

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM - Part I The Parable of the Sower

Text: Matthew 13:1-23

Key Word: Sowing

Key Thought: Is Our Heart Open and Ready to Receive the Word of God?

The Parables of the Kingdom of God are among the most important of all the messages that Jesus gave. There are 7 of them in total. Seven is the Biblical number of completeness. **When we take the 7 parables and link their truth together we will have the complete message.**

A parable is different than a fable. It seems like fables contain stories with dubious morality. Fables often mock people's calamities. A parable is a saying or story that is given to reveal a heavenly truth. Some have said,

"Its an earthly story with a heavenly meaning."

The parables of the Bible have for years been challenging students of the Word because in their simplest form there is a deep truth to be revealed. Their simplicity has often been a snare for interpreters. We must always remember that the primary purpose of the parables was to instruct those who initially heard them. We have simply been able to benefit from the translation of the gospels.

The parables were one of Jesus' favourite teaching methods. Often there were no applications explained. **One thing is for sure, no one can properly apply what they've incorrectly learned.** A parable always makes an attempt to lead the hearer from what they know to what they need to know.

Parables take on many different figures of speech

1. Simile - " I am sending you out like sheep among the wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves."

Matthew 10:16

2. Metaphor - "I am the gate for the sheep."

John 10:7

3. Similitude - "The kingdom of God is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."

Matthew 13:33

4. Story - *"There was a man who had two sons . . ."*

Luke 15:11

Jesus placed a great deal of emphasis upon what He taught. **Approximately 1/3 of Jesus' teaching took on the form of parables.** Why did Jesus use parables so often in His teaching?

Read Matthew 13:10-17

Basically, **Jesus used parables to reveal a truth to some people, but also to hide the truth from others.** He always seemed to have a mixed audience to address. Some were believers while others were not. Some had placed their faith in Jesus while others rejected Him as their Messiah. It was virtually impossible to separate these groups of people. **Jesus wanted to instruct His disciples, but he also did not want to add any more responsibility for knowing the truth upon the unbelievers.**

There is a greater responsibility placed upon those who hear, understand and accept the Word of God. **Let Us Consider the First of the 7 Parables Relating to the Kingdom of God.**

I. THE SOWER

II. THE SEED

III. THE SOIL/SEQUENCE

I. THE SOWER

"A farmer went out . . ."

Matthew 13:3

When Jesus addressed the crowd He did not name the sower other than saying that He was a farmer. It was in the parable of the weeds that Jesus explained who the sower was.

"The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man."

Matthew 13:37

Since both parables are linking the truth of the kingdom, it is not wrong to believe that the sower in this parable is also the "Son of Man."

The Eastern farmer sowed his field much different than the way we do. They would begin by clearing the surface of their fields of the old growth. The field would then look much the same.

I. THE SOWER (Contd.)

The sower had no idea what lay beneath the soil. The soil was not plowed like we do in this country. The seed was simply cast over the field and then scratched into the soil by a primitive wooden plow. The early rain would then come and germinate the seed. The sower's work was then finished until the later rain would bring the crop to its maturity.

II. THE SEED

A. On the Path

" . . . to sow his seed.

4. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up."

Matthew 13:3,4

The greatest truth found in this parable is within the meaning of the seed. **Actually, the vital truth that must be grasped is THE MEANING OF THE SEED IN RELATION TO THE SOIL.** When Jesus gave the interpretation of this parable He said,

"When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. (This is he which receiveth seed by the wayside - KJV)"

Matthew 13:19

HERE WE HAVE A SEED THAT IS ACTUALLY REPRESENTING A PERSON.

The work of the sower had not been given adequate time to see any growth. The seed had simply been sown on the path where everyone walks. It seems to me that this is a poor place to plant good seed. Yet who are we to determine where the Son of Man should cast His seed. He has a reason for everything He does. **The path would become hard because of people persistently walking over it.** Seldom can any profitable work be done in their heart of a person with a hardened heart.

We must be careful where we allow the message of the kingdom which resides in the heart of mankind to be scattered. Some people are satisfied as long as the Word of God is spread into the lives of others. I believe we should be careful where we place it.

II. THE SEED (Contd.)

A. On the Path

"Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces."

Matthew 7:6

B. Among the Rocks

*"Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly because the soil was shallow.
6. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root."*

Matthew 13:5,6

Again the interpretation is very important.

*"The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy.
21. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away."*

Matthew 13:20,21

The seed sown among the rocks again represents a type of person who receives the Word of God and is very joyful and exuberant about the message they've received. It begins to find root in their lives until troubles come. **This seed therefore, represents the people who fall away when the difficulties of life brought because of the Word of God guiding them in a new way overtakes them.** Instead of placing their trust in God, the little growth that began soon dies away.

The stones seem to represent areas of rebellion in our lives. These people would rather give up on serving God than dealing with the issues of rebellion within them.

II. THE SEED (Contd.)

C. The Thorns

"Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the seed."

Matthew 13:7

"The one who received the word that fell among thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of life and the deceitfulness of wealth chokes it, making it unfruitful."

Matthew 13:22

Here we have a person whose has an unfruitful life because of their pursuit for wealth and materialism as well as the ordinary troubles of life. **These troubles of life must be totally uprooted from our lives.** Like any common weed, it is not good enough to cut it off. We must remove its roots from our lives.

D. The Good Soil

"Still others fell on good soil, where it produced a crop - a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Matthew 13:9

"But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Matthew 13:23

Here we have a person whose life becomes very fruitful because they receive the **Word and understand it to the point that they are willing to pattern their life after it.** Every seed is to bear forth its own kind. **The Word of God that is properly planted in our hearts will produce its offspring in us.**

III. THE SOIL/SEQUENCE

The soil is basically the same. It would be located in much the same area. The soil represents man's response to the Word of God.

A. Non-understanding

To those who hear the Word, but do not understand it, **the soil becomes unreceptive.** Growth never begins.

B. Failure to Obey

To those who hear the Word, rejoice temporarily, but quickly fail to obey it, **the soil becomes unproductive.**

C. Worries of Life/Deceitfulness of Riches

To those who respond more to the worries of life and the deceitfulness of riches, **the soil becomes destructive.**

D. Hears & Understands

To those who hear and understand in the full sense, **the soil becomes receptive, productive, and constructive.**

God is doing such a great work in His Church that I must say I'm thrilled with. This parable is definitely for the New Millennium. It is a call to the Church to hear and understand ***"what the Spirit is saying to the Church."*** We must be willing to let the Son of Man cast His Seeds of Truth into our very lives. **WE ARE THE ONES WHO ULTIMATELY DECIDE HOW THE SEED WILL BE RECEIVED.** Oh that God would grant us a Church full of producers in the 30 X's, 60 X's, and 100 X's multiplication areas. We will determine what God can do. Lets give Him our all in all!

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Date: Feb 3/19

Place: FCA Time: 10:30 Am

Song : To Know Him to Know Him - G

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4. Story - *Luke 15:11*

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Let Us Consider the First of the 7 Parables Relating to the Kingdom of God.

I. THE SOWER - *Matthew 13:3; Matthew 13:37*

II. THE SEED

- A. On the Path - *Matthew 13:3,4; Matthew 13:19; Matthew 7:6*
- B. Among the Rocks - *Matthew 13:5,6; Matthew 13:20,21*
- C. The Thorns - *Matthew 13:7; Matthew 13:22*
- D. The Good Soil - *Matthew 13:9; Matthew 13:23*

III. THE SOIL/SEQUENCE

- A. Non-understanding - the soil becomes unreceptive.
- B. Failure to Obey - the soil becomes unproductive.
- C. Worries of Life/Deceitfulness of Riches - the soil becomes destructive.
- D. Hears & Understands - the soil becomes receptive, productive, and constructive.

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