

Parable of the Sower—Mark's Account

Mark 4:3-8, 13-20 ³Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred.

13-20 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.

The seed is the word of God.

A) Way side

³Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

Explanation: "And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts."

i) They have heard

ii) Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

- o Satan come immediately.

- Matthew 13:19 mentions that the reason for Satan stealing the Word is that the hearer did not understand. Whatever we do not understand, we do not keep.

- o Then comes the devil and takes away the Word out of their hearts.

- Satan is a thief. He doesn't come to do anything good. He is there to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10).

- o Mark makes a unique point that no other writer (Matthew or Luke) makes. He says that Satan comes immediately to take away the Word.

B) Rock

Illustration: "And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away."

Explanation: "And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in

themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended."

i) heard the word

- o People have to hear the Word

ii) Immediately receive it with gladness;

- o These were receptive to the Word. They received it with Joy and gladness.

iii) And have no root in themselves.

- o Our root ought to be in us, not in others.
 - We need to put in the work to develop our own root system.
- o We need to have a personal commitment with the Word of God.
- o The same way a plant cannot sustain growth without a strong and deep root system, no one can sustain growth without a strong and deep root system.

iv) So, endure but for a time

- o If we have a good, strong and deep root system, we can endure the afflictions and persecution that may arise for the sake of the Word.
- o Our endurance was just for a moment.

v) Afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

- o Notice that **persecution and affliction come to steal the Word**. We saw earlier that Satan is the thief. So, this reveals that affliction and persecution are a tool of the enemy—Satan, designed to steal the Word.

- Offense is detrimental to the Word sown in our hearts. Persecution and affliction cause offense and the Word is stolen.
- If we have a good and deep root system; we can resist these things that come to steal the Word.

C) Thorns

Illustration: "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit."

Explanation: "And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."

This is the largest part of the body of Christ.

i) Heard the Word

- This is a common thing with all the hearts or soils. They all heard.

ii) Cares of this world

- Cares are worries. There are detrimental to God's Word planted in our hearts.
- 1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

iii) Deceitfulness of Riches

- Riches can be deceitful. This is not saying riches aren't good. God made Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and Solomon very rich. These all came as they were focused, serving and seeking the Lord. Seeking riches hinders

them. Many people have money, but they are broke. Having money is not synonymous to being rich.

- Many so-called rich people are poor!
- A pursuit for riches will choke the life out of the Word planted in our hearts.
- We need to be seeking the Lord, not things or riches.
- Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

iv) Lusts of other things entering in

- All sin falls in the category of three lusts.

1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

- Lust of the eyes
- Lust of the flesh
- Pride of life
- Some folks have filled their lives with lust of other things such as power, fame, and sex. These are all pleasures of this life. Pleasures are thorns—not just to the Word, but also to us.
 - They will stifle the life out of the Word of God Planted in our hearts.
- Cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, and lusts of other things are **like weeds in the garden that compete for the nutrients in the ground** that would have helped the crop to grow well and bring forth fruit.
- If we want to see fruitfulness unto completion or maturity, we need to deny all these things of the world that would hinder us.

- Notice the words “entering in”
 - These things (the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things) have to be let into our hearts for them to choke the word to a point of no fruitfulness.
- Mark is the only writer that give this detail. He uses the word “lusts of other things” and other things that do choke the Word and cause unfruitfulness.

v) Become unfruitful

- Mark is the only one of the three writers to say that it yielded no fruit. Others said that it was choked. Point is because it was choked, it yielded no fruit.
- All these three things (the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in) choke (strangle completely) the Word and it brings forth no fruit.
- God’s will is for us to be fruitful. We need the Word of God sown in our hearts and kept for us to bear and bring forth fruit.
 - John 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

D) Good ground

One out of 4 bear fruit. This would be about 25 out of 100 people.

Illustration: “And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred.”

- i) Mark is the only writer to mention that there was **increase** in the springing up and yielding of fruit.

Explanation: "And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

- i) Hear the word

- ii) Receive it

- The Word has to be received. We can't benefit from what we reject.
- How do we receive it? We receive with meekness.
 - James 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.
- How do we receive it? We receive by faith.
- Mark is the only writer of this parable that uses the words "receiveth it"

- iii) Bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.

- Not all people bring forth 100-fold. Some bring forth 30, some 60 and some 100.
- One out of four grounds did bear fruit. This would be about 25 out of 100 people.
 - Of these 25 people, a third brings forth 30-fold, another third 60-fold and finally the last third 100-fold.