

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

By Keith Greer

"Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow." {Matthew 13:3} Many times our Lord taught the disciples in parables. A parable can best be defined as, "denoting a placing beside, to throw or lay beside, to compare." {Vine's, pg.158} Let us say, "an earthly story, with a heavenly meaning." Let us look at this teaching of the sower.

We first understand the Lord discussed a number of soils, wayside, rock, thorns, and good ground. Now we will look closer at each type of soil.

First, the wayside. " ...some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. " {Luke 8:5} Jesus explained this type of soil as those who heard the word, then the devil comes along and takes the word out of their heart. By taking it out of the heart, it cannot come to "bear fruit". Remember the words of Solomon, Proverbs 4:23, "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." Christians need to remember that the battleground God and Satan are fighting over is the man's heart. Satan does not desire for the word of God to be placed deep within the heart of men—because only then it takes root and begins to grow and bear fruit.

Some fell on rock. " ... and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture." {Luke 8:6} These are ones that have no "root". They receive the word with joy, but when trials and temptations come, they fall away. Sadly, they are not grounded and therefore have no spiritual stability. One might say they have not really truly been converted. Troubles will come in this life and if one does not have a good spiritual foundation on which to build, difficulties in life will cause one to drift away from the Lord.

Others fell on thorns. "... and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it." {Luke 8:7} These are some who have heard, but allow the cares and pleasures of this life to "choke" out the word. Sadly, this is the one that gets many Christians to go back into the world. Seeking to "hold onto the world and God" at the same time. Walking a spiritual tightrope, defeat is inevitable!

Finally, some fell on good soil. "... sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold ... " {Luke 8:8} These heard with a good and noble heart, kept it and brought forth much fruit! Accepted, believed, obeyed and continued bearing spiritual fruits in their lives.

Now that we have taken a look at these four types of soils, let us make some applications of this parable.

Three of the four soils mentioned were unprofitable to plant in: wayside, rock, and thorns. What do all of these have in common? All had the "seed" planted, but three never produced. Why? It would not allow the "seed" to remain! In the good ground, it remained, so it produced!

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." {Luke 8:11} Our Lord is discussing the work of a "spiritual farmer". Who are these farmers? All who wear the name of Christ,

which includes you and me! God wants us to plant the "seed". Should I worry about the type of "soil" I'm planting in? We will not know, until the seed is planted!

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." {1 Corinthians 3:6} The seed must be planted first before there can be a spiritual harvest. Too many of us worry about the type of "soils" of the hearer instead of just trusting God and the power of His word and planting the seed! ***