

“What Jesus Really Taught about Bible Teaching, Part 2”

Our 2nd look at the Parable of the Sower is our 15th look at the real Jesus. Now looking at what he really taught: **First, his teaching about teaching!** **Quick summary of last Sunday:**

1. Hard soil Mark 4:15 And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.

2. Rocky soil Mark 4:16-17 And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; Then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

This week, the 3rd unhappy result to be expected and planned for.

TODAY: **3. Thorny soil Mark 4:7** Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.

Mark 4:18-19 ... They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

NOTES:

1. Not everyone's actual spiritual condition is discernable.

We saw this last Sunday in regard to a good happy response. (“Joyful but shallow”!) We might be being fooled! Here we might be being fooled again, because you can't tell what is happening when there is no fruit.

Matthew 7:17-20 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. Good fruit tells us something.

Bad fruit tells us something **Galatians 5:19-23** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity ... strife, jealousy, fits of anger ... I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...

But fruitlessness leaves us not knowing what is going on! Last week we saw how in some cases, people to whom we communicate the truth seem to be rooted but aren't. It turns out that they are “circumstantial believers” who stop believing when circumstances change. On the other hand, some of the people to whom we communicate don't SEEM to be “rooted”, but you can't tell by looking. It might be that they ARE really. It might be that they have “some soil” and it's not shallow. They don't seem to be reacting positively to the truth but it might be growing in them. It takes time for the roots to get established. But because they aren't fruitful, you can't tell by looking what is ACTUALLY going on with them. **And THEY can't tell either, because the basis of assurance is fruit.** And here is a wild thought: *maybe the same is true of you!*

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it... — each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.

If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Obviously the Word is not doing much in the lives of some people who hear it. Obviously, it IS doing much in the lives of some other people. But there are some people whose spiritual condition remains uncertain to us ... and maybe you yourself ARE one such person!

2. Certain states of mind can deaden the effect of the Word of God!

SO what ARE these deadening influences?

i) “cares of the world” “Worldly things” we are burdened by : e.g. burdened about physical attractiveness, about material impressiveness, about financial security Notice it is specifically “the cares of the world.” It's the worries that are inspired by the things of the world, which John writes about: the desires of the flesh, desires for the eyes and pride in possessions.”

We have been commanded not to be anxious ... (**Matthew 6, Philippians 4**) ... and here is one huge reason why ... worrying can choke out the effect of the Word of God. (Now THERE is something to worry about!!!)

ii) **“deceitfulness of riches”** Expensive things that make promises that they can't keep. Wealth that we are fooled by. *If only you had me, you would be happy.*

iii) **“desires for other things”** “Things” we don't have but are being dazzled and seduced by

ACTIONS:

a) **Base your hope of salvation on Christ alone and your assurance of salvation on the Christlikeness of your character** (Not on your fondness for Jesus or the intensity of your spiritual experiences)

Ephesians 2:8,9 → Titus 3:5-7 [God] saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

(NOTICE **Ephesians 2:8,9 → Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.)

Titus 3:5-7 → Titus 3:8 The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

ALSO **2 Peter 1:5-11; 1 John 2:3-11** Salvation is not by works: but assurance of salvation IS!

b) **Fight against the deadening impact of the world**

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Beware of television! If you soak your head in TV all evening long (especially commercial television!), then dry it off with end-of-the-evening Bible reading and prayer ... and start your day with focused attention on God (“Sober up!”) Consider giving your soul a break from TV ---- *Detox! Regain your perspective!*

Beware of comedians! **Psalm 1:1-2** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers...

Beware of worldly friends! (Including worldly Christian friends!) **Proverbs 13:20** Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

Beware of your own foolishness! **Proverbs 12:15** The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.

And fight these influences! **1 Timothy 6:11-12** But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called ...

How? By sowing seed, of course! **Psalm 1:1-2** Blessed is the man ...his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.