**The Parable Of The Sower**

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday July 7th, 2019

Text: Mark 4:1-20

### Intro

1. If you were put on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?
	1. Is there evidence of Jesus Christ in you?
	2. I Cor. 10:12: Paul said it’s important to examine oneself so that he does not fall!
2. Mark 4:1-20: Jesus told the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:18) and it is a good illustration whether or not there is enough evidence of Christ in our lives to convict us of being a Christian!
	1. Mark 4:1-2: Jesus was teaching a large crowd and was teaching in parables.
		1. Thayer describes a parable as: “an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.”
	2. Mark 4:3-9: Jesus told the parable of a sower who sowed the same seed on four different soils with four different results!
	3. Mark 4:10-13: When away from the crowds the disciples asked about the parables Jesus taught the crowds. Jesus quoted from Isaiah 6:9-10 and explained that they received the “mystery of the kingdom of God” while the others get “everything in parables.”
	4. Mark 4:14-20: Jesus explained the parable as different reactions to the word of God!
		1. The Sower = Preacher or teacher of God’s word (could even refer to Jesus)
		2. The Seed = The gospel, or Word of God
		3. The Soil = Four different reactions to the word of God (hearts of the people – Luke 8:15)
3. We can take the “Soil Test” Jesus gives to see if there is any evidence of Jesus in our hearts!

#### The 1st Soil: Beside the Road

* 1. Mark 4:15: This soil represents anyone who hears the word and Satan takes it away.
		1. When anyone “hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it.” (Matthew 13:19)
	2. Examine the evidence of Jesus in their heart…
		1. They hear the word and allow Satan to take “away the word from their heart” (Luke 8:12)
		2. This soil is an unbeliever who hardens his heart against obeying the gospel.
		3. Their condition is one of being “blinded” by Satan – *II Corinthians 4:3-4*
		4. There is NO evidence of Jesus in this person’s heart!
	3. The soil “Beside the Road” describes a heart who doesn’t let the word of God inside!

#### The 2nd Soil: The Rocky Places

* 1. Mark 4:16-17: This is the person who “when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy.”
		1. *This is a person who is obedient to the gospel and becomes a saint!*
	2. Examine the evidence of Jesus in their heart …
		1. Mark 4:17: “No firm root in themselves,” “only temporary,” “when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.”
		2. For a time this person may appear faithful, but they are not grounded.
		3. This is not just the “trials of life” that finally get to this person.
		4. This is specific trouble, targeted affliction: “because of the word” *(Mark 4:17).*
		5. Trouble, persecution, and temptation (Luke 8:13) cause this person to fall away, making them a “Fair-Weather Christian!”
		6. The “rocky soil” Christian has little evidence of Jesus, and when things get tough because of their faith, there is NO evidence of Jesus in their heart!
	3. The one who falls away because of affliction, persecution and temptation teaches us: you can’t grow fruit on the rocks!

#### The 3rd Soil: The Thorns

* 1. Mark 4:18-19: This is one “who hears the word…”
		1. *This is representative of one who obeys the gospel and is a saint!*
	2. Examine the evidence of Jesus in their heart …
		1. Mark 4:19: “Worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”
		2. Worries of the world, deceitfulness of riches, desires for other things, and pleasures of this life (Luke 8:14) make this person a “Distracted Christian!”
		3. This is the person who is obedient for a time but they become distracted, and “entangled” with the affairs of the world (II Timothy 2:4) and become unfruitful – *To not bear fruit is to be cutoff! (John 15:1-6)*
		4. The “thorny soil” Christian is so distracted by the world their light of Christ is dim so they have VERY LITTLE evidence of Jesus in their hearts!
	3. The one who allows choking thorns to render them unfruitful teaches us: you can’t grow fruit among the thorns!

#### The 4th Soil: The Good Soil

* 1. Mark 4:20: “And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it…”
		1. *This is a person who is obedient to the gospel and becomes a saint!*
		2. This is the one “who hears the word and understands it” (Matthew 13:23)
	2. Examine the evidence of Jesus in their heart …
		1. Mark 4:20: “…and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.”
		2. Luke 8:15: “But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.”
		3. Notice this saint does the opposite of the other three soils: From their “honest and good heart” they “accept it” (the word), unlike the Beside the Road Soil; they “hold it fast” (the word), unlike the Beside the Road Soil and Thorny Soil; and they bear fruit with perseverance, unlike the Rocky Soil.
		4. Perseverance indicates they persist through trouble and holding it fast means they don’t let Satan or the distractions of the world take it away from their heart!
		5. There is MUCH evidence of Jesus in the heart of the fruitful good soil saint!
	3. The one who hears, accepts, and holds fast the word of God teaches us: you can grow fruit in an honest and good heart!

## Conclusion

1. In Jesus’ Soil Test, what soil are you?
2. Are YOU like the “Beside the Road Soil”? (No Evidence of Christ in you)
	1. Don’t harden your heart unto wrath and judgment! *(II Thessalonians 1:8-9: obey the gospel!)*
3. Are YOU like the “Rocky Soil”? (No Evidence of Christ in you)
	1. If you are not being grounded in the faith, you will likely fall away when trouble and hardships arise! *(Hebrews 10:35-39: Saints are not to be “those that shrink back”)*
4. Are YOU like the “Thorny Soil”? (Very Little Evidence of Christ in you)
	1. If you are too busy to study, you are TOO busy! *(II Tim. 2:15)*
	2. If you have become too preoccupied with the cares of this world, you will not bear fruit for the kingdom of Christ! *(**Colossians 3:1-3: Focus on heavenly things, on Christ!)*
5. Are YOU like the “Good Soil”? (Much Evidence of Christ in you)
	1. If you are bearing fruit, then continue to hold fast! *(Hebrews 3:14; Revelation 3:11)*
6. Is there evidence of Christ in you?
7. Take the Soil Test to see if you need to be baptized or ask for forgiveness!
8. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!