

## **Parable of the Soils**

### **12-2-18 AM**

Jesus taught in parables for a number of reasons. We are told first of all that it fulfilled a prophecy that “seeing they would not see, hearing they would not hear”. In other words, Jesus could present the straight truth of the Gospel, but only those who desired God would seek to understand. Secondly, parables were ways to make a great heavy truth something discernable.

The *Parable of the Soils* is often listed as the first parable teaching of Jesus. It leads off His teaching, perhaps because it is a form of format for all parables. The story, then the explanation to those who seek to hear. Parables usually had a main point, and often we see side points that may or may not have been relevant or intended. These side points are only relevant if they are stated elsewhere, and can be attached here only as an auxiliary idea.

For example, in the parable of the soil there are three side points we might consider

#### 1. Seeds contain all of the information needed to grow a tree

As the seed is the word of God, we are told elsewhere that the Word of God gives us everything we need as Christians to grow in grace and knowledge (2 Tim. 3:16-17, 2 Pet. 1:2-3).

#### 2. Fruit is the way that seed is brought out

If the fruit is desirable, then nature will step in, pick the fruit, and thereby take the seed. Jesus taught about fruit in Matthew 7. We need to consider that it is by our fruits (Gal. 5) that we are seen as the children of God.

#### 3. Water brings the seed to life

Baptism is a water that brings a lost sinner to life. We can consider that until the seed receives water, it is not alive. So too it is with an unbeliever; until the moment they are baptized (buried with Christ in water, Romans 6:2-5), they too are not alive. Baptism is the point of the change from dead to alive (1 Peter 3:21).

But there are four main ideas in this parable that we need to consider as the points Jesus wanted His disciples to understand.

#### 1. It does not matter how good the sower is; the seed does the work.

Too many think that it requires special talents or ability to sow the seed. In this parable, the sower is not really that important, other than he does it. In fact, consider that he is doing this job poorly, throwing seed in rocks and on roads. The seed does all the work – James 1:21, 1 Cor. 3:6-7.

#### 2. Most people do not care to hear the truth

We sometimes think that we are not doing enough to spread the Gospel since so few seem to care. But this parable wants us to understand that this is (to God's sorrow) the expectation. It is constant statistic in the Bible - few are saved (Luke 13:23-26, 1 Peter 3:20). This is not the fault of the sower or the seed.

#### 3. Many fall away as soon as it gets hard

Jesus knows that many people who come to Him will not stay. He breaks them into two categories here. This first group are those who, at the first sign of trouble quit. The first time it is not easy to attend services or the first time someone is put on the spot they give up. Jesus promised that there would be obstacles in being a Christian (John 16:33).

#### 4. Many fail to bear fruit

The second group of those who obey and fall away are those who fail to grow to maturity. It is understood that we begin in Christ weak, immature and worldly. Over time our love for God ought to outgrow our love of the world. But many fail to outgrow the world; instead, they are swallowed by the world and diminish or die out (1 John 2:15). It may be that they simply never bear fruit, or it may be that they themselves die.

Jesus' concluding point is the soil we all should desire to be: the soil that receives the word with joy, that removes the rocks in their heart, that avoids and grows beyond the world and worldliness, and that brings forth the fruits of Christ.