

There is Nothing Wrong with the Seed

Originated, Generated and Composed by ***Ruach HaKodesh***

Assembled by Brekar Neschaden Burjon

Matthew 13:18-23 CJB ~ Complete Jewish Bible ~ ¹⁸"So listen to what the parable of the sower means. ¹⁹Whoever hears the message about the Kingdom, but doesn't understand it, is like the seed sown along the path — the Evil One comes and seizes what was sown in his heart. ²⁰The seed sown on rocky ground is like a person who hears the message and accepts it with joy at once, ²¹but has no root in himself. So he stays on for a while; but as soon as some trouble or persecution arises on account of the message, he immediately falls away. ²²Now the seed sown among thorns stands for someone who hears the message, but it is choked by the worries of the world and the deceitful glamor of wealth, so that it produces nothing. ²³However, what was sown on rich soil is the one who hears the message and understands it; such a person will surely bear fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Isaiah 49:4-6 CEV ~ ⁴I said to myself, "I'm completely worn out; my time has been wasted. But I did it for the LORD God, and he will reward me." ⁵Even before I was born, the LORD God chose me to serve him and to lead back the people of Israel. So the LORD has honored me and made me strong. ⁶Now the LORD says to me, "It isn't enough for you to be merely my servant. You must do more than lead back survivors from the tribes of Israel. I have placed you

here as a light for other nations; you must take my saving power to everyone on earth."

As Christians we have been "Saved To Serve"...

- a. Called to serve God and the Lord Jesus Christ
- b. Called to serve the faith community and those in the world – with His Word... our life is to be a living testimony...

Jesus taught us that our service will not be easy...but it will be honored...

John 12:26 KJV: (26) If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

In the parable of the Sower – Jesus gives us a glimpse of what our service to Him will come against...

There is nothing wrong with the Seed.

As Jesus preached the Gospel, He did not always find an open, receptive, interested, approachable, friendly audience (and we will not either).

In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus tells us that sometimes the ones we are called to serve with His Word will have hard hearts... There's nothing wrong with the Seed... It's the heart that has the problem....

Heart condition one: the Wayside Hearer, On the Roadside Soil

CJB – Matthew 13:19 ~ Whoever hears the message about the Kingdom, but doesn't understand it, is like the seed sown along the path — the Evil One comes and seizes what was sown in his heart.

Ground #1 is Hard-ness...

Their heart is like the road covering the highway: ***The Seed was sown, but it stays on top of the surface, nothing can penetrate through.***

Their mind is already made up... There is immediate rejection. They don't want it... No amount of talking or explaining will make a difference because My mind is already made up; Their attitude is the husband on the Nutty Professor: *You really think I'm listening to you – I ain't listening to You* They hear it, but they do not want to hear it. They already have a belief system in place and it will not be altered. The message makes no impression upon them. What has been spoken is pushed aside, ignored, cast off, rejected and is easily forgotten. They don't want it... They do not listen and they do not understand.

They are stubborn and refuse to believe = **Hard ground**

Ground #1: I hear it, but I don't really hear it; I get it, but I don't really get it, because I don't want it...

But do not get discouraged...

There is nothing wrong with the Seed...

You have not labored in vain

You are spreading the Seed of God's Word

Jesus said *"If you serve me, the Father will honor you."*

Jesus tells us that sometimes the ones we are called to serve with His Word will have **shallow hearts...**

Heart condition two: the Stony Ground Hearer, OR they are in a Place of Rootlessness

CJB – Matthew 13:20-21: ²⁰The seed sown on rocky ground is like a person who hears the message and accepts it with joy at once, ²¹but has no root in himself. So he stays on for a while; but as soon as some trouble or persecution arises on account of the message, he immediately falls away.

Ground #2 is Shallow-ness...

Their mind and heart are not emotionally ready for a change: ***the Seed is received; the Seed is on and goes in but it does not completely take root... there is no foundation...***

I'm not emotionally ready yet...

"It's just too hard. I get it. I know what you're saying, but I'm not emotionally ready yet. There are just so many things that I want to do. There are so many things I want to experience. I'm not really ready to make this kind of life-changing decision. It's just some things I'm not ready to give up yet.

I don't want to be a phony. I know enough Christian phonies. I know enough to do the right thing. I understand God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. I understand love, and spiritual authority. I'll be back when I'm really ready. God understands. He knows I'm not perfect. Nobody is perfect except Jesus anyway."

Sometimes it is not so much the person's heart, but the heart of the church they attend... The church itself has shallow roots.

Their church does not nourish them with the Scriptures.

The people are hungry and they know they are hungry, but since the church is out-of-focus, they do not always know what to do with their hunger. So they fly from church to church, and they never stay long enough to put down roots.

And their search ends in spiritual anemia and sometimes spiritual death = **Shallow ground**

Ground #2: I hear it, I get it, I maybe even need it, but I'm not emotionally ready yet.

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Jesus said *"If you serve me, the Father will honor you."*

Jesus tells us that sometimes the ones we are called to serve with His Word will have **thorny hearts**

**Heart condition three: the Thorny Ground Hearer...
Spiritual Strangulation**

CJB - Matthew 13:22 ~ Now the seed sown among thorns stands for someone who hears the message, but it is choked by the worries of the world and the deceitful glamor of wealth, so that it produces nothing.

Ground #3 is double-mindedness (worldly)

They hear, understand, and agree (in the mind only), but do not believe and act from the heart (the will). The Seed of God's Word takes root, but bears no fruit: **the Seed is on, goes in and down... the plant comes up, but no fruit is produced.**

Daily routines overcrowd them and distract them. The world with all its promises of wealth, status, power, and personal "freedom" captures their hearts.

God does not have first place in their lives.

They do not look to God for guidance and strength and they do not mature in the plans and purposes that God has ordained for their life.

They take no time to reflect on God's Word; and the result is that their lifestyle is not affected by God's Word. There is not time for study or prayer or reading. They are not familiar with the Bible. They do not pray regularly and do not know how to pray for themselves or others. Yes, they do attend church, but their hearts and minds have become preoccupied with the cares of daily living.

Let's take for instance two people who embrace Jesus Christ at the same time. One goes on to live a powerful life; the other winds up a drop-out... a hypocrite... Both of their destinies are a matter of their choices... The thorns choke us only when we give them **permission** to choke us. Stony ground hearers who love the world... **suffer a Spiritual Strangulation**

The world is enough; the world is their love; the world is their first... Yes... They come to church, the minister preaches, and they go home; but they are not committed. They want to be in Christ, but they don't want Christ in their business.

They want a religion that requires nothing of them = **Thorny ground**

Ground #3: "I hear it; I get it; I want it; but I'm preoccupied... I want this over here too..."

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Jesus said *"If you serve me, the Father will honor you."*

So far the examples of the kinds of people that we have been called to serve... have rejected the Word of God... They have rejected the message of the Gospel, and the proof of this is that there is no fruit in their life...

- Wayside: I don't want it = no fruit
- Stony: I'm not emotionally ready = no fruit
- Thorny: I'm pre-occupied = no fruit

But do not get discouraged...

There is nothing wrong with the Seed...

There is another example...

There is one more heart condition left...

Jesus said *"If you serve me, the Father will honor you."*

Heart condition four: the Good Ground Hearer on The Good Earth

CJB – Matthew 13:23 However, what was sown on rich soil is the one who hears the message and understands it; such a person will surely bear fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Ground #4 is Fruitful

The Word of God has entered their soul; it has filled their mind; it has transformed their life: ***the Seed was on, it goes in, down and up... the Seed has taken full hold of a yielded heart; and it produces fruit...***

They understand, obey, speak, act and live the Gospel message. They share it with others. God's Word is sufficient. Their decisions, and attitudes, their recreation and work, their family plans and money matters, their schooling and voting, their praying and singing, their very lifestyle is based on the Word of God that they believe. They produce fruit in proportion to their spiritual maturity and God-given ability.

Ground #4: I hear it; I get it; I want it. I thank God for it, and I'm doing something with it.

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Jesus said *"If you serve me, the Father will honor you."*

Let's take a look at the Seed, and consider its growing power..The Seed, no matter how big or small... when given the right conditions... will reach upward for Light even though it has been planted underneath a heart of solid stone. It will find the smallest crack and burst through asphalt, split pavement and dislodge foundational strongholds. The unrelenting life force of the Seed is born in its need to reach the Son.

The Seed handles the issue of its circumstances by taking one step at a time. The Seed puts first things first. It sends out threads of life that longs to become what it was designed and destined to be...

There is nothing wrong with the Seed...

*Isaiah 55:9-11 KJV ~ ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. ¹⁰For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: ¹¹**So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.***

There is nothing wrong with the Seed...

The Seed of God's Word takes root and it flourishes ... BUT... It's based on the choice of the hearer... to accept or reject, to obey or deny...

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So no matter the heart condition, we are to serve His Word

- If they don't want it; serve His word anyway
- If they are not emotionally ready; serve His word anyway
- If they are pre-occupied; serve His word anyway
- Because there is a place where there is good ground and His Word will cause a transformation

Because when you think about it...

- We all have a little hardness in our hearts, but God's Word transforms that hardness
- We all have a little shallowness, and God's Word transforms that shallowness
- We all have a little worldliness and double mindedness, and God's Word transforms our condition
- His Word takes root in the good ground of our heart and transformation occurs....

Conclusion...

Jesus could not always find an interested, open and friendly audience. And neither will we... But we are to serve God's Word anyway...

As Christians we have been "Saved To Serve"...

- a. Called to serve God and the Lord Jesus Christ
- b. Called to serve the faith community and those in the world – with His Word... our life is to be a living testimony...

Serving His Word... It's called evangelism...

Jesus said...

Matthew 28:19-20 Jubilee Bible ~ ¹⁹Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, behold, I am with you always even unto the end of the age. Amen.

We are called to serve the faith community and those in the world – with His Word... we are called to spread His Word... It does not go out void...

Right at the end of the parable of the Sower,

Jesus said, *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear...”*

Romans 10:17 – So then, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

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His Word causes results to happen.

His Word succeeds where it is sent.

Hebrews 4:12 - *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

2 Corinthians 10:5 - *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

Jesus said *“If you serve me, the Father will honor you.”*

But to serve you must hear..

Are you hearing the **Word**?
Are you reading the **Word**?
Are you speaking the **Word**?
Are you praying the **Word**?
Are you living the **Word**?

Are you serving the **Word**?

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