

My Heart, the Gospel, and the Grace of God

Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. ² And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ³ "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵ Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶ And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. ⁸ And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." ⁹ And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

- Mark 4:1-9 (ESV)

A **turning point** in the ministry of Jesus:

³³ With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. ³⁴ He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

- Mark 4:33-34 (ESV)

Why parables?

¹⁰ And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹ And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, ¹² so that " **'they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.'** "

There comes a time when the declaration of truth is an act of _____ and not _____.

Consider the **context**:

Why aren't there more _____ ?

We call this the "**Parable of the Sower**", but it's really not about the sower.

In this parable, **two constants** are assumed:

God's Kingdom grows through the spread of the _____.

The Word of God is the only _____ that will grow that kingdom.

Knowing those realities, **what do we do?**

We spread the Gospel _____ and without _____.

We _____ to bring about results.

The parable is about the **soils**.

What do the soils represent?

4 types of human hearts:

¹³ And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?" ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. 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. ¹⁶ And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

The _____ heart

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.

The _____ heart

¹⁶ And these are the ones sown **on rocky ground**: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷ 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.

² ... we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth ...

The _____ heart

¹⁸ And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹ 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.

These three soils have one thing in common:

What is the purpose of planting a field?

Only one soil produces **fruit**:

The _____ heart

²⁰ But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

This is the heart that truly hears the message of the Gospel:

The Kingdom of God is here.

Repent.

Believe the Gospel.

Follow me.

So how's your heart?