

Jeremiah and the Parable of the Sower

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Matthew 13:3-9

One of the more well-known parables of Jesus is the parable of the sower. It is a simple parable – its basic point can be explained quickly, yet it teaches an important lesson. It is also one we can build upon to draw out other points. In this lesson, we are going to consider this parable and build upon it with lessons learned from Jeremiah.

The Parable (Matthew 13:3-9)

- The sower sowed the seed – scattered onto four different types of soil (roadside, rocks, thorns, good soil)
- The seed was scattered regardless of the type of soil
- The results were affected by the type of soil

Explanation (Matthew 13:18-23)

- The seed is the word of God (cf. Luke 8:11)
- The soils represent the different types of hearts of those who hear the word – roadside (hear, do not understand, the devil takes away the seed; distracted, preoccupied); rocks (hear, receive with joy, no firm root, fall away at affliction; not committed, short-sighted); thorns (hear, choked out by worry and materialism; worldly-minded, misplaced priorities); good soil (hear, understand, bear fruit; this is what the Lord desires of us)
- We scatter the seed everywhere – necessary because we do not know people's hearts (1 Corinthians 2:11)
- Results will vary depending on the reception of the hearers – we persuade (2 Corinthians 5:11); our responsibility is to plant the seed, not to produce results (1 Corinthians 3:6; 1:17; Matthew 10:14)

Lessons from Jeremiah

- What if, as we work to sow the seed, we could also affect the soil? – turn bad ground (unreceptive) into good soil (receptive); it takes work, but it can be done (this is what farmers/gardeners do before planting)
- Jeremiah had work to do before he could plant (Jeremiah 1:9-10) – he had to remove all obstacles/hindrances to the message
- The men of Judah were told to break up ground rather than sow among thorns (Jeremiah 4:3-4)
- Maybe instead of JUST sowing seed, we could also work to affect the hearts of those around us – this could potentially make them more receptive to the gospel

How to Cultivate the Soil for Sowing

- We cannot judge the hearts of people (1 Corinthians 2:11) – but we CAN learn more about them as we get to know them; so what can we do to make the less receptive hearts more receptive to the gospel?
- The roadside – those who are uninterested, distracted, preoccupied; be persistent; be an example showing a consistent interest in spiritual things
- The rocky ground – those who are short-sighted, not fully committed; be honest about the effects of sin and godliness; be an example of commitment to the Lord through difficulties
- The thorny ground – those who are worldly-minded and have misplaced priorities; be content; be an example of one who puts spiritual things first
- Other possibilities for why people are uninterested in hearing, believing, and obeying the gospel – hypocrisy among religious people (so be sincere and genuine); previous negative experience with other Christians/churches (so be an example of faithfulness); many more could be added to the list

Conclusion

- We are to work to plant the seed of the word of God around us
- As we do this, the more we get to know people, the more we can work on cultivating their hearts
- Many who may not be receptive RIGHT NOW could be in the future
- We should try to work toward this – especially with those we know and interact with regularly