

Matthew 13
Part 1 (1-23)

The parable of the soils, the reason Jesus speaks in parables; and the explanation of the parable

Intro: This is a grouping of eight parables by our Lord.

I. The parable of the soils (1-9).

A. Jesus teaches the multitude from a boat near the shore (1, 2) (cf. Mk 4:1, 2; Lk 8:4).

1. This would make a natural amphitheater.
2. Sound carries so well over water.

B. Jesus teaches the parable of the soils (3-9).

Note: Parables explain divine truths using natural facts.

Note: This parable is really a parable of four different hearers. The sower and the seed are the same in each case.

1. The wayside soil (3, 4).
 - a. These were literally the paths that went through the fields. Ground too hard for seeds to germinate.
 - b. Does the teacher control the hearer? We assume/expect them to.
 - (1) We blame the teacher or the message when nothing happens.
 - (2) Obviously, the hearer is responsible as well (cf. Rev 2: 7, 11, 17 etc.).
 - c. The truth has no effect on those who refuse it (cf. 13:53-58).
 - (1) Some people cannot be persuaded (cf. Lk. 16:31).
 - (2) We, therefore, must learn how to hear (cf. Mk 4:24; Lk 8:18; Rom 10:17).
 - d. The wayside hearer received nothing.
 - (1) He didn't bring a receptive heart, so, he left without any blessings.
 - (2) Eloquent speakers or speeches won't make any difference if the heart is hard or unreceptive.
 - (3) Notice the Sadducees and Pharisees and the many times they heard Jesus speak, with no positive affect on them.
2. The stony soil. (5, 6).
 - a. The seeds fell on a thin layer of soil that was covering bedrock.
 - (1) The outward appearance was good.
 - (2) The sowing, receiving, and the growing were all correct.
 - (3) It didn't last because there was a heart problem.
 - b. This is an improvement over the wayside hearer; the seed is received.
 - c. The sun can cause plants to grow or wither (cf. James 1:11; Eph 3:17; Col 1:23; 2:7).
 - (1) We need to make sure we remove the rocks so we can grow.
 - (2) If we don't, the trials will come and we may wither under the heat (cf. 2 Tim 3:12, 13).
3. The thorny soil (7).
 - a. The seed fell on fertile soil, but unseen weed seeds were also in the soil.
 - (1) Weed seed must be killed for proper growth (cf. Col 3:5).
 - (2) This soil represents a person with divided loyalties (cf. 6:24).
 - b. Often, lawful things choke the seed.

- (1) Corn in a wheat field is a weed.
 - (2) Recreation, business, or anything else, which takes precedence over God's will, is a weed.
 - 4. The good soil (8, 9).
 - a. The seed is planted in the soil that is properly prepared.
 - b. The stones and the weed seeds were removed.
 - (1) Counting of the cost is necessary to being good soil (cf. Lk. 14:28-30).
 - (2) Fruit bearing is also necessary (cf. Jn. 15:8; Gal 5:22, 23; Phil 1:11).
- II. Jesus explains His use of parables (10-17).
 - A. He explains because of the question the disciple asked (10-12). Note: This question may have been at the end of the long list of parables and Matthew inserts it here to aid in understanding (cf. Mk 4:10).
 - 1. "Mysteries" does not mean unable to understand, but rather those things that have been hidden until that time (cf. Rom 16:25; 1 Cor 15:51; Eph 1:9; Col 1:26; 1 Tim 3:9).
 - a. Those with knowledge and understanding will have it increased.
 - b. Those with no knowledge, or understanding will lose what they had.

Note: Those who made improvement in their understanding would have additional opportunities to grow. Those who did not would have opportunities taken from them (cf. 25:29).
 - 2. This was a fulfillment of prophecy (13-15).
 - a. Both Jesus and Paul apply this quotation from Isaiah 6:9, 10 to their day (cf. Acts 28:26, 27).
 - b. This is true of every period in time.
 - B. Jesus sets forth a contrast beginning with verses (16, 17).
 - 1. "Blessed" or happy are they for they see and hear what is taught.
 - 2. Those who have the right mind set (the good soil) clearly understand the truths taught by the parables.
 - a. These disciples may not have known the true blessing they were receiving.
 - b. It was a long awaited event (cf. Gen 15:4-6; 22:18; Jn 8:56).
- III. The parable of the soils explained (18-23).
 - A. Jesus explains the wayside soil (18, 19) (cf verse 4).
 - 1. The "wicked one" is Satan (cf. 1 Jn. 2:13, 14; 3:12).
 - a. Satan knows the power of God's word (cf. Rom 1:16).
 - b. He will use any means we allow to have the seed removed from us.
 - 2. A person's heart can become so hard it will not receive the teachings of God's word (cf. Rom 1:28; 1 Tim 4:2)
 - B. Jesus explains the stony soil (20, 21) (cf. verses 5, 6).
 - 1. Immediately receives it without properly understanding the commitment involved (cf. Acts 8:18-22).
 - 2. "Tribulation or persecution" will come upon all Christians (cf. 5:10-12; Lk 22:31).
 - a. If properly taught these will not be a "scorching" ordeal (cf. 2 Pet 1:8; 3:17, 18).
 - b. The sun will strengthen the healthy plants and wither the weak (cf. James 1:3, 4, 12).

3. This happened often in the first century (cf. 1 Cor. 1:10-13; Gal 3:1).
- C. Jesus explains the thorny soil (22) (cf. verse 7).
1. This represents those who started well, but let the cares of this world have mastery over them, e.g.:
 - a. John; Acts 13:13.
 - b. Hymenaeus and Alexander, 1 Tim 1:20.
 - c. Demas; 2 Tim 4:10.
 2. It is a problem mankind has had since the beginning (cf. Gen 13:10-13; Josh 7:20, 21; Mk 10:17-22).
 - a. Small things begin to crowd out the seed.
 - b. This is what we must fight against.
 - c. Some symptoms of weeds starting to grow: doesn't study, won't teach, and won't work.
 - d. The first thing you know Satan has won back another soul to destruction.
- D. Jesus explains the good soil (23) (cf. verse 8).
1. This soil allowed the seed to grow until it could bring forth fruit (cf. Acts 17:11, 12).
 2. Luke says that "an honest and good heart" is required in Lk 8:15 (cf. Ps 51:10).
 - a. Honesty is a noble trait.
 - b. We must be honest with ourselves and with God (cf. Lk 6:45).

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