

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Text: Matt.13:1-23, “A farmer went out to sow his seed” (v3b).

The indifferent hearer

The first class of hearers are those who hear the word but neither understand nor esteem it. They are completely indifferent to spiritual truths. The word makes no penetration in his heart because it has been “pounded down” and has become overbearing and insensitive.

Because it makes no penetration, the seed of the word is exposed to the enemy of his soul. The devil comes and snatches away the life-containing seed that was sown in his heart.

The superficial hearer

The second class of hearers are those who receive the word with joy, but they do not persevere. Because the soil of his heart is shallow, he has no firm root in himself. His change was only on the surface, rather than in the depths of his heart. His feelings were changed but not his soul.

When this person hears the gospel message it brings a religious experience but not salvation—evidenced by the fact that when afflictions or persecutions arise because of the word, *immediately* he falls away.

The worldly hearer

The third class are those who hear and understand the word, but whose hearts are like ground that is infested with thorns. This person is caught with the pleasures and cares of this life, so that he does nothing with the word.

He is too worldly to allow the word to take root and grow in his heart. He doesn't notice that his deceiving worldliness chokes the word, “crowding it out”, because his attention is on riches, possessions, prestige, position, and other enticing things.

The seed will not choke the thorns, but thorns will choke the seed.

The receptive hearer

The fourth class are those who lay hold of and keep the Word in a good and honest heart, and bring forth fruit with patience.

The ultimate mark of a genuine believer is fruitbearing. He not only hears and understands but also bears fruit. The same truth in one man's heart may bring forth a 100-fold, while in another 60, while in another 30. The measure of understanding has much to do with the measure of fruitfulness.

Soli Deo Gloria