

Matthew 13:18-21. the Explanation of the Former Part of the Parable of the Sower.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

The parable of the sower describes the characters of all people who hear the gospel, and it highlights the importance of prayer and meditation in resisting Satan's attacks and allowing the gospel to take root in our hearts.

Scripture: Matthew 13:4, Mark 4:15, Luke 8:13, Acts 3:19, 2 Corinthians 7:10

Topics: "Gospel Message", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delves into the parable of the sower, highlighting the different types of hearers of the gospel. The wayside hearers are described as careless individuals who do not reflect on the message of the gospel, allowing distractions to hinder the growth of the word in their hearts. Satan strategically works to erase any positive impact of the gospel through inconsiderate hearers who neglect prayer and meditation. The stony ground hearers receive the word with joy initially but lack true repentance and a softened heart, leading them to fall back into worldly ways when faced with challenges.

Transcript

There is one circumstance which renders this parable peculiarly interesting. It describes the characters of all people who hear the gospel; therefore it must describe ours. Let us endeavor to discover by the help of God to which class we belong.

First--there are the wayside hearers--these seem to be careless people, whose minds are so trifling that though they hear the words of the preacher, they do not reflect upon their meaning. We know that the seed represents the word of God, whether spoken by faithful ministers and parents, or instructors or friends, or in whatever way conveyed to the mind. But though the seed is good, it does not spring up in every heart. Why does it not? Because every heart is not prepared to receive it. As a beaten path is a soil not prepared to receive seed, so a heart full of trifling thoughts is not prepared to receive the gospel. Such a heart finds religious instruction a weariness, and rejoices when the sermon is over, and the chapter is finished.

It is to be feared that every congregation contains many of these careless hearers, who hear the sermons with little interest; but even on the wayside, a seed might occasionally spring up, were it not for the passers by who tread it down, and for the birds who pick it up.

How can we calculate upon the amount of good that is prevented by those spirits that throng the air! They are all marshaled under one experienced commander, even that old serpent who tempted our first parents. Satan knows how to choose the most favorable opportunities for exerting his power. It is after faithful sermons have been preached that his hosts are on the alert to efface any impression that may have been made. The people who lie most exposed to his attacks are the inconsiderate, who have offered up no prayers for a blessing on the instructions they have received. What havoc is made every Sabbath night and every Monday morning in the paths where the faithful preacher was seen sowing just before! If Satan found people endeavoring to fix the sermon in their hearts by prayer and meditation, he would not have such great success. But is it surprising that he succeeds, when he finds so many who neglect secret prayer!

The next class of hearers appear at first sight more hopeful than the wayside hearers. The seed sometimes falls on stony ground, where there is a little light, though dry earth; it soon springs up, but is soon withered by the heat of the sun.

The stony ground hearers receive the word with joy. When they hear the gospel, they attend, they remember, they are delighted, they determine to be Christians; they begin to do many things that are right, but when they find difficulties in their way they change their minds, and become as worldly as before. What is the reason of this? It is that their hearts were never softened by the Holy Spirit. They never were convinced of sin, they never repented. Repentance is the beginning of religion. Our Savior's first sermon was, "Repent." If we think we can be Christians without repentance we are mistaken. We must be brought to see what ungrateful creatures we have been to our best Friend. We must be led to mourn over such ingratitude, and to entreat for pardon and grace. Paul sat three days after his conversion fasting, before Ananias came and said, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins." Christians may feel different degrees of grief; but they all grieve. Those who have felt no godly sorrow will easily be induced to return to the world; they will never consent to make any great sacrifice for Christ's sake. They cannot resolve to give up a brilliant prospect, or to lose an advantageous situation, or to forfeit the favor of honorable people. No! they will sooner give up their religious profession, lose their hopes of heaven, and forfeit the favor of the glorious God.

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