

## Mark 4:13-20

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "If you can't understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables?" <sup>14</sup> The farmer plants seed by taking God's word to others. <sup>15</sup> The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message, only to have Satan come at once and take it away. <sup>16</sup> The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word. <sup>18</sup> The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God's word, <sup>19</sup> but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced. <sup>20</sup> And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!" (NLT)

<sup>13</sup> ¿No entienden esta parábola? —continuó Jesús—. ¿Cómo podrán, entonces, entender las demás? <sup>14</sup> El sembrador siembra la palabra. <sup>15</sup> Algunos son como lo sembrado junto al camino, donde se siembra la palabra. Tan pronto como la oyen, viene Satanás y les quita la palabra sembrada en ellos. <sup>16</sup> Otros son como lo sembrado en terreno pedregoso: cuando oyen la palabra, en seguida la reciben con alegría, <sup>17</sup> pero como no tienen raíz, duran poco tiempo. Cuando surgen problemas o persecución a causa de la palabra, en seguida se apartan de ella. <sup>18</sup> Otros son como lo sembrado entre espinos: oyen la palabra, <sup>19</sup> pero las preocupaciones de esta vida, el engaño de las riquezas y muchos otros malos deseos entran hasta ahogar la palabra, de modo que ésta no llega a dar fruto. <sup>20</sup> Pero otros son como lo sembrado en buen terreno: oyen la palabra, la aceptan y producen una cosecha que rinde el treinta, el sesenta y hasta el ciento por uno. (NVI)

### Notes:

#### A. Interpretation of the Parable of the Farmer/Seed/Soil:

- a. **Farmer**—someone who takes God's word to others (v. 14).
  - i. Jesus
  - ii. Christians teaching/preaching/evangelizing/witnessing/etc.
- b. **Seed**—God's Word: Revelation of God by God
  - i. Jesus
  - ii. The Bible—The Bible is God's way of revealing Jesus to us.
- c. The Farmer scatters the Seed over the whole field. God gives His word to everyone, everywhere, from all times.
- d. **Soils**—those who hear the message. Reaction to the Seed [the Word] is varied and determines the soil type:
  - i. **Soils that produce no Harvest:**
    1. **Footpath**—"those who hear the message, only to have Satan come at once and take it away" (4:15).
      - a. No matter what Jesus does or says, the soil has already decided to reject the Word. (*hardheartedness*).
    2. **Rocky Soil**—"those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy"
      - a. "But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long." A faithful response has to be grounded in who Jesus is, rather than in emotions which come and go, or what Jesus does for us and how He makes us feel.
        - i. Because they don't have deep roots, "They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word."
      - b. **Thorn Inhabiting Soil**—"others who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out"
        - i. "by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things".
        - ii. The plant apparently survives, but it produces no harvest.
  - ii. **Soils that produce Harvest:**
    1. **Good Soil**—"those who hear and accept God's word"—"accompany Him"
      - a. In other words: **be His disciples**,
      - b. "and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"—"and do His work", in other words: **make disciples**.
      - c. Remember, this is how Mark has described "being with Jesus"—**be His disciple and do his work, which is: Make disciples**.
  - iii. **Results:** All soil hears the Word. The difference of soils is determined by whether we receive: "hear and accept" the Word. Hearing is our responsibility, and it requires continual relationship with Jesus.
    1. We are not born "good" or "bad" soil. We make our soils either:
    2. Footpath soil by deciding not to accept Jesus' message before hearing it.
      - a. We should be open minded and at least consider Jesus.
    3. Rocky soil by not putting in the effort to grow our roots.
      - a. Relationship with Jesus isn't always about how great He makes us feel or what He can do for us. At times, we do experience His love very intense emotional ways, and at times He graciously and mercifully does amazing things for us. But our faith in Him can't just exist during these times when we "feel" His presence. It has to be constant all the time, and this takes effort on our part. We need to get to know Him better by reading the Bible and spending time in prayer always, not just when we are motivated, convicted, or

moved. We need to worship Him all the time, not just when we “feel” His love and presence. He is always worthy of our love and worship. We need to follow Him always, not just when it is easy or we feel “led”. Our relationship, faith, and commitment to Jesus needs to have deep roots, because hard times will come.

4. Soil doesn't remain the same all the time. We can improve our soil conditions (and the Farmer is willing and able to help). Or we can neglect our soil. We need to pick our rocks, pull our weeds, and fertilize our soil.
- e. **Harvest**—(Often in the OT) harvest is a metaphor for the arrival of the kingdom of God.
- i. **The Promise of the Parable**—The harvest will come in abundance!! No matter how much seed does not grow, in the end, a miraculous harvest is produced. The Kingdom of God has come in Jesus, and will come in full eventually. Our relationship to the Kingdom of God is determined by our relationship with Jesus, so let's “have ears to hear” and be “good soil”.