

LESSON 6



JESUS SOWED GOOD SEED (Part 2)

Scripture Text: Mark 4:18-20

Today's lesson is found in the same setting as was the last one. Jesus, using a boat as His pulpit, taught the multitude by parables. Today we pick up where Jesus left off last week. He taught in this parable about four kinds of ground, symbolizing the four kinds of human hearts on which God's Word, as the seed, falls. Today we study about His teaching concerning the latter two types of ground. These four kinds of ground cover all humanity. Wayside hearers, stony places, thorny ground, and good ground. Every individual is one kind of ground or another. The Gospel of Christ will locate each of us.

MEMORY VERSE: *But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*

Matthew 13:23

Review

In the last lesson Jesus spoke of a sower who went out to sow. The seed sown is the Word of God. Jesus taught of the response of the wayside hearers and the hearts representing stony ground. Now let us learn about the other types of ground, or hearts of mankind.

Among Thorns

Mark 4:18-19 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word. This ground represents the hearts of those who believe the Word and are saved. But they allow material things to occupy their minds too much. They love these temporary things too much and eternal things too little. As **cares of this world . . . deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things** enter in more, the things of God are thought of less. Soon the Word that had begun to grow in the heart is choked out. The heart bears no fruit unto God. There is no living, God-imparted **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness or temperance** (Galatians 5:22-23). The life is turned back to sin.

It is the work of Satan to bring along anything he can to stop fruit-bearing. He has so many tools and will stop at nothing to retard our progress in moving forward with God. The heart of man must either bear fruit or die; there is no in-between. It is either obedience or disobedience.

With this in mind, the enemy uses the well-worn tool of deception. Satan makes many offers and gives many promises. But he is a liar; he has nothing to give. Christ proved this fact when He was tempted in the wilderness by Satan (Matthew 4:1-10). Satan is a deceiver from the beginning. One great deception is the **deceitfulness of riches**. A person may pray that God will prosper him so that he can amply support the work of God. He should pray, "if it be God's will for him to have this," for with the money comes a spirit. If we get more than we can handle, it will handle us. Look at this example: Here is a man who is working and making small pay. When



a need arises, he will give fifty dollars of his hard-earned wages quicker than the rich man will give twenty. Why? Because they are looking at this through different eyes. To the rich man, twenty looks larger than fifty does to the poor man who is consecrated to God. Money talks, but it never tells the truth (Proverbs 23:5; Matthew 6:19-21). It is dangerous to the soul to have great possessions. Stony ground will not allow your roots to go deep.

Mark 4:20 And these are they which are sown on good ground. Good ground represents the hearts of those who **hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit.** The hearts are open. They separate from all conflicting interests. They take the Word deeply into themselves. They sink deep into God. There is faith and determination and consecration. The Word takes root and grows. It bears the fruit of the Spirit.

The good seed was sown on all types of ground, but in order for it to produce, the ground must also be good. The Church of God cannot be built on wayside, stony, or thorny soil. We must have good ground to produce the Church of God. There is just one word that distinguishes good ground from all the rest, the word *fruitful*. There is a test that shows whether we are good ground or not. It is Matthew 7:20. We can hang things on a tree, but for that tree to produce fruit of its own is another thing. God has a way of moving on people and changing them from wayside hearers. He can remove the stones, pull out the roots of the thorns, and make them good ground if they obey His Word (Luke 8:15). We must be honest with ourselves and with God.

Some thirtyfold . . . sixty . . . an hundred. God only requires fruit to correspond to the light He has given and made plain to each individual heart. The church began on a hundredfold basis, and when it came down to thirty and sixty, you could not see it. The Church of God has never run on less than a hundredfold basis. The light we have been shown by the Spirit determines our responsibility in fruit-bearing. Good ground only brings forth a hundredfold. Holiness is hundredfold—no sin, no moving from any truth of the past. That which was good seed in the past is still good seed today. What kind of ground are you?

JUST A THOUGHT

**God help us, as never before, to
declare His eternal truth.**