

Jesus and the Parable of the Four Dirts – “Which Dirt Are You (Your Heart)?

Historical Setting & Context – Outside the city of Capernaum on the shore of Sea of Galilee.

“On that day Jesus had gone out of the house and was sitting by the sea. And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach. He told them many things in parables, saying, “Behold, the sower went out to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and they sprang up immediately, because they had no depth of soil. But after the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. But others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty times as much. The one who has ears, let him hear. vs1-9

Why Parables? This parable was interrupted by the disciples (not just the twelve). Verses 10-17 give Jesus’ explanation of why He taught in parables that some understood and most did not. That deserves a longer explanation, but not here.

The Parable Explained

*“Listen then to the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one sown with seed **beside the road**. The one sown with seed on the **rocky places**, this is the one who hears the word and*

*immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution occurs because of the word, immediately he falls away. And the one sown with seed among the **thorns**, this is the one who hears the word, and the anxiety of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But the one sown with seed on the **good soil**, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces, some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty times as much."*

Sow means "to scatter seed." It was done by hand and sometimes on a cart with holes in the bottom drawn by oxen across a furrowed field. Even then some seed would scatter.

The Sower = Jesus was scattering not specifically planting

The Seed = the Word of God

The Soils – Dirt (the Hearers' Hearts); the hearts of men and women who hear it.

- **Hard dirt** Seed that fell alongside the road. We associate this most often with hard packed ground. Seed sat up on top of the roadside, and left unattended. Such seed became easy prey for seed-eaters like birds.
- **Shallow dirt.** Rocky field that had a little soil between the exposed rocks or on top of the bedrock under a layer of soil too shallow to allow seeds to take root and grow. But often there is enough soil that the seed will begin to sprout a few roots. We have seen this sowing grass seed across our lawns, in cracks in sidewalks or driveways. The sun is too intense to allow the roots to take, so these sprouts withered and died.
- **Ill-prepared dirt.** There were thorns and thorn seeds in this soil. Both were able to overpower or choke out the new growth.
- **Fertile dirt.** Well-prepared to receive the seeds and

allow them to grow and become fruitful.

Your Heart in Jesus' Parable

The Hard or Unreceptive Heart

In this example, the heart of the hearer that did not understand or grasp what Jesus was teaching left himself open to having that which had been thrown his way, snatched up by satan. Commentators suggest that this person's heart was hard in terms of unwillingness to receive the "seed" Jesus was teaching; unreceptive, inattentive, or disinterested.

satan is more than willing to swoop in and take what was just laying there. If I gave you a very valuable gift and you put it on a table in public and paid it no attention, you did not truly receive it. Perhaps you thought it would still be there when you left or turned attention to it again. But when you were not looking, a thief snuck in and stole this precious gift right out from under your nose, so to speak.

So it is when teachers of the Word of God share truth with you buds boring or too hard to understand so you doze off or play with your phone. Demons, that are fallen angels following satan, prowl around or lurk in the dark places waiting to snatch what has been given or spoken to you that you paid little to no attention to or did not value.

The Shallow Heart

Many people, including some of us, have heard motivational speakers and preachers whose words resonated with our felt needs at that moment. We became so caught up in the moment and excited, we bought their books, began following them on social media, even subscribed to their channels. (in the old days bought their tapes, CDs)

Then it happened. As soon as we hit the same hard times or something bad happened to us or loved ones, we fell back into

our old ways in rocky places. Nothing had really changed. Motivational words can bring momentary joy or delight, but life is real and permanent until we die.

In the shallow heart of this hearer, there was no godly sorrow that produced repentance that alone can open the heart to salvation and lasting transformation. This sower (Jesus) is the only way.

The Ill-Prepared Heart

Too many people today have allowed their hearts to become cluttered and pre-occupied with things of this world – satan’s toys that look like fun, but in the end destroy them. They become anxious, worried, even obsessed. Jesus spoke about money many times and used this opportunity to do so again. He called wealth “deceitful”. I remind you He called satan the deceiver and father of lies. The lust for wealth destroys those who seek but do not have it. The lust for more destroys those who have it but are never satisfied. All of this keeps people from focusing on the Sower to believe and receive Him and His Word as truth.

The Fertile or Rich Heart

This Good soil allows us to bear fruit. What is good soil? Define much fruit. In His last command, Jesus told His disciples to go and make disciples. Recall in the Sermon on the Mount, He said that those who are really Christians will bear much fruit. That is a sign of our salvation. Sharing the Gospel and helping others in ways that lead them to Christ is the essence of this fruit-bearing.

Invitation for those who need a Savior

You know you are lost and without hope apart from this relationship with Jesus Christ. He is calling you (again) to warn you that your sin means death and that eternal, not just physical. He is repeating the fact that you too may be saved

if you humble yourself and repent just as I have been teaching throughout this message. Confess your sins and receive Him as Savior today before you do anything else. Please do not turn this off or stop reading until you do. I may be the last messenger God sends to you to call you to repentance and salvation in Christ.

For Christ's sake,

Walter