



“WITNESS TO WIN!”

MATTHEW Chapter 13:1-23

(v1-9) SOW THE SEEDS OF SALVATION!

(v1-9) A “sower” is a farmer going forth casting seed to cultivate and reap a harvest!

- **Observe the four places where the seed fell and the results:**

- (1) Birds snatching the seeds up before they take to the earth (v4).
- (2) Some seed fell on stony ground. It starts to grow upward and not downward unable to receive moisture from the soil, the plant lives for a short time, then dries up and dies from the heat of the sun (v5-6).
- (3) Other seed fell among thorns and without cultivation the weeds overcame the good seed and killed the plant (v7).
- (4) But others fell on moist fertile soil and brought forth a harvest of 100, 60 and 30-fold. Think about the reproduction!

(v10-17) PEOPLE PROBLEMS!

(v10-13) Why did Jesus speak in parables?

- These parables became a proof text of the true followers of Christ, those who want to draw close to God in revelation and understanding. The majority were there for self-satisfaction, self-gratification and possibly for sheer entertainment. **A true disciple would desire to learn the meaning of the story.**

> **Mysteries of the kingdom** - A *mystery* is a spiritual truth understood only by divine revelation. You might say it's a sacred secret unveiled to those who desire to know the Lord and obey Him.

> **Christian do you know what you have in abundance?**

- 1 Timothy 1:14-15 – *And **the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant**, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*

- 1 Peter 1:3-5 - *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to **His abundant mercy** has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

- Jesus said in **John 10:10** - *I have come that they may have **life**, and that they may have it **more abundantly**.*

(v14-17) **Isaiah prophesied that when the Messiah would come the people would not respond!**

- **HOW?**

(1) *Hearing, but not understanding;*

(2) *Seeing, but not perceiving;*

(3) *Their hearts have grown dull; the Greek word is **pachuno** which means **thick or calloused**. This speaks of an unwillingness to hear, to see, and to receive. Verse 16 reveals our hearts; whether we are blessed or bored with the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

- Peter declared in 1 Peter 2:2-3 - *as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

(v18-23) WITNESS TO WIN!

- (1) The SOWER is the WITNESS;
- (2) The SEED is the WORD OF GOD;
- (3) The SOIL is the HEART.

(v19) **THE HARDENED HEART** - Jesus says, "*When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it.*" Not to understand in the Greek is *mee sunientos*, which means they choose not to understand, a denial of truth.

- The "wicked one" is the devil.

- The knowledge of God is "sown" in every heart; Romans 2:14-16 - *for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

1 John 3:8 - *He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil;*

John 3:19-21 - *And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."*

- The "wayside" is a hardened pathway that is used to walk through the fields. Multitudes walk through life with a hardened heart towards God, and when Jesus Christ is heard they choose to harden their hearts more than ever; blaming God, blaspheming God, cursing Jesus Christ and the devil snatches away the seed and replaces it with sin!

(v20-21) BEWARE OF THE SHALLOW HEART!

- The "stony places" speaks of a shallow heart; shallow soil on top of stone.

- This person hears, is attracted for a while, but when "tribulation or persecution arises because of the word they stumble (or are offended)."

- The word *stumble (offended)* in Gk. is *skandalizo*, which means to **entrap, i.e. trip up, or entice to sin, apostasy** (*Apostasy* is generally defined as the determined, willful rejection of Christ and His teachings by a Christian believer (2 Thess. 2:3; Heb 10:26-29; John 15:22)).

- The word *tribulation* in Gk. is *thlipsis*, which is *pressure*; whether it is peer pressure, worldly or fleshly pressure. People will also walk away from Christ due to *persecution*.

- **Notice the seed went in; but has *no root!*** We are told in Ephesians 3:17-19 - *that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.* (Also, Colossians 2:6-10.)

(v22) BEWARE OF THE WORLDLY HEART!

- Over time this heart returns to the ways of the world.

- **Thorns are represented in Scripture in the following ways:**

(1) as a curse - Gen 3:17-18 - *"Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you"*

(2) **as a crude and cruel crown - John 19:2-3** - *And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands.*

(3) **as heading to Hell - Hebrews 6:7-8** - *For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.*

> **What represents thorns choking out the word of God in someone's heart?**

- **First, the cares of this world - 1 John 2:15-17** - *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

- **Second, the deceitfulness of riches? 1 Timothy 6:6-10** - *Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

- **Jesus says that these become unfruitful (read John 15:1-8).**

One commentator writes, "This explains why some "believers" do not last: Their faith was weak their understanding was meager, and their decision was not sincere. It is possible to "believe" and yet not be saved (John 2:23-25). Unless there is fruit in the life, there is not saving faith in the heart."

(v23) EMBRACE THE FRUITFUL HEART!

- *We have seen the hardened heart, the shallow heart, and the worldly heart. Let's discover the fruitful heart!*

- **The fruitful heart is fertile soil for the Word of God!**

Your heart has been broken up by the love of JESUS CHRIST, your desire is to learn HIS WORD, and you now live according to HIS WILL!

- **What is this fruit that we are to produce a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty?**
(1) **Fruit is the test of true salvation - Matthew 7:16-20** - *You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.*

(2) **Fruit includes holiness - Romans 6:22-23** - *But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

(3) **Fruit reveals Christian character - Galatians 5:22-25** - *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

(4) **Fruit is good works - Colossians 1:10-11** - *that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;*

(5) Fruit is winning others to Christ - Romans 1:13-14 - Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles.

(6) Fruit is sharing what we have - Romans 15:25-28 - But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.

(7) Fruit is praising God - Hebrews 13:15-16 - Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

- If a plant is to bear fruit, it must be rooted in fertile soil (a repentant heart) and exposed to plenty Sunshine through the Word of God!

> What is your current RATE OF PRODUCTION? 100 – 60 – 30?

LET'S GO FOR GOD!