

Soil - The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:3-9 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸ But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

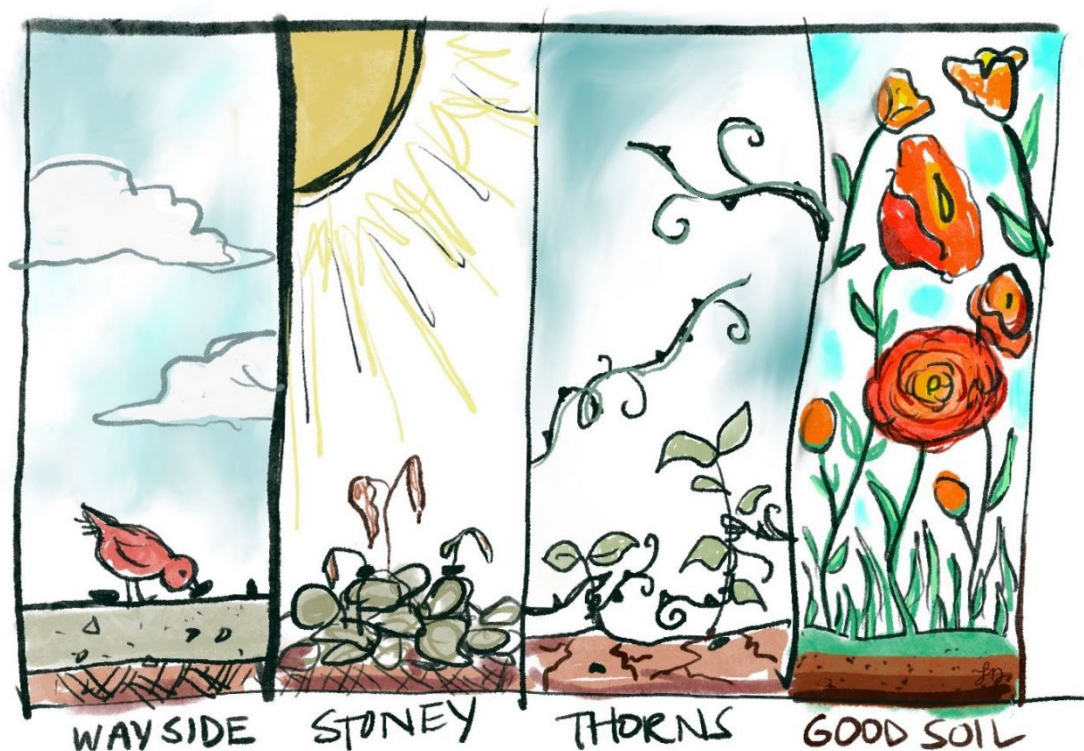
- Most parables are similes. This one is closer to an allegory, though still not quite an allegory.
- We still must be careful with it as an allegory.
- Most parables = 1 main point to get across.
- This one assigns meaning to a variety of points.

In fact, Jesus gives us the interpretation of this parable simply because it is so different than most others.

Matthew 13:18-23 "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

Who is what in this parable?

- The Sower – Doesn't matter. Jesus gives almost zero attention to the sower. That's one reason this is not a full allegory.
 - But, since vs. 19 says "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it" we can easily infer that the sower is anyone spreading the Gospel.
- The Seed – The Gospel. The Word of God, specifically for evangelism.
 - The Word of God is the important aspect of this story. It is how the Kingdom of Heaven comes. How it grows. How it transforms lives.
 - The Word of God is central to the church. It is how God grows the church. Not political activism. Not social justices, not social involvement, not anything else. The Word of God.
- The Soils – People. People are arranged into 4 categories. And we will look at those 4 categories.
 - There are 4 soils. Only 1 is good.
- Birds, rocks, thorns – all will be covered in the 4 types of soil.



Soil #1 – The Wayside

Matthew 13:4 And as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.

Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

- Some fell by the wayside.
- Is God haphazard in distribution? Why is it thrown on the road? Or into thorns? Or in rocks?
- In Old Testament times they sowed seed this way. Seed was scattered and then the land was plowed. We do it the other way around now.
- God's word is spread indiscriminately, even to those hostile to it, those that have no time for it. Those that don't care.
- It may seem that seed is wasted. But God chose to give salvation to everyone. And His Word does not return void.
- God makes salvation available to all. His Word is freely given to everyone.
- **1 Timothy 2:3-4** For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- Please note that how the sower sows does not determine how it is received. The type of soil does.

The birds are the enemy.

- When we sow seed, do we bind the enemy? Do we do spiritual warfare on behalf of the lost?
- The enemy is able to easily snatch away the Word that is presented to these people.

Why is the enemy able to snatch the seed so easily?

- Their lives are like the wayside.
- A hard surface, not letting the Word of God inside.
- Hostile. Rejecting God.

- God makes Himself known, but when outright rejected, that seed is quickly taken away by the enemy.

Soil #2 – The Stony Ground

Matthew 13:5-6 Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.

⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.

Matthew 13:20-21 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

- People rush to give commitments, get excited, but then it just becomes business as usual.
- An emotional response.
 - Do not confuse emotional responses with faith.
 - Faith believes no matter what because it knows it is true.
 - Emotions waver based on how we are feeling.
 - I thought Jesus would do such and such for me. He did not.

There is no depth in the stony ground.

Deconstruction happens here because there is no depth. No maturity.

How does soil become stony?

- No study.
- No fellowship.
- No church.
- No prayer life – except emergency help me prayers.

This is where people believe they get saved. Ignore Jesus, God, the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Live how they want. Then tragedy occurs. Someone dies. Lose a job. Sickness. Something.

- And the first question is – Where is God?

- And because they do not know how to find Him, they jump to the conclusion that He just isn't. Even though His name is I Am.

Keeping your faith shallow – not rooted – is the easiest way to lose your faith. We want to be deep Christians. Believers that have faith that will persevere.

Matthew 24:12b-13 the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

James 1:12 Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Just because someone is in a Christian profession does not mean they are not stony soil. How many Christian artists have deconstructed? Why? If you listen to their reasons, they are based on someone that never got deeply in the Word of God. There are exceptions, but for the most part this is true.

Having doubts and seeking answers can be healthy, provided you are seeking answers from good places.

Reasons given by ex-Christian artists for full deconstruction:

- Shouldn't everyone be saved? If God only saves some, then I don't want that God.
- Church culture hurt me, so there is no God
- No one ever talks about why there is suffering in the world
- One guy I listened to was a pastor for 25 years. In his testimony, he only talked about his parents getting saved, so he was a Christian. He got involved in Christian political causes. Eventually becoming a pastor, since others said that was his calling. Eventually deciding that nothing in the Bible is true calling Christianity fiction. Said that his calling was a very emotional experience.
 - Everything was based on others. His parents salvation. His friends pressuring him to his calling. An emotional experience generated by the church he was in. What was actually his?

John 6 –

A great multitude follows Jesus. This is because of the signs and wonders. Jesus feeds 5000 people.

John 6:15 Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

Jesus walks on water. The people followed Jesus in boats. Jesus preaches the straight truth to them about who He is.

John 6:41-42 The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."⁴² And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

Jesus explains further

John 6:66 From that *time* many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

BUT...

John 6:67-69 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"⁶⁸ But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.⁶⁹ Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Soil #3 - Thorns

Matthew 13:7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.

Matthew 13:22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

- Thorns represent the stuff of this world.
- I think these people are people that actually got saved. But then got so consumed in the stuff of the world that they forgot that they are saved.

- They become unfruitful. Intoning that at one time they were bearing fruit. But now, they do not.

This is sometimes called the carnal Christian. They may be saved, but are carnal. They may not be saved. They give into their flesh.

Maybe go to church on Sundays but no one at work knows they are a believer. If they didn't tell you they are saved, you would never know.

For this person, the world is more important than God.

- Kids sports on Sundays over going to church (How will the kids be when they grow up)
- College even if children are not spiritually prepared. Because good job and money is most important.

Dr. Jerry – says

- Trading Spiritual empowerment for education
- Mission for career
- Faith for worldly security
- God's promises for Earthly reward.

Basically the affairs of this world for Jesus

- The most important thing is to be successful in this world, even at the expense of the next.
- **1 Timothy 6:10** 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.
- **Matthew 19:21-24** Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." ²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. ²³ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

#4 Good Soil

Matthew 13:8 But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Matthew 13:23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

- Do not mistake good soil for good person. What makes the soil good soil? Why does one receive the word and another does not? Is there something different in those people? No
- We are not saved by ourselves. We are saved by His grace. But it is in believing that we become good soil.
- What is the fruit? Fruit of the Spirit. Other converts. Lives impacted. Faith. Love.

Belief is what drives the difference between the soil types.

- The wayside believes there is no God
- The Rocky soil believes God is unimportant
- The Thorns believe God is not enough
- The good soil believes God is everything

Going back to John 6. What was the message that Jesus preached that caused people to leave, but his disciples to cling to truth?

John 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

John 6:35-38 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 6:40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Good soil believes.

Good soil protects its faith.

Good soil practices things that develop deeper faith.

Good soil invests in its faith.

Between the parable and the Explanation

Matthew 13:13-16 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: "*Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; ¹⁵ For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.*" ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;

- Quote from Isaiah. They were infatuated with their own ideas about God. If they keep in their ways, then God would speak to them in a certain way.

Some people will reject the word of God entirely:

- **Romans 1:24-25** Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Some are not interested in Christ, but in what Christ can do.

- **John 6:29-31** Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." ³⁰ Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, "*He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*" "
- They want a Jesus made in their image, rather than conforming to His image.

Whenever the crowd is removed, the true seekers remain

John 6:67-68 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" ⁶⁸ But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

- Those who seek Him the mysteries are opened up to them.
- **Jeremiah 29:13** And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart.
- **Mark 4:11** And He said to them, "To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables,