

Sharing the Gospel With Four Kinds of People

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Corona Virus / Matthew 13:3–9

Introduction

1. What is God teaching you today? This week? This month? Are the lessons God is teaching you changing your life today? Will you remain changed next week? Next Month? Next year?

2. Someone sent me a text recently that said, “If your New Year’s resolution was to eat out less you are on track!” We resolve to change based upon knowledge received. We learn something new and resolve to make use of the knowledge to make a positive change in our life.

3. God has created us this way. We are intuitive, curious and capable of learning new things. But even more exciting, we are created with the potential to take the things we learn and apply them to our life for what many in today’s church like to call, “Life Change.”

4. Real and genuine Life Change is actually a new life not an improved one. Jesus came to

give us a completely new life for the old one we have been living.

5. The passage we are looking at today is all about this potential for a changed life. It addresses the question of what constitutes real conversion...real, lasting change. In fact it addresses what it means to be eternally changed.

6. All of us desire for those around us to hear the Gospel and be changed. We want others to experience the salvation from sin and death that we have experienced. We want everyone to experience life in Jesus and the joy of a relationship with Him.

7. As we exit the Corona lockdown and reenter our social circles the opportunity to share Christ is going to be great. People are thinking about life, death, God and the fragile nature of life in ways not seen in a generation.

8. Sharing our faith is something we are told to be ready to do in season and out...that means all the time! And share we should!

9. But not everyone we share with gets genuinely saved. Jesus says there are four types of people who hear God's truth and only one of them is truly converted to experience a change of life.

10. Knowing this information will enable us to be better prepared for the opportunities which lie ahead. It will help us share well, endure rejection better and trust Jesus for the results

more!

11. Matthew 13:3-9

Matthew 13:3-9 CSB

Then he told them many things in parables, saying:
“Consider the sower who went out to sow.

As he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.

Other seed fell on rocky ground where it didn't have much soil, and it grew up quickly since the soil wasn't deep.

But when the sun came up, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.

Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it.

Still other seed fell on good ground and produced fruit: some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty times what was sown.

Let anyone who has ears listen.”

The Sower

1. The sower in the story is the one sharing God's word...Jesus. But all of us are sowers when we preach, teach or in any way testify to the truth of God's word.

2. **The Seed** — Is God's truth...the Gospel
3. **Before we move on it is important to notice that the success of the sower is dependent upon the soil not the sower. "Even when the chief sower is at work some seed fails."**
4. **We are called to share the truth of God's Kingdom but the response is dependent upon the heart of the person hearing (the soil).**
5. **And the Word is shared indiscriminently to everyone. The seed is scattered for all to hear but not all will have ears to hear.**
6. **"Let anyone who has ears to hear listen." — To have ears to hear is to listen with a receptive heart that is open to the truth...something for which we should be in prayer for everyday...that all we share the Gospel with would have a receptive heart.**
7. The truth about God, Jesus and His salvation is preached everywhere. The Bible says every nation on earth will hear it preached. **But not everyone who hears has a heart ready to listen and it is not the fault of the preacher if that be the case.**
8. There are four types of people (hearers) mentioned in this passage and it is a very important teaching for all of us...we are all hearers of God's truth...now it is time to make certain we are the type of hearer who listens well and lives God's kind of way for the information we have received.

The Soil

1. **Path** — Some of the seed the sower scattered landed on the footpath that would crisscross the fields of farmers in the day of Jesus. This was a very hard kind of soil and the seed had no potential to crack the surface.
2. This soil represents the heart of those who hear spiritual truth but do not understand what they are hearing. The truth is around them but they don't grasp it. Those who hear the Gospel and fail to understand it are in this category.
3. Satan does not allow this truth to linger unopposed in the life of the hard hearted. He quickly comes in and snatches it away, diverting the attention, causing one to be blinded and removing the occasion for a heart to be changed.
4. **Rocky Ground** — These are the ones who hear spiritual truth, quickly receive it and appear to be changed by it. But the change isn't genuine...it is emotional. They are never truly converted to Christ.
5. The moment persecution, deprivation, trials, temptations or any kind of sacrifice is required of their professed new found faith it is proved a farce, unreal and fake. The truth sounded good...they understood it and had an emotional desire to be converted but never genuinely turned from their sin and gave their heart to Christ.
6. **Thorns** — These are the ones who hear the Gospel, seem to accept it and begin to live what looks like a changed kind of life. But then life happens, temptations arise and life returns to what really matters most to

their heart: money, pleasure, entertainment...things of the world.

7. **Good Ground** — These are those who hear the Gospel, understand it, repent from their sin and genuinely give their heart to God. They are changed... genuinely so. This change is seen in how they believe, desire and want new things. It is seen in their new habits and their service to God.

8. Those who genuinely accept Christ as their Savior love and want to obey Him...and they do. They are not perfect but their desires is to be so...their heart belongs to Jesus...they are consistently His...and even in those times of backsliding they are grieved by their sin and determined to be free of it.

9. The truth of God gets into a man and produces fruit in his or her life. Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 gives a picture of some of what this looks like...

Galatians 5:22-23 CSB

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things.

10. These are not naturally occurring traits of the human heart. These are produced in the converted man or woman by the Holy Spirit of God who resides within them.

So What Now...

1. The America 2.0 about to emerge from the dormancy

of Corona lockdown is a spiritually needy one and we have the truth that unlocks the door of their heart to a genuine relationship with God. How can we help our nation hear and receive the Gospel of Christ?

2. **First — Pray.** Only God prepares the soil of the heart to hear His word. **Charles Spurgeon once said, “No heart of man is good by nature: the good Lord had made this plot into “good ground.”** In this case, both thought and heart are engaged about the heavenly message, and the man *“heareth the word and understandeth it.”*

3. We need to begin praying for hearts to be prepared... that thought and heart will be engaged about the message of the Gospel. That man, woman and child will hear and understand the good news of Christ.

4. In an industrial plant employing 500 men, there was an excellent canteen and lounging room. After the men had lunched each day, they developed an informal open forum where, for the balance of their lunch period, they discussed topics of general interest.

5. One day their discussion centred on Christianity and hypocrisy. Some very harsh and cruel things were said about Christians. In the company was a Christian fellow named William James. When Bill could stand it no longer, he rose to his feet and said, 'Men, you have been saying some very hard things about Christians. Now I admit that there are hypocrites in the church, but I also want you to know that there are quite a lot of sincere Christians, and I, myself, very humbly claim

to sincerely believe in Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour.'

6. He was about to sit down when a man said, 'Just a minute, Bill. I would like you to answer some questions.'

7. **Question:** I take it from what you have said that you believe the Bible to be the Word of God?' 'I certainly do,' said **Bill**. 'I believe it from cover to cover.'

8. **Question:** 'Then, do you believe that all men out of Christ are lost and on their way to outer darkness?' 'Yes,' he said, 'I do.' And so the dialogue proceeded:

9. **Question:** Do you think that most of us men are out of Christ and therefore lost? **Bill:** Yes, boys, I am very sorry indeed to say I do believe that.

10. **Question:** Do you believe in the efficacy of prayer? **Bill:** Yes, I have had many answers to my prayers in the past.

11. **Question:** How long have you worked here with us? **Bill:** Four years.

12. **Question:** How often in that period have you spent a night in prayer for our lost souls? **Bill's** head doesn't seem quite so high as he says, I am sorry boys, but I cannot say I ever spent a night in prayer for you.

13. **Question:** How often have you spent half a night in prayer for us? **Bill:** I'm sorry, but I cannot say I ever spent half a night in prayer for you

14. **Question:** Bill, we'll take your word for it — quickly add together all the time you've spent in prayer for us during the last week: how much would it be all

told? **Bill:** I'm sorry, fellows, but I cannot say that I have spent any time in prayer for you this last week.

15. **Questioner:** Well, Bill, that's just the kind of hypocrisy we've been talking about.

16. Who are you praying for today? Do you have the names of people you are regularly lifting up to Christ for their salvation? Would you pray for those who will come into your sphere of influence once the walls of social separation begin to come down?

17. If we fail to pray we simply fail. Only God draws people to heaven...we are just His mouthpiece...so we must pray for God to do the work of preparing hearts to hear.

18. **Second — Be Prepared** — Today, this afternoon, take one single sheet of paper and write down your own, personal story of how you came to faith in Jesus Christ. Read what you wrote, memorize it, and be ready to share it with someone who doesn't know Christ.

19. Sharing Jesus is as simple as sharing your story and the A,B,C's Tell the person you are sharing with about your experience and then lead him or her to...

20. **A — Admit they are a sinner**

21. **B — Believe Jesus died on the cross for their sins just as He did for yours and those of all who place faith in Him for their salvation from sin**

22. **C — Commit his or her life to Jesus in prayer by turning from their sin and giving their life instead to Him.**

23. **Third — Prepare for Failure...**prepare for

rejection. How many types of soil are described here? Four...and how many actually received Jesus...ONE! Too many have excitedly embarked upon the work of sharing the Gospel only to quickly become discouraged at the sight of rejection and ridicule of men.

24. Too often we take the rejection of others personally and deem ourselves a failure. We begin to hear a little voice (our sense of worthlessness at best or demonic at worst) tell us that sharing Jesus isn't our thing...isn't our gift...isn't something we are good at and should be left to someone else.

25. The fact is simple...we are all called to give reason for the hope we have in Christ. 1 Peter 3:15

1 Peter 3:15 CSB

but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

26. Even Jesus was rejected...and rejected by the VAST majority of people with whom He shared the message of God's Kingdom. John 1:11-13 But He never stopped sharing...because there were those who would receive...and they were given eternal life!

John 1:11-13 CSB

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name,

who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.

27. We must never, ever, ever quit.

28. **Winston Churchill once said, "Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm."**

29. If he could say such words about earthly matters how much more should we make an undeterred effort, in the power of the Holy Spirit of the Living God, to share the words of eternal life with dying men, women and children of our own generation?

Conclusions

1. We have been entrusted with the most wonderful message anyone could ever have...the words of life, forgiveness and salvation from sin. We have the message that enables one to have a genuinely changed life...a new life. A life free from the fear of death, burden of sin or terror of eternal separation from God.

2. We have been given a wonderful privilege to be a part of God's salvation for our generation as we share this message, indiscriminently, with the world. To be a part of God's work all around us.

3. We must never let fear of failure stop us. Never allow ourselves to be intimidated by the enemy of our soul who desires eternal hell for those around us.

4. **In 1902, the poetry editor of *Atlantic Monthly* returned a stack of poems with this note, "Our magazine has no room for your vigorous verse." The poet was Robert Frost. In 1905, the University of Bern turned down a**

doctoral dissertation as "irrelevant and fanciful." The writer of that paper was Albert Einstein. In 1894 an English teacher noted on a teenager's report card, "A conspicuous lack of success." The student was Winston Churchill.

5. One ballplayer set the major league record for strikeouts with 1316. The same player set a record for five consecutive strikeouts in a World Series game. The holder of both records was the great slugger Babe Ruth.

6. We must never give in, never surrender, never give up...in Christ we must obey, give reason for our hope, preach in season and out, and win souls.

7. We now face the prospects of a new America...a place unlike any we have ever known...a people who have seen their sense of self-sufficiency and well being crushed by an invisible enemy.

8. Let us pray, believe and engage the world with the good news of Christ...praying for good soil and share with ready hearts.