

- Hear and receive the Word (vv. 4-15) = Parable of the Sower (Soils)
- Hear and share the Word (vv. 16-18) = Parable of the Lamp
- Hear and obey the Word (vv. 19-21) = Instructions to Jesus' followers

### Parable of the Sower -- LUKE 8: 11-15 (NASB)

<sup>11</sup>“Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. <sup>12</sup>“Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. <sup>13</sup>“Those on the rocky *soil* are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no *firm* root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. <sup>14</sup>“The *seed* which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to maturity. <sup>15</sup>“But the *seed* in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.

### Hear and receive the Word (vv. 4-15).

**The Sower:** Jesus Christ/God's people who share the Word of God (John 4:35-38).

**The Seed:** The Word of God.

**The Soil:** Human heart. But the seed can do nothing until it is planted (John 12:24). When a person hears and understands the Word, then the seed is planted in the heart.

Jesus described four different kinds of hearts, three of which did not produce any fruit. The proof of salvation is *fruit* and not merely hearing the Word or making a profession of faith in Christ. Jesus had already made that clear in His “Sermon on the Mount” (Luke 6:43-49; also note Matt. 7:20).

### **The hard soil** (vv. 5, 12).

- This soil represents the person who hears the Word but immediately allows the devil to snatch the seed away. How did the heart become hard? The “wayside” was the path that ran through the common field, separating the plots; and the foot traffic hardened the soil. Whatever goes into the ear or eye finally enters the heart, so be careful who is allowed to “walk on your heart.”

### **The shallow soil** (vv. 6, 13).

- This soil illustrates the emotional hearer who quickly responds to the message, but his interest wanes and he does not continue (see John 8:31-32). In many parts of the Holy Land there is sub-surface layer of limestone covered with a thin layer of soil. A plant can grow up, but the roots cannot go down, and the sun withers the rootless plant.
- The sun represents the testing that comes to all professing believers to prove their faith. Sun is good for plants *if they have roots*. Persecution can deepen the roots of a true Christian, but it only exposes the shallowness of the false Christian.

### **The crowded soil** (vv. 7, 14).

This soil illustrates the person who does not repent and “weed out” the things that hinder the harvest. There is enough soil so the roots can go down, but not enough room for the plant to grow up and produce fruit. The plant is crowded out and the fruit is choked.

- “Cares, riches, and the pleasures of this life” are like weeds in a garden that keep the soil from being fruitful. The person with the “crowded heart” comes closest to salvation, but he still does not bring forth “fruit to perfection.”

**John 7:13** Yet no one was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

**John 9:22** His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

**John 12:42** Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;

**John 19:38** After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews...

**The good soil** (vv. 8, 15). This soil alone is fruitful. It illustrates the individual who hears the Word, understands it, receives it within, is truly saved, and proves it by patiently producing fruit (see 1 Thes. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:22-25).

- Not everybody produces the same amount of fruit (Matt. 13:8), but all true believers will produce some fruit as evidence of spiritual life.

That fruit may include:

- Winning others to Christ (Rom. 1:13)
- Money given to God’s work (Rom. 15:25-28)
- Good works (Col. 1:10)
- Godly character (Gal. 5:22-23)
- Praise and honor to the Lord (Heb. 13:15).

*This parable shows that Jesus was not impressed by the great crowds that followed Him. He knew that most of the people did not really “hear” the Word and receive it in their hearts.*

**John 6:66 - 67 (NASB)** <sup>66</sup>As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. <sup>67</sup>So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?”

*When you consider how much teaching, preaching, and witnessing goes on in the course of a month or a year, you wonder why there is such a small harvest. The fault does not lie with the sower or the seed. The problem is with the soil.*

**John 8:31 (KJV)** <sup>31</sup>Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

**Monday Morning Moment:** *“It’s not always how you start, but how you finish!”* **Matthew 25:21-** His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.