

Lesson 10 – What Is Your Reaction to Christ's Invitation?

(Ask the student if they know what a parable is.) A parable is a short story taken from everyday life that illustrates spiritual truths. Jesus often spoke in parables that can help us grasp spiritual realities. Today we will study the parable of the sower.

The Seed and the Ground

(Read Luke 8:4-15.) (Ask the student what the seed is.) God's Word, verse 11. This is what we have to sow. We have to share with others the truths of the Bible. It is not about human philosophies. It is not about doctrines of men. It is not about my ideas or your ideas. It is about teaching and listening to the Holy Word of God, which is revealed in our Bibles.

(Ask the student if they understand what the ground/soil represents.) It represents the listeners, their minds, their hearts. It represents us and how we react to hearing the Word of God. There are four types of ground.

Along the Road

(Ask the student to explain what the first type of ground is and what it represents.) (Ver. 5 and 12) The first type of ground is "along the road," that is, where people walk. It is hard ground. It is common to say that someone has a hard head. The Bible speaks more of a hard heart. Whether head, mind, heart, or spirit, the first ground represents a hard person. Nothing penetrates, nothing impresses, nothing enters. Or, if it enters, it does not remain. The birds eat it. We have a different expression, but with the same meaning: it goes in one ear and out the other. The person hears and does not want to hear more. They have not the slightest interest in considering what they have heard. It is a sad condition.

Stony Ground

(Ask the student to explain what the second type of soil is and what it represents.) (Ver. 6 and 13) The second type of soil is stony, that is, ground with many stones. Luke just says "rock." Rock would be harder than hard earth. Matthew 13:5 helps us: "others fell on rocky ground, where they didn't have much soil." There was good soil, but very little. Since it had some soil, it sprouted. But because of the stones it could not take root, and it dried up. The soil was shallow, without depth.

Christ explains that this ground represents the person who, yes, hears the message, receives it, and follows it – but for a short time. They continue with joy while things are going well, while there are blessings; but they "fall away in time of temptation/trial." Matthew 13:21 explains it this way: "when oppression or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles." This person receives the gospel and follows Christ with joy motivated by the blessings one receives. They had not thought of the difficulties that might result. There are even churches that manipulate listeners by preaching that everything will be glorious when you give your life to Jesus. No, no, no. One has to make a decision to follow Christ through thick and thin, come what may.

Among Thorns

(Ask the student to explain what the third type of ground is and what it represents.) (Ver. 7 and 14) The third type of ground is similar to the second in that there is good soil mixed with something bad. In this case it is about thorns that grow up together with the good seed. As in the case of the stony soil, this person receives the gospel. However, there are things in life that are more important to the person, and little by little there is no place left for spiritual things. Verse 14 details "cares, riches, and pleasures of life." Mark 4:19 details it like this: "the cares of this age, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things."

We can reduce all these words to two: money and pleasure. Money. You have to buy food, clothes, medicine, gasoline, and other necessities. You have to work to get this money. There is so much to do that one does not have time for the spiritual. The "necessities" of life drown out the Word. And the pleasures, although not as necessary, can do the same. "I need time for myself." For example, a Christian should rejoice with his family. However, for some, family time does not leave room for time with God.

Good Ground

(Ask the student to explain what the fourth type of ground is and what it represents.) (Ver. 8 and 15) Thank God that there is also good soil: not hard, without stones, and without thorns. Ground that produces. The type of soil that the farmer seeks. The kind of ground that Christ seeks. People who hear the Word, meditate on the Word, believe the Word, and put the Word into practice. People who not only receive the Word with joy, but who continue in the path of Christ, come what may. If suffering comes because of the Word (or for whatever reason), they move on. Neither the needs nor the pleasures of life divert them from the Way. People who make a firm decision to follow Christ come what may. Christ is looking for good ground.

Questions

1. Explain the first type of ground. (hard, nothing penetrates, nothing remains)
2. Explain the second type of soil. (stony, superficial, does not support trials)
3. Explain the third type of soil. (thorny, material things choke out the Word)
4. Explain the fourth ground type. (good, bears fruit, grows, remains faithful)
5. What type of soil are you? (_____) (If the student does not believe they are good ground, help them understand that Christ can help them change)