

The Parable of the Sower

A brief commentary by Chris Griffith - 2001

For centuries, trying to unlock the scriptures has been part of man's quest to move nearer to an understanding of his creator. Our teachers have shown us that no one until Christ was able to open the book and reveal the hidden mysteries therein (**Rev. 5:1-5**). This passage is a reflection of over an 800 year old statement made by Isaiah (**Is. 29:11**).

The vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed which men deliver saying, read this, I pray thee and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed.

God's visionary book truly has been sealed since Adam's fall in the garden. Think about it: A book sealed for 4,000 years until He sent his son into the world to bring back the hidden message of eternal life to a people He had placed his name in. There was a promise to one faithful man, Abraham. Because of his great faith, God promised to raise up in him a great and righteous nation. They would enter into a covenant of love. But as Adam and Eve chose the wrong fork in the road, so did this great nation of Israel throughout the ages. God never losing his love for Israel and, furthermore, for humanity sent his Son Jesus, born of a virgin Israelite girl, to be a savior. He was sent first to Israel that they might have eternal redemption and that **through them**; the world might be saved from eternal death.

Israel at the time of Christ was represented namely by the remnant of the southern kingdom or the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The northern kingdom or 10 tribes had nearly been destroyed by 721 BC, prior to the exile in Babylon. John the Apostle wrote in (**John 1:1**):

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Those that would receive and believe on the Christ would be given the power to become a true son of God with the same rights and inheritance that Jesus himself had, namely, eternal life with access to the Almighty. The religious leaders of Jesus' day refused to accept his words. They had risen to a high level of self-importance, imposing on the people the works of the law of Moses. Notice Jesus' word concerning them:

(Matt. 23:11)

For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers

Paul the Apostle says later that we were kept under the law. It was the schoolmaster to bring us safely to faith in Christ. Christ would then justify or reconcile us, by our faith in him, back to the Father. The law cannot bring life to the soul, but the end of our faith in Christ can (**Gal. 3:21-29**) (**1Pet. 1:9**).

Jesus loved his people and wept over them when they would not accept the wonderful truths that he was unlocking for them, truths sealed for 4,000 years, truths that would have connected them with the one they were now worshiping in vain. Because of their hard hearts, it was needful for Jesus to speak in a manner which hid the truth from the contemptible. But he revealed wisdom to those who were willing to search out its true significance. It is the same now as then. (**Prov. 2:1-5**):

Vs. 4,5 If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

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Jesus had the key of knowledge. The religious leaders of his day restricted him from unlocking any of those bound whom they had influence over.

(Luke 11:52)

Woe unto you lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge. Ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

History bears out that they were not able to stop God's plan. Nor will any to come. In these last days the revealing and passing of truths are still with us. Part of what we have been taught is, God's hand was in the preserving of the written word, and that in many cases, scripture will interpret scripture. Jesus spoke and did many things while here on earth. John the Apostle said that if all had been recorded concerning Jesus, the world could not contain the books (**John 21:25**). We have a small, fragmentary account of Christ's teachings. But together with the Apostle's doctrine and the Old Covenant prophets we are pressing oil from these two olive trees with the confidence it will light and direct our life back to the one who gave it.

Jesus in his teaching used simple metaphors or parables. The word "parable" comes from the Greek *parabole*, which means a *placing beside*. It is therefore the placing of one subject by another as an illustration. Especially is it used for the illustration of spiritual things by familiar earthly objects or incidents. Jesus made use of the parable to veil the truth from those who were not willing to see it. Yet those who really desired to know would not rest till they had found out the true significance. Jesus never wasted motion but often used the words of his Father recorded by the prophets to paint a picture of deep spiritual meaning, plain enough for the uneducated and believing to understand yet deep enough that the exalted and scornful could not grasp it. This was the wisdom of God.

(Mark 12:37) *The common people heard him gladly.*

They heard, accepted, and believed to the saving of their souls (**Heb. 10:39**). Jesus came to open the eyes of the blind, ears of the deaf, heal the lame, and release out of prison those that were in bondage (**Luke 4:17-21**) (**Is. 61**). He came to reveal to the faithful the mystery of salvation's plan (**Matt.13:34**) (**Ps. 78:2**).

All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

One of these such *parables* or *dark sayings* is entitled "**The Parable of the Sower**". It is recorded in the synoptic gospels of Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8. It is recommend that you read all three accounts concurrently so that you get all that is written on the subject. You also will receive the personalization of the authors, and as stated earlier, scripture will often interpret itself.

The above is merely a brief synopsis of the world Jesus was born into. **Most of his parables were either directly or indirectly dealing with the corrupt religious element of the Nation of Israel**, holding in bondage the children of the kingdom. Jesus' words are timeless. With very little exertion, we also can clearly see the parallel of false religion in our own day.

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According to Matthew's account, we catch up with Jesus on the Sabbath, after a long day of healing and teaching. He is nearing the seaside, where he is met by yet another multitude. Jesus, always about his father's business, again takes advantage of his circumstance. He takes the opportunity to sow a little more gospel seed.

Mark and Matthew both show that there were so many gathered that he actually got into a ship and preached to them on the shore (**Mark 4:1**) (**Matt. 13:2**). Hereafter I will use Matthew's account as the first telling of the parable, then harmonize the various records to help us with Jesus' interpretation.

(Matthew 13:1-8)

The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some and hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

In all the accounts Jesus ends with words similar to, "*Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.*" This is a very important key to the understanding of this parable.

Both Mark and Luke's account show that the disciples asked the "*meaning of the parable.*" Where Matthew shows that they asked, "*Why speakest thou unto them*" (or those that weren't considered disciples) *in parables?*

A good Bible student will not be thrown by the difference in the record but will consider that both these questions were most probably asked and addressed. Matthew seems to give the most detailed record and hereby lends us a most beautiful key. A key not only to this parable but many others. Furthermore this key is not limited to parables but to an overall understanding of God.

Before we get to Jesus' interpretation of the parable, let's take a closer look at the disciples question, "*Why speakest thou unto them in parables?*" (**Matt. 13:10**)

As stated, Jesus ended the parable with: "*Who hath ears to hear, let him hear*" (**Matt. 13:9, Mark 4:9, Luke 8:8**). This was an invitation given by Jesus to the nation of Israel but secondarily to all that would have an open and believing heart towards him. A similar invitation are these words also recorded by Matthew. (**Matt. 11:28,29**):

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Jesus was and is constantly inviting, sowing to the fertile heart: ears hungry to hear, and a heart eager to believe. Jesus in the book of Revelation uses this same trademark invitation to the seven Gentile churches of Asia. These were not just literal spiritual centers of that day but are representative of specific time periods of the Church. Each letter was closed by Jesus with his similar invitation to life.

vs.10) And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

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vs.11) *He answered and said unto them*, speaking of Jesus' disciples in vs.10. The 12 disciples were not to be singled out here, but they were to be the foundation on which many believers would thereafter be built, representative of many believers to come.

Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. Given unto whom? **Answer:** you of vs. 11, the disciples of vs. 10, and those with ears to hear of vs. 9. In other words, "I speak to them in parables because it is given unto you that hath ears to hear the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. But to them that hath not ears to hear, it is not given."

vs.12) *For whosoever hath* ears to hear and gains spiritual knowledge, *to him shall be given* the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven that brings life to the soul vs. 11. Jesus in the "Sermon on the Mount" instructed (**Matt. 7:7,8**):

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and knocketh it shall be opened.

...and he shall have more abundance: Jesus in (**John 10:10**) said,

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly

are you starting to see Jesus' point? The Apostle Peter said (**2 Pet. 1:9,10**):

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

...but whosoever hath not ears to hear and a believing heart towards the gospel, *from him shall it be taken away even that he hath.* Luke's account says (**Luke 8:18**) *that which he seemeth to have.* The different religious sects that Jesus was dealing with seemed to have religion, but their hearts were hard and impure. That which they seemed to have would be made manifest and cast into outer darkness, because they loved **it** more than light (**John 3:19**) (**Matt. 8:12**). This term "seemeth to have" is echoed by James the Lord's brother in (**James 1:26**):

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

The religious Jews of Jesus' day certainly seemed to be religious. They deceived themselves and many that followed after their pernicious ways. Their ears and heart were closed to the gospel. Their religion indeed was in vain. Keep in mind James is using this thought in conjunction with being a hearer and doer of the word. The true word of God will expose any that seem to have, for there is nothing hid from God (**Heb. 4:13**).

vs.13) *Therefore speak I unto them* (that hath not ears to hear and a desire to understand) *in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*

vs.14) *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, (Isaiah 6:9) which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not percieve:*

It would be interesting to comment directly on the above 2 verses, further breaking them down. But a better job could not be done than Jesus does himself. He gives us his interpretation and true essence of this passage and Isaiah's prophecy.

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vs. 15) *For the people's heart* (The Nation of Israel, them that hath not in vs. 12, them that are not given in vs. 11) *is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed*; (they have made choice to close their eyes) *lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.* (Notice in place of the words *I should heal them* Mark uses the phrase, *and their sins should be forgiven them.*

(Mark 4:12) What an amazing key Jesus himself gives us. He says at any time they should see, hear, and understand with heartfelt conversion, and he would heal them, at any time. They at any time could have chosen as did the followers of verses 9 and 10. These had believing hearts in the gospel of Jesus Christ and received healing conversion. In (Rom 10:16-21) Paul, speaking of Israel, quotes (Isaiah 53:1, 65:1,2):

But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. But I say, have they not heard? Yes verily their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. but I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long have I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

What an opportunity lost. Can you see any parallels today?

vs.16) Jesus goes onto say to those believers, *But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.* This was not some personal predestination, some chosen to believe and some not, but the blessing of salvation was for the taking. It was as near as a soft and believing heart.

(Is. 66:2)...but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

vs. 17) *For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*

This verse is so condemning, it's hard to draw any clearer point than Matthew's record of Jesus' words. I truly believe that the foregoing verses are a wonderful key left to us by the Savior. It shows clearly the part **we** play in our own salvation (Phil. 2:12).

We have a choice to see, hear, and understand, to open or close our heart to the light of life. We have been given a day of salvation, and while it is called **To Day**, (Heb. 3:12-15) we must avail ourselves of the wonderful converting power of God's word. Jesus Christ is waiting, and at any time that we would turn our heart toward him, he is waiting to heal our soul. (Is. 53:5)

Jesus now addresses the question recorded by (Mark 4:10 and Luke 8:9) saying, *The 12 asked him of the parable or What might this parable be?* If you notice in Mark's account (4:13) he sternly addresses the disciples ignorance of the parable. *Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?* This shows the importance Jesus himself put on the information we just covered and the parable itself. His comment seems to infer, to understand this parable is to understand. If you understand much of what was just covered, it makes Jesus' interpretation of the parable the more clear. Let us go to Jesus' interpretation of the parable. Please keep in mind that I am not trying to say everything that could be said here, but I am to the best of my ability letting the scriptures

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interpret themselves, only making comments for clarification. I know from experience that if the Holy Ghost will touch our mind, we will get many thoughts beyond what is written on the printed page.

Matthew	Mark	Luke
<i>13:18, hear ye therefore the parable of the sower</i>		<i>8:11, Now the parable is this</i>

We have an immediate key from Jesus through our record keepers, Mark and Luke.

	<i>4:14, The sower soweth the word</i>	<i>8:11, The seed is the word of God</i>
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We immediately see **what** is sown. The word of God. But who is the sower? Well, if you read ahead in Matthew 13, Jesus gives another parable, the Tares and the Wheat. In verse 37 he gives us a clear answer: ***He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.*** Jesus in the forthcoming verses gives us four different lodgings of the seed. **Wayside, Stony, Thorns, and Good.**

<i>13:19, When any one heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which receiveth seed by the way side</i>	<i>4:15, And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts</i>	<i>8:12, Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.</i>
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Firstly, we see the representative lodging place of the seed is the heart. All three accounts make this clear. As stated, Jesus will give four conditions of the heart in his foregoing interpretation. Understand that these four conditions of the heart can be four separate and distinct conditions. But I do not believe this was Jesus' area of concentration, but rather, that every human heart has **all** of these present within him, as seen through Jesus' own temptations in the wilderness. After hearing the word of God, we are to set out and accomplish what Adam, the first man, failed to do.

(Gen. 2:15) *And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*

Adam was in a spiritual garden as well as a physical. The seed of the word of God was planted in the soil of his heart. He, as a free moral agent, had these various soils within him. The job the Lord gave him to do with the garden of his heart was to dress it, that is, cultivate it, keeping out the thorns and rocks, and to keep it, that is, protect it from any influence or pestilence outside the realm of the kingdom of God.

(Prov. 4:23) *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

Jesus was going to make it clear, it's all about the heart.

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(Matt. 12:35)

A good man out of the treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

At the beginning of Jesus' public ministry he in **(Luke 4:16-21)** quotes from **(Is. 61)** concerning himself and what his ministry was to accomplish.

In **(Is. 61:3)**, speaking of those that hear the word of the Lord, *that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.* **(Ps. 1:3)** speaks of the righteous who have heard and believed: *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.* These are just a couple of Old Testament references to verify that the Lord uses the planting and maturing metaphor. There are many references, Old and New Testament, where bringing forth good fruit or a healthy crop are mentioned. In the scriptures there is mention of sowing, planting, harvesting, watering, burning, purging, pruning, fruit, tares, branches, leaves, vines, etc. I believe you get the picture.

Jesus addresses his first soil here called "**Wayside**". All three accounts seem to verify that this is one who has heard the word or has had the opportunity to receive and understand. But here, the seed was **immediately** taken or caught away. We can get this not only from the aforementioned account of Matthew, but all three accounts of Jesus' interpretation state clearly that the individual has received or heard the sown word in his heart. The next point to be made is a difficult one. Who took it away? This involves **the wicked one, Satan, and the devil**. It is difficult in that it is hard **not** to veer off completely into "*The Devil Subject*" trying to explain what Jesus meant here. It is interesting to note, however, that in these parallel accounts these three terms are used **synonymously**. I believe that the term **wicked one** and the scriptures related to him really help clarify what is meant in the other two accounts, **(Satan and the devil.)** Jesus in **(Matt. 13:38)** exclaims that there are **children of the wicked one**. Then John the Apostle helps us in **(1 John 3:12)** that Cain was **of** that wicked one. Well, if Jesus says there are children of the wicked one, who was Cain the son of? Paul the Apostle in **(Rom. 5:12)** says:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

Paul says by **one man** sin entered. Jesus came that we might have life. Paul goes on to say in **(Rom. 5:17:18)**:

For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgement came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto the justification of life.

The wicked one is the spirit of Adam, The spirit of mankind that brought sin and death into the world. John the Apostle shows it is to be overcome **(1 John 2:13,14)**. No longer being a child of Adam as Cain, and these that Jesus called "children of the wicked one." Jesus said that it was his words that would bring a new life. He told Nicodemus *that ye must be born again* **(John 3:1-5)**. The Apostle Peter echoes the words of Jesus in **(1 Pet. 1:23)**: *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, (or by the seed of the flesh, or Adam, or the wicked one) but of incorruptible, by the word of God.* Here's another real key to our parable. By the word of God comes life and the ability to overcome the

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wicked one, Satan, and the devil. The Word of God, *which liveth and abideth forever*. John goes on to say in 2 John:

(2 John 5:19)

We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

Therefore, Jesus in this parable is showing that these in the wayside have heard. The word hit the heart. But instead of the heart being pricked and planted as in (**Acts 2:37**), they were cut to the heart as in (**Acts 7:54**); a completely different condition of the heart. The writer of the book of Hebrews calls it *an evil heart of unbelief* (**Heb. 3:12**). They did not set out to "*believe*" to the saving of their souls. (**Heb. 10:39**). Luke makes this clear when he records,

(Luke 8:12) Lest they should believe and be saved.

Firstly, the object of Jesus' teaching was the nation of Israel who, because of unbelief, would not enter into the phase of the kingdom that Jesus brought in.

(Mark 7:6)

Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

This was prevalent in Jesus' day but has continued to this present time. It will continue into the future until God's plan of salvation has reached its finality.

These **immediately** allowed the spirit of the wicked one to remove the good seed from their heart, and the seed fell by the way and was devoured. They turned from **the way**. "Wayside":

(John 14:6) Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

The word **Satan** merely means **adversary** or one that would show contempt for the things of God. The word **devil** describes a spirit, or one with a degenerate motive and nature, one outside the realm of the kingdom of God. These are all very descriptive and colorful metaphors explaining the plight of one who has heard and turned aside from the way. Jesus in the Parable of the Tares (**Matt.13:39**) says the **enemy** that sowed the tares was the devil. The word "enemy" here connects all of these metaphors together, Wicked one, Satan, the devil all being an adversary or an enemy to God and his Son (**Rom. 5:10**). Paul speaking to Elymas the sorcerer used a couple of these terms together;

O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil. thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? James says *a friend of the world is the enemy of God*. (**James 4:4**). But as Jesus told his disciples, he came to give them *power over all the enemy* (**Luke 10:19**). Again, it is hard not to go off on a tangent concerning "the devil subject". But let it suffice to say that these three synonymous terms are used to show an individual who hears but is immediately

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overcome by the degenerate spirit of mankind **from without**, or on the outside of Christ. In (Acts 19:29,30) Paul addresses the elders at Ephesus:

For I know this , that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

This is one such example of the wicked one, Satan, or the devil **taking** or **catching away** the word of God that was sown in the heart. Luke records, *lest they should believe* (the truth) **and be saved**, which is in contrast to Matthew's, *understandeth it not*. There was no germination or maturing of the seed under these circumstances, for it was **immediately** rejected and **devoured** by the **fowls** of contempt and unbelief, taken from what could have been a fertile and productive soil. God's promise to the believer was found in the Old Covenant passage of (Malachi 3:11):

And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

The spirit of this devourer is the same spirit found in Jesus' descriptive uses of *the wicked one, Satan*, and the *Devil*.

Matthew	Mark	Luke
<p><i>13:20-21, But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.</i></p>	<p><i>4:16-17, And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.</i></p>	<p><i>8:13, They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.</i></p>

The second lodging place of the seed is called *stony places, stony ground, or rock*. Again, in all three accounts it shows that these had the opportunity to hear and receive the word of God. Furthermore, our author's record is that these **immediately accept it with joy and gladness**, which is in contrast to "wayside" who **immediately reject it**. Stony, were only able to **endure** for a while; because the seed had not taken root **in himself, or themselves**. The word "endure" might bring some confusion, because the most common meanings are *toleration, to last, to suffer patiently*. The scriptures bear witness to all three of these definitions separately. But consider that Jesus' spiritual meaning really encompasses them all.

We know in planting natural seed that some will sprout and show all significance of coming to maturity but under severe weather conditions or pestilence will not survive. Many times this is due to the root's lack of depth: depth to receive the proper nutrients; depth to balance and steady the plant, depth to keep any force from premature uprooting. Here Jesus says that the seed fell on stony ground. In a natural situation a seed could

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start to germinate, but when the roots would began their downward thrust for nutrition, growth, and survival, they could not break through the hard surface. The seed starts its germination, begins its sign of life and growth, but as soon as any force would come against it, it would be tossed about and, henceforth, perish.

Jesus and the scriptures teach there is needed time for a planting in the Lord to come to maturity. Our teachers have showed that after we have been born again, we are a baby and that there is needed time to grow and mature. The word "perfection" is a New Covenant term that simply means to grow up and mature in Christ. Let me just list a few familiar scriptures along this line that you can reference:

(John 3:3-5, 1 Pet. 1:23, 1 Pet. 2:2, Eph. 4:14-15, Heb. 5:12-14, Heb. 6:1-3)

With these thoughts in mind we see that Jesus was using the natural planting and maturing metaphor to show that there was an endurance time for the kingdom seed to bring forth a mature or perfect fruit. The harvest of a perfect fruit is the culmination of the seed's planting. As stated, to endure is to brave the elements that would appear harmful, as drought or stormy weather. But under spiritual circumstances, these elements only cause the roots to thrust deeper into the fertile soil, taking hold of the nutrients that will stabilize the plant until it is ready for the harvest. Jesus says in **(Matt. 10:22 Mark 13:13) *He that endureth to the end shall be saved.*** Jesus in his time was showing that there would be times that his followers would be hated as he was, and it would take endurance to make it to the end or maturity. In our day we are not necessarily suffering physically for the gospel, but it takes a time of endurance or patience to finish our course. Remember, Jesus is our example.

(1 Pet. 2:21)

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.

Jesus was called the firstfruits **(1 Cor. 15:23)**. He showed us how to accomplish the goal by enduring not only the attacks of the wicked one but even death itself.

(Heb.12 1-3)

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such a contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Notice that in these verses the word **patience** is used along with the word endurance. This also is a key to the thought of endurance. We are to run this race, or endure with patience. The synoptics interchange this word in a parallel passage of Jesus' teachings.

(Matt. 24:13) *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

(Luke 21:19) *In your patience possess ye your souls*

Notice the similarity that the writer of Hebrews uses in his record of Abraham.

For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swear by himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

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Right here in our parable Luke records Jesus own words:

(Luke 8:15)

But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

James records, ***Blessed is the man that endureth temptation (James 1:12)***. He also shows a greater picture related to our story: The heavenly husbandman who has planted a spiritual vineyard with the seed of the kingdom and is waiting for the harvest of precious fruit.

(James 5:7,8)

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

(James 5:11) *Behold we count them happy which endure.*

Jesus in his parable is showing that these that received the word of truth with joy and gladness were only able to endure for a while or a time. Luke's record says ***which for a while believe***, showing that continuing to believe to the saving of the soul is also tied in with endurance. To believe is to continue with obedience in love. Notice Paul's interchange of believe and obedience:

(Rom. 13-16)

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed or report?

Under the Old Covenant we could not endure to salvation, because there was nothing that we could truly be rooted or anchored in. It was only the gospel that Christ brought that enabled us to be rooted and endure unto everlasting life:

(Hebrews 12:18-24)

*For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: **For they could not endure that which was commanded**, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart; And so terrible was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: But ye are come unto mount sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

It is only the Word and spirit of God that can water, feed, and prune, allowing us to endure unto the end of our salvation, which is perfect fruit ready for harvest. We see that taking root is letting the reigns of the heart anchor themselves into the gospel for nutrition. So if the word of God is our nutrition, the Apostle Peter says ***the word of the Lord endureth forever. (1 Pet. 1:25)***

(John 6:27) Jesus says he is the meat or spiritual food and nutrition ***which endureth unto everlasting life.***

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So Jesus in his explanation of the seed falling on stony ground shows that it is an individual who makes a glad start in the kingdom of God but only lasts or endures for a while. He is not rooted or grounded in the word of God. **And furthermore, it is because of the word that he is offended.** Our writers record Jesus giving four general reasons of offense.

Matthew	Mark	Luke
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Tribulation or persecution	afflictions or persecution	Time of temptation
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- 1.) Tribulation
- 2.) persecution
- 3.) affliction
- 4.) temptation

Our record of Jesus' interpretation seems to cover the gamut on reasons of offense. **But we also see through Luke's account that to be offended is to fall away.** Oh, how important it is to be rooted in Christ and his kingdom! Paul says that none of these things should offend or separate us from God.

(Rom. 8:37-39)

Nay, in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Ephesians 3:17-19)

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

(Colossians 2:6,7)

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

(Matt. 15:13)

But he answered and said, every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

Our prayer should be according to the promise of the New Covenant, which comes with a new spirit.

(Ezekiel 11:19,20) (Jer. 31:31) (2 Cor. 3:3)

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people and I will be their God.

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Matthew	Mark	Luke
<p><i>13:22, He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.</i></p>	<p><i>4:18-19, And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.</i></p>	<p><i>8:14, And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.</i></p>

The third lodging place of the seed is called *among the thorns* or *among thorns*. Again, Jesus describes in all three accounts that these individuals have the opportunity of hearing and understanding the word. Remember that our descriptive lodging places are the soil bed of the heart. Matthew gives us a little clue when he records *He also that received seed among the thorns*, showing that the thorns were already there when these heard the word of God. Luke probably helps us the most to begin with. He states that these have heard and then *go forth*. That is, they go forth from the protective hand of the husbandman. Here Jesus gives us a clear list of things that would strangle or choke out the life of God. We can match them up as follows and then take a closer look:

Matthew	Mark	Luke
		Choked with
Cares of this world deceitfulness of riches	Cares of this world deceitfulness of riches	cares and riches
	lusts of other things	pleasures of this life
choke the word	choke the word	
become unfruitful	become unfruitful	bring no fruit to perfection

Jesus in his teaching often warned against being overtaken with the cares of this life.

(Luke 21:34)

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

He emphasized that our faith was to be in God and that our desires were to come from above (**Col. 3**). We are put on this earth with a short life span at best. There is a natural drive given to mankind to lay up, working toward comfort and security. This is a God-given drive. But as any other, we are not to be overtaken in our efforts of natural security crowding God out of our lives.

(Matt. 6:33)

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

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Paul's words to Timothy warns of being entangled or choked.

(2 Tim. 2 4)

No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

The cares of this life intertwine themselves with the deceitfulness of riches seen by Luke's account. He simply records **choked with cares and riches**. "Cares" can be tending to the important and needed issues of life. But care is namely worry with excessive and compulsive thought concerning one's **natural** past, present and future. Jesus early in his teaching explains that we we're created to only handle the present events, and not be overtaken with yesterday or tomorrow.

(Matt. 6:34)

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Paul echoes Jesus sentiment in his letter to the Philippians.

(Phil. 4:6, 19)

Vs. 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Vs. 19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

We see Jesus' concern for Martha, the sister of Lazarus. She became so concerned about serving those gathered in her house to see Jesus. She was pure of heart. She was trying to help the Lord's people. But she lost sight that Jesus the Christ was imparting words that she needed to hear. You notice that in **(John 10:39)** it says of Mary her sister, That she **sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word**. Jesus, having compassion on Martha and her anxious condition, got her attention by the following words:

(Luke 10:41,42)

And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Jesus showed Martha that one thing was needful in her life, and if she would choose this good part, as did her sister Mary, it could not be **taken away** from her. That which she would hear and receive could not be **choked** out of her life.

Jesus also early in his teachings warned that gaining material wealth could end up being a deception in one's life. He did not condemn a person for gaining wealth; he simply warned of its deception. He pointed out the danger of putting your trust in riches and not God. He equated this way of thinking to idolatry.

(Matt. 6:24, Luke 16:33)

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

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We have an object lesson in the New Testament. The story of the "Rich Young Ruler." It is recorded how he came to Jesus asking what good thing he could do to have eternal life. Jesus referred to some things in the scriptures. The young man pointed out that he had kept these commandments from his youth and asked what he yet lacked. Jesus said, "go, sell all you have and give to the poor, then return and follow me."

(Matt. 19:16-26)

Vs. 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Lest we think Jesus was hard on this young man, Mark's account adds that ***Jesus beholding him loved him.*** (Mark 10:21)

God is a jealous God. This is a godly jealousy, not jealousy like we would equate in our world. He is in love with His creation and His desire is that we would love Him with our own free will from the heart. He wants us to trust him for all our needs. So easily we can be deceived into thinking we have the power of our own security. This is truly a deception. Paul the Apostle admonishes the wealthy in **(1 Tim. 6:17)** not to trust in ***uncertain riches.***

Charge them that are rich in this world. that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

Jesus explained in the sermon on the mount:

(Matt. 6:19-21)

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

We are to understand that the things of this life are temporal and uncertain. This is not given to us to frighten us, but Jesus merely wants us to have our priorities straight. Our help, life, and wealth comes from the Lord. In a parallel passage to Matt. 6, Luke records this parable as told by Jesus:

(Luke 12:15-21)

And he said unto them, Take heed; and beware of covetousness: for a mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, the ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits. And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Another wonderful key: ***Being rich toward God.*** Jesus shows that there is a different wealth to seek after.

(Mark 10:24) ***Children, How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God.*** The key phrase here is, ***them that trust in riches.*** Jesus makes it clear throughout his teachings that these riches are not only mammon or monetary, but that being rich can be a state of heart, not just the wallet. One can say in his heart, "I am secure and in need of nothing." Notice Jesus' words and the attitude of the Laodicean church,

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(Rev. 3:17,18)

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knoweth that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked; I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ...

Jesus' third soil covers many of the world's attractions and distractions. Mark adds *the lust of other things*. Luke adds *the pleasures of this life*. It's amazing that Jesus ties all these into the thorny soil that chokes out the life of God, for truly these are all interwoven with each other. John the Apostle in his later writings echoes these very teachings of Jesus:

(1 John 1:15-17)

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

What a Promise. Let our heart be protected from the thorny soil that chokes out our spiritual nutrients. There is pleasure in this world of sin but only for a season.

(Heb. 11:25) The Gospel cannot die. If it has been planted in our heart and is being watered by the river of life. We can bring forth good fruit unto perfection or full maturity.

(Jer. 4:3,4)

For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among the thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart ...

Matthew	Mark	Luke
<p><i>13:23, But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.</i></p>	<p><i>4:20, And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.</i></p>	<p><i>8:15, But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.</i></p>

The Fourth and final soil of Jesus' parable is called "**good ground.**" Consider that the good soil is not just a fertile and receptive soil but is the culmination and finality for a planting of the Lord. Jesus will further expound on this thought after his interpretations of the soils. Again we must use the synoptics in tandem to behold Jesus' fine needlework.

Our writers agree that hearing the word of God was available to these as it was in the prior three soils. But in this final soil, Jesus gives hearing and receiving the gospel its true meaning and significance. We can almost line these verses up and play, "*connect the dots.*" Let's take a closer look with our spiritual magnifying glass.

Matthew again starts with the foundation when he records, *he that received* (or accepts what he has heard) *seed into the good ground ...* A good question to interject here would be, what is the good ground? Luke records what Jesus has been trying to get

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across from the very beginning of his teaching: ***But they on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart ...*** Another great key and revelation that has been sprinkled throughout this entire teaching is culminated here in this last soil. The heart is what Jesus was trying to penetrate with the incorruptible seed of the gospel. He said in **(Matt 5:8) *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*** How much simpler could he put it? The seed of the kingdom was to be planted in the fertile soil of the heart. The soil was to be kept pure, free from rocks and thorns. If properly cultivated and protected, the seed would grow and flourish, bringing forth fruit after its own kind. The Psalmist reflects how the heart was the lodging place of the good seed.

(Ps. 119:11)

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee

So in our first imaginary connection, connect ***good ground*** with ***honest and good heart***.

The next point Jesus and our writers give us is what it means to *have heard* or to *hear*. Matthew records ***heareth the word and understandeth it.*** Mark records ***hear the word and receive it.*** Luke records ***having heard the word keep it.*** Notice the writers' interchange of words: ***Understandeth, receive, and keep.*** We can now use our imaginary connecting of the dots. The sower went out to sow the word of God, and those that heard and accepted it were those of a pure heart. Jesus breaks down through our writers what it truly means to hear and accept the word in the strictest sense. He is culminating this parable in contrasting some familiar territory from **(Is. 6:9)** and **(Mat. 13:14:15):**

(Is. 6:9,10)

And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

(Mat. 13:14:15)

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias which saith, by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive : For this peoples heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

As stated, Jesus is culminating his thought of the sown heart in this last soil. He is showing that the good ground includes the zenith of a believer. It includes the end of his faith **(1 Pet. 1:9)**. Jesus shows that the wayside soil really wasn't counted with the other three, Because the seed never was accepted but was immediately rejected. We see this by Luke's account when he records ***lest they should believe and be saved.*** These ***did not*** believe but rejected the seed. **Therefore, separate in your mind the "wayside" from the remaining three.** These remaining three soils are indicative and inclusive of every human heart and in parabolic form shows us the pathway to heaven. A picture can be seen in Jesus' wilderness temptation and how he was tempted in all points, yet without sin. Jesus was not "wayside," for he ***believed*** in God. He then in his temptations fulfilled all that Adam, and later the children of Israel, failed to accomplish. Using Luke's account of Jesus' temptation and the soils; **(Luke 4:1-13) (Luke 8:12-15)**, you can see Jesus'

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spiritual **endurance** when he overcame the **stony ground**. In his hunger, he spoke of the spiritual endurance that came from eating the word of God. (**Deut. 8:3**)

Then by the word of God, Jesus overcomes the **thorny soil**: The devil taking him up into a high mountain, showing him all the kingdoms of the natural world in a moment of time. Then he proceeds to fulfill the **good ground**, As Matthew and Mark record, one-hundred fold. But Luke says,

(Luke 8:15)

But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

The point to recognize is that Jesus was able to **keep it**. Adam was not, Abraham was not, Moses and Israel were not. Luke's record of Jesus' last temptation states that he answered Satan with these words (**Luke 4:12**): *And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Let's see how the Old Covenant helps us concerning this verse:

(Deut.6:16:17)

Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted him in Massah. Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

There is that word **keep** again. This was fulfilled by the Savior as an example for us to follow. Jesus not only fulfilled the law, but he fulfilled all righteousness. He showed us how to bring forth perfect fruit. Jesus was called the firstfruits (**1 Cor. 15:23**), The first of many to follow. We see the word **keep** in (**Gen. 2:15, Deut. 6:16-17, Luke 8:15 and Rev. 14:12.**) And many other places. This shows it is a thread that runs through the entire bible. Jesus simply says in (**John 14:15**) *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

Again, Jesus is closing his soils with the true definition of hearing the word of God. Using the three parallel definitions of the writers as shown earlier (**receive, understand and keep**), we first hear the word. To **receive** it is to **accept** it into the soil bed of your heart with the overcoming power of the Word and Spirit, we keep the garden cultivated from rocks and thorns, being able understand and keep it. This very closely follows what we have been taught concerning the "**Three Phases of Salvation.**" We first hear in faith believing, and are saved from our past sins. As we grow and gain spiritual understanding, we are being saved, believing to the salvation of our souls. Then maturing to full growth; keeping the faith, we are eternally saved by death, which is the end of our faith. The three phases is a complete study in itself. I only interject this here as a segue to Jesus last comments about good ground.

Matthew	Mark	Luke
<i>13:23, ...understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.</i>	<i>4:20, ...receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.</i>	<i>8:15, ...keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.</i>

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Jesus says of the seed planted in the good ground that it's through the patient endurance we spoke of earlier that we bring forth fruit. In Matthew and Mark's account they record Jesus saying of the fruit bearers, that some bear thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred fold. This may be a little confusing to you at first reading. **But remembering that we have eliminated "wayside," because they immediately rejected the seed and believed not, and that the remaining three soils is a progression of our salvation and not just a separate and distinct class. But as we saw in Jesus' temptation, these are inclusive conditions of man's heart that must be cultivated.** The rocks and thorns, must be removed one by one until the soil has been cleansed and the plant is allowed to grow up to full maturity, ready for the harvest. This does not happen all at once. Just as it takes time for fruit to be brought to perfection, so does it take time to grow up in him. Jesus said earlier in our parable that *whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance.* Jesus' point is that after you believe and receive and would continue in him, he would continue to give that which is needed for your growth to maturity. Jesus will clarify this after his interpretation of the soils. The word and understanding comes to the faithful as they grow, as they mature, as they perfect. Isaiah records this pattern.

(Isaiah 28:10,13)

For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little

This is how Jesus received it, and this is how we will receive it. Notice the end of verse 13, how it describes Israel, and the teaching that Jesus was giving primarily for their benefit. Notice the familiar and descriptive words that are pertinent to the soils.

But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

With these thoughts in mind, consider that those that bring forth thirty, are those that went past "wayside." They have believed and received the word with joy but were only able to endure for a while. The seed germinated and began the growth process, but because of poor gardening and cultivation, the roots that began to spring could not get through the rocks that were left in the soil.

Those that bring forth sixty are those that were able to accomplish getting past the stony offenses of the word. The roots had began their natural downward thrust, but again, because of poor gardening, were not able to keep the garden clear from the weeds and thorns that choked the life from the plant.

Those that bring forth an hundred fold are as "Jesus the Firstfruit," who **kept** the garden of his heart, removing all the rocks from the soil, keeping all the thorns and roots of bitterness pulled out, therefore bringing forth full grown, ripe fruit with patience, ready for the harvest.

In all three accounts Jesus ends his particular interpretation of the soils. But he does not leave his thoughts, as we will see in Mark and Luke's accounts. Matthew's record at the beginning of our study set the whole tone of the understanding of the heart, but Mark and Luke seem to have recorded the ending of the message, which directly ties in where Matthew's record of Jesus' beginning thoughts leaves off. We will leave Matthew for

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now. For after his interpretation, he immediately goes into the parable of the tares and wheat. But the other two continue on with Jesus thought.

Mark	Luke
<p>4:21-25 <i>And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. If any man have ears to hear let him hear. And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.</i></p>	<p>8:16-18 <i>No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.</i></p>

I will try to bring these two passages together with a general paraphrase of the combined passages.

The candlestick Jesus speaks of here is the light of revelation that comes to a believer when he by faith accepts the "Word of God" himself. Jesus is that true light. As I stated, this passage tags onto the record of Matthew, who records:

(Matt. 13:11) *Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.*

(Matt. 13:17)

For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

This is a general promise to them that believe. Jesus is saying that once I have lit the candle of your soul and become the light of your life, it is not my will to have the light covered. It is for the purpose of bringing to light the hidden things of darkness. I will perpetually manifest and reveal my truth to you as you grow, and in its fullness, I will keep nothing hid from you. ***If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.***

(Col. 1:26) *Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints:*

(2 Cor. 4:6)

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

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Jesus not only promised light at the onset of belief in him, but he promised that the light of revelation would continue getting brighter as we matured in him. Then he continued with this admonition to clarify:

(Mark 4:24)

Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

I feel the Amplified Bible gives a good translation on Jesus' thought:

Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you. and more [besides] will be given to you who hear..

If you put in all you have, God gives the increase (**1 Cor. 3:6,7**). Jesus verifies in (**Matt. 19:29**) That those that give all they have, cultivating and keeping the garden of the heart, will receive not only hundredfold but everlasting life.

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

How profound. Another scripture that is usually used for the natural giving of alms can also be used spiritually in the time we give tending to the things of God.

(Luke 6:38)

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

As there are laws of nature, so there are laws of heaven. This seems to be one of them.

(Matt. 7:2, Mark 4:24, Luke 6:38)

The synoptic accounts vary on exactly where Jesus concludes his teaching. Out of the three accounts, (and for the sake of this being what I call a "brief commentary") I have chosen Mark's account for our conclusion.

(Mark 4:25-29)

For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle because the harvest is come.

Jesus ends his "Sower" thoughts with yet another natural farming story that directly connects with the "Sower." Jesus' amazing gift to compare the seen with the unseen, the natural with the kingdom of God really comes through in this grand finale.

This great mystery of *he that hath* ears to hear *shall be given*: to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven and be given them in more abundance (**Matt. 13:11**): *he that hath not* ears to hear and a heart to receive, *from him it shall be taken away even that*

The Parable of the Sower

A brief commentary by Chris Griffith - 2001

which he hath. Even though the seed was planted, if it did not take root and have the proper gardening, it would eventually be dispersed.

So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, as Jesus sowed the word in the field or soil bed of hearts, And should sleep, and rise night and day, the natural and spiritual seasons from planting to harvest, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For it is a natural and spiritual miracle of God's creation.

For the Earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, just as the heavenly brings forth fruit of itself, *First the blade, or the thirty, then the ear, or the sixty, after that the full corn in the ear.* This is the hundredfold, the fruit ripe in its perfection or maturity.

But when the fruit is brought forth, ripe or full grown, immediately he putteth in the sickle for reaping (James 5:7,8) because the harvest is come. which is reaped by the "Lord of the Harvest" (Matt. 9:38, Luke 10:2).

My desire is that by now this parable has come alive for you, as it has for me. This is not just some abstract artwork by an unknown impressionist, but we see in the recorded scripture, the work of the Master himself, Jesus Christ, not only the Son of God, but now in his resurrection, the Son of Man, a king and high priest ever interceding for us at the right hand of God Almighty.

Again, I have not tried to strain at every avenue that was presented but simply to show the underlying thoughts of Jesus in this teaching. These principles are the foundation of understanding God and His plan. The promise He gave to faithful believers to reveal or manifest the mystery of godliness and give us the needed help to bring forth fruit unto perfection. This truly is the love of God for our sakes. We start out in faith. We look for that blessed hope, having the hope of glory. And it's through the love of God or charity that we make it to the end of our faith. The greatest of these truly is charity, for we will see the end of our faith. That which we endure and hope for will come to pass. But the love of God abides forever.

(1 Cor. 13:12,13)

For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

This was Jesus' promise, to give them that hath more and more and more. The candle would continue to light the way of the believer all the way to the end. We will then know, God manifesting himself to us in His fullness. Praise God.

(Ephesians 3:14-21)

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ throughout all the ages, world without end. Amen.