Matthew 13: 3-9, 18-23 The Parable of the Sower

Introduction: Jesus gave the parable before the whole multitude, verses 3-9. In verse 10 the disciples come and ask why He spoke in parables. Mark 4:10 says that Jesus was alone when they came and asked. He and the disciples were still alone when He gave an explanation of the parable, verses 18-23.

I. The giving of the parable, Verses 3-9.
   A. "A sower went forth to sow," verse 3.
      1. A sower does not sow with a needle and thread, but he is a farmer who goes forth to scatter or plant seed.
      2. He went forth out of his home and out into the field.
   B. Before he went forth to sow it was necessary for him to go forth to plow. (After plowing he would sow.)
   C. As he went forth to sow, he would scatter his seed onto four different types of soil.
      1. Some of the seed would fall by the wayside, verse 4.
         a. This was the unplowed roadway.
         b. The seed would not sink down into the hard roadway.
         c. The birds would come and feed on the seed and eat them up.
      2. Some would fall on stony ground, verses 5-6.
         a. This was areas where huge boulders, too big to be moved from the field were beneath the surface with only a thin layer of top soil over it.
         b. Once the field was plowed it would look like the rest of the plowed field and so it was sowed, too.
         c. The seed had enough soil to germinate, but the plant could not develop a good root system. Therefore when the weather got hot the plants would die for lack of water.
      3. Some of the seed would fall among thorns, verse 7. (The thorn bushes and briers and weeds would sap the nourishment from the plants and so they would be unproductive.)
      4. Some would fall in good ground, verse 8.
         a. All of these would bear fruit.
         b. Some plants would be more productive than others.

II. The interpretation of the parable, verses 18-23.
   A. The seed is "the word of the kingdom," verses 19. (The word of God, Luke 8:11.)
   B. The seed by the wayside:
      1. This is one who hears the word, but does not understand, verse 19.
      2. Apparently he does not want to understand.
      3. The Devil interferes and is able to distract him or cause him to doubt or disbelieve or be disinterested.
         a. He always seeks to interfere.
         b. Man can believe God or the Devil.
   C. The seed upon stony ground, verses 20-21.
      1. This is one who reacts emotionally and makes a joyous profession of faith. (Implication: he is baptized.)
      2. He shows every sign of making a good Christian worker.
      3. But when persecution comes he drops out as quickly as he got in because he has no depth of conviction.

D. The seed among thorns, verse 22.
   1. This person also is receptive to the word.
   2. He too shows prospects of becoming a great Christian worker, bearing much fruit.
   3. But soon he is attracted by the pleasures and the wealth of the world. (He may or may not get involved with the more gross sins.)
   4. But just as the thorn bushes sap the nutrients of the soil, even so the things of the world sap his energies and make him unfruitful.

E. The seed in good ground, verse 23.
   1. These seed represent those who are not only saved, but they are dedicated to the service of God.
   2. They bear fruit for Christ.
   3. Some are more productive than others. (This difference can be accounted for by different opportunities, different talent and different zeal.)

III. <u>The application of the parable today</u>.

A. To the unsaved:
   1. Do not let the Devil cheat you out of heaven and cause you to go to hell.
   2. You repent of your sins and trust Jesus Christ today.

B. To the saved:
   1. Do not be frightened away from a life of dedication to Christ by unkind remarks or threat of harm. If the Devil's crowd can get their bluff in on you, they will do it.
   2. Do not be enticed away from a life of dedication to God by the allurements of the world. Many a Christian has had his Christian productivity choked to death.
   3. Dedicate yourself to the service to God. (Give your time, talents, energies, mind, money, and influence into the service of God. There will be great reward in the harvest.)

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