

The parable of the sower (A surrendered heart = good ground)

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[0 : 00] Greetings to everyone. It's good to be here. Ennis, can I borrow that songbook at the bottom? I'll have to bring one up. Appreciate what has been shared this morning.

Laverne, children's class. Challenge to all of us. Do we obey him because we love him? That's kind of what I got out of that one part at least.

Do we love his commandments? I like that. Or is it because we have to? We feel like we have to. That song that I had selected, I didn't realize we didn't know it that well, or some of us probably grew up with it.

What page was it now? 82. Is it 82? Yes. Heaven will surely be worth it all.

Just came across it sitting here this morning, and I... Verse 2 says that... Well, all the verses say something about burdens so heavy, or trials and toils and tears and toiling and pain and enduring and all those things, but then also how we hear Jesus saying, reminding us that heaven will surely be worth it all.

[1 : 32] And this morning I was reminded earlier this morning about some things, some of the difficulties that have been difficult in my life and hard to come through, and just in a spiritual way.

I'm not talking about financial hardships and things like that, but spiritual hardships that we've come through, and just to encourage us that heaven will surely be worth it all.

Jesus said it will be. And he also called us to endure hardness. It's not for the faint-hearted.

It's not... This journey is not for those that faint by the way and give up. But it's so that... In our today language we'd say we hang in there.

We continue the walk. Heaven will be worth it all. And I'm sure all of us can look back and say, wow, we came through hard things. We've had difficulties in life.

[2 : 47] I look at each of us, and I'm sure every one of us has had hard things in life. I just was so blessed this morning with the thought that not only will that be worth it all, this journey is worth it too, because we have Jesus, and he's with us.

It's good to be with brothers and sisters that love and care for each other. I'd like to just look at some parables in Matthew 13, if you want to turn there.

Matthew chapter 13. I've just this week been thinking a lot about things that Jesus said, things that...

the way he gave stories, and how he made comparisons. I was thinking a lot about the treasure hid in a field, and those things like that.

I'd like to just start reading in verse 1 of Matthew 13. You know, there's four types of soil here when the sower went out to sow. There was four different types of soil, and Jesus compares those things with our hearts.

[4 : 08] Four different types of hearts. The same day went Jesus out of the house and sat by the seaside, 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, the sower went forth to sow.

I like this setting. So at first he just sat there, probably in the grass, out by the sea, but then the multitudes began to come.

What's a multitude? Great multitude. There's no number here, but a lot of people. I was trying to imagine that, thinking about that a little bit, just the setting.

So great. Why did he go into a ship? Was it to separate himself a little bit? I had this thought, you know, if we're on water, how sound carries.

Maybe he needed more, a better sound system. You know. I don't know. There's not too many, too many crowds in our country here.

[5 : 23] In some countries, there's crowds of 100,000 people. Here, the biggest one I can think of is probably the Trump rallies. In the last few years, some of those have been 15,000 or whatever.

But can you imagine speaking without a PA system? And those people were all supposed to hear? How did that work?

I don't know. He must have raised his voice. Or somehow God, miraculously maybe, just made them all hear. I don't know. Those were just some thoughts I was having this morning.

Great multitudes. But for whatever reason, he went out onto the water's edge or out into the, and sat on a boat. What a setting.

What a teacher. Would you have gone to hear him? Would we have gone to hear Jesus in that day if we would have been there?

[6 : 24] But he said that, he started out by saying, telling them a story. A sower went forth to sow. And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, 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. I'm just going to keep reading this whole parable, and then Jesus comes back, and he explains the parable.

Let's see. Which verse were we ready? Six, I believe. And when the sun was up, they were scorched. And because they had no root, they were withered away. Verse 7.

And some fell among thorns, and thorns sprung up and choked them. But other fell into good ground and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

[7 : 40] Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples came and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? I don't know if the disciples were challenging Jesus, or they were, possibly they were just out of a sincere heart.

Why, you know, why are you telling stories, you know? And he answered them and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance. But whosoever hath not from him shall be taken away, even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not. Neither do they understand, and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive.

For this people's heart is wax gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed. Lest at any time they shall see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

[9 : 14] I wonder what he'd say in our day. Heart is wax gross, and their ears are dull of hearing. They just hear a noise.

They don't, it doesn't go into their heart. They don't hear. But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.

What would Jesus say this morning? What is he saying this morning? To us? Brother Laverne asked something about being excited to come together, come to church, where the church gathers. Are we excited? If we're not, maybe we're dull. Maybe our ears aren't hearing. Maybe we're not seeing clearly. Jesus said, For barely 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 you hear, and have not heard them.

He's talking about the prophets of old. Many prophets, many of God's people in the past, in the Old Testament, they desired to hear what you are hearing.

[10 : 33] That's what he's saying. They would have loved to hear what you're hearing. Jesus is saying in this parable.

Then he comes back to the parable. He says, Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. He's saying, he already said it.

And now he says, Hear it. Listen to what I'm saying. Let's get some understanding of this parable. Jesus is saying that to the great multitude.

And maybe, maybe he's just saying this to the disciples. Help me out on this. Is he still preaching to the multitude here?

When he comes back and says, Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower? Or had he gone back to just the disciples? You know, James?

[11 : 43] Yeah. That's kind of what I'm thinking. So he's saying, okay, to the ones that were still with him, hear this. This is what I'm saying. We can look into that some more.

But verse 19, When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in the heart.

This is he which received the seed by the wayside. This is the first one. This is so sad. When the word is heard, but quickly confused and destroyed.

These are people that have heard the word of the kingdom. This is a new kingdom. This is Christ's kingdom. They hear it, but they're still confused or maybe not sure what they were hearing.

And before they decide to surrender to Christ and his kingdom, the devil, make sure to distract them. This often lies directly on the responsibility of Christians, the church.

[12 : 52] These are some of my thoughts that I like to share. And I'm wondering, are we wise in this area? As wise as we should be. Sometimes when there's a new believer or a newcomer in the church or in the body of Christ, people that may not be saved, are we careful to not allow the enemy, at least from our part, to distract, to take away the seed that's being sown?

Sometimes even in our own life, in this life, we are distracted from the word, from letting the word take root. I know I am at times.

Social media, news, sports, friends and fun, things like that. And the devil would just snatch away Sunday afternoons every thought and every conviction that was planted Sunday morning in our life. Distractions in church. Many times a struggling person or an unsaved one is sitting, hearing the word preached.

I've seen this. I've already been like, you know, I've even taken friends or sinners with me to maybe a revival meeting or a church and right as the preacher is getting there to just really bring it home, the truth of God's word, the seed was being sown, there's a distraction.

[14 : 26] A family comes in late and everybody looks or there's all kinds of examples. Maybe a child just gets out of control right at that moment and the noise overrides what the preacher's saying.

And some of these things, you know, maybe a chair falls down or something funny happens or, you know, and the word that was being sown is I have just sat there grieved my spirit like we just missed it.

You know, say that again. Preach it again. Whatever. Some of those things cannot be avoided. I understand that. You know, we can't control when something falls or maybe somebody came late for a reason or a child is miserable and wasn't taken out quick enough or whatever.

We can't avoid some of those things. But here's one. Sometimes I've heard preachers crack a joke right after they said something that was really, you know, maybe not a big joke but something that everybody kind of laughed and the conviction just kind of eased away.

are we wise in these areas? Do we understand that Jesus is saying that the devil wants to come in just sift that seed away?

[15 : 51] We need to be wise to those things and understand and be sensitive. That's the devil's work. There's a time to say something funny maybe but rarely in the middle of the preaching of the word of God especially when it's the word of God.

You never joke about the word of God. Do we think these things are important? Jesus did.

He gave a whole parable about it. He used this parable to explain to us what happens when God and Satan between God and Satan when the word is being sown.

The word of God is the seed. I imagine this seed when I think of sowing what Jesus was saying I don't know what their custom was was it just spreading seed like that you know out into the wind and cross the ground or was it with one of those things I have that you crank you know and the seed just goes out.

I remember my dad doing that for years. He would go out in the alfalfa seed or fields and sow some kind of a hay. but I imagine that the devil is out there with a big vacuum just trying to get all that loose seed just siphon it up right off the ground before it takes root.

[17 : 30] Verse 20 says but he that received the seed into stony places the same is he that heareth the word and anon that word means quickly or immediately with joy receiveth it.

Now this is the second one I believe. The stony places let's talk about that. What was the first one? The first one was I have them all marked here. Heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not.

And then okay yeah this is where he's explaining what all these what he meant by the parable. The next one then will be among thorns.

But now we're talking about the stony places the same is he that heareth the word and he quickly with joy receiveth it. We've seen that haven't we? Yet hath not yet hath he not root in himself but doeth for a while for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word by and by he is offended.

[18 : 57] These are the people that want to try Christianity try Jesus. They hear it they like wow this is great this will help my life. It'll make my life better.

There was some good or soft soil there and prepared but oh so little. Their heart didn't go deep. there was still way too much rocks too many rocks and stony ground in this heart so that any kind of hardship that comes along like we were talking earlier that hardship causes them to stumble. Now they are offended and bitter at things. Maybe the very people that brought them the seed and sowed the seed all of a sudden well when they had a little bit of joy and they accepted it now all of a sudden they become bitter and you wonder why.

Maybe they're bitter at things or life or even against the church but we are called to endure hardship.

2 Timothy chapter 2 a couple verses there 2 Timothy 2 verse 1 Thou therefore my son be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus Paul talking to Timothy and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.

[20 : 44] Verse 3 is what I wanted Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ no man that wroth and tangleth himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier someone that has a that is faint in heart and has no real vision for the things of God will not last in this kingdom and the seed that was sown will wither in the soil of the heart because the soil of the heart was too shallow for the word to go deep and bring fruits out of that man or that woman's life what is the ultimate purpose of the seed why does God want us to have his word what is he looking for what fruit he's looking for fruit to come out of our life it's not just seed when we go out and sow wheat or hay or whatever we're sowing we're not just out there toiling away for fun there's a purpose behind it and here in

Timothy he calls us to be a good soldier to have good fruits verse 22 now we're going to look at those seeds that are among the thorns he also that receiveth 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 what unfruitful he becometh unfruitful before there's fruit it gets choked out how many times do we see this one where the focus in this life goes from what was spiritual to begin with to what is carnal to what is physical the things that are not spiritual making money having times of pleasure you know all these things can be okay in their right way as long as it doesn't become the important part of life but to be entangled that word entangled was in

Timothy where it overcomes you you get really into it and it takes your focus I think brother Reggie talked a lot about focus having a right focus you know the way to measure these things in our hearts there is there are ways that we can measure our hearts test our hearts sometimes we need to just do that what will the people in our life remember us by what will I be remembered by that's a question I don't like to ask I'm not asking for answers but what will be are we going to be well we were successful business people I mean how cheap is that you know I could do sales well that memory will fade quick hard working individual good work ethics or was he a man after God and he loved truth a woman that loved Jesus more than anything in this world is that how you're going to be remembered by when we pass on I know what I want but will I get to that place is that where I'm at when I think about that I realize I have a lot of work to do or a lot of surrendering to do maybe not work but surrender to be a man after God's heart now let's look at the good soil verse 23 but he that received seed into the good ground that good ground I love that term what is the good ground is he that heareth the word and understand it which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth some hundredfold some sixty and some thirty how wonderful to see and experience this heart

you know it doesn't take much intelligence doesn't take a lot of intellect it just takes a simple heart that is in search for the truth a heart that says

I will do whatever it takes to get right and to stay right with my God that's all it takes how can I know him better how can I learn more about his kingdom and surrender to it this kind of heart is where the Lord wants to sow his seed the seed of his word because ultimately he's looking for fruit there's way too many just half hearted Christians just shallow like we heard Reggie last week at the other church where it's just shallow water we're not out in that deep water we're not going deep with God that was such a challenging word that he brought but

[27 : 05] God's looking for fruit God's word will not return void it will bring forth fruit the question is will it grow and produce fruit in our heart it's going to bring forth fruit the word of God says his word will not return void his word will bring fruit to God but will it be me will it be in my life in Ezekiel 11 verse 18 there's a couple verses in Ezekiel you can turn there if you'd like Ezekiel 11 18 and they shall come thither and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence and I will give them one heart and will put a new spirit within you and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh that they may walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and do them and they shall be my people and

I will be their God what a promise has you done that work in your life taking that stony heart out that was hard and made it soft we're talking about the seed and how it can grow it can't grow in that hard heart it just won't it will be choked out the devil will make sure that it does not grow in a hard heart it can't there's no root there the next verse 21 says but as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations I will recompense their way upon their own heads saith the Lord God in other words those that walk after their own heart have detestable things and abominations in their life God will pay them back he'll be the judge

God will pay those that walk away from his kingdom and follow their own way pay day is coming God is not mocked what does the word say whatsoever man soweth that shall he also reap are you convinced this morning that the seed is good and it's right the seed of the word of God is right it is true the word of God is true that's the first thing we need to be convinced of it's 100% true we need to understand the perfection of this seed the authority of the word of God it is life giving and it's life changing and I believe this morning that most of us here hopefully by far have experienced the power of the word of

God in our life the seed of God in our life but these are the hearts these are the different the four different types of hearts that Jesus gave in that parable and the last one is what we want to be the good ground just remember that is my heart good ground has it been turned toward God and say I love him I love his truth I want it to come into my heart and take effect take root and go deep just another way of saying going into the water deeper like we heard last Sunday I don't know why God is still saying that to us but he is to go deeper with the word of God this challenge is directly for me personally it's for all of us but it is for me the authority of the word of

God the surrender he's looking for turn to Galatians 5 and just look at the fruit just look at the fruit God is looking for Galatians 5 22 we all know this but the fruit of the spirit is love joy peace long suffering gentleness goodness faith meekness temperance against such there is no law what is love do we have the fruit of love in our heart where we love not only our brother and sister that we think is a good Christian do we love the ones that are a little harder to love those that maybe don't live right we still love them do they know we love them joy Bible says joy of the

[32 : 41] Lord is our strength do we have joy rejoicing do we have peace is our heart our soul at rest with God do we have peace long suffering patience that suffers long is that long suffering patience that suffers long in other words we're we're very patient gentleness gentleness is a fruit of the spirit you know some people are just naturally more gentle others have to really work on that one right to be gentle I don't know where I fall in that I tend to believe I have to work on that one goodness faith having a faith an unwavering faith that we know where we stand with our

Lord and we have all our faith is in him meekness and temperance against such there is no law you know that word meekness I'll be honest with you is probably one of my favorites because for many years I didn't have a clue what it meant and I still barely do but I know a little bit about it that I believe that meekness wasn't Moses one of the meekest men in the whole Bible and yet meekness obviously is not weakness or he couldn't have led a couple million people or however many million there was he couldn't have been a leader of those people in a wilderness 40 years but he was very meek meekness is controlled inner strength not weakness in fact it's quite the opposite if it's not

controlled if your strength is not controlled then you're certainly not meek

I would consider that weakness actually but controlled inner strength temperance self control a heart a heart that is under control and disciplined in the ways of God great meekness I thought of Joseph as well I think he had a lot of meekness although I don't know if the Bible mentions that but the way that everything he came through all the heartaches the trials the rejection and the suffering the jail the dungeon falsely accused brothers sold him and yet he was a meek person and he could again lead a nation through terrible drought and suffering he was a meek man I just believe God is calling men to be meek especially to be meek to have an inner strength that can't be shaken but it's under control to be able to speak when we're supposed to speak to be able to be quiet when we're supposed to be quiet

I want to be more meek and have temperance God's looking for fruits real fruits in his body in his church verse 24 and they that are Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and lust if we live in the spirit let us also walk in the spirit this will only happen if we receive the word and it has taken root in our lives verse 26 let us not be desirous of vain glory provoking one another envying one another you know this envying this jealousy is perhaps one of the greatest destroyers in God's church here on earth is to be jealous to be envious to be you know not happy with somebody else's success because

I want that to be me you know jealous of one another's gifts it'll destroy a church the devastation of envy seeking after the glory of men man's approval instead of God's approval jealousy are we jealous of each other I don't know of any case like that here but I've seen it I've seen it being extremely destructive I think I'll go into the next here in Matthew 13 just a little bit on the going on to verse 24 another parable another parable put he forth unto them saying the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field but while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way now why did the enemy do that interesting parable but who would do that but he was an enemy and we know

[39 : 01] Jesus is referring to Satan in the spiritual tares also so the servants of the householder came and said unto him sir didst not thou sow good seed in thy field from whence then hath it tares he said unto them an enemy hath done this the servant said unto him wilt thou then that we go and gather them up in other words shall we go out and just pull out the tares out of this field that has a good crop in it and he said nay lest while you gather up the tares ye root up also the wheat with them let both grow together until harvest and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers gather ye first the gather ye first the tares and bind them in bundles and burn them but gather the wheat into my barn this is an amazing story again burn them and he comes back again and he talks about he comes back to this kind of like he did in the other parable and explains it let both grow together burn them let's go down to verse 36 and

Jesus sent the multitude away went into the house and his disciples came unto him saying declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field and he answered and said unto them he that soweth the good seed is the son of man Jesus is the sower Jesus is the sower the son of man the field is the world the good seed are the children of the kingdom but the tares are the children of the wicked one the enemy that sowed them is the devil the harvest is the end of the world the reapers are the angels he just laid it out there so clearly you know that day is still coming as therefore the tares are gathered and burn in the fire so shall it be in the end of this world the son of man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity we heard a few weeks ago what iniquity was back in

Pennsylvania and shall cast them into the furnace into a furnace of fire there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father who hath ears to hear let him hear I don't need to make that any more clear the very words of Jesus explaining his own parable to the disciples and thank God it was written down for us those words today are just as true just as powerful as they were 2000 years ago are we able to hear it that means there are tears among God's people always have been always will be there are tears there are those that are not walking right there are those that you know maybe some of this over here that where we were reading about the first parable they kind of go together actually but in the first parable we talk about the seed and the stony heart and you know the heart that is full of thistles and other things at first it looks the same right it's when there's no fruit is when we realize that it's different and

Jesus said don't worry about pulling out the tears I'll deal with that when I come back he's the harvester he will harvest he didn't say don't worry about the tears I take that back he just said don't pluck them out it's an amazing parable to discover and to study like to go now to verse 44 yet excuse me just a real short one three verses another short parable again the kingdom of heaven and you know Jesus came all the time and he said the kingdom of heaven he came to bring the kingdom of heaven what did John the Baptist say the kingdom of heaven is at hand a new kingdom are we glad to be part of that kingdom this morning or are we so focused on this kingdom here on earth again the kingdom of heaven is like under a treasure hid in a field the which when a man hath found he hideth and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field again the kingdom of heaven is like unto merchant man seeking goodly pearls who when he hath found one pearl of great price went and sold all that he had and bought it the key word in these in this parable the treasure and the goodly parable is all they both sold all in other words they surrendered their whole life everything to get that parable

I remember we talked about this one in Michigan when we were back there about the parable I mean I'm sorry about the the treasure that the man hid in a field and he went wouldn't we do that I don't know what you know we can only imagine what this treasure was worth but it was a great treasure it was something worth buying a field but he had to sell everything else he had in order to get that in the spiritual it's the same you know I would say this to a terror you can still become you can still sell all that you have and buy the treasure that's the good news of the gospel you know at some point I was a terror too right I was a terror

[46 : 12] I acted like a Christian but I wasn't one thank God that he gave me a chance to sell all and find Christ and surrender so that I don't have to go to that place where there's gnashing of teeth but can be gathered with the wheat if I endure if those roots go deep and we endure Jesus said many times he that endureth until the end shall be saved it it's not the one that begun it's the one that ended well let's pray his