

Daniel Perrin – Lesson 4: Parables – Monday July 22: Jesus' Interpretation

Text: **Mark 4:13-20** – *And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?" ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. ¹⁶ These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; ¹⁷ and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble. ¹⁸ Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²⁰ But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."*

Lesson does a good job of summarizing Jesus' interpretation – Seed is God's Word – 4 soils represent the reception that God's Word receives in our lives.

1. Everyone heard the parable – THEN there were TWO GROUPS
 - a. Those who DID NOT RECEIVE AN EXPLANATION from Jesus.
 - b. Those who DID RECEIVE AN EXPLANATION from Jesus.
 - c. Which group had an advantage? / Better experience? / Greater benefit?
 - Maybe you look at others who have grown up with a greater dose of spiritual information and think they have an advantage over you.

2. What did the crowd receive?
 - a. They heard the words of life from Jesus.
 - b. They prayed for a deeper understanding.
 - c. They EXPERIENCED His teachings / Slow release AS they worked through the day\$ to follow.
 - **Mark 4:33** – *And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it.*
 - d. **1 Corinthians 2:13-14** – *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*
 - The Holy Spirit revealed to the individuals in the crowd, what Jesus revealed to His disciples – at just the right time: the SEED = God's Word / The SOIL = the conditions of man's hearts

3. What did the Disciples receive?
 - a. **Mark 4:34** – *But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.*
 - b. Do you want a DEEPER understanding of God's Word – SEEK TIME ALONE WITH JESUS.
 - Not a MOMENT only, but adequate time to get a full education.
 - c. There is a purpose here – So you can encourage and instruct others in their study of God's Word.
 - No hoarding God's Word
 - Explain what you have learned – SHARE THE FRUITS OF YOUR GARDEN

4. To help understand the parables more deeply, I would recommend a book called “Christ’s Object Lessons”
 - a. 29 chapters / Written by Ellen White / Help you see things that are right there in Scripture / Every page full of useful application to your life wherever you may be.

5. Jesus uses a number of different parables that connected with regular life
 - a. Farming metaphors are prominent (3 of the 5 in Mark 4)
 - b. Farming never goes out of style or out of date – Everyone has to eat.
 - It is governed by natural laws (GOD’S LAWS) that must be followed / It provides periods of labor and rest / It has a positive result / It brings joy to those who experience its benefits
 - It is not limited by age / gender / race / social standing / religion / experience (beginner or expert) – EVERYONE can participate AND benefit
 - c. In working with the soil, lessons can be learned – Jesus KNEW this

6. **This Day With God, 12.3** – *“The cultivation of the soil is a school in which man may learn spiritual lessons. As he cultivates the soil, man is to see reflected as in a mirror the work of God upon the human soul.”*
 - a. We need the quiet of the garden, even if that garden is just a few plants on the windowsill or pots on the balcony.
 - b. Anxious, hyperactive children learn how to slow down and care for a tender plant, and they are opened up to hear God’s voice speaking to them.
 - c. We must pray over the soil and the seeds, and we learn we must pray over the soil of mens’ hearts and the seed of the Word sown there.

7. **Christ’s Object Lessons, 88.1** – *In tilling the soil, in disciplining and subduing the land, lessons may constantly be learned. No one would think of settling upon a raw piece of land, expecting it at once to yield a harvest. Earnestness, diligence, and persevering labor are to be put forth in treating the soil preparatory to sowing the seed. So it is in the spiritual work in the human heart.*
 - **Child Guidance, 34.2-3** – *The cultivation of the soil is good work for children and youth. It brings them into direct contact with nature and nature’s God. And that they may have this advantage, there should be, as far as possible, in connection with our schools, large flower gardens and extensive lands for cultivation. An education amid such surroundings is in accordance with the directions which God has given for the instruction of youth....*

8. **Education 111.3 (Adventist Home 142.3)** – *In the cultivation of the soil the thoughtful worker will find that treasures little dreamed of are opening up before him. No one can succeed in agriculture or gardening without attention to the laws involved. The special needs of every variety of plant must be studied. Different varieties require different soil and cultivation, and compliance with the laws governing each is the condition of success. The attention required in transplanting, that not even a root fiber shall be crowded or misplaced, the care of the young plants, the pruning and watering, the shielding from frost at night and sun by day, keeping out weeds, disease, and insect pests, the training and arranging, not only teach important lessons concerning the development of character, but the work itself is a means of development. In cultivating carefulness, patience, attention to detail, obedience to law, it imparts a most essential training. The constant contact with the mystery of life and the loveliness of nature, as well as the tenderness called forth in ministering to these beautiful objects of God’s creation, tends to quicken the mind and refine and elevate the character.*

a. We need instruction from God to know what each plant needs.

9. MY EXPERIENCE:

a. When I work in the garden, God shows me how much work He needs to do in me.

b. Our garden has been a literal experience of Blood – Sweat – Tears

c. Sometimes the Garden becomes a battleground where the enemy wants us to focus on failures instead of God's miracle-working power to bring forth life.

d. In the battleground, our carnal nature is brought to view as we are tempted complain / argue / quit

- The Lord of the Harvest knows all those things
- Let the Lord of the Harvest teach you through planting a seed.
- ONE SEED – How many okra did we get from that? / How many Japanese eggplants? / How many basil leaves? / How many figs? / The big one: How many of the little, yellow "Sun-sugar" Tomatoes? (Literally hundreds from one seed)

The Youth's Instructor, 8/16/1900, par.3 – *The cultivation of the soil, the sowing of the seed, the care bestowed on the seed by the sower, represent different stages of Christ's work for the soul. First appears the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.*