

Becoming the Good and Fruitful Soil Part 4

The Thorny Places

Scriptures.

Math 13v3, Mark 4v3 and Luke 8v5

Introduction

The Gospel likens our hearts to four different types of soil. We are urged to consider the condition of our heart in the light of the above scriptures. In this article, we will start to look at the thorny place and in following articles consider the remaining type of soil.

In the thorny place, the hearer receives the seed of Salvation but the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the lust of other things choke the word. It produces no fruit with a loss to the kingdom of heaven.

Thorns and Brambles

Thorns and brambles start off small but quickly grow in height and strength. Eventually they reach several feet high hanging over the existing plant like a curtain, imprisoning it. The thorns choke the vital life from the plant and stop it producing fruit.

The central message from the thorny ground is that there is a great danger that the cares, lusts and riches of this world can grow and crowd out the word of Salvation. Christ is therefore robbed of his rightful harvest in us.

It is a remarkable and sobering truth that the cares and riches of this world can choke the life of Christ in us. We may have been duped by false reassurances into thinking that this is not true. The first thing for us to acknowledge is that there is a real possibility that the life of Christ can be choked in us and this should sound alarm bells to us. In the Parable of the Sower, four types of soil are described and three did not produce any harvest at all.

Are we clear of Thorns and Brambles?

Our thinking is often quite superficial and religious, in that we consider ourselves to be either the good soil or the thorny soil. We rarely consider that our field may be a mixture of both. Others may frequently reassure us or we may reassure ourselves that our lives will produce a full harvest. However, the apostles in the New Testament warn us repeatedly to beware of things encroaching into our lives.

We may consider ourselves free from the thorny ground because we attend church once or even twice a week. However, given the general state of the Christian Church we should consider the possibility that many of us may be in a thorny state. When we see Christ face to face, many may discover that there was a greater potential for harvest in our lives but it was subdued by the cares and riches of this world.

Christ Deserves the Best Harvest

Jesus Christ is worthy of the very best harvest from our lives. If we are to hear the words "thou good and faithful servant" we need to be sure that our field is clear of thorns. God give us a revelation in our hearts of how worthy Christ is to receive the full harvest from our lives.

Oswald Chambers in his book *Biblical Psychology* states:

"No I don't object to being forgiven, I do not mind being guided and blessed, but it is too much of a radical surrender to ask me to give up the right to my self and allow the spirit of God to have absolute control of my heart".

If we are to produce a harvest that fulfils God's potential in us we need to allow him to have absolute control of our lives. We have the life of the risen Christ sown in our hearts and the potential harvest is infinitely greater than we realise. Be warned, if the potential for harvest is immense so will be the disappointment if we do not attain the harvest.

Friendship with the World.

We are warned in James 4v4 of the dangers of being a friend of the world and in doing so become an enemy of God. The word "friend" in the Greek means, "Where we seek our pleasures". Are we seeking our pleasures in the very same places as our non Christian neighbours or are we seeking the reward from the Lord Jesus for a full harvest?

Ask, and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Matthew 7v7 KJ

This scripture is so true in that, what we seek we shall find. If we are seeking pleasures in the cares and riches of this world then we shall certainly obtain some pleasure but it will be at the cost of our potential harvest in Christ.

What the devil cannot destroy he tries to subvert. Could there be a better way to nullify the work of Christ than to encourage the growth of the cares of this world and the love of riches in the Church and Bride of Christ.

The Challenge

God give a revelation in our hearts of how worthy Christ is to receive the full harvest from our lives. May the Holy Spirit cause us to be willing to give up worldly cares and riches so God's potential in us can be fully realised.

In the next article, we shall examine some practical indicators to help us see if the field of our hearts are clear or mixed with thorns and brambles.