

The Parable of the Sower

Lesson * 2 (COL 33-61; Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43; Mk. 4:1-20; Lk. 8:1-15)

The Field, the Sower and the Soil

1. The field in the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares represents the _____ (Mt. 13:38).
2. The sower represents the _____ of man (Mt. 13:37).
3. The soils represent four kinds of hearts where the word of God is planted: “And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh _____, and taketh away the word that was sown in their _____.” (Mark 4:15).

The Seed

1. The seed represents the _____ of God (Luke 8:11). COL 33 explains that Jesus’ parable _____ itself was the seed with which the most precious truths of His grace were _____.
2. I Peter 1:23 explains the meaning of the seed: “Being born again, not of corruptible _____, but of incorruptible, by the _____ of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”
3. “the same _____ that govern earthly seed sowing govern the sowing of the seeds of _____ (COL 33). A knowledge of agriculture is thus a basic need!
4. Jesus frequently told parables as the events were occurring. When Jesus told the parable of the sower, “upon _____ and _____ both sowers and reapers were busy, the one casting seed and the other harvesting the early grain” (COL 34).
5. The life giving power of God’s word can be discerned in the following statement: “In every _____ and in every _____ of the word of God is the _____, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very _____ and character of God.” (COL 38).
6. It is dangerous to substitute the ideas of men for the word of God because, “Philosophical theories or literary essays, however _____ cannot satisfy the _____” (COL 40).

7. The life changing power of God's word is described in Psalm 119:11: "Thy _____ have I hid in mine _____ that I might not _____ against thee."
8. Through the prophet Isaiah (55:11), God promises that as the seed bears fruit: "So shall my _____ be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me _____, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."
9. There is grave danger in setting aside the word of God for, "When the word of God is set aside, its power to _____ the evil passions of the natural _____ is rejected. Men sow to the flesh, and of the flesh they reap corruption." (COL 41).
10. In many of our schools, the works of the world's great men are placed before the young people instead of the word of God. The result is that "In turning from God's word to feed on the writings of _____ men, the mind becomes _____ and _____ (COL 41).
11. Ellen White explains the psychological process whereby the mind is dwarfed and cheapened: "The understanding _____ itself to the comprehension of the things with which it is familiar, and in this devotion to _____ things it is weakened, its power is contracted, and after a time it becomes unable to _____." (COL 41).
12. In many of our schools the study of the Bible is considered of secondary importance. This is tragic because, "There is _____ so ennobling and _____ as a study of the great themes which concern our eternal life." (COL 42).
13. It is not enough to teach the theoretical truths of the word of God. Truth must be embodied. Of Christ it is said: "Christ taught the truth because He _____ the truth. His own thought, His character, His life-experience, were _____ in His teaching." (COL 43).

The Seeds by the Wayside

1. "The seed sown by the wayside represents the word of God as it falls upon the heart of an _____ hearer. . . . The spiritual faculties are _____. Men hear the word, but _____ it not." (COL 44). These are people who have hearts of stone where the seed of truth cannot penetrate.
2. The birds which plucked the seed away represent the _____ who takes away the word out of their hearts lest they should _____ and be _____. (Lk. 8:12). Concerning this, Ellen White remarks: "As the birds are ready to catch up the seed from the wayside, so _____ is ready to catch away the seeds of divine _____ from the _____. He fears that the word of God may awaken the careless, and take effect upon the _____ heart." (COL 44).

3. Among these inattentive hearers are those who “listen to the preaching of the word of God [and] make it the subject of _____ at home. They sit in _____ on the _____ as they would on the words of a lecturer or a political speaker. . . . Often these things are spoken by _____ in the hearing of their own _____. Thus are destroyed respect for God’s _____, and reverence for their message.” (COL 45-46).
4. Among the “wayside hearers” was Felix whom, after Paul had preached to him about righteousness, temperance and judgment said to him: “Go thy way for this time, when I have a _____ season, I will call thee.” (Acts 24:25). That opportunity never came!
5. Among the “wayside hearers” was also king Agrippa. After the apostle Paul preached a powerful sermon, the king replied: “_____ thou persuadest me to be a _____.” (Acts 26:27-28).
6. Among the “wayside hearers” were members of the Sanhedrin who stoned Stephen. We are told that after they heard Stephen’s message they “_____ on him with their teeth” and they “cried out with a loud voice, and _____ their ears, and ran upon him with one _____.” (Acts 7:54, 57)
7. In the end-time, many who claim to believe the truth will be “wayside hearers”. Because they did not _____ or _____ the truth, God will send them a strong delusion that they might believe the _____.” (II Thes. 2:9-13).

The Seed in Stony Places

1. There are two problems with this kind of soil. Luke 8:6 explains that this soil lacked _____ (a symbol of the Holy Spirit). Matthew 13:5-6 underlines the fact that the soil in stony places had “no _____ of earth” and therefore when “the _____ was up” the plant was _____.”
2. In the people represented by this soil, “_____ of the natural heart underlies the soil of their good _____ and _____.” (COL 46).
3. “This class may be easily _____ and appear to be bright converts, but they have only a _____ religion.” (COL 46).

Note: These are the people who have a form of godliness but lack the power thereof (I Timothy 3:5). They are half-hearted Christians. They want to serve Christ and self and self simultaneously. They serve Christ with a divided heart. And no one can serve two masters!

“Half-hearted Christians are worse than infidels; for their deceptive words and non-committal position may lead many astray. The infidel shows his colors. The luke-warm

Christian deceives both parties. He is neither a good worldling nor a good Christian. Satan uses him to do a work that no one else can do.” Spaulding-Magan Collection, p. 260.

4. It is not because men receive the word _____, nor because they _____ in it, that they fall away They do not consider what the word of God _____ of them. They do not bring it [the word of God] face to face with all their _____ of life, and yield themselves fully to its control.” (COL 46-47).

Note: Most of the disciples of Jesus left their professions immediately to joyfully follow Jesus. But before they did this they considered the cost. This is why Jesus told Judas to count the cost before he decided to follow Him: “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has no place to lay his head.” (Luke 9:58). Judas chose to immediately follow Jesus but he did not count the cost. The end result was suicide! Ananias and Saphira fall into this same category.

5. The scorching sun which withers the plant represents _____ and _____ which arise because of the _____. (Matthew 13:21)

Note: “Stony ground” hearers are those who enthusiastically receive Christ in the good times. They expect that Christianity will spare them from trials and tribulations. While things go well, they appear to be good Christians but when they are required to make a sacrifice for what they believe, they fall away. In Matthew 10:34-39 Jesus warned that following Jesus involved great sacrifices yet in the end the dividends would be eternal (read Mark 10:28-31)!

6. This kind of soil represents those who “rejoice for a _____, for they think that religion will free them from difficulty and trial.” But when trials come, “they _____ beneath the fiery test of temptation. They cannot bear reproach for Christ’s sake. When the word of God points out some _____ sin, or temptation, or requires _____ or sacrifice, they are offended. It would cost them too _____ effort to make a radical _____ in their life.” (COL 47-48)

7. God cannot accept half a heart. “Christ asks for an _____ consecration, for _____ service. He demands the _____ the _____, the _____, the strength. Self is not to be cherished. He who lives to _____ is not a _____.” (COL 48-49)

The Seed Among the Thorns

1. When Adam and Eve sinned, the earth produced _____ and _____ (Genesis 3:18). The thorns are symbolic of sin.
2. “The thorns of _____ will grow in any soil; they need no cultivation. . . . The thorns that have been cut off but not _____ grow apace, until the soul is overspread with them.” (COL 50, 51)

3. “Stony ground” hearers face four dangers which are: The cares of this _____, the deceitfulness of _____, the _____ of this life and _____ of other things. (Mark 4:19; Luke 8:14).
4. Yielding to any of these four dangers brings disastrous results: “The soul ceases to draw _____ from Christ, and spiritually dies out of the _____.” (COL 51)
5. The “cares of this world” could be described as the rat race of life. Ellen White explains: “But many become so _____ in business that they have no time for _____, no time for the study of the _____, no time to seek and _____ God.. At times the longings of the soul go out for _____ and heaven; but there is no time to turn aside from the _____ of the world to listen to the majestic and authoritative utterances of the _____ of God.” (COL 53)
6. Jesus spoke about these kind of people who are always fretting and worrying about the cares of this life and making ends meet: “Therefore I say unto you, Take no _____ for your life, what ye shall _____, or what ye shall _____ nor yet for your _____, what ye shall put on. Is not _____ more than meat, and the body than raiment?” (Matthew 6:25)
7. The “deceitfulness of riches” was manifested in the rich young ruler. He wanted _____ life but he thought the cost was too great. He went away sad because he had many _____. (Matthew 19:16-21).
8. The apostle Paul well knew the dangers of riches: “But they that will be rich fall into _____ and a _____, and into many foolish and hurtful _____, which _____ men in destruction and perdition. For the _____ of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred _____ the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” (I Timothy 6:9, 10)
9. The dangers which the rich face are described by Ellen White: “They lose the sense of their _____ upon God and their obligation to their fellow men. Instead of regarding _____ as a talent to be employed for the glory of _____ and the uplifting of _____, they look upon it as a means of serving _____.” (COL 52)
10. The “pleasures of this life” are a real danger to the soul: “There is danger in _____ that is sought merely for self-gratification. All _____ of indulgence that weaken the _____ powers, that becloud the _____, or that numb the _____ perceptions, are ‘fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.’” (COL 53).

Note: It is recommended that everyone prayerfully study the following passages: I John 2:15-17 and Luke 21:34-36.

11. Parents face a real danger in this respect: “Many parents seek to promote the happiness of their children by _____ their love of _____. They allow them to engage in _____, and to attend _____ of pleasure, and provide them with _____ to use freely in display and self-gratification. . . . They form habits of _____ and self-indulgence that make it almost _____ for them ever to become steadfast Christians.” (COL 54).
12. Youth who are led down this road by their parents “may see their folly and _____. God may _____ them. But they have _____ their own souls, and brought upon themselves a lifelong _____. They power of _____, which ought ever to be kept keen and sensitive to _____ between right and wrong, is in a great measure _____.” (COL 55).
13. Among the “lust of other things”, Ellen White identifies “The exciting sports—theatergoing, horse racing, _____, liquor-drinking, and reveling. . . . Those who learn to love _____ for its own sake open the door to a flood of _____.” (COL 55)

The “good ground” hearers

1. The good ground hearers are described as those who have an _____ and good _____ and having _____ the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with _____.” (Luke 8:15)
2. The “good ground” hearer” has an honest heart who _____ to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He _____ his guilt, and feels his _____ of the mercy and love of God. He has a sincere desire to _____ the truth, that he may _____ it.” (COL 58)
3. Cornelius was this kind of hearer. When he and his friends visited the apostle Peter he said: “Now therefore are we all here present before God, to _____ all things that are commanded thee of _____.” (Acts 10:33)
4. “To those who in _____ of heart seek for divine guidance, _____ of God draw near. The Holy Spirit is _____ to open to them the rich treasures of the truth.” (COL 59)
5. The fruit is described in the following words: “Those who, having heard the word, _____ it, will bring forth fruit in _____. The word of God, received into the _____, will be manifest in good _____.” (COL 60)
6. The apostle Paul encourages Christians to “walk in the Spirit”. This means that they have the fruit of “love, joy, _____, gentleness, _____, faith, meekness and temperance.” (Galatians 5:22-23).

7. We are told that the word of God often “comes into _____ with man’s hereditary and _____ traits of character. . . . But the good-ground hearer, in receiving the word, accepts all its _____ and _____. His habits, customs, and practices are brought into _____ to God’s word.” (COL 60).
8. Jesus made a beautiful promise in John 14:23: “If a man love me, he will keep my _____: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our _____ with him.”
9. Revelation 1:3 and 22:7 commends those who _____, hear and _____ the words of the book.
10. James warns us about being forgetful hearers of the word: “But be ye _____ of the word, and not _____ only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way and straightway _____ what manner of man he was” (James 1:22-24).
11. Fruit is not produced overnight. It is a long process which requires toil and patience: “the Christian is to wait with _____ for the fruition in his life of the _____ of God.” (COL 61)

The Soil of the Heart can be Changed

1. The soil of our heart, not matter what type, can be changed: “A new _____ also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put _____ you: and I will take away the _____ heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my _____ within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments to do them.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27)
2. Saul of Tarsus was one of the ringleaders in Stephen’s death (Acts 26:9-11) and yet he became the great champion of the gospel. Truly, if we consent, the soil of the heart can be changed by God

