

The Most Important Parable of Jesus—Redemption: The Key to All Other Parables (Mark 4:13)¹

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Legend

1. Characteristics of interest
2. Evidence of the Godhead (Trinity)
3. Characteristics of unredeemed & lost virtues
4. Wayside soil
5. Rocky, stony soil
6. Thorny soil
7. Good ground

Matthew 13:1-23

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. 2 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. 3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; 4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: 5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: 6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: 8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. 9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. 10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered 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. 12 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. 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because

¹ Mark 4:13—And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. 17 For verily 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 ye hear, and have not heard them. 18 ¶ Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. 20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. 22 He also that received 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 unfruitful. 23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

This parable, a heavenly story with an earthly meaning, is found in the gospel accounts of Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8. The context is established at the beginning of each parable, namely Jesus exited from a house near the Sea of Galilee, he sat and attracted a multitude. Because of the multitude, he got into a ship with his disciples and had the ship a distance from the shoreline, where the multitudes remained while taking in Jesus' words.

In this story we have the Godhead intimately involved in the phenomenon of redemption—the Father is the sower, while the seed Jesus Christ, is sown in the hearts of ALL men. The Holy Spirit is evident in the root that is sent forth. A seed will only germinate if the seed receives moisture. In Luke 8:6, where the seed falls on stony ground, Jesus said “it lacked moisture.” Once the seed coat is broken, the seed sends forth a root to grow and develop. . . But NOT until.

I will remind the audience, that ALL men have heard the truth, the seed has been sown in the hearts of all men. We have 100% evangelism the Father has performed for the benefit of ALL mankind so no man can say come judgment day and reply to the Creator, 'I didn't know!' All men are without excuse according to Romans 1:20.²

Continuing with this evangelistic endeavor by the Godhead, it is revealed that only 25% are called and chosen by the elective counsel of Providence. And this is done before the foundations of the world.³ There is no activity of man's will involved in this unseen miracle of personal redemption. It is the Holy Spirit that inclines, influences, moves, and leads the sinner ultimately producing regeneration through repentance and crucifixion of the sin nature.

The first soil or heart (v. 19—"sown in his heart") is wayside—hard, impervious, impenetrable. The emotions that dominate this individual are enmity (hatred) and fear. Any seed that falls is quickly removed by the fowls or "the devil" (Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12). These are those we read about in Proverbs 58:3-5⁴ and Psalms 7:11.⁵

The next soil we read about is the heart that is rocky. It has no depth. These people are shallow, spiritually. Even though they exhibit a profession of faith, they do NOT exhibit a possession of faith—no fruit of the Spirit. Of these, Jesus also says they hear BUT they do not understand. Their 'faith' is characterized by emotion—joy. This, of course, is a false or phony sense of outward joy. It does not reflect the inner joy of peace, contentment, and rest evident in the believer's heart. We see this false conversion in verse 5—"they sprung up." Jesus also says about these people that "when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

I have identified, denominationally, these people as belonging to the Holiness Movement—Pentecostals, Charismatics, Nazarenes, Methodists,

² Romans 1:20—For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: . . .

³ It is probably much less than this. Remember, only 8 people out of millions were spared from the flood. Two people, Joshua and Caleb who believed by faith, were the only two out of their generation consisting of approximately 1.2 million (600,000 men + their wives). Jesus had 120 in the upper room in Acts 1:15. And this was after 3.5 years of God in human flesh proclaiming his life-saving message.

⁴ Prov. 58:3-5—The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. 4 Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: *they are* like the deaf adder *that* stoppeth her ear; 5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.

⁵ Psalms 7:11—God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

Wesleyans, Calvary Chapel, Foursquare, etc. People who ignore the glue of doctrine and follow the faith of their emotions—intuitive feelings, ‘Christian’ psychology, subjective experiences, and emotional assembly’s void of truth, doctrine, and dispensational teaching, as well as refusing to hear “all the counsel of God.”⁶

The next soil type has thorns, or the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. The dominance of these worldly enticements choke the word and it can produce no fruit. These denominations I have identified as generally more reserved, less given to emotion in the demonstration of their faith. These people are dominated and attracted by the wisdom of men. I classify them denominationally as Baptists, Episcopalians, Russian Orthodox, Presbyterians, Mennonites, Amish, Seventh Day Adventist, etc.

The seed that falls on good ground is a heart that heeds the still small voice of God, also known as God’s law written on the heart of men.⁷ This awareness of one’s Creator through the action of one’s moral conscience is supplemented by the repentant work of the Holy Spirit upon the sinner.

John the Baptist and his ministry of repentance, pictured in the immersion of the sinner completely underwater and then arising, was proof that a changed heart had occurred, namely, that Jesus’ words and message could be received. Did this prove conversion? No.⁸ What it did; however, was enable the Holy Spirit to influence the sinner in recognizing Jesus as the only Mediator between God and men,⁹ as well as assisting the sinner in understanding Jesus’ message—the Holy Spirit will lead and guide the believer into all truth.

⁶ Act 20:27-30—For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. 28 ¶ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

⁷ Rom. 2:14, 15—For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) . . .

⁸ John 7:39—(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) For those deceased individuals during Jesus’ ministry and those who passed away before his ascension, Christ’s unlimited atoning blood and his righteousness would be retroactive. Christ’s sin payment and righteousness would be exchanged for the sinner’s condemnation and disobedience.

⁹ I Tim. 1:5—For *there* is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; . . .

Finally, the seed that falls on good ground is the believer who recognizes the evils of denominationalism-sectarianism,¹⁰ the subtlety of sorcery in bewitching its subjects,¹¹ the imperative command to watch,¹² and finally, one who has a teachable spirit and can discern both good and evil¹³ in the public arena (John 3:11, 12).¹⁴

¹⁰ I Cor. 1:11-13—For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. 13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

¹¹ Acts 8:9, 10—But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: 10 To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

¹² Mark 13:37—And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

¹³ Heb. 5:14—But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

¹⁴ Jesus' reply to Nicodemus a rabbi of the Jews. John 3:11, 12—Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. 12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you *of heavenly things*?