

PARABLES

THE STORIES TOLD BY JESUS

Parable of the Soils...- Matthew 13:1-23

May 17th, 2015

OBSERVE & REFLECT

(This section is designed to encourage us to reflect on and observe the scripture and weekend sermon.)

READ Matthew 13:1-23

- ☀ Read the text at least twice. Try reading the text from two different translations.
- ☀ What do you observe in the text? What jumps out at you and grabs your attention? What questions do you have from the text? Pay attention to any action words or phrases and observe what the implications are.

INVESTIGATE & APPLY

(This section focuses on what the scripture has to say as we dig deeper into the Word. It is oriented to create discussion on the Scripture.)

1. What is the context of this parable? Why do you think Jesus is teaching it to his disciples at this point in their lives?
2. Outline this passage, giving titles to each of these sections:
 - v.1-9
 - v.10-17
 - v.18-23
3. How do verses 10-23 make this parable especially unique and an important starting place in our study of the parables?
4. What is the seed? What is the growing process?
5. Can you elaborate on each of these types of ground?
 - Along the path: How does the devil take away the word from their hearts?
 - Among the rocks: What do the rocks represent? Why do you suppose they fell away?
 - Among the thorns: How do these things "choke" the Christian life? What are indications of maturity?
 - On good soil: What are common characteristics between soil which is good from growing plants and those who not only receive the message well, but also produce fruitfulness after much perseverance?

What is a Parable?

The word "parable" (*παραβολε*) comes from two Greek words, *para* which mean "alongside", and *ballo* which means "to throw". It literally means "throw alongside". In a parable, something familiar is placed alongside something unfamiliar or mysterious in order to help reveal the unknown. Jesus usually used the natural world, which was well-known by His audience, to teach about the unknown and mysterious kingdom that He was ushering in.

NEXT STEPS

- What does this parable teach us in regards to the condition of our own hearts when it comes to listening and obeying God?
- What does this parable teach us in regards to sharing the Gospel? What are we responsible for, and what is God responsible for? How does this motivate you to keep sharing the Gospel, regardless of people's response to you?