

“The Greatest Stories Ever Told”

“and He spake many things unto them in parables...” Matthew 13:3

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Sept. 1 AM

Communication is the key to healthy relationships. Jesus was a master at communicating. “Parable” means: “to cast near” (So we can “grasp” it.) In Mt. 13 Jesus shares 8 parables to help us grasp (understand) God’s Kingdom. This first parable is so important that Jesus interpreted it for us.

- **The Sower represents those who share God’s word. Mt. 13:3**
- **The Seed represents the word of God. Mt. 13:3,19**
- **The Soil represents the heart conditions of those who hear God’s word.**

Last week we examined those who have become hardened to God’s Word and are easily **deceived** (2 Cor. 4:4) or **distracted** such that God’s word never penetrates & germinates in their hearts. Vs 4, 19

Mt. 13:5 *“Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth:...”* represents:

The Disappointed Hearer vs 5,6, 20

A few inches below much of the Judean soil surface is a layer of limestone, blocking the roots from going very deep. This limits the plants to the surface water only.

“and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.”

The Emotional Hearers are:

1. Often quick to respond. 5,20,21 *“forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth...20 the same is he that hears the word, and anon with joy receiveth it”*

A. It takes time to develop a healthy root system. Example: Chinese Bamboo

1) This is why the O.T. Law forbade harvesting the fruit for the first 3 years! (Lev. 19:23-25)
The fruit from the 4th year belonged to God!

2) Quick decisions are often based on Emotion. Vs 5 *“and forthwith they sprung up...”*

Vs 20,21 *“he that received the seed into stony places...is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it...Yet hath he not root in himself...”*

3) Repentance requires a reprocessing of our thoughts (presuppositions) when confronted with God’s truth. Repent: (metanoēō: to reconsider, re-think)

a) This is a process, involving our entire soul (*mind, will, and emotions*) & not simply a prayer. Lk 13:3,5 *“except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”*

B. It takes effort to develop deep roots. Mt. 26:40,41 *“Spirit is willing...flesh is weak”*

1) It’s hard work to break through the limestone. Mt. 26:40-41; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Tim. 2:15)

2. Consequences of a shallow Faith.

What happens to trees that grow without adequate root systems?

A. Little (or no) fruit. Is. 61:1-3 *“that they might be trees of righteousness, planting of the LORD, That He might be glorified!”*

1) What Glorifies God? Jn. 15:8 *“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit”* (Mt 5:16)

2) This is why we are saved. Jn 15:16 *“I have chosen you...that ye should go and bring forth fruit”*

B. They can’t withstand seasons of drought. Mt. 13:6; 21

“when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.”

1) Israel averages only 28 days of rain per year!

2) Draught means death unless the roots go deep!

You can tell a lot about the depth of your commitment during the dry times.

2 Tim. 4:2 *“Be instant (ephis’tēmi: stand firm) in season and out of season.”*

The depth of the roots of your faith (commitment) determine the quality of the fruits of your faith!

C. They can’t withstand Storms! Mt 13:21 *“Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation (thlipsis: pressure) or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”*

(skandaliz’ō: ensnared) **A faith that can’t be tested, shouldn’t be trusted!**

1) Remember how Jesus closed his first sermon? Mt. 7:26-27

2) Problems reveal the type of foundation (root system) lying beneath the surface.

- Problems (drought and storms) should draw us deeper in our faith developing a deeper root system
- The greatest Trees are found in the harshest environments. (Sequoias and Redwoods)
- If we neglect our relationship with God in the easy times, we may find ourselves withering during the hard times. Jeremiah 12:5 *“If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace,... they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?”*

3. Rocks that block faith and fruit.

A. **Religion** (Misplaced Faith) Ro 10:3 *“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”*

a) This clutters the “strait gate.” (Luke 13:24; See Mt. 7:14, 15,22,23)

B. **Rebellion** Jn 5:39-40 *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”*

This is true of Salvation as well as Sanctification. (hagiaz’ō: purified, consecrated) 2 Tim 2:19-21

C. **Relationships** Mt 10:37-38 *“He that loveth father or mother (son or daughter) more than me is not worthy of me: And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”* See Luke 14:26-35

D. (False) Reasoning. (Col 2:7-8) *“Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein... Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”*

Conclusion: Root comes before Fruit. (Eph. 3:17-19; Col. 2:7)

What’s the difference between having a shallow (Superficial) or a serious mind/heart when it comes to hearing from God? COMMITMENT!

Application: How to develop a deep faith.

1) Break up the bedrock. Hos. 10:12 *“...break up your fallow ground: for it’s time to seek the LORD,”*

a) Remove the rocks. (religion, rebellion, relationships, reasoning)

b) Rearrange our priorities Lk 14:33

2) Expose yourself to God’s Word! Hos. 10:12; Ps. 119:11 *We remember what’s important to us!*

3) Focus on Application. What does God want from me! Joshua 1:8 *“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein ... that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”*

James 1:22 *“But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”*

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith” Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22