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CROP FAILURE

In Mark chapter 4 we learn the parable of the sower. In verse 13 it says, ***“And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables?”*** Jesus is telling us that this parable will help us understand ALL parables, so it is important that we understand it.

If you have gone to church and heard an excellent sermon on Sunday, and I were to ask you a week later what the message was about, chances are you would not remember. In the parable of the sower, we learn some very important facts. First of all, the sower is the one that preaches the Word of God and “plants or sows” that seed into a person’s life.

We learn the ground that the seed is sown in will determine the “seed’s” fruitfulness.

The first place it was sown was the wayside. The second place was on stony ground. The third place was among the thorns. The fourth place was on good ground.

In each case the seed (word) sown started to grow, but only in one of the four instances did it produce. Then, in the one that produced, it came up thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. That isn’t percentage, it means thirty times, sixty times and a hundred times what was sown. In the good ground there was only one-third of the ground that brought forth one hundredfold. So, out of the seed sown, only 8.33% produced a hundredfold increase. In my mind that is quite sad.

What causes the “crop failure?” The first ground was on the wayside. This would be the casual hearer that is not interested in hearing the Word of God preached to them. Satan steals the seed (word) immediately and there is no growth at all.

The second is stony ground. These people hear the preached word with gladness but have no roots in themselves. They do not have the word of God in them deep enough to take root. This is caused by the cares of the world such as affliction, and persecution. This causes them to become offended, which stifles any growth. I believe bitterness is one of the chief causes of this. Once a person is offended and they do not repent, bitterness sets in and their hearts become like stone where they cannot receive. Until that stony heart is removed through repentance, they can never receive what God wants for them.

The third ground is among thorns. These people hear the preached word but are deceived by riches and lustful things of the world. The word they received gets choked out by these “weeds” until there is no fruit. They often do not receive because they do not want to pay the price to be disciples of Jesus. We must not let things become our goal in life. It will rob us of fruitfulness. They aren’t willing to seek first the kingdom of God. If they did, then God would bless them far more with the right kinds of things.

The fourth ground is good ground, but even then, this ground only have one third produce a hundredfold. I believe this ground has to be tended to more than anything so that we have the greatest harvest possible. Those that produce a hundredfold will find that it isn't money that motivates them. It isn't success that motivates them. Their motivation is to only do what God has called them to do no matter what the cost may be. This alone gives them satisfaction because they were God pleasers and not man pleasers.

We each are given a choice as to what to do with the seed sown. We are told to break up the "fallow ground" so that seed can grow. This means it starts with us. We must remove the thorns, thistles, rocks, stones, and be determined to hear the word of God and then act on it.

There will be a day that each of us will stand before God. We will be asked what we did with what He gave us. There will be no excuses on that day. God is a "know it all" and knows all that we have done and have not done. I pray that you make the right choices and let His word grow in you and bring forth a tremendous harvest so one day you will hear, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter into your rest."