

The Parables of Jesus

“The Gardener and His Garden”

Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23

August 11, 2019

A Worship Series for the Summer of ‘19

Matthew 13

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.

⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, ⁶ but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear. . . .”

¹⁸ “Hear then the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.

²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. ²³ As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”



“Rock-Breaking Cherry Tree”
(400 yrs old, in Japan)



“Pando”: The world’s largest living organism

A Clonal Colony in Utah of 47,000 Aspen Trees,
all interlinked and all stemming from one ancestor.

I am more sinful than I dare face:

Romans 5:6,8

For while we were still weak (“helpless”), at the right time Christ died for the ungodly (“destitute”)... ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

I am more loved than I could possibly dream:

1 John 4:10

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us
and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Jeremiah 31:3b

I have loved you with an everlasting love;

I am more fruitful than I could ever imagine:

Romans 8:3

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors
through him who loved us.

Romans 8:11

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus
from the dead dwells in you...

I am more dependent than I could ever know:

Colossians 3:3

For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

The Finished Work of Christ

John 19:30
“It Is Finished!”

JESUS PLUS NOTHING

There is nothing you can do to make God love you any more.

There is nothing you can do to make God love you any less.

The Soils

What We Think

It begins with our ears
and mind.

Who is God?

Who am I?



What We Know

It grows deeper into
what we believe.

Do I know Jesus, or just
know about Jesus?



What We Do

We will always “do
what we believe.”

Knowing Jesus’ love
grows into loving Him
and loving others.

Soil #1 - Hardened



Intellectually and
Historically don't
believe in Jesus

Spiritually don't
believe Jesus is truly
God in the flesh

Functionally don't
believe I need him
or that he matters.

Romans 1:21

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Soil #2 - Shallow



“immediately receives it with joy,
²¹ yet he has no root in himself”

I'll follow Jesus, as long as I stay
on my spiritual mountaintop
and there's no real cost...as long
as it's really all about me.



FEELING

The ups and down
of how you feel
about Jesus. Like
fruit, it's seasonal.

FAITH

Head and Heart belief
and attachment to
Jesus, resulting in
loving Him and others

FACT

The unchangeable
Truth of our need,
Jesus' sacrificial love
and his redemption
and adoption of us.

Soil #3 - Thorny



1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

When the glimmer of this World overshadows the beauty of The Gospel.

- *Success overshadows* _____
- *Others' Approval overshadows* _____
- *Comfort overshadows* _____

Soil #4 - Fruitful



Mark 4:31-32

(The Kingdom of God) is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, ³² yet when it is sown it grows up and **becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."**

1 John 3:14

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers.

Soil Analysis

Find each soil in your heart...

Hardened

Where in my life do I forget the love and finished-ness of Jesus?
What parts of the Gospel just don't resonate or apply to my real life?

Soil Analysis

Find each soil in your heart...

Tried

When things get hard, do I blame God?
Forget the Truth that God is for me and loves me?

Soil Analysis

Find each soil in your heart...

Tempted

What shiny parts of the world woo me away from Jesus?
Where do I believe (and act) like _____ will satisfy me more?

Soil Analysis

Find each soil in your heart...

Fertile

Celebrate where I really do see and respond to the glory of Jesus.
How can I love the way I have been loved?

But why am I still so “unfruitful”?
What’s wrong with the soil of my heart?

“Some of us consider leaving the road to heaven not mainly because we are tempted by the world, nor because we are tried by suffering, but because we are just plain tired. Tired of daily self-denial. Tired of taking two steps forward and one step back. Tired of walking on a road that feels endless, toward a city we cannot see.”
- *DesiringGod.com*

Here is the Good News: it’s all about the Seed and the Gardener.
The Soil’s job is to say “Here Am I. Send me” (Isaiah 6:8)

He is the Gardener. I am the Soil.

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.
I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

John 15:4-5

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

1 Corinthians 3:7

So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

John 12:23-25

And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵ Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.



The Church is Pando:

- We all stem from One Seed
- We are beautiful individually, and more beautiful together
 - By the Gardener's Nourishment, we Multiply
 - By the Gardener's Grace, we Nourish Others
- By the Gardener's Power, we are Unconquerable

