

Way of Jesus 6- The Word, the World, and the Worries

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Big Idea

The word of the kingdom is powerful, but hardened hearts, shallow roots, crowded lives, and deceptive riches can keep it from bearing fruit.

The seed is good. The question is the soil.

1. The Word Can Stay on the Surface

Matthew 13:3-4, 18-19

Some seed falls on the path. The ground is hard, so the seed remains exposed and is quickly taken away.

Jesus says this represents the person who hears “the word of the kingdom” but does not understand it.

Biblical understanding is more than knowing what the words mean. It reaches the heart, reshapes our loves and loyalties, and changes the way we live.

Key line: You can be around the Word without being under the Word.

Key line: The most dangerous kind of hard heart may be the one that still knows all the words.

2. The Word Can Spring Up Without Roots

Matthew 13:5-6, 20-21

Some seed falls on shallow soil over rocky ground. It grows quickly but has no depth. When the heat comes, it withers.

Jesus says this represents those who receive the word with joy but have no root. When following Jesus becomes difficult or costly, they fall away.

Joy and spiritual experiences can be beautiful beginnings, but lasting discipleship requires deep roots.

The Way of Jesus 6 “The Word, the World, and the Worries”

Listener Outline

Roots grow through ordinary faithfulness: prayer, Scripture, worship, Christian community, and obedience.

Key line: Quick growth is not the same as deep roots.

Key line: Excitement is a beautiful beginning, but it is a terrible root system.

3. The Word Can Be Choked by Crowded Lives

Matthew 13:7, 22

Some seed falls among thorns. The seed grows, but other things grow alongside it until the plant is choked.

Jesus identifies the thorns as:

- The cares of the world
- The deceitfulness of riches

The greatest threats to fruitfulness are not always obviously sinful things. They may be good things that have grown wild and become ultimate things.

Family, work, money, schedules, activities, comfort, security, politics, and success can all crowd the word when they occupy the place that belongs to King Jesus.

Key line: The thorns do not have to hate the seed. They only have to crowd it.

Key line: For our kind of people, the word may not be choked by hatred of Jesus, but by a crowded life full of good things that were never meant to be king.

Key line: Wealth deceives us by promising to be a shelter, then quietly becoming a master.

4. The Word Bears Fruit in a Heart That Understands

Matthew 13:8-9, 23

Some seed falls on good soil and produces an abundant harvest.

Jesus says the good soil is the person who:

Hears → Understands → Bears Fruit

Biblical understanding is not merely explaining the Word correctly. It is receiving the word of the kingdom deeply enough that it produces visible kingdom life.

Fruit includes:

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Listener Outline

- Repentance
- Mercy
- Faithfulness
- Forgiveness
- Generosity
- Humility
- Truthfulness
- Endurance
- Compassion
- Love for enemies
- Allegiance to Jesus
- Participation in his mission

The amount of fruit may vary, but good soil bears fruit.

Key line: Understanding is hearing that reaches the heart and comes out as fruit.

Key line: The goal of hearing the Word is not information collected, but fruit produced.

Closing Summary

The Parable of the Sower is not primarily an invitation to diagnose everyone else.

It is an invitation to allow the Word to examine us.

- Where has the ground become hard?
- Where are the roots shallow?
- What good things have grown wild?
- What worries are choking trust?
- What is wealth promising?
- Where is the word of the kingdom bearing fruit?

The Sower still sows.

The word of the kingdom is still good.

Jesus is still speaking.

The seed is good. The question is the soil.