

The Parable of the Sower

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Date: 22 October 2023

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[0:00] Amen. Good morning. It's been a blessing being with you and really enjoyed ourselves. It's been great. Well, it's Sunday school hour. So take your Bible and we're going to study it this morning. I want you to turn to three places. So turn to Matthew chapter 13, Matthew 13, Mark 4, Mark 4, and then with your third hand, Luke 8, Luke 8.

Now we possess a good book. This King James Bible is a good book. And I want to look at the reason why I had you turn to Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8 is because in each one of the Gospels, it's going to give you the same parable. And I'm sure you've noticed that when you're reading your Bible. And the particular parable that we're going to look at is the parable of the sower. And I want to look at that. We're going to draw some things from it. We're going to learn how the Lord compares, how we compare scripture with scripture. And then we'll also take some real practical application from it that we can apply to our own lives.

So we'll start in Matthew 13. It says in verse 1, the same day when Jesus out of the house and sat by the seaside and great multitudes were gathered together unto him so that he went into a ship and sat and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, behold, a sower went forth to sow. Father, bless your word this morning in Jesus name. Amen.

Now, verse 4 says, and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside and the fowls came and devoured them up. Now, you know, this parable, the sower, I'm assuming you've read it before. If if you haven't read it, you've definitely heard of it. It is a pretty famous parable. Now, hold Matthew 13. And then so we can get our bearings. Look at Mark 4. Now, I'm not going to turn to every single passage. I want you to be familiar and have them open. I'll tell you where some of I'll say, for example, I'll say, well, Mark says this. Luke says this. And if you have them, you can turn to them and you can check it out. Make sure I'm not lying to you. Now, in Mark 4, verse 1, it says, and he began again to teach by the seaside. And there was gathered unto him a great multitude so that he entered into a ship and sat in the sea and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things by parables and said unto them in his doctrine, hearken, behold, there went out a sower to sow. So you can see that in Mark chapter 4, this is the same exact parable that we've read in

Matthew 13. Now, notice verse 2 says he said unto them in his doctrine. So the first thing I want to point out to you by way of introduction is we're not telling you today, I'm not going to tell you what the Baptists teach. I'm not going to tell you what the Methodists teach. We're going to talk about what does the Bible say? Many of you are told this, you'll go out and you'll witness and you'll say, well, that's what you Baptists believe. You ever heard them say something like that?

[3:45] Uh, the Bible says that the gospel, the gospel is this, is that Christ Jesus died for our sins. And then what are the next words? According to the scriptures. Notice it's not according to the Baptists. It's not according to the Methodists, not according to the Presbyterians. It's according to the scriptures. So what we're looking at is we're looking at his doctrine. They accused the apostles of this in the book of Acts. They said, this is your doctrine. And they're doing the same thing today, but this is not our doctrine. It's what the Bible says is his doctrine. All right. So notice now let's go over to Luke eight. Let's get our bearings there. So you can kind of see where we are. Uh, Luke, uh, eight, Luke eight verse four. And when much people were gathered together and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable, a sower

went out to sow his seed. Okay. So now you know the location in each passage of where the parable of the sower takes place. Now this parable is a very important parable. As a matter of fact, I personally think that it's probably one of the most important parables. If you're going to get started in studying the parables, I think you just, I think you should start with this one. I think this is the one to start with. Now, why is that? Look over and Mark.

So like I said, we're going to flip back and forth. Look at Mark chapter four. And when the disciples come to Jesus Christ, so we'll, we'll start in verse four. We'll read down to verse 13.

Verse 13 is going to be our answer of why this is the most important, but let's at least get the parable under our belt. Verse four says, and it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the wayside. The fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground where it had not much earth. And immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up, it was scorched. And because it had no root, it withered away. Some fell among thorns and the thorns grew up and choked it and it yielded no fruit and other fell on good ground and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased and brought forth some 30 and some 60 and some 100. And he said unto them, he that had ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was alone, they, that were with him, uh, they, they, that were about with him, about him. Sorry, I keep reading wrong about him with the 12 asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, unto you, it is given to know the mysteries, the mystery of the kingdom of God, but unto them that are without all these things are done in parables that seeing they may see and not perceive and hearing. They may hear and not understand lest at any time they should be converted and their sins should be forgiven them. And he said unto them, no, ye not this parable. Now that's important. Jesus Christ is asking them, no, ye not this parable. You might put it like this. You don't know this parable. Well, Lord, that's why they're asking. Now watch his response to the question that he asks. Know ye not this parable? And how then will you know all parables? This is why I say, I believe this parable is one of the most important parables. If you're going to start learning the parables, you ought to start with this one, because the Lord Jesus Christ said in the text that know ye not this parable.

[7:28] If you don't know this parable, then how then will you know all parables? So this parable is a really important parable to get a grasp on. This is what I like to call a gateway parable. And what Jesus Christ is about ready to do is he's about ready to show you his method of interpretation. How do we interpret the scriptures? How do we interpret it? Well, there's a few things in this text that we got to get straight right off the bat. Notice there's a seed. There's a seed says in, uh, look, if you, uh, in Matthew 13, it says in verse, uh, in verse, uh, four, and when he sowed some seeds fell by the wayside. So there's a seed. Well, what is, what's the seed? What is the seed that's being sowed?

One day I was new in the ministry and I had a guy who wanted to learn the Bible. And so he said, I would like to meet with you because I want to learn the Bible. And I was so excited. I'd only been in the ministry less than six months. And I was super excited because somebody wanted to learn the Bible. Can I tell you this? Not everybody who wants to learn the Bible actually wants to learn the Bible. As a matter of fact, there are some folks who they don't really care to actually learn the Bible. Here's what happened. So we're sitting in Jack in a box. I had taken time off from work. We're sitting in Jack in a box and I began to show him the scriptures and I'm going through it. I'm showing him this scripture and this scripture. And it keeps getting frustrated with me.

And he keeps saying, well, you keep pointing out what the, what, what it says, but I want to know what is the, what is the meaning? What does it mean? I said, what are you talking about? He said, I want to know what the meaning, what is the real meaning of it? And so I flipped open my Bible and he, he flipped open his Bible and he pointed to the book of Acts and it has to do with, remember the, the, the storm, the Eurachlodon that came up. Do you guys remember the storm?

No? Yeah. Remember that storm? Right. Okay. So then I remember there was a boat in that storm and that, and they were getting ready to lower the boat. And then Paul says, if these guys escape, nobody's going to be saved. And so they cut the boat down and it fell into the water. So the word boat is in the text. Well, about that time, he points at the word boat and he says, what does that

mean? I said, boat. He says, yes. What does it mean? And I said, it's like a, it's like a boat. It's like a dinghy. It's like a life raft. It's, you know, it's, it's not the ship part. It's a boat. And he threw up his hands in the air and he goes, that's what I mean.

You keep just taking it as what it says. Literally. And I said, fine. It's the seven heads of the dragon and revelation. And this has to do with the antichrist kingdom that must be cut loose.

[10:15] Now, you know what he wanted? He wanted me to come up with some weird thing like that. How many have ever been listening to somebody and they'll say, now what this means is, and then they give you something off the wall and you're like, what are you talking about?

I don't even get that from that. So I am going to give you the interpretation of what the seed is. You ready? This is deep. Look at Luke chapter eight. Now I have to see this first one. I'll give you a chance to go there. You should have all three, have all three, but look specifically at Luke eight and verse 11. You ready for the deep meaning of what the seed is? Here you go. This is, this is, this is deep. Now the parable is this. The seed is, what is it class? The word of God. Now you see what just happened? The scripture interpreted itself. Why is this parable important? Because Jesus Christ is showing you how you interpret scripture. You interpret scripture with scripture.

My brain and your brain is not good enough. It's what sayeth the scripture. All right, now we got this down. You're in Luke eight. Who's the sower? Luke eight. Notice verse five, a sower went out to sow his seed. That's interesting. His seed. Well, I know what the seed is. The seed is the word of God because that's what it told us. And it said his seed. All right. What is, who is this sower? Look down in verse, uh, let's see here. Oh, the seeds, the word of God. Look over to, uh, I just lost my spot.

Sorry. Look over to Matthew 13, Matthew 13. Now it's his seed. Now watch this. Watch this. Luke Matthew chapter 13. Now you got to see this one too. Matthew 13 and notice verse 37.

Now what I want to point out to you is this is a different parable. This is not the same parable as the parable of the sower, but Jesus Christ is consistent in his interpretation. Matthew 13, verse 37. He answered and said unto them, he that soweth the good seed is the son of man.

[12:28] So as you start to read throughout the parables, Jesus Christ being consistent and you read about this man. We know who the son of man is. That's a reference to Jesus Christ. So Luke eight makes it clear. It's his seed. So in Matthew 13, verse 37, even though it's a different parable, Jesus Christ is consistent in his interpretation. Are you starting to see the connection? How he's saying you understand this parable, how then you're going to understand all parables. Now he went out to sow his seed. So how exactly does he sow his seed? Well, if you're still there in Matthew 13, Matthew 13, notice verse 19. So verse 19, this has to do with the sower sowing the seed.

When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom. Notice down in verse 20, but he that receives seed in stony place is the same as he that heareth the word. Notice down in verse 22. He also that receives seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word. Verse 23, but he that receives seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word. So sowing the seed has to do with putting it out so someone can hear the word of God. So that's what sowing the seed is. My Bible tells me. So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. So when he sows the seed, he's putting it out there so people can hear.

Do you know what's happening this morning? This morning, the seed is going out. It's being sown. It's going out. Now, the last thing we got to figure out is we got to figure out what is the ground. So we know what the seed is. What's the seed? The word of God, right? We know the sower is. So Lord Jesus Christ, the son of man, we know what the sowing is. It's hearing the word. So out goes the word. He speaks the word out goes the word. They hear the word. Now, what's the ground? And this is the important part, which will then bring us to our four points here in the text. So notice here in the text in verse 23 of Matthew 13, Matthew 20, Matthew 13 and verse 23. But he that receives seed into the good ground is he that hear it, the word and understandeth it, which also bringeth forth fruit.

So notice he received seed into the good ground. Now comparing scripture with scripture, go over to Luke chapter eight, Luke eight and notice verse 15, but that on the good ground, same exact thing.

[15:09] Same thing we read over Matthew 13. Now we're comparing scripture with scripture, but that on the good ground, are they which in an honest and good what? Ah, so what's the ground? It's the heart.

You see, all you did, you really didn't even need me. You could have just read this yourself, compared it, and you could have seen for yourself exactly what it was because all we did is read it. That's why the Bible says that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. That's why I challenge my people, read your Bible, see it, check it out for yourself. See if it's so because if you're saved, you got the same Holy Spirit living inside of you and he bears witness to his word and he'll tell you exactly what it is. So now we have understood the meaning because the Lord told us the meaning. The seed is the word of God. The sower is the son of man. We know what the sowing is. It's hearing the word and we know what the ground is. It's the heart. So then let's make application because in the text, there are four different grounds and the same seed goes out and falls on four different types of ground or four different types of hearts. There's nothing wrong with the seed. The seed is going to produce fruit, but it must fall on good ground. So now let's get the practical. And that is this morning when the seed goes out, when you come to church and you hear the preaching, your preacher is preaching, there's nothing wrong with the seed. What type of ground is the seed going to fall on? Because if it falls on good ground, that's when it brings forth fruit.

The other types of ground, there's problems with them. So let's find out, shall we? All right, let's go through this. We're going to go through it quickly now. I'm not going to take as much time to flip through the passages. I've shown you how we find the text. If you want to try to find it, I'll just tell you where it is and you can find it. Now, the first one that we found, we found those that were by the wayside. That's what Matthew 13 says. It's those that are by the wayside. And what happens is, is when the seed goes out, the seed falls by the wayside. Down come the fowls of the air. They snatch it away.

And, uh, and, and these people, when the seed is snatched away, they don't understand it. They're not converted. And it says, lest they should be saved in the book of Luke. Now I would like to compare this to those that are lost, those that are lost. What's interesting is in Luke chapter eight, it talks about when the sower sows the seed, it talks about the seed and it was trodden down.

[18:01] It was trodden down. You know what? We're trodden as a step on it. When somebody, when you trod on something, when you walk on something, you don't really have as much care for it. If you have fine china, uh, you'll set it up on a, on a shelf because you want to take care of it. You don't just put it on the ground where it might accidentally get stepped upon. So these people are rather careless with the word of God. They don't really have a, they don't have any regard for it. And they trod down the word of God. In the old Testament, there's Dagon, the fish God. Dagon gets knocked down.

And if you remember, I think it was the second time he knocked down, his hands were touching the threshold. You remember that? And the Bible says that when the, when the priest came in, when they came in, they wouldn't tread anymore on the threshold. You know why? Because they thought that threshold, something was special about that threshold and they didn't want to tread on the threshold. People don't think anything special about the word of God anymore. I mean, half the Christians don't think anything special about the word of God. And they just, these guys here in this text, they trod on the word of God. You know, the Bible says they did that to Jesus Christ.

In the book of Hebrews, it says of how much sore punishment. Suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden underfoot the son of God and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing. That's what they said about Jesus Christ. They didn't care about him.

They didn't care. They just trod him under. Just trod, kind of like they do with his word. But I tell you, the Lord Jesus Christ will have a last laugh because one day when he comes back, he'll tread the wine press and he'll trod them. Now it says in the text, in the first, the first group that they take the seed is trodden. But in Matthew 13, verse 19, we get a definition of what the fowls of the air are.

Matthew 13, 19, it says the fowls of the air are the wicked one. In Mark 4, verse 15, it says that the fowls of the air are Satan. And in Luke 8, verse 12, it says the fowls of the air are the devil. Well, that should be very clear what that is. Doesn't he not take any, any guess what that is at all?

[20:03] That's the devil. That's an unclean spirit, an unclean spirit. In your Bible, many times birds are likened to spirits. For example, a dove, you know what that is? It's likened to the Holy Spirit.

At the baptism of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit descended like a dove. There were two birds that Noah let out of the ark. One was a raven, which is an unclean bird. And the other was a dove, which is a clean bird. The raven went out. He went to and fro. Notice those words. He went to and fro, kind of like the devil over in Job. He went to and fro. He never came back to the ark. The dove went out and the dove went out. He couldn't find a place to rest his foot. And so he came back to the ark and then he let him out the second time. And that's when he came back with the olive leaf in his mouth. Now, you know what that is? The unclean spirit, that raven goes out. He found a place to land because there's a bunch of dead bodies out there. He found a place to land. But for the dove, it wasn't a clean. It wasn't clean. You know what the Holy Spirit likes? He likes clean places. He likes clean places. You know what the devil likes? He likes unclean places. That's what he likes. He likes unclean places. So the first group here, the unclean spirit comes down, and it just snatches that seed away. Now, what's interesting is in all three passages, it uses the word devoured. So the the fowls of the air came down and devoured the seed. In all three texts, it says it devoured the fowls, devoured the seed. You know why that's important?

Because in first Peter chapter five, verse eight, it says that the devil is as a roaring lion walking about seeking whom he may devour. You see how you're connecting those words together?

[21:49] Now, these are lost and there there's interference. The interference comes in Mark chapter four, verse 15. It says that the interference is immediately. It's immediately is when the interference takes place. You ever tried to witness to somebody? And as you're witnessing to someone, you get them right down to the point where you're telling them that they're a sinner and on their way to hell. Right about that time, all of a sudden up walks somebody and interrupts the conversation.

You ever had that? Or all of a sudden the phone rings and it just interrupts the conversation or they have to go or something. Why is that? Why is there interference when you're about ready to tell a soul how they can be saved from hell? I'll tell you, when you're out there witnessing, there's a spirit world and the devil is very active and you and I may not care about souls, but the devil does. He don't want to lose one. He don't want to lose one. Now, what I thought was interesting in this passage, I'm going to look in Matthew 13 and if you could go there with me, Matthew 13.

Verse 19, it says, when anyone heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart.

Now, here's some people, they hear the word, but the Bible says that Jesus interpreting his own parable, he's the master and he says he understandeth it not. I thought, well, that's not fair.

That's not fair. They just don't understand it. But then I said, I wonder why they don't understand it. And so I begin to back up in the passage. Why don't they understand the text? I mean, if somebody doesn't understand instructions, we're not really too hard on them because they just didn't understand what the instructions are. But if there's a reason why they don't understand, we should find out what the reason is. So let's back up. So you're in Matthew chapter 13, verse 13. Therefore speak I to them in parables because they seeing, see not and hearing they hear not. Neither do they understand. Well, yeah, Lord. I mean, you said they don't understand it.

[24:05] I totally get that. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith by hearing, you shall hear and shall not understand and seeing you shall see and shall not perceive.

Well, yeah, they don't understand it. They don't perceive it. They see it, but they, they hear it. They see it. They don't understand it. They don't perceive it. They don't know what's going on. Why, Lord? Why don't these people understand? Verse 15 for this people's heart is waxed gross and their ears are dull of hearing and their eyes. Watch it. They have closed lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and should understand with their heart and should be converted and I should heal them. You know why they don't understand? Because when the truth is presented, notice their reaction. It says about their eyes, they close their eyes.

Do you see that in the text? Their eyes, they have closed. It says about their ears are dull of hearing and it says their heart is waxed gross. Let me try to explain this. All right. So their eyes, they have

closed. You know, it's like close your eyes. Kind of like when the preacher is droning on and or you ever been there and you're trying to pay attention to something and you're just your eyes like that. You know, these people close their eyes. Imagine if I told you, I said, hey, do you see that piano? And imagine you went, nope, I don't see it. What am I going to tell you?

I'm going to say, well, of course you can't see it. You closed your eyes. And then you saw you say, okay, okay, okay. I still can't see it. And I say, well, of course you can't see it because you put your hands in front of your face. And so then I say, look again. And you go, okay, my eyes are open. My hands are not in front of my face, but I still cannot see the piano.

By the third time is the person I'm talking to. Do they really want to see the piano? Probably not. I would say around this time, they're doing everything they can to actually not see it. So their eyes, they have closed. Their ears are dull of hearing. Some of you have your ears dull of hearing. Maybe you see somebody listening to really loud music. You say to them, man, you know, that's not good because it's going to, it's going to hurt your hearing. Your hearing is going to go down. I worked in the shipyard for many years and work in the shipyard. You get there and on those metal holes, you have to have hearing protection in. If you don't have hearing protection in, especially you get those welders on the other side, you know, bam, they hit that steel bulkhead. That's loud. And so you have to have hearing protection in. And some of the guys didn't like wearing earplugs, you know, so they would kind of pull them out of their ears a little bit, wouldn't put them in. And then we'd have these hearing tests. You go do these hearing tests.

[27:11] And you guys ever done those before you ever done a hearing test? So they have these faint little sounds and you have to click the button, right? You've seen that before. And so you click it. And then what happens is some of the guys over time, because they didn't take time to protect their ears and allowed all this stuff to come in, they, their hearing started to go down. I would venture to say in this country, the word of God has gone out for years and years and years and years and they've heard it and they've heard it and they've heard it. But now their ears, their hearing is just dulling. It's just dulling.

I mean, it seems like you can't, you try to, I'm in my town and I'm preaching on the street. I don't mind if somebody gives me a thumbs up. I don't mind if they flip me off. Do you know what bothers me more than anything else? The indifference.

That bugs me. I mean, at least like, you know, okay, at least I'm getting something, you know, I can work with that. Or at least smile. Yeah, I can get that. But the indifference.

And I've noticed there's an indifference in my town towards the word of God. So you know what? The reason why they didn't understand it lay on them. The Lord had given them chance at their chance at their chance.

But there was something wrong with the ground. And so when the seed went and fell by the wayside, it was just ripe. And down came the fowls of the air and snatched that thing away.

[28:37] You know what there is right now? Right now there is, as I remember hearing Dr. Ruckman say numerous times, between my mouth and your ear, there are a spirit in the air just trying to snatch that word away.

Now, you know what these people are doing? They've rejected the truth. How about you? How is your approach to the truth? Here in this text, it has everything to do with your heart and the way your heart approaches the truth.

Now, this is a good practical example for those saved as well as those lost. How is your approach to the truth? Have you taken a soil sample lately? Now, notice next of all those that lacked.

So if you're in Matthew chapter 13, Matthew 13, you see verse 5 and verse 6. There are those that lacked. There are those that lacked. We find out, if you look in verse 20 and 21 of Matthew 13, it says, But he that receives seed in the stony places, the same as he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it.

Yet hath he no root in himself, but doth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. Now, notice he received the word, and the Bible says, Anon with joy.

[29:52] Now, all you've got to do is cross-reference that with Mark chapter 4 and verse 16, and anon means immediately, because that's what

it tells you. And so that's an easy way to figure out the definition of the word. Let's go over to Mark 4, and you'll see it there.

You know what these people are doing? They are excited for the preaching. I mean, they hear it, and they're like, Yeah! Man, that's good. I enjoyed that. That was great. That's the best message I ever heard in my life.

That was amazing! And they're just excited. They get in a song service. They're excited. They read their Bible. They're excited. Exciting. You ever met somebody like that? Everything's just exciting. After a while, it's like, Whoa, calm down, man.

Everything's not exciting. Just calm down, you know. But then when tribulation, persecution, or affliction, or temptation comes their way because of the word, they are offended, and they fall away. Now, this is very applicable to today. You take old John. John, he calls himself in Revelation 1 and verse 9. He calls himself our companion in tribulation.

[30:52] Now, Christians will go through tribulation. They will not go through the great tribulation, but they'll go through tribulation in the sense of personal trouble in your life.

And you'll go through that. Trouble is coming. No preacher, no Bible-believing preacher that I know of wants to deceive his people into making them think that all the Christian life is a bed of roses. Because it's not. There is going to be trouble in your life. Now, the Bible says that this seed fell on stony ground. It also says that there was no depth.

And in another passage, it says there's no deepness of earth. Things do not grow well in that type of environment. If there's no depth there, they just do not grow well.

You know what the problem was? In Luke chapter 8, it said that this this ground lacked moisture. Luke 8 verse 6, it tells you that it lacked moisture. You can't grow things very well.

[31:51] If you were just to walk out on tons of rocks and there's certain soil where things grow well. And if there's very little dirt, things don't grow well there.

And there is no deepness in these people and there's no root in themselves, the Bible says. So when along comes this tribulation, they lack moisture and then they're gone.

They're gone. Now, when you first start growing things, you may not introduce soil right away. You may not introduce dirt. But one thing you absolutely desperately need is you need moisture.

You need to water it. You ever tried to grow something just from a seed? Some people take a seed and they'll put it in a wet paper towel and they'll fold it over like that. And then after a while, the thing will start to sprout and begin to grow.

Christian, this book is likened to water. If you don't get the word of God in you, your heart will become hard and you'll have no deepness of earth. It'll get stony and rocky.

[32:52] You need moisture. And if you don't have moisture, things are not going to grow. And when tribulation comes along, out they go. I remember I had people come to church and I remember there was this one young man.

He was real excited. He wanted to learn all the Bible that I could like teach me the whole entire Bible. In three months. I don't even know the whole entire Bible. You ain't got to learn the whole Bible in three months.

But somehow they think that, you know, I'm Elon Musk and we can give you like a brain chip and somehow download this in a neural link and give you the Bible. But, you know, that's not how it happens.

And what I noticed, he was real excited, real excited. And then all of a sudden along came trouble. And he's just gone. He didn't lose his salvation. But because there's no deepness, out he went.

Now, the next one is those that lusted. This is the one that deals with the thorns. They deal with the thorns. Now, I found out that there are certain types of vines or ivy that can choke a plant.

[33:54] That's what it says about it, that they choked the plant. They choked the word. They choked the plant. And they end up becoming unfruitful. They wither away. I read this off the gardeningchannel.com.

It says, like other plants that are categorized as invasive, the English ivy or heterohelix, without the checks and balances of its native environment, becomes a destructive force in nature. English ivy can and will destroy everything in its path.

It will smother other plants as it crawls over the ground and forms a dense covering. It can squeeze the life right out of even the largest and most mature trees as it climbs. It will vine its way under the siding of homes and coerce its way into the foundation until the walls and floors are left crumbling. The Bible talks about these thorns. They spring up and they choke the word. The thorns are defined in Matthew 13 as care of this world, deceitfulness of riches.

In Mark 4, it's defined as cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, lusts of other things. And in Luke 8, it's described as cares, riches, and pleasures of this life.

[35:01] An example of this would be Demas. The Bible says, Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world. Now, I want to tell you, my friends, there's a lot of cares. There's a lot of things in this life.

But if you don't put the proper checks and balances on your job, if you don't put the proper checks and balances on your banking account, if you don't put your proper checks and balances on just the cares and troubles of this life and the pleasures of this life, it'll choke you out.

It'll choke you out. No one's strong enough to handle it. They're just not. No one is. I'm not. You're not. The cares of this world. Some men put so much emphasis on their job, their identity becomes tied up in their job.

You know, I had learned at an early age. I was working and I saw there was this fella and I worked down at a shipyard, a place called Nasco. It's a pretty, if you go to San Diego, everybody knows it. And I was working down at the shipyard. They had this retirement party for this guy. And they named a room after him. You know, they named a room after him and they had this retirement party. And when he walks away, everything he had was in a box.

[36:06] I don't want my life to end like that. Some guys, their whole entire identity is in their job. They lose their job. They lose their identity.

And this guy, everything he had just fit there in a box. You know what that was? That was the cares of this world. Yes, you got to make money. And yes, you should be the very best at your job.

You're a Christian, right? How many are saved? Amen. All right. You ought to be the best. They ought to see, oh, that guy, he's a hard worker. He's a Christian. You ought to do that. But this is not all there is.

You know what you do with the cares of this world? The Bible says, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you. Now, last of all, and I'm done. Notice the good ground. The good ground. Now, if you would, please look at Luke chapter 8.

Luke 8. Good ground doesn't just happen. Doesn't just happen. Somebody had to work at it. You got to spend some time working at it. Now, Luke chapter 8, verse 15. It says, but that on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience.

[37:10] Good ground doesn't just happen. Somebody had to work at it. Now, the Christian knows that the preparations of the heart and man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. Now, there are some preparations that you can do physically, like developing your mind or picking up your Bible and reading it.

But there is a spiritual element to this as well that takes place in your heart. It is good ground that is needed to bear fruit. Good ground doesn't just happen.

It must be prepared. It must be prepared. This morning, you expect me to be prepared to preach to you. Every Sunday when you show up, you expect your pastor to be prepared to preach to you. I would like to put a challenge before you. Did you prepare yourself? Did you prepare yourself? To hear the word that was put forth? As we have seen, the seed is the word of God.

But it's only there's nothing wrong with the seed, but it's only going to produce fruit depending on what type of ground it finds in you. What kind of heart is it going to find?

[38:20] What type of soil? What type of ground? It says in Luke 8, they keep it and bring forth fruit with patience. Now, you know what you need to do? I realize the Lord has to do a work in the heart.

He has to do a work in the heart. And some of you know, have seen, look back in your life and can see that the work that the Lord has done in your heart. I mean, you've seen the trouble he's gone through. And sometimes, you know what you got to do with hard ground?

You got to break it up. And sometimes the Lord had to bring trouble in your life and break it up. He had to do that. You know what it says about this text? It says he brings forth fruit. And he says with patience.

I hate that word. That's a Christian cuss word. Bring forth fruit with patience. You're not going to bear fruit overnight. But it takes time. Some of you have only been here a couple years.

Some of you have been here many years. You know what you'll notice? You'll notice things just don't happen like that. It takes time. Give it time. But if you will stay yielded to the Lord, the Lord will work on the hearts.

[39:19] By the way, let him work on other people's hearts. You don't have to work on their heart. The Lord will work on their heart. So in conclusion, there are four types of soil that come from four types of hearts.

Another way to label them is the careless, the temporary, the worldly, and the sincere. This means that in this room there are four types of soil. Which one are you? Have you taken a soil sample lately?

Maybe you need to go to the one who knows your heart better than you do and ask him to take a soil sample and to work on the soil in your heart so that you can bring forth fruit.

Father, thank you for your word this morning. Bless this Sunday school hour in Jesus' name. Amen.