

While our main concern in this study is to take up the "*Practical Application*" of Christ's seven Kingdom Parables, nevertheless, one needs to consider the other truths as well. Therefore, the diagram in lesson one, showing the "*Prophetic*" aspects of these parables, is offered.

Notice that the first four parables were spoken to the "*multitudes*" on the seashore; the last three were spoken just to Jesus' disciples *within the house*. Hence, the first four parables gives the "*external*" view of the history of Christendom, and the last three parables speaks of that which is "*internal*" . . . the *spiritual*!

The first four parables are arranged in two pairs, the first pair given "*individual*" aspects of **things** - the wheat and tares. The second pair sets forth that which is *collective* and *corporate* work of the "*professing*" church- the mustard-tree and leaven.

The **first** parable shows a "*sowing*," while the **fifth** and **sixth** parables reveal the result of the corp. The **second** parable *also* shows a "*sowing*," and the third and fourth describes the harvest, which springs from this second sowing.

The first parable represents our Lord scattering the "*seed of the kingdom*," showing this sowing from a human point of view and forewarns of the various hindrances which renders most of the "*seed*" infertile. This first parable shows that, as a result of the opposition - [The *devil*, the *flesh* and the *world*] - most of the "*seed of the kingdom*" is either caught away, choked, or is barren as a result.

The **second** parable shows dual forces at work in Christendom, of these "*dual forces*" Matthew 13:24-25 states, "*The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.*" The picture drawn here is of Christ sowing His "*good seed*" and the Devil sowing his "*weeds*" together with the wheat. The enemy gets in and the crop is spoiled, because the Lord's servants were not watchful.

The "*weeds*" are detected, however! Verses 27-28 states, "*When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, **then** the weeds also appeared. The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'*"

The order is given that these "*weeds*" must **not** be removed, but rather they are allowed to "grow together with the wheat until the harvest time (Verses 28-30).

"An enemy did this, he replied'. The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?' 'No,' he answered, because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn."

The **third** parable carries us to the time when the outward character of "*professing Christianity*" undergoes a radical change. The little "*mustard seed*" developed into a **monstrosity** and produces that which gives shelter to the agents of the devil.

From a "**PROPHETIC REVELATION**" point of view, the **third** and **fourth** parables, with all probability, refer to the 3rd century when Constantine, the emperor of Rome, declared Christianity the "*state religion*," followed by the infiltration of the false cult of Babylon.

"Christianity," by all outward appearance, seemed to have a phenomenal growth during the third century; however, it becomes a "*freak*," an abnormality from what its intended purpose of growth was to be.

While the first two parables...[the parables of the Sower and the parable of the weeds]...predicts the "*outward*" pressures the church would face and the third parable... [The parable of the *Mustard Seed*] . . . shows the perversion of the Church's growth, the parable of "*yeast*" presents the "*inward*" corruption, which would take place.

The parable of the "*mustard seed*" depicts the **outward** corruption, however, there is something even more tragic. Into the "*pure meal*" of God's Word, a foreign element is stealthily introduced, designed to make the food of God's people lighter and more palatable, but, alas, it corrupts.

THESE FIRST FOUR PARABLES GIVE A SAD PICTURE OF
THE UNFAITHFULNESS OF MEN, HOWEVER, IN SPITE
OF ALL THE FAILURE OF HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY
AND SATAN'S OPPOSITION, GOD HAS BEEN SLOWLY,
BUT SURELY, WORKING OUT HIS ETERNAL PURPOSE!

The **fifth** and the **sixth** parables bring the gracious and blessed work of Christ, securing for Himself **TWO** objects, which are inexpressibly precious to Him, first, the "*treasure*" hid in the **field** and, second, "*pearl*" from the **sea**, which represent redeemed Israel and the Church of this present age.

Here we have the brighter side of things to come, in spite of Satan's divinely permitted success, Christ will yet rule in His kingdom.

In the **seventh**, and the last, parable the final destiny and outcome of the good and the bad is given.

REVIEWING, BRIEFLY, THE "**PROPHETIC REVELATION**" OF THESE PARABLES

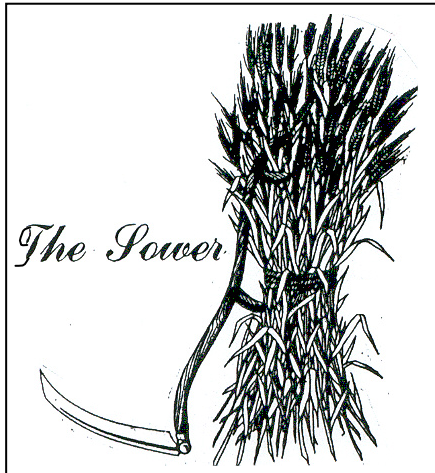
1. In the first parable, which is introductory, the earthly ministry of Christ is in view.
2. The second parable, describes what took place as far as Satan's work as the unwatchfulness of God's servants takes place.
3. The third parable shows how, (around the third century), the little "*mustard seed*" becomes a "*great tree*" pointing to the union of professing Christianity and the State.
4. The fourth parable shows *inward* corruption as a result of false teaching.

After the fourth parable there is a manifest break, Jesus leaves the "*seaside*" and the multitudes and then, after this break, come the next two parables.

5. The fifth parables shows how Christ unearthed a "treasure" hid in a field. He finds it, then He "hides" it again, and "sells all that He has, and buys the field," prophetically referring to Israel.
6. The sixth parable, the "priceless pearl," prophetically refers to the Church.
7. The seventh parable indicates the close of the age and God's dealing with right and wrong, good and evil.

While we need some knowledge of the "Prophetic Revelation" of these parables, our main concern in this study is the "Practical Application" of these parables to our lives.

THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PARABLES OF MATTHEW 13



1. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

This first parable deals with "*Human Accountability*," showing man's responsibility when he hears "the words of the kingdom." The question to be asked is, "What effect does the word of the kingdom have upon me, how do I respond to it?"

The Sower is the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. Verse 37 clearly states, "The One who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man."

The "seed" is the word of the kingdom. Verse 19 states, "Listen to what the parable of the Sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path."

Jesus tells us that there is **FOUR KIND OF SOIL** that the "words of the kingdom" falls on -- in the *believer's* heart.

(1) The Hard Hearted, (2) The Shallow Hearted, (3) The Half Hearted and (4) The Whole Hearted. Let's look at these different kinds of soil and see what they speak to us.

1. THE HARD HEARTED

THE TEACHING

"As He was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up." (Verse 4)

THE MEANING

"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path (Verses 18-19)

This first kind of soil that Jesus mentions is so hard, because of the traffic traveling over it and its exposure to the weather, that the seeds can not take root and grow. Notice that Jesus is referring, not to "*the word of the Gospel*"...[which bring salvation]... but rather, to the "*the word of the kingdom*"...which is the rule of God in the believer's life! Jesus teaches that this "*word of the kingdom*" does not get down into the believer's heart because of the hardness of the heart, due to so much traffic.

The kind of believer's heart, which Jesus refers to here, is likened to hardened soil, which must be broken and plowed...properly worked and harrowed...if it is ever to produce. Jesus pictures the seed [which is "*the word of the kingdom*"] remains on the surface and Satan is able to remove it from his heart.

2. THE SHALLOW HEARTED

THE TEACHING

"Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root" (Verses 5-6).

THE MEANING

"The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away" (Verses 20-21).

While the King James translation of verse 5 uses the words "*stony places*," the original Greek refers to "*bed-rock*," or soil that lacks any depth at all and leaves no room for the seed to put down its roots.

The kind of believer's heart Jesus refers to here is the person who receives the seed with real "*enthusiasm*," however, it is a **natural** "*joy*," and, because it is only natural enthusiasm, the seed...[that is, *the word of the kingdom*]...cannot put its roots deep and, as a result, when difficult times comes, it withers.

3. THE HALF HEARTED

THE TEACHING

"Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants" (Verse 7).

THE MEANING

The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful" (Verse 22).

This third picture Jesus gives of a believer's heart is a heart that is crowded with the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and Luke 4:19 adds, "*the lusts of other things*," and these things crowd out "*the word of the kingdom*" that it does not produce a spiritual harvest in that believer's life.

Here, in this third kind of soil that Jesus pictures, we see two crops struggling for mastery, and the result is that the "*word of the kingdom*" is choked. The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of other things take up the space that is required for the seed to grow.

NOTE:

1. The first kind of soil fails because of Satan's opposition
2. The second kind of soil fails because of the superficiality of the flesh.
3. The third kind of soil fails because of the attractions of the world.

Here Jesus gives the three reasons for barrenness as far as "God's rule" in the believer's life is concerned, namely, the Devil, the flesh and the world.

4. THE WHOLE HEARTED

THE TEACHING

"Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear" (Verse 8-9)

THE MEANING

"But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown" (Verse 23).

The "germination" of the seed of "the word of the kingdom" depends upon the reception of the soil. All soil considered is good soil, capable of producing a fruitful harvest, however, there was something that prevented it from being productive.

Jesus teaches in Verse 23 that the believer's responsibility is

- (1) to hear *the word of the kingdom*,
- (2) to understand "*the word of the kingdom*" and
- (3) to bear the fruit, the harvest, of *the word of the kingdom*. . .
(and not the Gospel of Salvation).

KINDS OF SOIL	FAULT	RESULT	CURE
1. Hard Soil	Not understand	Devil catch away	Understand the Word
2. Rocky Soil, Shallow	Human enthusiasm	Not last in persecution	Rooted in the Word
3. Thorny Soil, Half-Hearted	Worldly interests	Word is choked	Give Word room to grow in heart
4. Good Soil!	None!	PRODUCE!	