

'How to produce a great crop'

Introduction...

- **We are called to bear fruit that will remain...**

*John 15:16. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and **bear fruit—fruit that will last**—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.*

- **There is a principle of sowing and reaping...**

*Galatians 6:7-9. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time **we will reap a harvest** if we do not give up.*

A great crop is a Godly, fruitful & productive life.

Jesus taught from everyday life...

- **John 15:1-17. Vineyards, fruit, trees, pruning, gardner, etc**
- **Matthew 13:24. Wheat and weeds**
- **Matthew 13:31. Mustard seed, trees and birds.**
- **Matthew 13: 47. Nets and fish.**

Jesus taught about the unchanging principles God has embedded in His creation and in life.

The story of the sower and soil...

• In Luke 8:4-10 Jesus told the story.

Luke 8:4-10. While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: ⁵ “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. ⁶ Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.” When he said this, he called out, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.” ⁹ His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, “‘though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.’

• In Luke 8:11-15 Jesus gave us the meaning of the story.

Luke 8:11-15. “This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹² Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴ The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵ But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Observations about the story

□ **Four constants:**

- Same sower – the person doing the sowing
- Same seed – sown in all places and conditions
- Same sun – amounts of sun (Season)
- Same water – moisture for the plants

□ **Four variables:**

- **Four types of soil – hard, rocky, thorns, good.**

Lessons from the four soil types

1. Hard soil (road)

*V:12. **Those** along the path are the ones **who** hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from **their** hearts, so that **they** may not believe and be saved.*

• **The devil comes and takes away the word**

- Words of doubt, unbelief, ridicule, etc
- We chose what we believe – God's word or the devil's word.

*...so that **they** may not believe and be saved*

- **You and I have the choice to believe or not believe Gods Word.**

2. Rocky soil

V:13. Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.

- They believe and rejoice for a short season
- They have no root

...in the time of testing they fall away

3. Thorny soil

V: 14. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.

1 John 2:15-16. Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.

• They are choked:

- By life's worries – about shelter, provision, clothing, etc.

See: Matthew 6:25-34.

- By life's riches – Greed, envy, lust, selfishness, possessions, etc.
- By life's pleasures – Leisure, sport, gluttony, entertainment, alcohol, sex, drugs, etc.

...as they go...on their way... they do not mature.

4. Good soil

*V: 15. But the seed on good soil stands for **those** with a noble and good heart, **who** hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.*

- A noble and good heart – open, honest, transparent, humble, etc.
- Hear the word – receptive, eager, ready, etc.
- Retain the word – believe, hold on, obey, etc.
- Persevere – Patient, endure, steadfast, do not quit, etc.

*...**those**...**who**...produce a crop.*

Some important observations...

There are four constants:

- Sower – Seed – Sun – Water!

There are four variables:

- Hard soil – Rocky soil – Thorny soil – Good soil!
- **Jesus clearly uses pronouns to describe each of the four variables soil types.**
 - The pronouns reveal the variables.
 - What controls the variables?
 - You and me: Our believing, our heart response, our choices, etc!

This teaches us that our conscious and personal choices & responses produce our soil type

Summary...

- **God has called us to produce a crop – to be Godly & fruitful.**
- **Our soil type will determine our fruitfulness.**

‘Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear!’

- **We must be ‘tuned in to hear’!**
- **You and I are responsible for our soil type.**
 - **We cannot ‘blame others’ for our ‘soil type’.**

A Challenge and an Opportunity...

- **What is your long term trajectory? (Flight path)**
 - **Where will you be in 5, 10, 20 years in your fruitfulness?**
- **You can make an adjustment today!**

You can produce a great crop!