

Don't Abandon Ship: Stay the Course

Scripture: Matthew 13:1-9 (NIV)

¹ That same day, Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake.

² Such large crowds gathered around Him that He got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore.

³ Then He told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed.

⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up.

⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow.

⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root.

⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants.

⁸ Still, other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop – a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown.

⁹ Whoever has ears, let them hear."

I. Previous Sermon

A. The Nature of the Wilderness (physical, emotional, and spiritual conditions)

B. The Temptations (physical duress, worship and praise, and blasphemy)

1. The body
2. The application and behavior of the individual
3. The individual's heart

C. The Victory

D. Methods to Combat Temptations

1. Stay grounded and rooted in the Word
2. Know being tested
3. Pray
4. Purpose: enhance spiritual maturity

II. Matthew 13:1-9

A. Nature of the Parable

1. Time: Sabbath day (Matt. 12:1), probably towards the afternoon (Matt. 13:1)

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2. Location: Just left a synagogue (Matt. 12:9, 15) and outdoors (Matt. 12:12:46) on a boat near the sea (Matt. 13:1-2)
3. Testing: work on the Sabbath, healing on the Sabbath on two occasions, and the request for a sign
4. Audience: Pharisees who tested Jesus from synagogue, large crowds, and the disciples
5. Situation: The revelation of believers in the present and past and their revealed journey and heart through many parables (Matt. 13:3)

B. The Explanation of the Parable (full, see Matt. 13:18-23)

1. Field: the Earth (the harvest)
2. Sower: God
 - a. Objectives
 - 1) salvation to the broken, oppressed, the sinner, and the wicked
 - 2) to increase, populate, and develop the House or Kingdom of God on Earth
3. Seed: Believers
 - a. Fell on the road
 - b. Fell on rocky ground
 - c. Fell on thorns
 - d. Fell on good soil

C. Description of the Situations of the Seeds

1. God places the seed where he anticipates (Matt. 13:4)
2. "Fell" (Matt. 13:4)
 - a. Definitions
 - 1) To drop or descend under the force of gravity
 - 2) **To come or drop down suddenly to a lower position, especially to leave a standing or erect position suddenly, whether voluntary or not**
 - 3) To become less or lower; become of a lower level, degree, amount, quality, value, or number, i.e. decline
 - b. True meaning
 - 1) First definition suggests an owner's placement of their possession or object
 - 2) Second definition suggests the object's placement of their choosing
 - 3) Third definition suggests the object's decline by various forces
3. Seed: Believers
 - a. Location
 - 1) Fell on the road
 - 2) Fell on rocky ground

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- 3) Fell on thorns
- 4) Fell on good soil
- b. Breakdown of the nature of each seed
 - 1) Seed 1 (Matt. 13:4)
 - a) During the midst of sowing, some fell on the road
 - b) Road is between fields (different locations for different purposes)
 - (1) Surface is hard, can be hot or cold, and makes things known
 - (2) Not suitable for a seed
 - c) Birds eat the seed (exposed)
 - 2) Seed 2 (Matt. 13:5-6)
 - a) During the midst of sowing, some fell on rocky ground
 - b) Contains many different types of rocks and shapes
 - (1) Jagged, rough, and weigh heavily
 - (2) Movable or immovable (showcases the shaky plight of the situation)
 - (3) Depending on the seed's placement depth, sunlight cannot get through to the seed
 - c) Growth and immediate burnout
 - (1) Shallow due to lack of depth (some hit soil; others do not)
 - (2) Could not stand the fire because they did not have a supply of nutrients
 - 3) Seed 3 (Matt. 13:7)
 - a) During the midst of sowing, some fell among thorns
 - b) Choked
 - (1) Seed were in the minority
 - (2) Seed did not have a place to grown successfully due to a monopoly of thorns
 - (3) The thorns grew faster and quicker than the seed
 - (4) Seed were choked not because the thorn desired to do so but because they needed to grow
 - 4) Seed 4 (Matt. 13:8)
 - a) During the midst of sowing, some fell on good soil
 - b) Grain produced
 - (1) Some spontaneously produced more than others

D. Implications

1. Stubborn Seed (Matt. 13:4)
 - a. Hubristic perspective
 - b. Unwelcomed advice (did not ask the Sower where to go)
 - c. Misunderstood identity and purpose
 - d. Welcomed easy living
 - e. Abandoned their total natural habitat

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2. Shallow Seed (Matt. 13:5-6)
 - a. Misunderstands the cultivation of relationships or the work ahead (no root)
 - b. Desire glory, but do not want to put in the work
 - c. Impatient with the process
3. Careless Seed (Matt. 13:7)
 - a. Desire to stand out (make a name for themselves)
 - b. Attention-craving
 - c. No real root or source in Christ, which is why they become choked up
 - d. Development of relationships but easily manipulated
4. Purposeful Seed (Matt. 13:8)
 - a. Blossom (know their identity)
 - b. Understand where they can thrive and be successful for God
 - c. Understand their purpose

III. Thematic Implications

- A. God's will vs. man's will
- B. God's ideal soil and the seed's concept for ideal soil
 1. God has an ideal place for you and I (do not jump ship early)
 2. God places us in uncomfortable situations (do not jump ship early)
 3. God places us in an environment where the Lord wants us to grow (do not jump ship early)