

1.

S E R M O N O U T L I N E

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HOMILETICS 502

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THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEARER,
or RECEPTIVITY

(The Parable of the soils)

Passage: Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23.

Parallel passages: Mark 4:2-9, 13-20.

Luke 8:4-8, 11-15, 18.

Central theme: "He that hath ears, let him hear." Mat. 13:9

"Take heed therefore how ye hear." Luke 8:18

Introduction

A. Analysis of the similitude

1. The sower

- a. Not mentioned by Jesus; but he says in Matthew 13:37: "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man."
- b. Anyone who sows the seed, or word, but primarily Jesus
- c. The near-Eastern sower: "the sower went forth to sow", Matthew 13:3
 - (1) Sower lived in hamlets far from fields
 - (2) Fields not fenced or walled, but in the open country
 - (3) In open country fields:
 - (a) paths go through

(b) thorns grow

(c) ledges of rock exist

(d) there is fertile soil

2. The seed -- the word of the kingdom

a. The message of salvation as embodied in Jesus Christ

b. The words of the Scriptures

3. The different types of soil -- the hearers of the word

4. Details

a. Fowls -- the wicked one

b. Sun -- tribulation and persecution

B. The central truth of the parable

1. That the productivity of the seed depends upon the condition of the soil; i.e., the word of God bears fruit according to the receptivity of the hearer

2. This truth applies to all realms of life

a. Painting

(1) No one can appreciate a picture without the proper disposition of mind and heart so as to let the painting speak.

b. Music

(1) The hearer must forget himself and open his receptive power to the melody, rhythm, harmony and color of the piece of music

I. "Some seeds fell by the wayside" -- edge of the beaten track

A. Found no lodgement; remained on the surface

- B. The birds, ate it -- the fault not of the birds or wicked one, but primarily of the soil or hearer
- C. These are the self-hardened people
1. Of the same soil as the good soil, but it had been trampled: their lives have become a thoroughfare of pleasures, weddings, funerals, etc.
 2. The result: they have become impervious; the word cannot penetrate; they hear the word, and "understand it not"
- D. Judas Iscariot -- like a trampled path
- 1 Had become impervious to the word of Jesus
- II. "And others fell upon the rocky places"
- A. The soil is good but shallow: beneath there is a ledge of stone
1. On such ground the seed sprang up quickly but died for lack of water
- B. The hearer receives the word "with joy", "straightway"
1. No pondering; no realization of the implications of discipleship; too shallow.
- C. "When tribulation or persecution arises ... straightway he stumbl~~e~~th."
1. When the emotions wear off, the stark realities of life cause him to stumble: cynicism and doubt creep in, preventing the seed from growing
- D. Illustration: Luke 9:57,58.
1. The enthusiasm of the person: "And as they went on

the way, a certain man said unto him, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest."

2. But Jesus stopped him ^hort: "The foxes have holes, ~~and~~ and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

III. "And others fell upon the thorns"

A. The soil is rich but has latent thorn-seeds

1. Real possibilities of a good crop ~~if~~ weeds are held down

B. The hearer has a receptive heart but his interest is divided

1. The deceitfulness of riches choke the word: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon" . Matt. 6:24b

C. Illustrations: indeed the cares of the world choke the word

1. Ananias and Saphira, Acts 5:1-6
2. The rich young ruler, Matt. 19:16-26

IV. "And others fell upon the good ground"

A. Among the crowd Jesus found receptive hearts; i. e., good soil, that understood the word

1. "Such as in honest and good heart," Luke 18:15a

a. Not perfect, but ~~si~~gⁿere men

2. "Having heard the word, hold it fast," Luke 8:45b

a. Cling to it; hold it dear, close to their hearts and practice it.

B. "Such ... bring forth fruit with patience," Luke

1. "some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty"
 - a. Not that some are more receptive than others but that some have more talents and in a way are more receptive because of those talents.
 - b. "By their fruits ye shall know them," Matt.7:15

C. Illustration : stephen

1. "A man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit," Acts 6:5
2. "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Acts 7:56
3. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" then "he fell asleep." Acts 7:60

Conclusion

A. Christ is the seed -- the word of the kingdom

1. "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us"
2. "And we beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten from the Father," John 1:4

- a. This is the important point: to see His glory; then we can say that we have receptive hearts. when He is exalted in glory, we see our own *evils.*

B. when we come to glorify him then we can bear fruit

1. The interior: the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control, Gal. 5:22-23
2. The outward: the externalization of the internal: "pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows

in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted
from the world." James 1:27

- C. AS hearers of the word of God, we may fall into four
categories, three of them unproductive. It is therefore
of utmost importance to take heed how we hear.

This is a textual-expository sermon; perhaps wholly
expository, depending on the definition.