Introduction
Do you ever wonder why some people respond to the gospel while others want nothing to do with it?
Do you ever wonder why more people don’t want to follow Christ?
That’s what this passage is about.
It is called the Parable of the Sower, but it is really about the four soils.

A parable is a story from real life or a real life situation from which a spiritual truth is drawn.
Why did Jesus speak in parables?
• Stories are memorable.
• Only those with eyes to see and ears to hear would understand the spiritual meaning of what Jesus said.

A farmer went out to sow his seed.”
• The farmer (sower) is Jesus.
• The seed is the word of God, the gospel.
• The four soils represent the human heart.

I. THE HARD HEART.
VERSES 18-19
The first soil is the response of the unbeliever who hears the word of God and does not understand it.

What makes a hard heart?

Sin. The deeper we go in sin, the harder the heart becomes. Romans 1:18-32

“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.” Ephesians 4:17-19

II. THE SHALLOW HEART.
VERSES 20-21

This soil is like a person who hears the gospel, responds to it and three months later they are gone.

Were they ever really saved?
The answer from Scripture is no. The only sure evidence of a genuine faith is spiritual fruit. The total absence of fruit means they were never truly saved.

III. THE THORNY SOIL.
VERSE 22

The thorny soil represents the person who hears the word of God but is distracted by other things.

The word doesn’t bear fruit in their life because they are more concerned about worldly things.

Who comes first in our life?
If the answer is anything other than God, it is idolatry.
The same things that keep people from coming to Christ can also keep us from growing in Christ.

- The worries of this world.
- The deceitfulness of riches.
- The desire for other things

Our priorities can get out of whack. Who comes first in our life?

IV. THE RECEPTIVE HEART. VERSE 23

The good soil represents the person who hears God’s word and understands it. They delight in God’s word and they put it into practice in their life.

The good soil produces fruit according to its capability, but it is all called good.

The key is to keep our heart open to God – humble and teachable.

If you are in the family of God and you get it, do you realize how blessed you are?

“But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.” Matthew 13:16-17

Conclusion

We live in one of the most exciting times in human history.

What keeps us going is hope – the hope of our Lord’s return.

Be teachable. Stay faithful. Keep your heart open and responsive to God’s leading.