



# Is Your Heart Right for God's Kingdom?

Jesus teaches us what the kingdom of heaven is like, how to get there, and how we can prepare for it. He used parables - earthly stories that teach heavenly truths. Parables do not only convey information, but they also challenge the hearers to act. To understand Jesus' parables, we must have the right attitude. To hear and understand clearly, our hearts must be right. In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus talks about four kinds of soils which represent 4 kinds of hearts. Which heart is ready for God's Kingdom and truth?

## Hard Soil: Hard Heart (MATTHEW 13:9)

Jesus interprets this in Luke 8:11-12. The seed is God's Word, and when it lands on a hard heart, the evil one easily takes away the truth, preventing them from believing and being saved. How is our heart hardened? By the deceitfulness of sin (Hebrews 3:13)! Pride, bitterness, unforgiveness, and immorality can harden our hearts, sear our conscience, and make us calloused to the point of rejecting truth. An example of this would be Herod (Mk. 6:17-20, Lk. 23:8-11). His heart was hard and wasn't ready to receive the truth. He beheaded John the Baptist (Mk. 6:27) and mocked Jesus. Herod eventually lost his kingdom and died without the glory he held on for so long.

## Rocky Soil: Shallow Heart (MATTHEW 13:20-21)

Someone with a shallow heart may receive the Word with joy, but without the depth needed for the roots to anchor on, the rocks of life — afflictions, trials, and persecutions — cause him to give up. Jesus does not want counterfeit Christians. In Luke 9:23-26, we learn that as true followers, we must deny our self, take up our cross, live a surrendered life to God's will, and follow Him completely. 1 Peter 1:6 tells us that trials, disappointments, and problems are sure to come for many of us. These things "test" us, to allow the proof of our faith to show if our faith is true or not.

### this week's memory verse

So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.

MATTHEW 7:20-21

# UNCOVER

## Is Your Heart Right for God's Kingdom?

### **Thorny Soil: Divided Heart (MATTHEW 13:22)**

Worry and deceitfulness choke and compete for the nutrients of the soil. Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:24 that we can only have one master. We cannot serve both God and money. If we truly love God, He should be first and everything else must be secondary. An example is Judas who betrayed Jesus for a price despite being part of Jesus' ministry. Another example is Demas (2 Timothy 4:10) – a faithful servant alongside Paul, but eventually loved “the present world” and developed a divided heart. Jesus tells us we cannot serve two masters! Don't have a divided heart.

### **Good Soil: Devoted Heart (MATTHEW 13:23)**

Matthew 13:23 explains that this person hears the Word, understands it, and bears fruit abundantly. Luke 8:15 describes this kind of heart as honest, sincere, clinging on and not giving up, and eventually bears fruit. People who have devoted hearts persevere and do their very best to live out God's truth, share it with others, and impact many lives. The seed planted in devoted hearts will impact countless people, and those of us who embrace God's truth must keep on sowing.

May our hearts truly be like the good soil, ready and right for God's Kingdom and the mission it entails!

#### discussion questions

What kind of heart do you have?

What dangers do you need to avoid so your heart will not be hard, shallow, or divided?

What must you do to have a good heart?

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