

Cultivating a Life That God Calls Beautiful (Mt. 13)

I. SEEING THE VALUE AND BEAUTY OF THE KING AND HIS KINGDOM

- A. The kingdom and Jesus' leadership are indescribably valuable and beautiful. However, most do not see their value or beauty. The treasure and the pearl can speak either of the King or His kingdom. The treasure was hidden to most of the people who walked by seeing only an empty field.

⁴⁴The kingdom...is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found...and for joy over it he...sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵Again, the kingdom...is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶who, when he had found one pearl of great price...sold all...and bought it. (Mt. 13:44-46)

¹My heart is overflowing...concerning the King...²You are fairer than the sons of men... (Ps. 45:1-2)

- B. We need to be intentional to search out God's value and beauty as King David did.

⁴One thing I have desired...all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord. (Ps. 27:4)

- C. Paul "sold all" because of seeing Jesus' beauty. Many who confess Christ do not see anything that moves them to "give all" to Him. If we can see what Paul saw, then we can respond like Paul did.

⁸I also count all things loss for the excellence [beauty] of the knowledge of Christ. (Phil. 3:8)

- D. The Lord imparts His beauty into the life of any who humbly seek to trust and obey Him.

¹The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me...³to give them beauty for ashes... (Isa. 61:1-3)

⁴For the Lord...will beautify the humble with salvation. (Ps 149:4)

⁴...let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. (1 Peter 3:4)

II. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER AND THE FOUR TYPES OF SOIL (MT. 13:3-9, 18-23)

- A. Jesus described four types of responses that people make to His leadership and Word. In each case, the seed is the same, but the difference is in the receptivity of the soil or the heart's response to Him. Jesus explained the parable of the sower and seed to His disciples (Mt. 13:18-23).

- B. ***Wayside***: The *unresponsive heart*—Satan took the seeds before they germinated (13:4, 19).

⁴...some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. (Mt. 13:4)

¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one ...snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. (Mt. 13:19)

⁴...whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe... (2 Cor. 4:4)

- C. **Stony places:** The one with a *superficial response* who later is offended at Jesus' leadership (13:5-6). Seed that falls on stony ground may grow quickly in the shallow topsoil, but because it does not have deep roots to obtain the necessary moisture it withers and dies (13:20-22).
- ⁵*Some fell on stony places...they immediately sprang up...[having] no depth of earth. ⁶When the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away. (Mt. 13:5-6)*
- ²⁰*But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. (Mt. 13:20-22)*
- ¹²*Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. (2 Tim. 3:12)*
- ²⁸*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God... (Rom. 8:28)*
- ¹³*But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Mt. 24:13)*
- ²⁶*For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth... ²⁷[there is] a certain fearful expectation of judgment... ²⁹[for one] who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? ...³¹It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. 10:26-31)*
- D. **Thorns:** The one *preoccupied with personal gain* remains unfruitful (13:7). Seed that falls among the thorns will eventually be choked by the thorn bushes that squeeze out the young plant, robbing it of the necessary light and nourishment. These are preoccupied by the cares of this world and the seduction of riches. They received the Word, but thorns of worldliness choked the life of the seed.
- ⁷*And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. (Mt. 13:7)*
- ²²*Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. (Mt. 13:22)*
- ¹³*...each one's work will become clear...because it will be revealed by fire...¹⁵If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved... (1 Cor. 3:13-15)*
- E. **Good ground:** The one with a *faithful response* who became fruitful (13:8). Jesus commended *all* who received the message *regardless* of their measure of productivity. Genuine believers bear fruit—godly character and serving people (Gal. 5:22; Phil 1:22)—the measure of fruitfulness varies.
- ⁸*Others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. (Mt. 13:8)*
- ²³*But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. (Mt. 13:23)*
- ²²*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness... (Gal. 5:22)*
- ⁴¹*There is one glory of the sun...and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. ⁴²So also is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:41-42)*