

The sower.

A Parable.

- A parable: an earthly story with a heavenly meaning - Two things placed side by side.
- Jesus often used earthly things to compare the Kingdom of God to, things the hearer would associate with.
- A parable is eternal, it is not time bound or place bound.

Matt 13:1-23

The secrets and the keys are for the disciples.

Secrets and keys impart much of the same.

v10“The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.

Matt 16 ¹⁹ I will give you (his disciples) the keys of the kingdom of heaven;

1 Cor 2 ⁶ We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ No, we speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. ⁸ None of the rulers of this age understood it,....

Secrets and keys are meant for a trusted few, not for all the world. There are things, mysteries the Lord knows that no one else knows, not the general public but He wants us to know them.

The Holy Spirit has a continuing role to play in our lives, He unfolds the secrets of heaven to us

John 16 ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.

One only gives keys to those who have authority to use them.

The parable – Making a profitable deposit.

When we invest, plant, deposit or sow something we are putting our hope in a hidden potential. In the natural there is huge potential in seed.

What the farmer needs to do is make sure the soil is fertile, we cannot influence the seed, it has been pre-programmed by the Lord, the potential is already in the seed.

The Word of the Lord has the same potential. The power of this parable is that the seed and the Word are lying side by side. Jesus is saying His word can produce a harvest in your life. It can cause you to produce fruit up to 100 times that which is in you now.

How much power are you giving to the Word?

What you do with the Word will reveal the importance you place in it.

The Word:

Job 23:12 I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.

Psalm 12 ⁶ And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.

Psalm 105 ⁸ He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations,

1 Peter 1 ²³ For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. ²⁴ For, “All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, ²⁵ but the word of the Lord stands forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you.

Isaiah 55 ¹⁰ As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, ¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

The place of investment of the Word will determine our profitability and success.

Four types of investment of the Word.

Along the pathway - ¹⁹ *When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.*

Does not understand: to set or bring together, in a hostile sense, of combatants. To put (as it were) the perception with the thing perceived. To set or join together in the mind. Not a passive understanding, this is a person who never tried to put two things together.

Among the rocks - ²⁰ *The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.*

No root, no foundations – NO DISCIPLESHIP. The Word of repentance, Lordship, death to sin and resurrection to a new life is not there. The Kingdom is just another idea.

Among the thorns – ²² *The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.*

Worries, wealth, pleasure, popularity, status,

In the good soil - ²³ *But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”*

Group notes

Ice breaker.

1. What's the best investment you have ever made.
2. What's the worst investment you have ever made.
3. Have you lost money? How did you feel?

What's the Word on it?

Matt 13:1-23; see the other Scriptures printed in the sermon notes.

The object of the parable of the sower is to show the futility of investing in something that has no eternal and enduring value. For the ice-breaker we should all have said “the best investment I have ever made is to discover the eternal worth in living according to the word of God”, or something like that. When we think of investment we usually think of money. The whole aim of this parable is to discover unproductive “soil” within us and make a good investment of the word of God into good soil.

Please, don't just read all the questions off parrot fashion. You might only want to ask some of them or maybe you have ones of your own that will lead to application, in other words that we will become doers of the word.

1. Who are God's keys and secrets given to? (Understanding)
2. Why do you think His wisdom is hidden from the casual observer? (Understanding)
3. What kind of a seeker are you? What soil do you think you are? (Understanding, moving to Application)
4. What kind of fruit are you bearing? (Application)
5. How can you change so that you discover the real worth of the Word and apply it to your life? (Application)

Prayer

Pray for the Lord to help you (each other) change and for His Spirit to help you love His Word. Repent of letting the seed become “stale” and encourage each other to rediscover the wisdom of living by the Word.