Soil Testing: Good Ground

“I’ll Serve the Lord. I’m Eager to Hear, Accept, Understand, and Believe the

Word. I Want to Improve my Effectiveness. I Volunteer.”

Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-27; Luke 8:4-18

Introduction:

1. We come to the culmination and goal of the process: the good ground.
	1. This heart, this person has been otherwise. Romans 3:23
	2. He has dealt with the rocks, the hard, difficult, and discouraging things in life. Job 14:1
	3. He has made choices about thorns. Matthew 6:33
	4. He still has to deal with rocks and thorns. 1 John 1:8
	5. He takes advantage of God’s help in soil treatment. 1 John 1:7-2:2
2. Today we talk about God’s goal, God’s purpose in our lives.
	1. It’s one of God’s most practical principles: if we had raisin bran for breakfast, it is the result of God’s law of sowing and reaping – both the raisins and the bran.
	2. It’s one of God’s most predictable principles: it has been here since creation and will be here as long as the world stands. Genesis 8:22
3. GOD’S LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING IS POWERFUL
	1. I will reap what I sow. Galatians 6:7, 8
		1. In this parable, we have been looking at the crop from sowing the word.
		2. However, if I am not receiving the word into my heart, something else is being planted there.
	2. I will reap more than I sow. Mark 4:20
	3. I will reap in proportion to what I sow. 2 Corinthians 9:6
		1. Money. 2 Corinthians 9:7-11
		2. Judging and forgiveness. Luke 6:37, 38
		3. Mercy. Matthew 5:7; James 2:13
		4. Hearing. Mark 4:24, 25; Luke 8:18
	4. Different people will reap differently.
		1. 30, 60, 100. Mark 4:20
		2. Because of different abilities and opportunities the Lord gives. Matthew 25:14, 15
	5. I will reap later than I sow. Mark 4:26-29
		1. Waiting may be one of the most difficult challenges of the process.
		2. I want to sow the seed, not force the harvest. 1 Corinthians 3:6
		3. I don’t want to give up before harvest time. Galatians 6:9
	6. God is powerful and makes powerful seed.
		1. He can do a lot with a little. Mark 4:30-32
		2. He wants to help, not hinder. Philippians 2:12, 13
		3. He promises the rocks will not be too big to move or the thorns too thick to weed out. 1 Corinthians 10:13
		4. His word is powerful. Isaiah 55:10, 11
		5. His work will be useful and rewarding. 1 Corinthians 15:58
4. HOW CAN I MAINTAIN GOOD SOIL?
	1. Continue to seed, weed, and feed. Psalm 1:1, 2; Acts 17:11
	2. Remember—there is a difference between the sower and the seed. Acts 17:11
		1. Even a sack of good seed has some unwanted items.
			1. Pennington Perennial Ryegrass.
			2. Contents:
				1. 1. 95.00% pure seed.
				2. 2.00% inert matter.
				3. 2.50% other crop seed.
				4. 0.50% weed seed.
		2. Even the best human teachers (Paul) need to be checked with the standard. Acts 17:11

Conclusion

1. How is your crop today?
	1. Pathway soil
		1. It is a matter of entry and openness.
		2. Would you let God’s word into your heart?
	2. Rocky ground.
		1. It is a matter of depth.
		2. What are the real answers for the hardest things in life?
	3. Thorny ground.
		1. It is a matter of priorities.
		2. What are the most important issues both now and a thousand years from today?
	4. Good ground.
		1. It is a matter of cooperation with and submission to God.
		2. Are you willing to cooperate with His law of sowing and reaping?
		3. We are blessed; God is glorified. John 15:7, 8
2. What is your heart condition? Matthew 13:15, 16