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