

# ***BE The Kingdom Of God***

Matthew 13

2 Parables: “The Sower” & “New And Old Treasures”

November 27, 2022

**INTRO:** Last time I asked you: “*What do you SEE?*”

Today... “**What do you want.... to BE?**”

Most reply: Happy. Popular. Successful. Powerful.

Comfortable... Pretty. Rich... etc. **How about you?**

Do you want to be ruled & reigned over  
by an ALL-EVERYTHING King????

(Think about it. Don't just blow off that question.)

[**CONTRAST...** world vs. worship]

## **PRAYER**

### **CONTEXT:**

- ~ New Series: *SEE The Kingdom Of God* (6 weeks)
- ~ Building on **THE WORD**: Psalm 119's “*PERSPECTIVE*”
- ~ “*The kingdom of God*” (**161X** in the New Testament)
- ~ Understanding parables... **shocking** to many!
- ~ Matthew 13...
  - \* Relational & Theological “**bookends**”
    1. Before the parables... **rejection of Christ!**
    2. Within the parables... #1 & #8

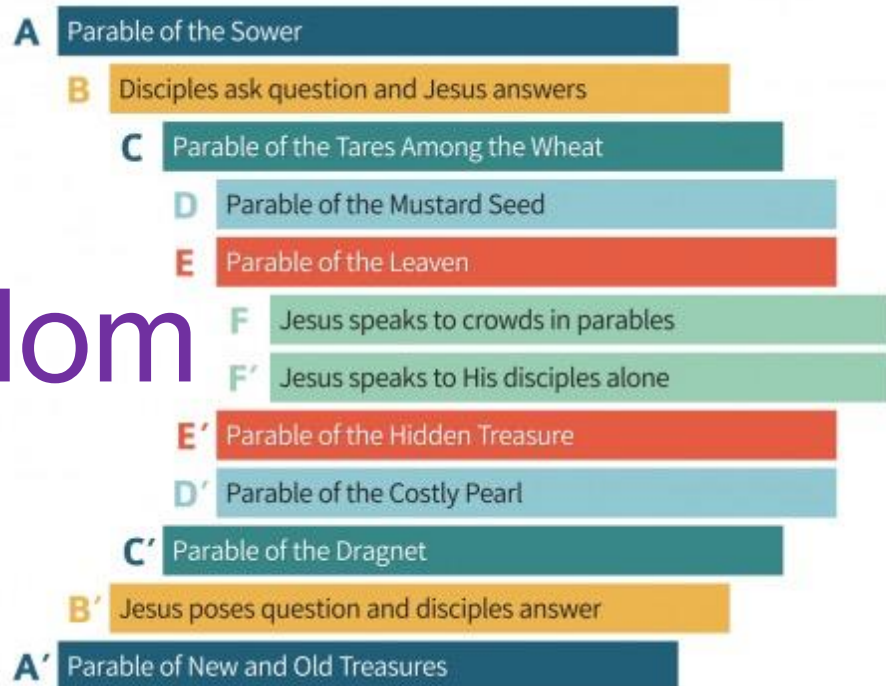
**Understanding the kingdom of God...**
  - \* Timing of theses parables
  - \* 10 pair chiastic arch
  - \* Outer pair: “***BE The Kingdom Of God***”

**T/S:** *This is where Jesus begins to preach & teach with parables!*  
Up until now everything He did was in clear & direct language.

**Matthew**  
Ch. 13

# The Kingdom of God

**Chiastic**  
Arch



**BIG IDEA:** The kingdom of God is filled  
with Christ's fruitful & faithful  
family of followers.

The kingdom of God is NOT the Church,  
BUT/yet, The Church IS (in part)  
the kingdom of God!

## PREVIEW:

- A. BE The FRUITFUL Kingdom of God
- B. BE The FAITHFUL Kingdom of God

## I. BE The FRUITFUL Kingdom of God

**TEXT:** The Parable of the Sower/Soils (Mt.13 per Mk.4)

- A. Let's begin by remembering WHY we are here

**VIDEO:** *Parable of the Soils #1*

- B. We desperately NEED to BE... we SEE to BE!

*We cannot BE what we do not SEE...*

Heaven & Hell weigh in the balance!

**VIDEO:** *Parable of the Soils #2*

- C. **Notice:** Behold! literally begins with "BE"

**VIDEO:** *Parable of the Soils #3*

- D. *The majority of people who were listening to Jesus came looking for miracles but what*

*they got were parables... Why? Answer:  
because they were more interested in the  
miracles than The Messiah!*

**VIDEO:** *Parable of the Soils #4*

I pray that you now have a personal & passionate  
understanding of the parable of the soils...

The seed & the soil go together like the  
Shepherd and the sheep... The good seed is like  
the Good Shepherd and the different soils are  
like different “versions” of sheep...

**I pray you are seeing how important BE-ing  
the kingdom of God really is!**

Jesus put it this way...

*The fruit reveals the root of every branch*

**Matthew 7:18**

*“A good tree cannot produce bad fruit,  
nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. – Jesus The Christ*

It's simple really... who & what come out of the heart  
reveals who & what are in the heart! – JDP



**T/S: Do you understand NOW how important it is... eternally... to BE the kingdom of God???**

- ~ Jesus taught about fruit-less branches...
- ~ *This is about your forever in either heaven or hell!*
- ~ There's too much **corruption** & confusion...
- ~ *Christ-less Christianity is an epidemic today!*

**VIDEO:** *MacArthur on the kingdom of this world*

**Friends... it is SO important that you understand what it means to BE the kingdom of God... to BE The Church!!!**

**Think about this...** if you or those you know and love do not understand what the Word of God & the God of the Word say about the kingdom of God... and you're flirting with the world (in the name of evangelism & compassion) all while just playing church... you'll end up ignoring James 4:4 which tells us that to be friends with the world is to be an enemy of God...

**THIS is what I'm talking about!**

*When people claim to be Christian but deny and/or blatantly defy the Bible's definitions and descriptions of the kingdom of God and its members, they are literally claiming to be the very definition of what they deny. - JDP*

**T/S:** I want to take a risk here & do something that the Lord has directed me to do... I want to take a few minutes and devote them to those of you who are living in the midst of compromise... Those of you who find yourselves convicted by Christ's words... those of you who are trying to straddle the fence and walk in both kingdoms... And to those of you who may have jumped the fence and gone over to the other side... I want to call you home – by the grace of God and to the glory of God. Listen to these lyrics & take them to heart!

### **VIDEO:** “Clear The Stage”

**T/S:** Are you willing to “set ablaze” all your idols???

- ~ ...being fruitful is NOT enough...
- ~ ...singing, crying, producing... it's not enough!
- ~ I've seen too many “fruitful wolves” in my day...
- ~ *You need to BE FAITHFUL in your fruitfulness!*

**TEXT:** The Parable of the Old & New Treasures (Mt.13:52)

## **II. BE The FAITHFUL Kingdom Of God**

\*\*\* See the bookends of FRUITFUL and FAITHFUL \*\*\*

**52**Then He told them, “*For this reason, every scribe who has been discipled in the kingdom of heaven is like a homeowner who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”*

1. Don't miss the positional & theological context...it's key!
2. Connect back to Jesus' teachings...
  - a. Scribes... teachers...
  - b. Homeowners...
    - i. Privilege & responsibility
    - ii. "Rock" vs. "sand"
  - c. Read Paul in **Romans 1:1** & **Acts 28:23**
3. See Scribes **"disciplined IN"** vs. **"about"** = transformation!
  - a. Kingdom teachers are kingdom learners! - JDP
  - b. What goes in is typically what comes out.
  - c. Your behavior reveals your beliefs. - JDP
4. Homeowner's storehouse/treasure = their soil & heart!
5. The Old & New truth & treasure = full, biblical Gospel!
6. NOTE the ending parable = LOVE & personal application
7. See here God's Passions, Purposes, & Priorities!

**T/S:** When you personalize this... I pray that you will see a personal call for you to BE a bit like the old and the new members of the kingdom of God!

~ Like a Moses & Apostle Paul combo.... OR

~ Like an Esther & a Lydia hybrid...

**VIDEO:** *"He Is No Fool"*

**CLOSE:**

To be clear, The King's true children  
live IN His kingdom! - JDP

***If The King does not come OUT...  
His kingdom is not with-IN! - JDP***

God's Word identifies Christ's faith-filled,  
forever-family by their fruit-filled  
and faith-full following!

**BEhold... To BE... is literally the basis & beginning of:**

~ **BE**lieve

~ **BE**come

~ **BE**long

~ **To BE...** is at the core & center of "o**BE**y"

~ **To BE...** is the last part of a:

~ wanna**BE**

~ tri**BE**

~ scri**BE**

\* inscri**BE**

\* prescri**BE**

\* descri**BE**

To BE... (The kingdom... The Church)... is to  
understand & overwhelmingly-worship and  
witness as the fruitful and faithfully-following  
family of our Creator and Christ – King Jesus! - JDP

## **PRAYER**

**WORSHIP:** *"I Was Looking For You" & "God, Turn It Around"*

## Matthew 13:52

### Parable of New And Old Treasures

<sup>52</sup>Then He told them, “For this reason, every scribe who has been disciplined in the kingdom of heaven is like a homeowner who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

## D.A. Carson on Matthew 13:52

### *The parable of the teacher of the law* (13:52)

<sup>52</sup> **Interpretations of this difficult verse are legion**. It has been variously held that it refers to scribes who become disciples of the kingdom (Jeremias, *Parables*, p. 216) or join the Christian community (Hummel, pp. 17ff.); that Matthew here refers to the way he himself functions within the community (C.F.D. Moule, “St. Matthew’s Gospel,” *Studia Evangelica* 2 [1964]: 98f.); that the verse demonstrates the existence of Christian “scribes” or “teachers of the law” in Matthew’s church, men who exercise much the same role as scribes in Judaism (Kilpatrick, *Origins*, p. 111; Strecker, *Weg*, pp. 37–38; Grundmann), or even that disciples within Christianity are more important than scribes within Judaism (Manson, *Sayings*, pp. 198f.); that each disciple who is able to qualify may present himself as a “teacher of the law” (Lagrange); that any scribe who understands what has been taught about the kingdom is like the lord of a house “who handles everything in a carefree manner, who does not save anything and even uses what is old” (van Tilborg, p. 132; R. Walker, pp. 27–29).

**The verse’s parabolic structure must be noted and a number of exegetical details explored before its meaning can be grasped or the significance of the introductory “therefore” rightly perceived.**

**The “is like” formula (see on v. 24) means “it is with a teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom as it is with the owner of a house.”**

**The problem is  
to discern the point of the comparison.**

The *oikodespotēs* (“owner of a house”) is a frequent figure in Jesus’ parables and can stand for God (21:33), Jesus (10:25), or disciples (24:43).

Very often he is a figure who dispenses wealth in some way (20:1–16; 21:33–43).

so here he brings out of his “storeroom” (same word as “treasure” in 2:11; 6:19–21; 12:35 [*bis*]; 13:44, 19:21) new things and old things.

## Why would an owner of a house do this?

Presumably it is not simply to ogle his wealth but for some useful purpose.

The point is that his treasure includes both the new and the old, and that he can use both.

The point of comparison becomes clearer when we remember that a *grammateus* (“scribe”) in Jesus’ day was not simply a theological interpreter of the Scriptures capable of rendering Halakic decisions (rules for conduct) but a teacher (hence NIV’s “teacher of the law”; see on 2:4; 8:19).

From this he derived much of his prestige and power (HJP 2:332–34; Trotter); indeed, he was seen as having esoteric knowledge that could only be passed on to committed initiates (cf. Jeremiah *Jerusalem*, pp. 237–40). But Jesus adds a qualifying factor: the scribe with whom he is concerned *mathēteutheis tē basileia tōn*

*ouranōn* (“has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven”).

Whether the verbal form is construed as deponent (“has become a disciple”) or strictly passive (“has been made a disciple”), it is not at all clear that the dative expression means “about the kingdom of heaven”; and in the one NT passage with similar construction (27:57), Joseph of

Arimathea had become a disciple *of* Jesus, not *about* Jesus. By analogy the scribes in this verse have become disciples of the kingdom of heaven.

If the preceding exegetical observations are correct...

the points of comparison in the parable are two. The emphasis in the first part of the verse rests, **not** on the supposition that the scribe has been instructed **about** the kingdom and therefore understands, **but...** that he has become a disciple of the kingdom and therefore his allegiance has been transformed. It is with such a person as with “the owner of a house”—a disciplined scribe brings out of his storeroom new things and old.

The **thēsauros (“storeroom”)** so regularly stands for **a man’s “heart,”** its wealth and cherished values (see above; esp. on 12:35), that we must **understand the disciplined scribe to be bringing things out of his heart out of his understanding, personality, and very being.** What he brings out are *kaina kai palaia*, not “new things as well as old” (NIV), which suggests the new things have been added to the old, but “new things and old things”—a subtle touch that reminds the alert reader that in Matthew the gospel of the kingdom, though new, takes precedence over the old revelation and is its fulfillment (cf. 5:17–20). The new is not added to the old; there is but one revelation, and its focus is the “new” that has



fulfilled and thereby renewed the old, which has thereby become new (Bonnard). **Thus the OT promises of Messiah and kingdom, as well as OT law and piety, have found their fulfillment in Jesus' person, teaching, and kingdom;** and the scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom now brings out of himself deep understanding of these things and their transformed perspective affecting all life.

But the order is of great importance.

***The parable shows that a disciplined scribe has this understanding, NOT that understanding generates discipleship.***

This conforms perfectly to the chapter's structure: the disciples are not defined as having understanding but are

described as having been given  
revelation & understanding  
(vv. 11–12).

When the disciples ask for an explanation, they are given it (vv. 36–43) and thus claim some measure of understanding (v. 51). “Therefore” (v. 52) a *discipled scribe is like, etc.* Discipleship to Jesus, recognition of the revelation he is and brings, and submission to the reign he inaugurates and promises are necessary prerequisites to understanding and bringing out from oneself the rich treasures of the kingdom (see further 25:31–46).

But *there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> point of comparison in the parable.*

The last one could have been made by stressing discipleship but omitting any reference to scribes. Scribes were “teachers of the Scriptures.” If they are likened to the owner of a house who brings treasures out of his storeroom, the further implication is unavoidable—they are not bringing forth things new and old for purely private or personal reasons *but in their capacity as teachers.*

Jesus’ disciples claim they have understood what he has been teaching.

*“Therefore,” he responds, **discipled teachers of the Scriptures, if they have understood, must themselves bring out of their storeroom the treasures now theirs so as to teach others*** (cf. Trotter).

**This interpretation admirably fits in with three other Matthean themes.**

**1. The disciples have a major responsibility in evangelizing and making disciples, both during Jesus’ ministry (ch. 10) and after his departure (28:18–20).**

**2. In the latter instance they are told to “disciple” the nations and teach them all Jesus has commanded them: i.e., the focus of their mission is Jesus and the revelation—the new “fulfillment” revelation—he has brought.**

**3. This interpretation, which places some teaching responsibility on the disciples, also fits the purpose of the parables described in the comments on vv. 12–17, 34–35. Indeed, part of the reason for private instruction may again be linked to the place of Jesus’ earthly ministry in redemptive history; for what he tells his disciples in secret they are to proclaim from the rooftops (10:27).**

**Jesus explains the parables to his disciples in private; they are to bring out of their treasure rooms “new things and old.”**

If this interpretation of v. 52 is correct, then though “disciples” in this chapter most probably refers to the Twelve, they epitomize the church to come. In that event “disciples” does not refer to a special group of “teachers of the law” within Matthew’s community (see further on 23:34) but to those who by Matthew’s day were called Christians. Just as they have been aligned with prophets and righteous men from past ages (e.g., 5:11–12; 10:41), so are they aligned with “teachers of the law.” In fact, only Jesus’ “disciples” are able to bring forth new things and old: the Jewish teachers of the law could bring forth only the old.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> D. A. Carson, [“Matthew,”](#) in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 331–333.

# *“Sowers See Souls In The Soils”*

Mark 4:1-20

December 6, 2020

**INTRO:** Do you have some favorite “old” words?

- Behold...
- Foils & Toils...

**CONTEXT:**

- **2020...** *“prophetic vision”* & **prolific virus**
- Gospel Gardening series: Roots, Fruits, & Boots
- **Jesus teaching** on **good fruit**, **branches**, & **trees**
- Parable of the Sower
  - **Sovereign** (the Root, Vine, & Vine-Dresser)
  - **Sowers** (last week **Mark 4:3**)
  - **Soils** (this week)
  - **Seed** (next time)
  - **Sent-ones** (closing out 2020 & the series)
- Today we shift from the sower to the soils...

**BIG IDEA:** *Sowers See Souls In The Soils!*

**PREVIEW:**

- Sowers **SEE** souls in the soils
- Sowers **SEEK** God’s good soils
- Sowers **SIFT** all soils for souls

## TEXT:

### I. Sowers Spiritually-SEE Souls In the Soils!

#### Mark 4:1-20

1 Again he/Jesus began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd (NOTE: “crowd” vs. “church”) gathered about him, so that he got into a boat (NOTE: what is your “boat” from which you share?) and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd (NOTE: the true Church is often engulfed by the crowds) was beside the sea on the land (NOTE: the true Church is the people gathered for the glory of God & the guidance of His Word... see **John 6:66**).

2 And he was teaching them many things in parables (NOTE: we must recognize the **JUDGEMENT** being displayed here or we will miss the finer points of the parable),

1. Sowers see **FOILS** in the soils
  - Definition: to prevent the success; to frustrate; to keep (a person) from succeeding... a defeat
  - See the World, the Flesh & the Devil in soil
  - See the lies & liars vs. truth & trustworthy

and in his teaching he said to them:

3 “**Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow.**

- To behold is to take-hold biblically... to let that which is beheld to take hold of you. - JDP

4 *And as he sowed* (NOTE: **NO adjectives for the sower!** Why not? Answer: 1). He is not the point, nor the power. 2). His style, looks, gifts, programs, etc. are irrelevant. 3). Sowers are defined by their faithful attitude & obedient actions in their sowing. Period. No more, no less, no matter what!), *some seed fell along the path* (NOTE: **soil #1**) , *and the birds came and devoured it.* 5 *Other seed fell on rocky ground* (NOTE: **soil #2**), *where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil.* 6 *And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.* 7 *Other seed fell among thorns* (NOTE: **soil #3**), *and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.* 8 *And other seeds fell into good soil* (NOTE: **soil #4**) *and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."*

9 *And he said, "**He who has ears to hear, let him hear.**"* (NOTE: Jesus began with "Listen!" and now ends with "hear... let him hear.")

## 2. Sowers see **TOILS** in the soils

- Definition: hard work; exhausting labor, battle
- See the "Fight" throughout ALL of life...
- See land-bandits, snakes, wolves, diseases
- See faulty equipment & sudden storms...
- See part-time, hypocritical commitments vs. full-time worker's holy commission...
- See the need for divine intervention...
- See gardening... **hard & dangerous work!**

*The Purpose of the Parables... 10 And when he was alone*  
(NOTE: It is important to distinguish the difference between what was asked and answered, or NOT asked and answered, when Jesus was surrounded by a/the crowd(s) vs. His chosen Church), *those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables.*

11 *And he said to them, “**To you*** (NOTE: see the distinction and eternal difference between the two groups) *has been given* (NOTE: “given” = BOTH grace AND The Gospel) **the secret** (NOTE: God has intentionally made AND kept the truth of His kingdom and gospel a SECRET... **just THINK about the implications of that TRUTH...**) *of the kingdom of God, but for those outside* (NOTE: “**those outside**” = the fruitless soils... the dead branches... the bad trees...) *everything is in parables* (NOTE: **stop here & ask** yourself the question that begs an answer: “**Why is Jesus ONLY speaking EVERYTHING in parables to “THOSE OUTSIDE,” while explaining Himself to the Church?** Answer: **JUDGEMENT!**),

12 **so that** (NOTE: we don’t have to speculate and guess... Here, God is about to tell us exactly why He spoke only in parables to those outside... **Don’t miss this!**)

*“they may indeed see but not perceive,  
and may indeed hear but not understand,  
lest they should turn and be forgiven.”*

- Jesus is quoting **Isaiah 6:9-10**
- Jesus is quoting **JUDGEMENT**

- “*so that*” = the parable’s PURPOSE!
  - Cf. Romans 1... “*given over*”
  - Cf. “*seared consciences*”
  - Cf. “*Pharaoh’s hardened heart*”
- See **Mark 4:34** for the love & hope of The Gospel

13 *And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable?”* (NOTE: Don’t miss the Lord’s intended conviction in the question...) *How then will you understand all the parables?* (NOTE: See here Christ’s divine expectation of missional maturation AND evangelization...)

## II. Sowers Supernaturally-SEEK Good Soils!

There are 2 paths to Gospel gardening:

- The *Cultural & Fruit-less*
- The **Biblical & Fruit-filled**

### 1. FRUIT-LESS... Cultural Gardening (Soils 1,2,3)

- a. Man-centered
- b. Mangled-message
- c. Missing the miracle
- d. Marketing & Manipulation
- e. Mechanical methods & movements
- f. Missing & mocking The Messiah
- g. Missing the mark & mission



*We are sent to bless the world,  
but we are never told to compromise with it.*

A.W. Tozer  
(James 4:4)

14 *The sower sows the word.* (NOTE: How breathtakingly beautiful is this small verse & these 5 simple words? See the simplicity. See the clarity. See the finality. See the miracle. See the Messiah. See the mission!)

3. Sowers see **ROYALS** in the **GOOD** soils
  - **Definition:** relating to a king, queen, or other sovereign: descended from or related to a king or line of kings: a royal prince/princess... a member of the royalty.
  - Good soil = GERMINATION = SALVATION
    - SALVATION = ORDINATION...
    - Royal children of God
    - Royal family of the Almighty
    - Royal sheep & under-shepherds
    - Royal soldiers for Christ
    - Royal armor bearers & wearers
    - Royal heirs with Christ
    - Royal crowns (5X in New Testament)

Soil #1

15 *And these are the ones* (NOTE: “the ones” tells us that we are about to learn of PEOPLE) *along the path*

(NOTE: “the path” depicts a soil that is packed down and so trampled upon that nothing can penetrate it... like concrete today)... (NOTE: we now know that the SOILS represent PEOPLE... even more, the soils are metaphors that symbolically define & describe the hearts of each different group of people), *where the word is sown* (NOTE: “the word is sown” defines the “seed” in the parable to be the Word of God): *when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.* (NOTE: 1). Satan is active just as **1 Peter 5:8** and **2 Corinthians 4:4** warns us. 2). The word “*immediately*” is both telling and tragic... 3). See that there is nothing mentioned about the sower... the bad outcome is soil NOT sower based. 4). Even Satan’s role is secondary to the soil’s hardened surface that fights against the work of the word/seed. 5). See the “*birds*” of spiritual warfare as **Satan’s minions** – *those who do the Devil’s bidding... distracting, diluting, and deceiving... pulling God’s Word away from people... and pulling those same people away from God’s Word, will & ways.* - JDP

## Soil #2

16 *And these are the ones* (NOTE: once again, so there can be no mistake... “the ones” reinforces that Jesus is talking about PEOPLE here) *sown on rocky ground:* (NOTE: “*rocky ground*” reveals, by definition, that it’s primary characteristic is similar to the “packed path” – rocky soil is tragically HARD and LACKING in life-sustaining depth) *the ones who, when they hear the word* (NOTE: once again, the “seed” is “the

word” of God), *immediately* (NOTE: once again, see the word and impact of “immediately” – in this case, the point is to warn us not to be too quick to celebrate a person’s response... Time will tell the truth about transformations... Jesus said that “those who persevere” to the finish are His true faith family...” *receive it* (NOTE: here we see that bad soil and dead branches can “receive the word” but not be changed by it) *with joy* (NOTE: some will even “receive the word with joy” 1). See Jonathan Edwards’ work and our A.I.T. on “The Experience That Matters.” 2). *Trust not the smiles of men, but the miracles of the Spirit* – JDP. 3). *Beware the happy that is not holy!* – JDP. 4). *Beware the manipulative work of the crowd-growing showmen and their shallow, man-centered, smile-factories that have mastered the art of replacing the Master’s awe with a cheap, contemporary, damnable, slight-of-hand. Where there is no cross, there is no Christ... no Christianity... no Church!* - JDP.

17 *And they have no root* (NOTE: Do not miss this... “they have no root” = they have no depth or supernatural presence beyond a shallow, superficial response. These people have quick, shallow, and fickle feelings, NOT lasting and firm faith... Without the root of The Gospel and very presence of God in the soil of one’s heart, there will not & cannot be biblical life, nor fruit.)

*in themselves, but endure for a while* (NOTE: two key terms here... “endure” and “a while.” 1). *Bad soil enduring is religious torture... There is nothing sadder than sour-pussed, white-knuckle church-goers who struggle to*

endure their religious rule-keeping. - JDP. 2). Root-less enduring is the opposite of faith-filled abiding in the Vine... - JDP 3). Bad soil can only take life in the garden for so long... for “a while” before they ultimately get exposed for who & what they really want... and what they really are... lifeless dirt. - JDP 4). Bad soil’s fixation and focus on the temporary tends to expose their “only for a while” commitment level, which, when in the presence of true, eternally good and fruit producing soil, leads to the kind of conviction that begets either repentance & restoration, OR resistance & rebellion. - JDP 5). The measure of a man is not to be made at the starting line or the midway mark of his life’s race. No. The measure of a man is to be made at his finish line, where his eternal fruit will both reveal and define him. - JDP 6). No matter how grand the wedding day’s ceremony and celebration, the marriage is measured by its truth, love, memories, and anniversaries. - JDP; *then, when* (NOTE: God chose the word “when” vs. “if.” This is yet another subtle but obvious reveal in God’s Word that trials and testing times will come with the Gospel’s truth in love) *tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word* (NOTE: there is an important distinction to be made here, when understanding the source of one’s tribulation and/or persecution: 1). There is no valor in self-inflicted, self-serving, or sin-centered tribulation and/or persecution. 2). “On account of the word” raises the issue of “counting the cost” and checking one’s heart... 3). Christ insisted that His followers be proactively committed to carrying their cross, thus Christians die to self at the beginning of their journey with Jesus. 4). By God’s grace

and for His glory, through the power & promise of The Gospel, born again followers faithfully overcome their fear of tribulation, persecution, & death. - JDP). 5). Jesus literally said, 3 times, that such persecution is to be counted as the believer's blessing (**Matthew 5**) , *immediately they fall away* (NOTE: see the word "immediately" once again... The rootless heart/soil immediately "falls away" – like the infamous house built on the sand... a life without Gospel roots is as flimsy as a house of cards... a dandelion/butterfly in a hurricane... - JDP) (NOTE: here our Lord is making another subtle but theologically deep point... Without gospel "roots" in one's soil, it is IMPOSSIBLE to withstand, in the long term, the heart-testing trials of spiritual warfare. - JDP). (NOTE: to be clear, such a person is NOT a Christian!).

### Soil #3

18 *And others are the ones* (NOTE: again... "ones" indicates that the soils are souls!) *sown among thorns* (NOTE: soil #3 is characterized by the "thorns" or "weeds.").

"Thorns" is the same word to describe Christ's "crown of thorns." See the providential irony of the relationship... that which symbolizes sinner's bondage would be transformed into a symbol of Christ's royalty & redemptive power to release & restore said sinners! -

JDP

*They are those who hear the word,* (NOTE: here again we see the inner core of HARDNESS, not for a lack of hearing, but instead, as revealed by their lack of heeding the

word). *19 but the cares of the world* (NOTE: “cares of the world” literally translates “distractions of the age” – see **Hebrews’ exhortation** on the 5 steps of apostasy & destruction) *and the deceitfulness of riches* (NOTE: see the relationship between “deceitfulness” and “riches!” One need look no further than the “rich young ruler” to see the damning and deceitful relationship between religion and riches) *and the desires for other things* (NOTE: in the same way as noted above, see the twisted and tragic relationship between “desires” and “other things” [not God’s Word, will, or ways])

*enter in* (NOTE: see the pervasive and perverted affects of being DOUBLE-MINDED... 1). “Enter in” is like a thief in the night... 2). “Enter in” implies a cunning, underhanded affect... 3). Desiring other things is spiritual adultery... spiritual heroin... spiritual suicide...

*and choke the word* (NOTE: The word calls for and champions our worship of Christ, which is exactly why the world “chokes the word” and kills the Christians. - JDP).

(**ILLUSTRATION:** what are effects of a fresh batch of chocolate chip cookies, in the presence of a little boy who is supposed to eat his plate of brussels sprouts???)

**RESPONSE:** In most cases, the answer is obvious. However, the answer here is shockingly simple for a boy who loves brussels sprouts and hates chocolate chip cookies... What we love... wins in our heart! - JDP



*Either the Word is going to choke out the world in your life OR the world is going to choke out the Word. It all comes down to which one you love and which one you hate.* - JDP),

*and it proves unfruitful.* (NOTE: see the two powerful and defining words here at the end of soil #3's definition & description: 1). *"proves"* = connects the cause-and-affect dynamic between "distractions of the age" as well as "desires of the world" with the lack of fruit-bearing.

2). *"unfruitful"* = the end result of wanting the world's ways and living distracted by the age... **You CANNOT serve two masters...** You CANNOT travel on both the broad and the narrow way... **Jesus is either LORD of all or He is not Lord at all in your life.** You are either going to help Christ to gather or you will scatter against Him.

- **FRUIT-FILLED Gospel Gardening (Soil #4)**

- Sovereignty
- Sin
- Salvation
- Spirit
- Seek
- Sow
- Sanctification

**T/S:** *Sometimes those of us in the good soil forget that, in and of ourselves, we're just putrid dirt.... It's only with the Holy Spirit in us that we can become productive soil.*

### III. Sowers Shrewdly-SIFT ALL Soils

*Beware soil-based vs. seed-based preaching!* - JDP

#### Soil #4

20 *But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones* (NOTE: again... the soil is referred to as a soul...) *who hear the word* (NOTE: again... the seed is identified as “the word” of God) *and accept it* (NOTE: see the gorgeous gospel tension between sovereign grace and human responsibility... *God gives us His truth in love by grace... & the good soil must respond and receive The Gospel, which is also by grace*) *and* (NOTE: more tension that builds on the same both/and principle... the “and” here serves as a literal conjunction, adding to the good soil’s responsibility and privilege) *bear fruit* (NOTE: to “bear fruit” is BE at the height of the Gospel’s miraculous witness - JDP), *thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”* (NOTE: see the providential progression of The Gospel’s grace & glory....  
1). God determines our capacity. 2). We fulfill our calling.  
3). ANY fruit is miraculous fruit! 4). 30, 60, 100 are progressive exclamation marks of amazing grace! - JDP  
5). God is sovereign over the sower, the seed, and the soil!

*Our soils tell the stories about the glories  
that we seek.* - JDP



## DECEMBER 4

*You were designed for it. You have missed the point without it.  
What is it? Living every day for the glory of the Father.*

I have written about it much and I will continue to write about it as long as I am able. It is a theme that cannot be repeated too much. It is a practical concern that touches everything that we think, desire, say, and do. It reaches to the deepest levels of human motivation. It sits at the epicenter of our spiritual struggles. It is one of the underlying causes of the most important battles of the heart. It exposes the deepest wishes of our souls. It is at the heart of why we were created. It expresses God's will for everyone who has ever taken a breath. It is the great moral dividing line. And it is the reason Jesus had to come.

Life is all about glory. Sin is all about glory. Grace is all about glory. Spirituality is all about glory. Heaven and hell are all about glory. Submission and rebellion are all about glory. Love and hatred are all about glory. A life of demand and a life of service are both propelled by glory. Contentment and craving are both motivated by glory. Every word you speak and every action you take is directed by glory. Glory causes you to want some things and despise others. Glory makes you arrogant and causes you to be humble. Glory reduces you to a thief or motivates you to give. Glory makes your heart glad or causes it to be eaten with envy. Glory makes you constantly thankful for a Savior or causes you to forget he exists.

We human beings were hardwired for glory. Glory orientation was woven into the fabric of our hearts. We were designed this way so that we would be able to take in all the glories of creation and so that those glories would point us to the one glory that is truly glorious and alone able to satisfy our hearts, the glory of God. This means that we are always living in pursuit of some kind of glory. Either our hearts have been captured by the temporary glories of the created world or by grace they have been captured by the eternally satisfying glory of God. We are working for our own glory, pursuing some created glory, or living for God's glory. But we are always living for glory.

Jesus came to liberate us from our addiction to glories that will never satisfy our hearts. He came to free us from our bondage to our own glory and our obsession with the shadow glories of the created world. He willingly died for glory thieves (us) so that we would find our satisfaction in and live in service of the glory of God. Jesus not only revealed God's glory on earth; he died so that that glory would be the final resting place of our hearts.

*For further study and encouragement: Psalm 145*

Let's Pray!