

Matthew 13:3-8

3... "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop-- a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

- HARD - deflective, closed off

Matthew 13:18-19

18 "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: 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.

...disappointment with religion or church.

...someone doing something in Jesus' name that doesn't have anything to do w/ Jesus.

...selfishness and pride, we simply don't want to hear what God has to say.

...fear of the unknown, we're not sure where that will lead so we keep pushing it away.

- SHALLOW - lacks stamina & resilience, quick to quit

Matthew 13:20-21

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.

The tension = we want depth, but we want it right now.

Breadth happens quickly, depth takes time.

-- top soil is generated at an average rate of 1 inch per 100 years

- CLUTTERED - choked with worries & wealth

Matthew 13:7

Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants.

Matthew 13:22

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.

- GOOD - soft, deep, uncluttered, receptive

Matthew 13:23

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.

Nehemiah 8:2-3

2 ... Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. 3 He read it aloud from daybreak till noon...And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

The question at the center of this parable...

Isn't about the farmer, he sows the seed lavishly.

Isn't about the seed, same seed is spread everywhere.

It's about the soil, how's the condition of my heart toward God & His word?

"It is the plough that prepares the ground for sowing the seed...There are lives that are hardened towards God, they are simply a way for the traffic of their own concerns. We are responsible for the kind of ground we are. No man on earth has any right to be a highroad; every man has the chance of allowing the plough to run through his life. Sorrow or bereavement or conviction of sin, anything that upsets the even, hard way of the life and produces concern, will act as the plough. A man's concern about his eternal welfare witnesses that the plough has begun to go through his self-complacency." - Oswald Chambers