



Group Guide

Matthew 13

October 20, 2024

Main Passage: Matthew 13:1-23

Theological Theme

Jesus told a parable to teach the importance of the condition of our hearts toward spiritual things by comparing the message of the gospel to seed scattered across different types of soil.

Introduction

- ❓ Would you say you have a green thumb or not? Why?
- ❓ What is something that you wish you could grow in abundance?

1. The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9)

Crowds gathered around Jesus and He took the opportunity to teach them many things. As the people stood along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus got into a boat and spoke to them. This would have given Him the necessary distance so more people could see and hear what He had to say. Matthew said Jesus taught the people many things through parables. A parable is a story with a spiritual point; it has been said that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

- ❓ What are some parables you are familiar with? How familiar are you with the parable we are looking at today?
- ❓ In what ways is the gospel message to be scattered about the earth? What is God's role in this? What is our role?
- ❓ Application: What of these verses is new to you or stands out in a different way today? Silently consider which type of soil you would initially say represents your heart.

2. Why Parables? (Matthew 13:10-17)

As the disciples were among the crowd that day listening to the parable of the sower, they had questions about Jesus's method of teaching. Pulling Jesus aside, they asked why He was using parables instead of speaking the truth plainly. Although the story Jesus told was easy to picture in the hearers' context, the spiritual application may not be easily discerned. Why was Jesus speaking in this manner?

- ❓ How have you seen it to be true that those who are spiritually receptive will “be given more”? How have you experienced this in your own life?
- ❓ How would you describe a calloused heart? How would you describe an open heart?
- ❓ Application: How can you seek to guard against your sensitivity to the Spirit of God growing dull?

3. The Point Explained (Matthew 13:18-23)

Jesus then explained the parable and how the types of soils represent different ways that the gospel is received. Three of the types of soil don't receive the message but the last one does, resulting in a great harvest.

- ❓ Why are all people's hearts bad soil apart from God's work in our lives?
- ❓ Why is it important to continually assess the receptivity of our hearts before God? What is the danger of not doing this on an ongoing basis?
- ❓ Application: How can you prepare the soil of your heart for spiritual things?

Conclusion

- ❓ How do you need to be intentional about preparing the soil of your heart for spiritual things?
- ❓ How can we support one another in this effort as a group?
- ❓ How can you share the gospel with another person by sharing the parable of the sower this week?