

# PARABLES ABOUT SOWING

## **TEXT: MARK 4:26-34**

### **Introduction:**

1. A couple of weeks ago we looked at the parable of the sower (4:1-20).
2. We saw from Matthew 13:37 that Jesus said, “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.”
3. Mark 4:14 says, “The sower soweth the Word.” So the seed represents the Word of God (cf. Mark 4:26).
4. The soil represents four types of hearers:
  - (1) The Way Side (Mark 4:4, 15).
  - (2) The Stony Ground (Mark 4:5, 6, 16, 17).
  - (3) The Thorns (Mark 4:7, 18, 19).
  - (4) The Good Ground (Mark 4:8, 20).
5. Then our Lord told the parable of the candle (4:21-25), which we looked at last week.
6. Tonight we are going back to the theme of the harvest. There are two kinds of harvests – God’s and the devil’s. There are two kinds of seeds – good seed and bad seed (cf. Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43).

### **I. THE PRINCIPLE OF UNCONSCIOUS GROWTH (4:26-29).**

1. This parable is only found in the Gospel of Mark.
2. In the previous parables, the responsibility of the hearer is set forth (cf. 4:9, 23).
3. But here the emphasis is on the one who sows the seed. The Gospel preacher, and the soulwinning Christian must faithfully “cast seed into the ground” (4:26).
4. “Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,  
Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve;  
Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.” – Knowles Shaw
5. We must cast our seed and then patiently leave the results with God. He is the “Lord of the harvest.”
6. Jesus said, “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2).
7. How all of this works is a mystery that we will never comprehend this side of heaven. Man “knoweth not how” (Mark 4:27).
8. The processes and the results are beyond man’s wisdom and power – both in the physical realm and the spiritual realm.

9. British scientists recently germinated some seeds that had been brought from South Africa by a Dutch merchant in 1803. They were found in a notebook stored in the National Archives.
10. The Kamut grain is an ancient variety of wheat that was discovered by archaeologists in an Egyptian pyramid dating to about 4000 years ago. They were able to sprout them and save the variety, and it now shows up in cereals and snacks.
11. The seed had lay dormant for 4,000 years, yet when they planted the seed it sprang to full life. “And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how” (Mark 4:27).

## **II. GOOD SEED WILL PRODUCE A GOOD HARVEST**

1. We must be faithful in sowing seed, believing that God will give us a great harvest (4:28, 29; cf. Isa. 55:10, 11).
2. The results are gradual (4:28). Just as it takes nine months for a physical birth, it takes some time for the new birth. The Holy Spirit does His convicting work in the hearts of men, and in God’s good time a sinner is converted to Christ.
3. Furthermore, sanctification takes time – “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear” (4:28).
4. We should not expect maturity of Christian character at once. The farmer does not expect his crops to mature overnight. He sows, and later on he reaps. When the grain is ripe, the farmer thrusts in his sickle (4:29).
5. “By and by the harvest, and the labor ended,  
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.”

## **III. THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED (4:30-34)**

1. This parable is also found in Matthew 13 and Luke 13.
2. Matthew 13:32 says, “Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree.”
3. The Scofield Study Bible says, “The parable of the Mustard Seed prefigures the rapid but unsubstantial growth of the mystery form of the kingdom from an insignificant beginning (Acts 1:15; 2:41; I Cor. 1:26) to a great place in the earth. The figure of the fowls finding shelter in the branches is drawn from Daniel 4:20-22” (p. 1016).
4. This parable, along with the others here and in Matthew 13, shows the conditions of things in the world in the interval between Christ’s ascension into heaven and the rapture.

5. The parable is not necessarily describing conditions in the local church, but the admixture of things in what is known as “Christendom.”
6. Again I will quote Scofield: “It is the sphere of Christian profession during this age. It is a mingled body of true and false, wheat and tares, good and bad. It is defiled by formalism, doubt, and worldliness” (p. 1018).
7. So according to these parables, in this kingdom of God (or kingdom of heaven) are found unbelievers mixed in with believers; tares sown in with the wheat; and bad fish in the net with the good fish (cf. Matt. 13:47-50).
8. This is what is known as “Christendom,” a big hodgepodge of saved people and lost people, Baptists, RC’s, Protestants, homosexual “churches,” strange cults like the Mormons, charismatics, you name it – they’re all in the branches of this big tree (Mark 4:32; cf. Matt. 13:32; Luke 13:19).
9. In the parable of the sower, our Lord said the fowls of the air represent Satan, the prince of the power of the air (Mark 4:3, 4, 14, 15).
10. Therefore, these fowls that find lodging in the branches represent Satan, his demons, and his deluded followers. These birds are injurious to the churches. They are predatory – waiting to pluck off the tender buds, or to prey upon the ripened fruit.
11. They hurt the cause of Christ and do serious damages to His churches. We must watch and pray because these fowls have flown into our congregation from time to time.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Mark 4: 33, 34 says, “And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.”
2. Our Lord’s listeners could not grasp everything He taught them. Our Lord spoke to them in parables “as they were able to hear it” (4:33b).
3. Our Lord said in John 16:13, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”
4. Not “some truth,” but “all truth.”
5. God has given us His Word. He has given us the indwelling Holy Spirit, who will guide us into all truth.