

The Walk of the Redeemed in Christ - Part 6

TEXT: *3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow [seeds]: 4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. 5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: 6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. 8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. 9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. (Mark 4:3-9)*

“The nature of a parable is that it depicts human or mythical characters as representing other things in a short story while implying a moral or spiritual lesson”. No one in the heavens or here on earth ever spoke more parables than our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord’s parables were and still are apt spiritual lessons to all readers and hearers of His Word. In order to understand the relevancy of the above text [Mark 4:3-9](#) (the parable of the sower), in the walk of the redeemed in Christ, we have to clarify three important elements in the parable. First, the sower represents the agent (a man of God) that ministers God’s Word; secondly, the seed represents the Word of God, and thirdly, the ground or soil represents the hearts of men and women who hear the gospel of Jesus. This particular parable is a short story about a man of God who went to preach the Word of God. As he preached to his hearers or congregation, they each received the Word differently because of the various conditions of their heart.

The Lord was precisely correct when He metaphorically likened the preaching and acceptance of the Word to the sowing and germination of seeds in the four different ground conditions depicted in the parable. Of the four, wayside, stony, thorny and good, three were not conducive for the healthy growth of the sower’s seeds. It would be very wrong to think that seeds could

germinate in just any ground and under any conditions. The nutritional content or condition of the soil determines the proper germination of a seed and the health of the resulting plant. This is also applicable with regard to the preaching and acceptance of the Word of God. Essentially, the condition of a man's heart determines the extent to which he accepts and applies the Word of God in his life. The bible says, "*As in water face reflects face, so a man's heart reveals the man*" (**Proverbs 27:19**). In other words, the content or the condition of your heart expresses your disposition, attitude and overall character. Whatsoever is in your heart will someday manifest physically or outwardly, when the light (the Word) of God shines upon it.

Before I go any further, it is important that I draw your attention to the primary element - the seed or the Word of God in our selected parable. First, it is good to know that without the seed or the Word there would never be a sower or preacher. Secondly, without sowing the seed or the Word there should be no expectation of any harvest. It is the Word that creates the preacher who must definitely sow the Word into people's lives to bear fruits. Truly, the walk of the redeemed in Christ only begins when the incorruptible seed, (the Word) of God is sown into a man's or woman's heart. The truth is that whenever God wants to intervene in a man's life, whether it involves his salvation, deliverance or healing, the only method He employs is to have His Word sown into the man's heart. It is important that once the Word of God is sown into anyone's life, he must not be careless with the Word otherwise Satan will immediately take it away from him to keep him bound. He must strive diligently to hold on to the sown Word in his life and willfully and boldly confess, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto [my] salvation [and] to everyone that believeth*" (**Romans 1:16**). That would be a clear indication that he has accepted God's offer of grace and mercy. It is only then that the Word of God effectively takes hold of his life and begins the sanctification process leading to his transformation. Undoubtedly, acceptance

of the *grace of God that brings salvation* through the Word of God depends on the condition of one's heart.

In our parable, the condition of hearts mentioned, are represented by the four ground types. The first condition is that of the *wayside* heart - *these are the ones where the word is sown and they hear it [but] Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts*. It might be quite easy to allude to the *wayside* heart as being that of the unbeliever, but that is not necessarily true. This is the regular churchgoer who attends church and is probably involved in various ministries of the church but the Word is in not them. The Word of God does not abide in them.

This heart cannot receive or hold on to the preached Word of God because Satan has put a veil over it to prevent the Word from penetrating it. This heart receives the Word with the right ear but it goes out through the left ear. No amount of preaching can pierce the *wayside* heart. The Bible says this sort is, "*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth*" because they are *carnally minded*. The carnal *wayside* heart is *enmity against God*. It is cold and hostile to God's Word. It does not submit to God nor can it do so and it cannot please God (**Romans 8:6-8**). The possessors of the *wayside* heart are *lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God*.

Brethren, please slowly read, ponder and meditate on the above list of sins or ungodliness that is a stench in the Lord's nostrils. I solemnly pray that God will quietly convict your *wayside* heart if you are guilty of one or all of these sins? My brothers and sisters which of these sins are you struggling with? Are you an out of control lover of money? My sisters in the Lord, would you prefer an ungodly millionaire to a holy man of God? Brothers, is it your

job or business before God? My dear *wayside* heart: do you obey your parents? Have you forgiven your father or mother for being an absentee parent in your childhood? My sister, did someone molest you? As sad, tough and heavy as that is, our Lord still wants you to forgive him otherwise your heart for Jesus will still remain by the *wayside*. I know it is not easy; but with Christ all things are possible. Brethren, do you lack self control in the area of sex? Are you having sex with someone other than your spouse? Why have you chosen to give your body to sinful sexual pleasures rather than to Jesus Christ? What other pleasures do you love more than God?

If you've read all these and you are not moved to repent and turn from your wicked ways, you indeed possess a *wayside* heart. You are being careless with the Word of God. You are like Cain who murdered his brother right after God Himself pleaded with him not to do it. You may also be like Lot's wife who preferred the perverted Sodom and Gomorrah to the land that the Lord was taking her and her entire family to. Beloved *wayside* heart how long will you remain *headstrong* against the Word of God? Are you going to let *Satan* to *immediately take away* this *Word* that's been sown into your heart? Tomorrow is not promised – this might be your last chance. My brothers and my sisters, come to Jesus, today!

The second “heart condition” mentioned in the parable is the stony heart. At a glance, you would think there is no chance for a seed (the Word) to germinate here due to the very nature of stony ground which is rocky, rough, dry and not very conducive for sowing. But the Bible says, the Word of God is like *a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces*” ([Jeremiah 23:29](#)). Therefore, Satan cannot block men and women with the *stony* heart condition from receiving the Word. He does allow them to sometimes immediately receive the Word but it is received only superficially and its impact is short-term.

Jesus told his disciples, “*These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word’s sake, immediately they stumble*” (Mark 4:16-17).

Brethren, in my humble opinion and based on my experience, of all the heart conditions this is the worst because this heart is fraught with humanism, mythical beliefs and a sprinkle of theology or Christianity. This heart is the heart of one who quotes the scriptures, but when his faith is tested, it flounders because the Word is not rooted in his heart. Hence, this heart may have a *form of godliness but denying the power thereof* and the Bible says, “*From such turn away*”.

Those with this heart are apt to start preaching and establish ministries only to crash and burn because the Lord had not called or sent them yet. These are the ones that are watering down the gospel of Jesus Christ because the Son or Truth has not set them free. In Acts 8:9-24, Simon the sorcerer *immediately received* the apostolic gospel *with gladness* but he quickly tried to pervert the very gospel that he had freely received by offering the apostles money to buy the power of God. Simon did not want to crawl before walking. He did not want to wait to have *complete knowledge* of the gospel to be able to instruct and admonish others (Romans 15:14). He did not want to pay the price to establish a God ordained ministry. All he cared for was to be like the apostles who had spent three sacrificial years with Jesus before their ministries sprang forth. He paid the price by spend time with Jesus unto his death.

Men and brethren, are you afflicted with a stony heart syndrome – a heart wrought with impatience, covetousness, superficiality and shallowness concerning the Word of God? Rather than praying, studying and waiting to receive power when the Holy Ghost has come upon you, you are turning to so called Gurus to tap unclean powers from them. Do you not believe that God can baptize you with the same power and fire like the apostles of old? Oh, my

beloved brothers and sisters stop the foolishness and heed the Lord's bidding today. He says, "*John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence...But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*" May these Words comfort and strengthen you and take root in your heart today, in the name of Jesus.

The third heart condition is the thorny heart or heart of thorns. *Now these are the ones [seeds] sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.* In the world of sports there is nothing as sad and disappointing as a team that chokes in a big game. For instance, Team A has Team B reeling in a game – victory is almost eminent for Team A but all of sudden Team A relaxes and loses focus just enough for Team B to come from behind to win the game. This description of choking in a sporting event is analogous to what happens to a Christian that is striving hard to walk and please God but somehow Satan causes a whirlwind of distractions or other gods to descend upon him. The things that Satan normally uses to distract us from our walk are not altogether bad, in fact, the majority of them (husband, wife, money, job, car or home) are necessary for our temporary existence here on earth. But if the Word of God does not take root in us these *cares of this world* and *desire for other things* choke the Word that is sown in our hearts.

In **Mark 10:17-22**, we have a perfect illustration of a man with a thorny heart condition: *Now as He [Jesus] was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" So, Jesus said to him, "You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'"* And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have

kept from my youth". Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions". Beloved, this is not another one of those Jesus' parables. This is a true story of a rich young ruler in the region of Judea who loved this world more than the Lord. It is a very sad case of man allowing *the deceitfulness of riches* to choke the Word of God that was sown into his heart directly by the King of Kings. The saddest part of the story is that this man was completely oblivious to who gave him the riches in the first place.

Today, this same proposition is still hounding our generation whether you believe it or not. A great many of Christians are shunning the Lord's business and are busy seeking worldly fulfillments or accomplishments. There are many us whom God has called into the ministry but we are busy chasing our own myopic dreams of climbing the corporate ladder, pushing our kids to become sports stars, or being blindsided by our little business enterprises. Many go into long, brutal periods of fasting to beseech God for a wife/husband or to pass board exams, but they'd never fast to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Some so-called Christians (unmarried men and women) who are living together would probably go away *sad* and *sorrowful* if Jesus were to ask them to come out of their abomination. Some, like the rich young man could probably turn their backs on Jesus to be with their unsaved and sinful lover. The truth of the matter is that if there's anything that we cannot give up for Christ, that thing becomes a god to us which is a huge violation of the Word of God – *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*. I pray that none of us will allow *the cares of this world* to choke the Word of God sown in our heart.

The last heart condition in the parable is the good ground. The Bible says, *"These are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred."*

The primary characteristic of good ground is that it bears fruits. This is also true of a good heart condition – it bears fruit up to a hundred-fold for the kingdom of God. Indeed, these are the truly redeemed in Christ. Any man or woman who has received the Word of God with a contrite and repentant heart will certainly bear fruits worthy of their walk with Christ because he or she now lives in the Spirit and walks in the Spirit.

The Bible says, *“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit”* (Romans 8:1). This is the portion of the redeemed in Christ Jesus. When the Holy Spirit overshadows us we are no longer of the world and the Spirit enables us to walk holy without the desire to fulfill the lusts of the flesh *which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, reveling, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God* (Galatians 5:19-21).

None of us can rid ourselves of such filth as is listed above. Without the saving grace of the blood of Jesus we remain dead in our sins with no other option besides eternal condemnation. But today, through the gift of salvation by the Grace of God, we are able to strive to *walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God* (Colossian 1:10). Brethren, if you are aiming for anything short of this goal, the condition of your heart needs to be examined in the light of the Word of God, for it is the Word of God that effectively works in us to wash and sanctify us for the Lord’s use. For sure, it is not by our power nor our might that we walk redeemed in Christ, but it is by the Spirit of the Living God. To God be the glory.

Amen and Amen.