

Is There Evidence of Christ In You?

Introduction:

If we were to be put on trial for being a Christian — would there be enough evidence to convict us?

1. It should be every Christian's desire that everyone is able to see our progress and the evidence that Christ is living in us. Paul said to Timothy:
1 Timothy 4:12-16
2. However, this is not the case in many Christian's lives.
3. This morning, we want to look at the only way in which Christ will be evident in our lives!
4. To examine this, I want to use the parable of the sower as the ground work.

The Parable of the Sower; Four Soils; the Seed

1. This parable is told by Jesus to illustrate different reactions to the gospel message.
2. The parable is recorded in **Matt 13:3-9**; Mark 4:3-9; Luk 8:4-8
Matthew 13:3-9
3. Through this parable we can see ourselves as we really are in regards to how we have received the Word into our lives.

Explanation of the Parable

1. **The Sower --- Jesus**
2. **The Seed --- The word of God**
3. **The Soil --- Four different soils discussed:**

The Wayside (The First Soil)

1. **This soil represents one who.....*“hears and does not understand”***
 - A. **Most likely, these are those who have hardened their hearts prior to hearing the Word - cf. **Mt 13:15****
2. **The "birds" represent "the wicked one" who snatches away the Word from those whose hearts are hardened.**
 - A. **Their condition is one of being "blinded" by Satan to the gospel**
2 Corinthians 4:3-4
 - B. **While Satan contributes to their blindness, it is precipitated by their own hardness of heart!**

The Stony Places (The Second Soil)

NOTE: Let audience know that most relate all the soils to those yet to be Christians. We want to relate these next three soils to *those that are Christians!*

1. This soil represents the one who..

A. "hears the word and receives it with joy" - Mt 13:20

**B. "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while"
Matt 13:21a**

**C. "when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word,
immediately he stumbles" - Mt 13:21b**

2. Here we learn that an emotional reception without a strong foundation based upon the Word will not enable one to stand against tribulation and persecution.

--- A weak, uncommitted Christian is the result.

The Thorns (The Third Soil)

1. This soil represents the one who..

A. "hears the word" - Mt 13:22a

B. But whose ability to bear fruit is choked by:

1) "the cares of this world" - Mt 13:22b

2) "the deceitfulness of riches" - Mt 13:22c

3) "pleasures of life" (added in Lk 8:14)

2. How these three "thorns" can cause us to be unfruitful is explained in other portions of God's Word...

A. Cares cause us to be unprepared (Luke 21:34-36)

1) Detracting our minds (Luke 12:29-32)

B. The deceitfulness of riches - divert our attention away from God, not toward God (1 Timothy 6:9-10, 17)

C. Pleasures of life divert our minds from things of the Spirit (Galatians 5:17)

2) When we sow to the flesh, it is impossible to reap of the Spirit (Galatians 6:7-9)

The Good Ground (The Fourth Soil)

1. This soil represents the one who...

A. "hears the word and understands it" - Mt 13:23a

B. "bears fruit and produces" - Mt 13:23b

**1) These would be like the Bereans (Acts 17:11).
--- receive the word & verify the word!**

2) When one "understands" they are more likely to bear fruit, but the key to understanding is to have a good receptive heart, **WANTING to follow Christ's teaching.**

2. What kind of fruit will one bear?

A. Fruit of winning souls (Rom 1:3)

B. Fruit of practical holiness (Rom 6:22; 12:1-2)

C. Fruit of the Spirit (Christ-like character- Gal 5:22)

You should have no trouble understanding this parable. However, it is one thing to understand it, quite another to make application of it.

Now, let's make application of this parable to find out if there is evidence of Christ in you.

Application of the Parable

1. Are You like "The Wayside"? (No Evidence)

A. If you have heard the gospel of Christ and His kingdom, but are *not yet a Christian*....

- 1) You may be in the process of hardening your heart the longer you wait!
- 2) You are susceptible to Satan's deception in some form, and will not allow the Word of God to have its intended effect!

Every Christian here this morning falls into one of the next three soils.

2. Are You like "The Stony Places"? (No Evidence)

A. If you responded to the gospel at one time, but are *not being grounded* in the faith...

B. You will likely fall away when persecution or temptation comes your way! (Also lazy and apathetic)

3. Are You like "The Thorny Soil"? (Very Little Evidence)

A. If you responded to the gospel at one time, but are becoming *too preoccupied* with the cares, riches, and pleasures of this world...

B. You will not be able to bear fruit! (Cut off - Jn 15:1-6)

- 1) That which is "SEEN" is taking precedence over that which is "UNSEEN."

4. Are You like "The Good Soil"? (Much Evidence)

**A. If you have responded to the gospel, and *are bearing fruit...*
Then you have demonstrated several things:**

- 1) You have a good and noble heart!**
- 2) You have come to understand the Word!**
- 3) You have been keeping it with patience!**

B. The Word has been able to produce its intended effect.

Conclusion

1. Jesus finished telling His parable of the Sower, and cried out,

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" - Mt 13:9

2. If you are anything other than like "the good soil", you need to repent today! – Only the "good soil" will be among the FEW!

Invitation

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