

Saturday Morning Devotion

What does “following Christ” really mean? What are different reasons why people choose to follow Christ? Why do you follow Christ?

Read and meditate through Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (you may want to compare this with the 2 parallel accounts recorded in Mark 4:3-9, 13-20 and Luke 8:4-15)

Picture the setting where Jesus was telling this parable. Why did Jesus have to get into a boat? Why did such large crowds come?

Looking at the parable itself (v. 3-9), what does each of the principal elements represent?

- the sower?
- the seed?
- the 4 soil-types?

What happened when the seed was sown into each of the 4 soil-types?

v. 4 and 19 tell us that the Enemy (Satan) aims to destroy the work of God by stealing the seed that was sown in peoples' hearts. In your life, what lies has Satan caused you to believe (about yourself or about God) that may have caused you to doubt God or to turn away from Him?

v. 5, 20 and 21 tell us the importance of ‘setting root’, or ‘getting established’. How are you getting established in Christ, so that you may not “wither away” when the time of trial comes?

v. 7 and 22 describe the seeds that got choked by thorns. What are the thorns in your life that may be ‘choking’ your faith? (They may not necessarily be “bad” things, but also include “good” things in life that are taking your eyes off Christ.)

Lastly, v. 8 and 23 paint the picture of the good soil that bears much fruit. What do you think is unique about this good soil? What do you think some of these fruits may be? (eg. 2 Peter 1:5-8, 2 Timothy 4:2,5...etc.)

Reflection and Application

Up to this point in Matthew's account, Jesus has been performing all kinds of miracles to demonstrate His power and authority. In doing so, He has attracted a sizeable following who wanted to see what He could offer them. However, following Christ is much more than acquiring the benefits of Christ. He is not just our “ticket to heaven”, nor does He promise material prosperity, or great health, or “smooth-sailing” in our earthly lives. In fact, a life that follows Jesus looks very different than that which the crowd might have imagined. Following Christ requires us to acknowledge Him as both our Saviour AND Lord. It is a condition of the heart that is necessarily expressed in how we live.

What is the condition of your heart? Perhaps you do not yet have a relationship with Christ. Talk to someone today and find out how you can know God personally. Or perhaps your walk has been “stale” lately for whatever reason – it is time to get rid of the thorns and start setting deeper roots in the Word and in prayer. Or perhaps you are already bearing fruit – that is great! Do not become proud, lest you fall (Proverbs 16:18); rather, be thankful, and continue to strive for a closer walk with Christ.

“Is this idea of the non-fruit-bearing Christian something that we have concocted in order to make Christianity ‘easier’? So we can follow our own course and still call ourselves followers of Christ?...Jesus' intention in this parable was to compare the only good soil to the ones that were not legitimate alternatives. To Him, there was one option for a true believer.” - Francis Chan