

Dynamics Of Discipleship

Pt 9 – How's Your Heart Condition?

Scripture – Matt 13:3-9, 18-23 (TNIV)

Matthew 13:3-9 (Today's New International Version)

3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. **4** As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. **5** Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. **6** But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7** Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. **8** Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. **9** Whoever has ears, let them hear."

Matthew 13:18-23 (Today's New International Version)

18 "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: **19** When people hear the message about the kingdom and do not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their hearts. This is the seed sown along the path. **20** The seed falling on rocky ground refers to people who hear the word and at once receive it with joy. **21** But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. **22** The seed falling among the thorns refers to people who hear the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. **23** But the seed falling on good soil refers to people who

hear the word and understand it. They produce a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

A.The 4 Ground / Heart Conditions

1. Wayside ground – Resistant heart (v19)

- Birds devour seed
- No understanding
- Matt 13:14-15 (NLT)

14 This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah that says,

*'When you hear what I say,
you will not understand.*

*When you see what I do,
you will not comprehend.*

15 *For the hearts of these people are hardened,
and their ears cannot hear,
and they have closed their eyes—
so their eyes cannot see,
and their ears cannot hear,
and their hearts cannot understand,
and they cannot turn to me
and let me heal them.'*

2. Rocky ground – Shallow heart (v20-21)

- Initial enthusiasm
- No root / depth

- Quickly fall away

3. Thorny ground – Cluttered heart (v22)

- Luke 8:14 (NLT)

14 *The seeds that fell among the thorns represent those who hear the message, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. And so they never grow into maturity.*

- Luke 10:41-42 (NCV)

41 *But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things. **42** Only one thing is important. Mary has chosen the better thing, and it will never be taken away from her."*

- Mixed up and misplaced priorities
- "Choke" – to strangle completely, to drown, to crowd out

4. Good ground – receptive heart (v23)

- Luke 8:15 (NLT)

15 *And the seeds that fell on the good soil represent honest, good-hearted people who hear God's word, cling to it, and patiently produce a huge harvest.*

- Acts 17:11-12 (NLT)

11 And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth. **12** As a result, many Jews believed, as did many of the prominent Greek women and men.

B. The Cure

1. Plough your heart

- Joel 2:13 (CEV)

13 Don't rip your clothes

to show your sorrow.

*Instead, turn back to me
with broken hearts.*

I am merciful, kind, and caring.

*I don't easily lose my temper,
and I don't like to punish.*

- Hosea 10:12 (NLT)

12 I said, 'Plant the good seeds of righteousness,
and you will harvest a crop of love.

*Plow up the hard ground of your hearts,
for now is the time to seek the LORD,
that he may come
and shower righteousness upon you.'*

2. Protect your heart – Provb 4:23-27 (NLT)

- 23** *Guard your heart above all else,
for it determines the course of your life.*
- 24** *Avoid all perverse talk;
stay away from corrupt speech.*
- 25** *Look straight ahead,
and fix your eyes on what lies before you.*
- 26** *Mark out a straight path for your feet;
stay on the safe path.*
- 27** *Don't get sidetracked;
keep your feet from following evil.*