

**Main text: Matthew 13:18-23**

Setting the Context: Isaiah 6:9-13

"This sermon is about Jesus teaching in parables to share the "Secrets of the Kingdom of God".

<sup>10</sup>The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

<sup>11</sup>He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. <sup>12</sup>Whoever has will be given more, and he will have abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. <sup>13</sup>This is why I speak to them in parables:

"Though seeing, they do not see;

though hearing, they do not hear or understand. <sup>14</sup>In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

" 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding;

you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

<sup>15</sup>For this people's heart has become calloused;

they hardly hear with their ears,

and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,

hear with their ears,

understand with their hearts

and turn, and I would heal them. <sup>16</sup>[a]

<sup>16</sup>But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. <sup>17</sup>For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

<sup>18</sup>"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. **This is the seed sown along the path.**

<sup>20</sup>The one who received the seed **that fell on rocky places** is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. <sup>21</sup>But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

<sup>22</sup>The one who received the seed **that fell among the thorns** is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

- <sup>23</sup>But the one who received the seed **that fell on good soil** is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. What does it mean to sow?
2. Why is Jesus the sower?
3. What is the seed in this parable?
4. Please describe each of the places the seed falls:
  - 1) Along the path in verses 18 & 19
  - 2) On rocky places in verses 20 & 21
  - 3) Among the thorns, verse #22
  - 4) Good soil in verse #23.

Digging Deeper: When you think of your life honestly, what place are you?

Prayer Focus: Dear God....help me to receive your Word in my heart and bear fruit for your Kingdom....

