

Sunday, May 26, 2013

## The sown word and the quality of the soil (2)

### First: Wayside

+ A wayside is not fit for growing plants. It is always trodden and traversed by people. When the ground is continuously trodden by foot, its soil gets compacted and becomes dry. Water cannot easily permeate through it and seeds cannot penetrate it. Therefore, the seeds stay above the surface of the ground and gets trampled underfoot by men until birds come and pick them up.

+ The Lord Jesus explained that this type of ground is likened to the people who hear the word and don't understand it. The word doesn't go through their minds and hearts, but stays in their short term memory for a while, and then the devil comes and steals it. That's to say that man forgets the word of God so it doesn't bring fruit in his life.

+ Therefore it is important to prepare the soil for planting. First, it is important to section off parts of the land as basins for planting and are kept un-trodden by men, other parts to be prepared as walkways for people to walk on them. In other words, **we divide the land into basins and walkways**, the basins are then prepared to be fit for agriculture [Basin Irrigation is a water management system developed by the ancient Egyptians to fit their Irrigation needs].

+ The spiritual meaning is that the wayside resembles the person that people tread over his time, leaving him with no time on hand to plant the word of God in his life. All his time has become a wayside that is not fit for planting. Example of that: Excessive talking to people, talking too much on the phone, texting, watching too much TV, being busy on the internet or on social media and smart phones... His life is all filled up and becomes a hard ground unfit and ill prepared to receive the word of God.

+ If we want to change this type of ground to make it fit for planting, we ought to first section off parts of it that would be dedicated only for planting, no one ever tramples over it. This means that we dedicate a fixed time for planting [the word], this could be in the form of reading the scriptures and meditating upon it, listening to sermons, or attending Bible study meetings in the church. Successful planting also can be through prayer, reading, and discussions.

### Second: Stony ground

+ This is a type of ground may look good on the surface but it has serious problems on the inside that prevents it from bringing fruit. This is similar to the condition of someone who takes care of the outwardly beauty only without preparing the inside to receive the voice of God and His message. If we always go to Church wearing the best clothes and taking care of our outwardly appearance, do we also prepare our inner hearts with prayer, repentance, humility, forgiving those who trespass against us?

+ This type of ground **lacks three important aspects according to Jesus' explanation: It doesn't have much soil, it has no depth to it, and doesn't allow roots to grow within it.** Because of the rocks and stones, it doesn't have sufficient dirt for planting except for a thin layer of topsoil that is not enough for plants to grow. Additionally, the stones in the soil prevents the roots from growing deep enough, consequently the plants cannot withstand the high temperature so it wither away from the sun and eventually burns.

+ **This underlines the importance of deepening the roots in our lives.** It is not enough to hear the word and store some information in our minds. It is necessary that the word enters the heart and touches it, the heart meditates upon and it becomes the focus of one's prayer. One should then ask for help from God to live the word and plea to the Holy Spirit to reveal to him its deep mystery and rich meanings and to aid him to live it practically.

+ **The presence of rocks and stones in the soil is a serious problem; it devalues the land and weakens its fertility. It also requires a great effort to remove it out of the soil** such that the land becomes arable. Therefore, **we should not take this matter lightly without reclaiming the land** by plowing, cleaning, and watering it. **Otherwise the loss will be great.**

To be continued.

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