THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER  
Matt. 13:1-23

MAIN THOUGHT  This parable explains how this mystery is revealed to people and what their responses will be.

INTRODUCTION (1-17).

- These first seven parables reveal the MYSTERY (v. 11 – only here in the gospels; 13x by Paul; a truth not revealed in the OT) of the new form of the kingdom of God on earth – the Church Age.
- It is only now that Christ begins to speak of the CHURCH (Matt. 16:18 – first mention) and his DEATH (Matt. 16:21) because he had been rejected (John 1:11).
- The parable has two perfect constants (1) the SOWER who is Christ (38); (2) and the SEED which is the word of God (Luke 8:12; Isa. 55:11). The only variable is the SOIL – the quality and preparation of the hearers.

THE WAYSIDE HEARER – Hard Soil (18-19).

- This is the most difficult of the soils – a hardened heart (Jer. 9:17) filled with unbelief and sin. He is hounded by the devil.
- These are the STIFF-NECKED (Ex. 32:9; 2 Kings 17:14; Jer. 19:15; Acts 7:51) who despise wisdom and instruction (Prov. 1:7; 18:2). They have the devil as their father (John 8:44).
- The devil snatches the seed away through LIES (John 8:44), DECEIT (2 Cor. 2:11), and MASQUERADE (2 Cor. 11:14-15).
- The aim of the sower is to see people “believe and be saved” (Lk. 8:12).

THE SHALLOW HEARER – Rocky Soil (20-21).

- This rocky soil has but a thin layer of top soil – not enough to sustain life.
- It represents people who have an EMOTIONAL response to the gospel but it does not last. Like grass that grows on top of a roof (Psa. 129:6), no good fruit ever develops (Matt. 12:33). Know your faith will be tested (Jam. 1:2).
- A true disciple will ABIDE (John 8:31; Heb. 3:14) and CONTINUE (Col. 1:23).

THE WORLDLY HEARER – Thorny Soil (22).

- Like the rocky soil, these too had an initial positive response but were quickly choked out by thorns – the CARES, RICHES, and PLEASURES OF LIFE (Luke 8:14).
- They can make us double-minded (Jam. 1:8) serving both God and Mammon (Luke 16:13) like the rich young ruler (19:22) and Judas (John 12:6).

THE FRUITFUL HEARER – Good Soil (23).

- This person ACCEPTS the word (Mark 4:20) and bears abundant fruit (Gal. 5:22-23) by abiding and being pruned (John 15:2-4).
- This person had his heart prepared to receive the Lord (2 Chron. 12:14; Jer. 4:3). Ask God to prepare your heart (Psa. 51:10).