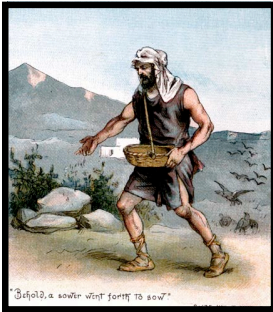


The lack of fruit is best attributed to the nature of the soil not the seed or the sower.

Mark 4:1-20

The Parable of the soils



- ✓ **Alongside the road**
(it is timed out)
- ✓ **On the rocky places**
(it is bought out)
- ✓ **Among the thorns**
(it is crowded out)
- ✓ **On the good soil**
(it is patient, persevering, a priority, & fruitful)

Are we responsible to find good soil or to cultivate it?

Does God manipulate the soils?

What is God doing here?

Mark 4

"¹⁰ And as soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables. ¹¹ And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God; but those who are outside get everything in parables,

¹² in order that *'while seeing, they may see and not perceive; and while hearing, they may hear and not understand lest they return and be forgiven.'*"

Romans 9

"¹⁴ What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! ¹⁵ For He says to Moses, "*I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.*" ¹⁶ So then **it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.** ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "*For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth.*" ¹⁸ So then **He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.** ¹⁹ You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" ²⁰ On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it?"

God's Sovereign Election (Primary)

Revelation (Secondary)

Family

Culture

Reason

Brokenness

Which comes first?

Saving Faith

Deuteronomy 29:29

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God,

but **the things revealed** belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law."

Romans 9:4,6

“**who are Israelites**, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, . . . But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For **they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;**”

Romans 11:1

“I say then, **God has not rejected His people, has He?** May it never be!”

- Rom.9-11 does not address individual salvation so much as God’s promise to spiritual Israel.
- The individuals mentioned (Sarah, Hagar, Jacob, Esau, Moses, Pharaoh) are to be understood in this context.
- God’s blessings and curses rest within the mystery of his plan and will, not our race, merit, or will.
- God may chose to use outsiders like Pharaoh (and Judas) whose hearts are hardened to fulfill His purposes.
- God’s choice of Israel may seem unfair but it has in the end a broader application to the whole world.

Matthew 13

“¹⁴ And in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, *‘**You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; and you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; 15 for the heart of this people has become dull, and with their ears they scarcely hear, and they have closed their eyes lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and return, and I should heal them.**’* ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.”

Paraphrase

“This is just like Isaiah’s judicial prediction: *“Your hearts are revealed and judged as hardened, which means that you don’t understand so as to repent and be blessed.”* But those of you who hear and see are blessed.”

Mark 4

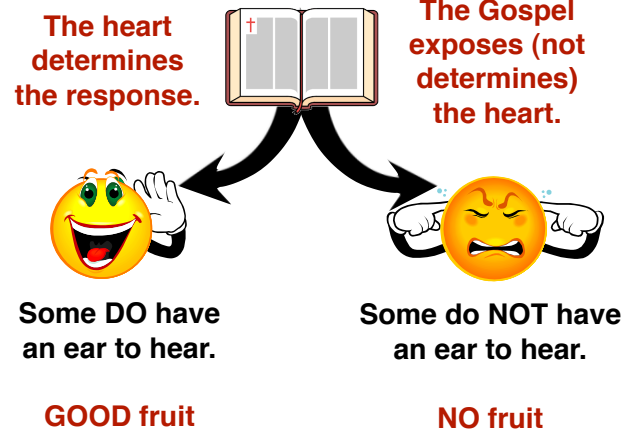
“²¹ And He was saying to them, “A lamp is not brought to be put under a peck-measure, is it, or under a bed? Is it not brought to be put on the lampstand? ²² “For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it should come to light. ²³ If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.” ²⁴ And He was saying to them, “Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it shall be measured to you; and more shall be given you besides. ²⁵ For whoever has, to him shall more be given; and whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.””

Paraphrase

“The Word of God, like a lighted lamp, comes forth exposing what has been hidden in the hearts of men. For example, if you have ears to hear the Word of God, you will see yourself and God’s heart so as to be led into His kingdom. On the other hand if you do not have ears to hear the Word of God by listening to other voices, you will lose even the little light that you do have.”

Hebrews 4

“12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”



Jesus sowed broadly to a mixed audience for the purpose of exposing their hearts.

“those who are outside get everything in parables.”

“He who has ears to hear let him hear.”

Example of Jesus being IN but not OF the world.

Sow broadly and expect the Word of God to expose the nature of all types of soil.

Implications

- **Speak in known tongues to felt needs with spiritual insight.**
- **The church should boldly & broadly sow the Word of God expecting it to expose the hearts of listeners.**
- **Expect and respect a mixed response.**