

E Summer lessons from the parables =

Main Point

If you only focus on the fruit, you'll forget about the soil



While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: 5 "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up.



Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."When he said this, he called out, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.



His disciples asked him what this parable meant. 10 He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that,"though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.



The Parable and The Question

- → Four seeds scattered in different areas
- → Parables reveal and conceal truth
- → Jesus wants people to search for truth
- → Jesus sees people in all types of these soils



LISTEN UP!!







This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.



The Meaning

- → The word of God is the seed
 - Reading the Bible, preaching, etc...



Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.



The Path

- → Hear the word and pay no attention to it
- → Can't be proven, or don't want to be Christians
- → Keep giving seed with how we live



no. Thank



you!



Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.



The Rocks

- → Take in the Word but don't have roots
- → Run to something else to feel better
- → Don't have patience to wait for God



REW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS





The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.



The Thorns

- → Start to grow but get consumed by what is around us
- → Concerns, enjoyment, health
- → Thorns are sneaky and can appear to be good things



But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.



The Good Soil

- → Grow strong, healthy, mature
- → Willing to wait for the fruit



Are We Stuck In Bad Soil?

- → No!
- → Seed gets scattered AND THEN plowed
- → Be honest about the soil you are in now



Are We Stuck In Bad Soil?

- → The Path
 - ◆ Talk about it
- → The Stones
 - Protect yourself



Are We Stuck In Bad Soil?

- → The Thorns
 - Check your priorities
- → The Good Soil
 - ◆ Keep it up and stay patient



Wrap Up

- → Be honest with what your spiritual soil is
- → Take some steps to move towards the good soil
- → The timing of the fruit is up to God
- → Focus on the soil



Audio file The Four Soils Audio.mp3

Transcript

Say I like Swiss cake rolls. The other one I thought about that I remember is did any of you in? A haste to try to get some fruit or your parents trying to make you eat fruit. Eat those little like dole fruit cups where they're like Peaches and pears and those little like sweet and cherries were all packed in the. Disposable cup cherry. Yeah, all this stuff. I had them in my lunch box a lot. I remember those. I didn't love them, but I remember eating those and I was thinking about those because we're talking about fruit today. They were fruit in there. I don't know how real that fruit was in. These things, but we are going to talk about fruit because fruit is the end result of something being planted, right? We have seed that grows into a Bush or a tree or something, and then it produces fruit. To get to that fruit, we have to plant the seed, but the seed we talked about seed last week, seed gets planted in soil and I feel like we don't always think about. Soil, right, we we started a garden this year. We're doing our best. We usually kill plants, but we're trying a garden. Jeremiah wanted to grow and we bought this soil from the store in a bag and it's like this nutrient enriched soil and got all this good stuff in it to help our vegetables hopefully grow. We got some little Peppers and little tomatoes coming. Some rain would help, but you know. It's where we are. But the soil is so important. If the soil isn't good, isn't rich, or isn't has any depth to it, it won't produce fruit. That seed won't grow into a plant and then produce fruit, and that's what we're going to get at today. We're going to look at the parable of the sewer. To be honest, I don't think that's a good name for this parable, so I'm going to change it to the parable of the four soils, because that's really more what it's about. Honestly, it's more about that in your Bibles. It will say the parable of the Sower. It says it here. I hope I don't get in trouble one day with Jesus for this, but I'm going to do it. So the four soils, because Jesus is going to talk about when seed gets scattered in four different types of soils, what happens in those soils and how what happens to the seed? So I want you to think about. This today, soil being the focus, if you only focus on the fruit, you'll forget about the soil. You only focus on the fruit which what comes. Forget about the soil. The idea is the fruit is what will come from our lives as followers of Jesus, the fruit will come and that's important that it matters. But God takes care of that fruit, right? He he brings it out when it's his time, but the soil is our hearts. And that matters so much more. It's what condition are our hearts in? Where's our spiritual life at? And our hearts seem to be in the right place so that God can bring out some amazing fruit and do his thing. So we're going to look at this parable and take a look at the four different types of soil as we go. And see what we can do if we're in a soil that isn't great or isn't good and rich, how can we maybe get? To that point. So let's look at that today. We're going to start with Luke Chapter 8 versus 4 through 10. It's in your Bibles on the table. It'll be right. Up here behind. I mean follow along tablet phone is also great. I will be in the NIV translation. We'll do Luke 8 four through 10 to start. It says while a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable, a farmer went out to sow his seed as he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path. It was trampled on and the birds ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no money. Each year, other seed fell among the thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crap 100 times more than was sown when he

said this, he called out whoever has ears to hear, let them hear. His disciples asked what this parable meant. He said the knowledge of the secrets. The Kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables so that those seeing they may not see through hearing, they may not under. All right, we'll stop there for now. So it says this farmer goes out and sells are scattered his seed. A number of sources say in Jesus Day you actually you you dropped the seed and then it got plowed up. Right. So you didn't blow up and freshen the soil and then scattered the seed. It was the other way. So the seed comes down and we plowed up. That's going to be important for us. Today, as we talk. Of this. So then Jesus launches into four types of soil. First one, there's this hard path or a hard surface. Basically this would be a place that really there isn't soil there. It kind of just hits. It's got nothing to grow into. It doesn't have a chance to take root or get into the ground, so a bird can come and just ***** it away. So it's like it's here and then it's gone right away. Then he goes into the seed scattered among the rocks. Little rocks kind of all amongst the soil. This would be fairly common landscape in Jesus time and place, but basically there was some soil, but it didn't have a lot of depth, so it couldn't grow strong roots, so it would come up. But then it would wither. There was nothing holding it there. If so mething big came or a wind. Came it could just knock it right out. There is no depth, no real root. OK, the way the third. One, this is among thorns, so the plants able to start to grow. It's starting off in good shape, but there's thorns that just grow up all around it and eventually surround it kind of overtake this good healthy plant and in essence choke it out. Take it away from where it's trying to go, and then 4th we have the really good soil, the good stuff. This would hold the moisture. Allow strong roots. Let the plant grow tall and strong and it will produce the intended fruit even more than what was expected. Alright, so Jesus tells. Of all this, and the disciples, his followers are the ones that say Jesus. What does this mean? And he kind of gives a really short reason as to why he speaks in parables throughout his teaching. Now parables. They're like little stories. We've we've heard a number of them. We have more to go. They're like little stories and they can kind of do two things. I've heard they can reveal truth. They can also conceal the truth. Now they'll reveal the truth and let you know what Jesus is getting at. If you seek to understand. If you want to dive in and see what is behind this. That's what his disciples are doing. They're saying, OK, what is this about? Tell me about this. But it can conceal the truth if you just hear these stories and they're just like, little entertainment. They're little anecdotes. They're fun, you hear it, and you just let it go. And he's got other people like that, all right. And he says, you know, there's those that will see but not. See here but not. Understand, right? That's kind of what's going on with some of these people. They'll see it or they'll hear the parable. Just be like it's nothing and this is a quote from Isaiah 6. It was prophesied that this was going to happen. Some would see it, hear it, and not even seek to under. But he says, everyone with ears. Hear this? He wants us. To understand, he's saying, take this in and why? Because Jesus is experiencing these four types of soils in his ministry already. He is giving the word of God. That's our seed. Right is the word of God. He's got villagers that will come to the synagogues and listen, but do absolutely nothing with what he teaches. That's like the path. It's here. It's gone in one ear out the other, or they reject it. It's done. He's spending time with the Pharisees. They're kind of like the rocks, right? He teaches, they kind of take it in, but then it just seems so out there. So different or counter to the law that they love so much that they like, uh, it's too much. There's adversity with this not doing it. So we have those, he's got the thorns, people that he encounters that are so consumed with wealth and status. Again, we've talked about. In Jesus Day, wealth status meant so much, so they were consumed with all these other things that may be following, Jesus would get choked out. But then he's also got people in the good soil, the disciples that are seeking to understand those people that are turning from ways they shouldn't. There's an awesome story in John chapter four of the Samaritan

woman at the well who Jesus starts talking to, and she's like, I need this living water you speak of. And he says you've got to go. And send no more. So this is that good soil where people are trying to take the roots of Jesus. And grow. So all of this is happening. So Jesus is like this is going to happen in your lives. We need to care for the soil. He's concerned about the soil, he knows the fruits going to come. He's concerned about this soil, so he's, like, imploring them. Please, listen. Hear this? Take it to heart. Earlier this week on Wednesday, I was playing golf with my brother and a couple of other guys and we're we're in the carts and we're having a nice time. It was really. Nice out on the first part of. The course it was sunny, it was warm. It was great. As we get to the final few holes, we knew there was some rain coming. So on the 17th hole it starts to rain. It starts to rain really hard. We're thinking, oh boy, here it comes. But we'll try to finish it. You know, we'll get through this. It'll be fine. No joke, I was hitting my tee shot on 18 and the club just came flying out of my hand. It was so wet all this stuff. But in the cart they have tablets attached to the cart. They kind of show you how to get from hole to hole and how. Far you are from the hole and we're driving the car and. On the final hole, as we start to go up. Of a sudden there's this big alert. On the screen and Kyle, you can go to the next slide. It kind of looks like this. There's one of these. We're in the cart and it's got this kind of Thunderbolt message on it and it's saying lightning in the area, it return cars to the clubhouse and it's like loud and it's flaring at us. We're like, whoa. Like something's bad. It's imploring us. Listen to this. You see the screen, you hear what's going on. There's lightning in the area. Do what it says. Go return the cart. So Jesus wants us to do here. He's like, listen to this and take it in. And we can hear Jesus and understand it through his explanation of the parable and evaluating it. So that's what he's going to get to next. We're going to kind of take it verse by verse here and hear what he has to say about the parable. So Luke 8, verse 11 really quickly says this is the meaning of the parable. The seed is the word of. God's pretty simple. He's talking about seed being scattered. That's the word of God. That's us reading our Bibles. That's teaching and preaching. We hear anything like that. It's been scattered and it's going to continue to be scattered. What we want to do is what kind of soil are we in? What kind of soil do we see in our lives for that seed to be sewed in? And that's where we're going to go. So let's look at verse 12. It says those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts so that they may not believe and be safe. So these are the ones they don't pay any attention to it. They hear it and it's just gone, right? They accept it and then they turn away. I was. Trying to think about like this. Outright rejection, and I thought about my son Jeremiah when he was probably six months old and we started feeding him solid foods. Any of you? With kids, Kyle, you can put up. This slide here. We fed him asparagus one time and it was pureed, terrible looking asparagus. And he has his face, which you can't totally tell is it is all. Over his face. And his chin and his cheeks had got in his mouth. And it just right back out, out right rejections there. I do not want asparagus. He still doesn't like asparagus to this day, but it's that kind of thing. I've tasted it. Nope, not having. And I think about this one. With God, people that just maybe they hear about God, but they have no interest and they just kind of push it right back. I knew people throughout my life, especially in college, as some roommates that were just big. You can't prove God. So I don't want I want anything to do with it. The science, the facts, it doesn't make sense. So I want anything to do with it. And they're right. We can't totally prove it because it's faith, not fact. They wanted nothing to do with it. And then there's other people that I'm sure many of us have come across. That like I. I don't want to take in this whole thing in God and believe in all this because I don't, really. Want to be a Christian? I don't know if I want to be a follower of this because maybe it means changing my life in a way I don't want to. Or they see maybe Christians acting in a way that they don't like. They're like, if that's what God's about. Ohh about I don't want anything to do with that and unfortunately this happens because we all we talk about

this, we represent God. And when we don't represent God well or honestly, it can be a turn off for people that don't know him. So what do we? Do we want to represent Jesus well because most of us in this room at least, are willing to kind of take in what God has to say? Hopefully that's why you're here. You're willing to least hear this, but we. Will have people in our lives that are like this path. So what we don't want to do is. Push them away. Maybe they've rejected it or pushed it away, or want nothing to do with it. But don't ostracize and bring them in. You can kind of help scatter this seed just by the way you live. You don't have to say anything and this has been a conviction of mine for a while is that we can give seed not with our words, but with our lives. Right. Because here's what I think. What happen is people can hear Christians talk about faith and love and grace and kindness and peace, but then turn around and treat Christians and non Christians alike. Kind of like crap. And they're like this just doesn't make sense. It doesn't jive. It doesn't go with what you're saying. And I get it. So let's flip that. Let's live. Out what we believe Jesus to. Be and so those that are on that harder path that maybe are pushing it away. Maybe it'll be a little bit more receptive. So that's that first part that path, that kind of hard rejection type of peace. Alright, verse 13. This is the rock. So explain the rocks so those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it. But they have no roots. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing, they fall away. So this is taking in the word. Taking the seed but don't have any real roots, so there's not a lot of depth to it. Basically, when adversity comes, it kind of gets swept away. I thought about this similar to like a New Year's resolution type of crowd. All right. How many of you make New Year's resolutions? Only a couple. Yeah. Here's some of the stats I found is that by by the end of January, 43% of people have given up on those New Year's resolutions usually cause they're hard. I worked at a coffee shop for a long time and the first. No joke, the first three weeks of January, we cut our bakery order in half. We'd only order half because so many people were like, I'm giving up sweets, not going to spend the money on. And we did increase it again by the end of January and February and we were right back up with the sales. It worked like every year I did it for seven years. We did it every year and it worked because it would start and then it would get hard. Why it's hard. Want to give up my schooling every morning or this? It's just convenient. It's easy. So they fall away. And this is kind of what? Is happening here with the rocks. Maybe we have this mountain top experience or this great revelation with God, or this great time with God and it's awesome. But then when things start to dip in our lives, things get tough. We get hit with something, we fall away, we go somewhere else, right? Things don't get fixed right away by God. So what we? Do is we get swept back into a quick fix, some sort of instant gratification? Something that's going to make us just feel better in the moment. But it's not God. We don't have that root that depth to be willing to wait on God to have the patience for God, and this can happen with anything with we can run to substance, to food, to pleasure, to to isolation. Maybe we'll start comparing ourselves to other people, but rather than waiting on God and relying on him, we kind of separate. From him and run back to something else. So in any case, we don't have the deep roots that allow us to weather a storm. We get just swept away. But we want is the strength and the patience to withstand. Alright, so that's kind of the rocky, the rocky soil. Third one, the Thorns verse 14. The seed that fell among the thorns stands for those who hear. But as they go on their way, they're choked by lifes, worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. So the plant starts to grow. It's got some good roots, growing seed, everything seems good, but then these thorns come out and they grow faster and they kind of just overtake it and they can be a little sneaky and they choke it out, right? We start to grow in our relationship with God, but so many other things competing for our attention. Take us away from God. Think about like losing focus on something you've tried to do. If you've ever tried to learn a new skill or grow in some type of art form or anything like that, I play guitar.

I've always wanted to get better, right? So I think, OK, I'm going to commit myself to playing this type of guitar or this style. Well, it takes time. It takes effort, it takes focus, and I'll get. Started and then later everything else just gets in the way. It's not that I want to give up on it, but life and work and everything else. Takes my time, my energy, and my focus away from that. This is kind of what I think can. Happen with God. It's easy to get caught up in the everyday scenario of life, and that can actually kind of cut off our relationship with God if we're not careful. There are so many things that compete for our attention today. Our concerns with with money. With food, with kids, with work, what we're going to do to just enjoy life. TV shows we're going to watch games, we're going to play trips, we're going to take parties, we're going to go to or not go to our own health, workouts, diets, preparing food. All this stuff is all pretty good in and of itself, and we might not think of them as thorns. But if we're not careful, they do have the capability to choke out our growth in our relationship with God. If we let them kind of take over, they can be sneaky. I'll be honest, one of those we think about work, that's sneaky and tough for me is even preparing these sermons can do this to me because I'm so focused on the work side. I'll be reading my Bible in the morning, doing my own devotional time, and I'll go to this motive. How would I teach that? How would illustrate it? How would I do it here in front of all of you? And that's the work mode, not the growth part. So it's sneaky and it's tough and we just have to be. Aware of it? All right, so we have this path, that kind of rejection we have the rocky soil where there's not enough depth maybe to it and it can get easily blown. And then we have the thorns where it can choke out our growth and what we want to do is understand that these can happen at any point in our lives. We can feel like we're in these different modes, but we want to do is get to the good soil, which is verse 15. The good soil. It says, but the seed on good soil stands for those with the noble and good heart, who hear the word retain it. And by persevering produce a good crop, this is fertile soil. It can grow the good stuff, it's strong, it's healthy, it's mature. It can bring up a good, strong planet, takes time and effort, but that really good fruit comes from good soil. So we want to be that good soil, right? But what if we're not? What if we were sitting here today and like I am not in that good, rich, fertile soil? Are we stuck in bad soil and the answer is no, we're not. Thankfully, we are not stuck in rougher soil because remember, back to the beginning, the seed gets scattered and then they plow it up. So we can still plow up our own kind of spiritual soil composition. We can always get back to that good rich soil that can produce fruit. It might take some time, some effort, but no matter what, you are not stuck and I think the first thing we need to do is be honest about what soil are we in, where are we? Think about where we are. And then work from there to get to the good soils and I'll try to offer here a few examples of just if you feel like you're in one of the first three soils, what can we do to maybe get back to good? These are just my own ideas. They are not exhaustive. Maybe something else will come up for you and that's great, but I'll. Try to offer a few of these. So First off in that path, maybe you're in a place where. You do feel like you're rejecting or pushing back completely on. I would encourage you to maybe can. You be willing. To talk about that with me or with someone else, just to be like I just. I'm really hesitant and I'm pushing and I'm frustrated. I'm just mad I have questions and in that mode I think it's OK to be there, but have a conversation about that. And I'm not going to dwell on the path too much, but that's kind of the one where I think it's just a willingness to to talk about. The stones being swept away, which can happen easily with no real depth and I would say protect yourself is how I would say that protect your soil in your heart. Because if and when temptation comes, you give in easily. Or if when adversity easily just knocks you off your feet and you kind of run to something else and not God, I would encourage you to protect yourself. And I think one way to do that. Is what we would call account a bility partners or groups. These are just other people you have in your life that you trust that you can talk to about struggles,

about temptation, about anything else. That's going on in your life. Getting someone else involved, because then when that temptation comes or when you know, hey, this is going to get really tough, you go to them and they can help pray with you, help walk you through it because you can get through it right when these temptations or these things come, this diversity comes, we can. It's not always easy or fun, but we can walk through it. 1st Corinthians 1013 says no temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he'll provide a way out so that you can endure. So I think having that accountability can help dig that route a little deeper if maybe we need more depth to that soil. Then there's the thorns, things that can take your focus away from God, right? You're growing well. Things are good. But there's just so much other stuff in life, right? Let's say, consider our priorities, consider your priorities. Colossians 3 one through 2. So since then you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on the things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds and things above not on earthly things. Make a priority list of all the things that kind of take your attention in life, and there probably be a lot for many of us, that's OK, but then think. Where is where is God in that? Where's your time with God in that? And this one's hard to to keep priorities and focus in check. Making sure for me, I have a hard time with this one, making sure that I'm focusing. And growing my relationship with God before all these other things kind of kick in and take all my attention. I had a teacher in high school when we were seniors, kind of talked about dealing with priorities and you said imagine yourself in one of those like glass kind of things that you that would shoot out the money that you grab all the money in. But imagine instead of money. It's two different types of balls that are all floating up in the air. There's rubber. Balls and glass balls and the rubber ones. If you drop those, they bounce back up easily, right? They come back up. So these would be things like for me if I miss a workout or I don't get the laundry done when I want. If that falls, it comes back up easily. But then the glass balls, those are things we have. To really focus on. Because when they fall, they shatter. And they're harder to put back together. Not that they can't, but they're a lot. This would be like that time with God that I really want to focus on that, protect it and take care of it. Now if I miss 1 quiet time, does it mean that ball is shattered and it never get it back? No, but we want to protect it in that way and focus on it in that way that we're so focused on it that it doesn't it it becomes a priority. So that's kind of that, that idea with the thorns, making sure our priorities and our time. With God is where our focus is. And then finally, the good soil. If you're there, that's great. That's a good thing. Good for you. Be there, right? You may be sitting here being like my soil is rich. It's deep and I'm ready. But I would encourage you to do is keep watering that soil. Don't let it go through the drought like we're in outside. Right. Think about what's been working for you. Why are you in that good place? How can you keep watering it? Talk about that and share that. And then the one caution I would give you is. Don't force the fruit to come. We can't force the fruit that God is going to bring out in our lives. That's all in God's timing. We just be patient and let him do it. What he wants from us is just to. Keep that soil rich and ready, and that when it's time he will pop up that fruit. Ecclesiastes 31 says there is a time for everything and a season for everything under the heavens. There's time to plant time for uproot, time for justice to be growth, and then when God's timing comes when God dictates it, we'll have that fruit. So this week I would say let's all try to be honest with what our soil is kind of where, where is our spiritual life right now. And it's OK to be wherever you are. Alright, you can't. You can't go back and be like I wish I hadn't dropped to that type of soil. But we can plow it up now from here today as we go to think about it and work to get it to that good rich soil. It'll take some steps and some time, but go ahead and take those steps to start to get back there. So start by being honest and then just try to move. Forward if you're in the good soil like we just talked about, keep

watering it. Keep it up. Right. And then have the patience to wait for the fruit. The fruit will come. But we have to stay focused on the soil because remember, the fruits up to God. And if we only focus on the fruit, we'll forget about the soil and the soil is what really matters to God. Let's pray. Got to thank you for this morning. I got to thank you for for the parable. With these soils. God, that you've given us these examples and things that kind of look out for and see in our lives. And got to really thank you that we're able to continue to plow the soil that we can come back to that good rich soil and we can get there no matter what and that you'll be with us along that time, no matter how much effort and work and time it takes God that you're right there with us as we get back to that. So I thank you again for this morning and for this parable, and I pray for all of us that we would. Be honest about where we are in our lives with you and that we would take the steps forward to grow those relationships and to grow our lives with you. Your name.