

Expository Thoughts On Mark - Mark 4:1-20

by J.C. Ryle

Transcript

These verses contain the parable of the sower. Of all the parables spoken by our Lord, none is probably so well-known as this. There is none which is so easily understood by all, from the gracious familiarity of the figures which it contains. There is none which is of such universal and perpetual application. So long as there is a Church of Christ and a congregation of Christians, so long there will be employment for this parable.

The language of the parable requires no explanation. To use the words of an ancient writer, "it needs application, not exposition." Let us now see what it teaches.

We are taught, in the first place, that there are some hearers of the Gospel, whose hearts are like the wayside in a field.

These are they who hear sermons, but pay no attention to them. They go to a place of worship, for form or fashion, or to appear respectable before men. But they take no interest whatever in the preaching. It seems to them a mere matter of words and names, and unintelligible talk. It is neither money, nor food, nor drink, nor clothes, nor company; and as they sit under the sound of it, they are taken up with thinking of other things. It matters nothing whether it is Law or Gospel. It produces no more effect on them than water on a stone. And at the end they go away, knowing no more than when they came in.

There are myriads of professing Christians in this state of soul. There is hardly a church or chapel, where scores of them are not to be found. Sunday after Sunday they allow the devil to catch away the good seed that is sown on the surface of their hearts. Week after week they live on, without faith, or fear, or knowledge, or grace--feeling nothing, caring nothing, taking no more interest in religion, than if Christ had never died on the cross at all. And in this state they often die and are buried, and are lost forever in hell. This is a mournful picture, but only too true.

We are taught, in the second place, that there are some hearers of the Gospel whose hearts are like the stony ground in a field.

These are they on whom preaching produces temporary impressions, but no deep, lasting, and abiding effect. They take pleasure in hearing sermons in which the truth is faithfully set forth. They can speak with apparent joy and enthusiasm about the sweetness of the Gospel, and the happiness which they experience in listening to it. They can be moved to tears by the appeals of preachers, and talk with apparent earnestness of their own inward conflicts, hopes, struggles, desires, and fears. But unhappily

there is no stability about their religion. "They have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time."
There is no real work of the Holy Spirit within their hearts. Their impressions are like Jonah\

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jc-ryle/expository-thoughts-on-mark-mark-41-20/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net