

Banner

"You have set up a banner for those who fear you, that it may be displayed because of truth." Psalm 60:4



*"Pleasing God,
Making Disciples
of
Jesus Christ"*

A COMMUNICATION MINISTRY OF QUIDNESSETT BAPTIST CHURCH

Do you like to work in a garden? Flowers, vegetables, shrubs, and other assorted things gardeners delight in growing and caring for? I know it is the dead of winter in New England and gardening as a topic seems out of place. It may be out of place when it comes to the time of year, but our Bibles use the work of gardening and its associated products often in illustrating people and people's hearts.

In the creation account, what did God do after He finished His work and formed man? Here is what we find, *"And the LORD planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He put the man whom He had formed"* (GENESIS 28). God planted a garden.

We also see God referring to His

people using another gardening term, a vineyard, *"And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?"* (ISAIAH 5:2-4)

One other portion of scripture where gardening is used as a powerful illustration is the famous *Parable of the Sower* Jesus taught. It reveals the condition of the human heart and

the associated responses from the human heart to His Word.

In this issue of *The Quidnessett Banner*, we will look at the four soils found in Jesus' parable. While doing so, let's ask the question, "Which soil accurately describes our hearts?"

Which soil in Jesus' parable accurately describes our hearts?

Inside This Issue

GOSPEL GLIMPSES 2
"The First Soil"

THE PASTOR'S PEN 2
"The Second & Third Soils"

OUR DAILY WALK 3
"The Fourth Soil"

BOOK REVIEW 3
Growing up in Grace

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM 3
"Question One, Two, Three"

QBC HAPPENINGS 4
"February and March"

GOSPEL GLIMPSES

THE FIRST SOIL

“That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea. And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach. And He spoke many things to them in parables saying, ‘Behold, the sower went out to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up’” (MATT. 13:1-4).

It was immediate. The hungry birds wasted no time. The seed barely had left the sower’s hands until it was devoured, failing to bring about its designed purpose.

Jesus interprets this first soil in these words, “When anyone hears the Word of the Kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes

and snatches away what was sown in his heart (MATT. 13:19).

The human heart, which responds to the Word of God proclaimed in the first soil, is the person who hears, but does not understand its meaning or personal application. It is dull. It is lifeless. It lacks drawing power.

A good way to describe this response is when one is in a conversation with another person while attempting to do something else, like reading a newspaper or book. One party will be saying something, with a question or two attached, and ask, “Did you hear me? What do you think?” I confess, I have been there with my wife and when it happens, I scramble, with futility, to recall what she asked. After seeking forgiveness, I then ask for a repeating of her statement since I did not get it

the first time.

The application in the parable for the first soil is the lost sinner who has not been illumined by God’s Spirit to the truth of the Word proclaimed. The person is incapable of understanding. The god of this world has blinded them (2 COR. 4:4). They may hear, but not hear.

However, let’s extend the application to believers. Have we been under the preaching of God’s Word and left the service, “not hearing” or not understanding? The way to measure that is to see if the Word proclaimed translated into the Word applied. It is possible, as believers, to have a “first soil” heart. Not that the devil can infiltrate us and steal the Word, but he can distract us to where we may hear the Word of God, but not really hear the Word of God as it fails to enter our lives.

THE PASTOR’S PEN

THE SECOND & THIRD SOILS

“Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil, but when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out” (MATT. 13:5-7).

Jesus interprets soils two and three in these words, *“As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the*

deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful” (MATT. 13:20-22).

The Puritans had a term to call those who started out well in a profession of faith, like the ones in soil number two who “endured for awhile”, but then fell away. They were labeled “temporary believers” who never really experienced new birth. This isn’t the forum to debate the theology of the term, but it is a forum to see the second soil as a warning. For those who think Christianity is to be void of suffering and difficult self-denial in order to practice aggressive obedience, Jesus removes this mindset. Trials and tribulations must come to validate faith.

The second soil may also be applied to a true believer in the sense of how we react to those trials and tribulations. We won’t fall away completely, but we will lose joy and peace if not persevering through

those trials and tribulations. Paul made it clear - *“through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (ACTS 14:22).* The human heart of soil two refuses to embrace this scriptural and experiential truth.

Moving into the third soil, we now encounter the human heart whose view of life is simply horizontal. Life is lived full of fretting and anxiety over the here and now instead of looking to the then and hereafter. For the unbeliever, this is one who is convinced of the truth but delays responding for a better time. Like Felix (ACTS 24:25). For the believer? This soil may apply quite well. One of our biggest obstacles in the Christian life is worldliness. To see if that is not so, how much eternal living and thinking did we do this week compared to worldly? If the balance isn’t tipped vertically, we might have a heart planted in soil number three.



GROWING UP IN GRACE

Murray G. Brett
RHB Publishers
Paperback, 178 pages

If I were to ask you about your communion with God, how would you answer me? What is communion with God? When the Apostle John writes, "That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 JOHN 1:3), how is that to be experienced?

In Murray Brett's book, he has gone into history and taken from the wisdom of the Puritans to help us understand communion with God. This is not a quick fix book on how to have a quiet time. One endorser wrote, "This is not a self-help book. This is a self-exposure book."

God wants us to commune with Him and He has given means. This is a good book to help us understand those means and apply them daily.

QUOTABLE QUOTE

"If there is anything in your life more demanding than your longing after God, then you will never be a Spirit-filled Christian."

A. W. TOZER

OUR DAILY WALK

THE FOURTH SOIL

"And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty" (MATT. 13:8).

Jesus interprets this soil in these words, *"As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the Word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty"* (MATT. 13:23).

This is where we want to be - daily - planted in the soil where the Word, energized by the Spirit, produces a harvest for our Lord.

As we consider this in light of the entire parable, it should prompt us to the seriousness of the call to be a follower of Christ. There were four soils, yet, only one out of four

is commended and fruitful. If one played percentages, the odds of being in the good soil is against us. That isn't to alarm us, but to drive us to a good, regular, and healthy dose of self-examination.

In looking at this fourth soil, the human heart planted here is one that "hears the Word and understands it". And to rightly comprehend what "understands" means, we must link it to its results - fruit. What is fruit? It is what comes forth from our works of obedience to God's Word. Paul informs us, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them"* (EPH. 2:10).

If we rightly understand the Word of God, obeying the Word of God follows. Soil four is where that happens and the evidence will be clear in our daily lives.

THE BAPTIST CATECHISM



The Shorter Catechism with Scripture Proofs

how we may glorify and enjoy Him (2 Timothy 3:15-16, Ephesians 2:20, 1 John 1:3-4, Luke 16:29, 31, Galatians 1:8-9).

QUESTION ONE: What is the chief end of man?

Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever (I Corinthians 10:31, Romans 11:36, Psalm 73:25-28).

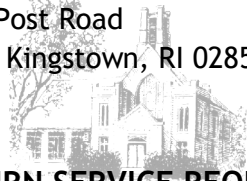
QUESTION TWO: What rule has God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him?

Answer: The Word of God, namely the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the rule to direct us

QUESTION THREE: Are the Scriptures trustworthy in all that they affirm?

Answer: The Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments, being God-breathed, are infallible and inerrant in all their parts and are therefore, trustworthy in all that they affirm concerning history, science, doctrine, ethics, religious practice, or any other topic (2 Timothy 3:16, I Thessalonians 2:13, John 10:35).

QUIDNESSETT BAPTIST CHURCH
6356 Post Road
North Kingstown, RI 02852-1896



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
North Kingstown, RI
Permit No. 140



A Sower went out to sow . . .

QBC HAPPENINGS

FEBRUARY 2010

- Young at Heart monthly fellowship will be held Tuesday, February 9 at 12:00 p.m.
- Second Saturday of Service will be held February 13, meeting in the library at 8:45 a.m.
- Roller Skating Night to benefit Providence Rescue Mission will be held Tuesday, February 16 at 6:30 p.m., located at the Narragansett Ocean Club. .

MARCH 2010

- Young at Heart monthly fellowship will be held Tuesday, March 9 at 12:00 p.m.
- Second Saturday of Service will be held March 13, meeting in the library at 8:45 a.m.
- Daylight savings time begins March 14

THE QUIDNESSETT

Banner

*"Pleasing God,
Making Disciples
of
Jesus Christ"*



The Quidnessett Banner is the bi-monthly newsletter of Quidnessett Baptist Church. It is free of charge and readily available for all who would like to be placed on our mailing list. If you desire to receive *The Quidnessett Banner* in your home, simply contact the church office.

QUIDNESSETT BAPTIST CHURCH

6356 Post Road

North Kingstown, RI 02852

401-884-9111

Email: office@qbchurch.org

Website: www.qbchurch.org