

The passage of scripture that I want to read, I think we're going to find around page 50 (*The Life of Christ in Stereo: The Four Gospels Combined as One* by Johnston M. Cheney). We're on page 54. In the middle, it says, "Lessons of the four kinds of soil." *The Sower went forth to sow his seed, and it came to pass as he sowed that some fell upon the roadside, and the seed was trampled. The birds of the air came and devoured it. Some fell on rocky places where it had not much earth, and it sprouted up at once, as it had no depth of earth. But when the sun rose, it was scorched, and because it had no roots and lacked moisture, it withered away. And some fell into the midst of the thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it, and it produced no returns. But some fell into good soil, and growing up, and increasing, it brought forth results, some 30, some 60, and some 100-fold. And when He had said these things, He exclaimed to them, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."*

Now, we're going to stop there. There is more to this parable. In a way, this is the beginning of the Lord's parables. This parable is interesting because the Lord doesn't start by saying, "The kingdom of the heavens is likened to," or "The kingdom of God is like unto." He simply says, "A Sower went forth to sow." Later, He says that some cannot understand or grasp the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens. So we know that this parable has something to do with the heavenly things. He later interprets this parable privately to His disciples. This makes me feel it must have been one of His first parables, and it's listed as such here.

The provocation of this parable has to do with hearing, and that immediately makes this parable extremely central for this reason. As we look at an indwelling Father, a Father who lives within the Lord Jesus Christ, we are just now beginning, barely, on the outer edge during this conference, to see that relationship established, illustrated, and at work. We are only beginning to understand that relationship.

One thing is clear: the Lord Jesus Christ believes He is hearing someone speak deep within Him. That is an undeniable fact and point. He speaks often of the witness. He speaks of hearing and of seeing. I am telling you what I see, not what I have seen, but what I see. I'm speaking to you about what I have heard. I speak to you about what I have seen and heard. You will never understand...I will never understand the Lord, nor His ways, nor His parables, nor His teachings, if we do not have a sense almost of His being homesick, of His sense of the other realm, of the sense that He lived there so long. He's here for just a short while, and He is there recognizing the fact that no one else has this realm within Him, but that they soon will. Some soon will, and He's showing them a relationship to that realm within; to that kingdom within.

Let's not use the word kingdom. Let's use the word realm. There's a realm within Him, and He is telling them it's drawing near. He'll tell them shortly after that the kingdom, or realm, is within you, but for now that realm is within Him, and He once lived wholly in that realm. Now He's having to divide His attention; may I use that term without establishing any theological concepts? He is in the material realm. He is dealing with people who unanimously know nothing of this

realm, know nothing of what He's talking about, and have no imagination or concept of what He means by His reference to a habitat He has known so terribly, very, very long.

He's trying to prepare them, and He's establishing with them the fact that when that realm is within them, there is hearing and there is seeing, there is hearing, and there is seeing, and I want to say that to you, within that realm, within you, the believer, there is hearing, and there is seeing. I hope you will exercise what little you may have learned this week in hearing and seeing that realm, remembering, please, that that realm is mostly exactly what it was to Christ. It's the Lord. It's God. It's the Father. It's whoever God is. For Him, the Father's domination was present. For you, the believer, perhaps the Son's domination is present. I'm not going to make an issue of that, but in that realm, for Him, it was mostly a place awash with God. Do you have that term? Am I too southern when I use the term "awash"? Does that make any sense to a New Zealander? Okay, a place that was awash, or is awash, with God.

He sees two things: saturated with, soaked with, like a ship sinking is awash; that's right, a ship is sinking. It's awash. It's absolutely inundated; flooded with; it's absolutely dominated by God. Remember, He has lived within that God; that's where He's been. To put it another way, to the Lord Jesus Christ, heavenly places are the bosom, the center of God. Alright? He is preparing people to understand they can be there, and there's a lot of hearing, and there's a lot of seeing.

Now then, the parable itself has always been used on us. You've heard it, have you not? You can't hear, and you can't see. Are you a piece of hard dirt? (laughter) I'm not denying that, or any part of it, but that's not where this parable began. That parable began in the positive sign of this picture, not the negative. We may look at the negative, but there was a positive. Someone, speaking in His own wisdom, shares how to hear and see other realms, because He Himself hears and sees. He is not trying to load us down with the hard soil or the shallow soil or the rocky soil. He shows us what's going on inside Him with His Father, and that He can hear and see. He will soon say, when this realm comes within you, here are ways you might hear and see.

So, as you listen to me tell this story, keep in mind that the Lord was only sharing how He hears and sees other places, invisible realms. Let's not dwell on the negative; let us look at the relationship of the Father to the Son. I can't help but believe that, years earlier, the Lord was walking through the countryside in Galilee. I'm so glad that He grew up in the country. If the Lord Jesus Christ were born today in New York City and grew up there, it would really be rough having to live with His parables, wouldn't it? Oh, that would be hard. Aren't you glad He was a country boy? Honestly, there's something so light and refreshing there.

He's seen the men go out to the freshly tilled land, grab the seed, and throw it without sense. They just threw it everywhere, and He watched it fall; He watched it fall on the good ground. And because He created that ground, and because He created the seed, and He created the birds that flew over, and He created the rocks, all of these things spoke more clearly to Him because He has been in a realm where the "real" is, and all those are simply symbols and pictures of the real.

As He walked along in fellowship with His Father, perhaps the Father said to Him, "You understand why it is now as you're growing up. You're beginning to be able to hear Me. You're beginning to remember from which You came and where You were so long. You're beginning to see You are like that seed. What did the Father tell the Son? Just listen to what the Father told the Son. Isn't this a lot more exciting to come this way? How gloriously positive this is. How non-burdensome this is. Just look. Just behold. You will be more transformed by beholding Him than by all the dumb sermons you will ever hear. Just behold Him now.

The seed falls on ground that has been impacted; that is, it's just as hard as it can be. Now, brothers and sisters, it can't grow there, but if that very ground were tilled and broken and opened, that ground would grow seed as good as other ground. The Father is simply saying you hear the "Me within" because your soil is so soft. It's soft. When I speak, I am seed falling into your soft soil. My Son, you're soft inside. Very soft. My Son, you're not hard; you're soft. Your soil is so soft.

Then some of it, of the seed that is to be heard and to be seen and to be responded to, fell on ground that was quite shallow. The Father said to the Son, "You hear, You see, You respond because You're not only soft, but You're deep. Your soil does not run to the surface; it is not a surface thing, but deep. The soil is soft...and it is deep.

As a young man walks along the road, he not only observes those two aspects, but also that the soil contains rock. The Father says the reason my seed falls into You, and You can see and hear, is that Your ground is soft, because it's deep and because nothing else is in it. There's nothing else in it. The soil is there for Me and for Me alone. It's soft; it's deep; and nothing else is there. Just soil. Soil for the Father. Soil for the Father to sow. Soft; deep; nothing else in.

And because, as a young man, He walked about Galilee with a living realm in Him; when the Father sowed the seed in that realm, the soil was soft, deep, and utterly without anything else in it. The seed could grow up. The seed was hearing and seeing, and, in a real way, it was also obeying.

Well, I don't know. I really don't know if the 30, 60, and 90 apply to the Lord. We would like to believe He was always the 90, because if He wasn't, He wasn't always perfect. But brothers and sisters, I don't know if that's true or not. Sometimes we're supposed to produce 30, sometimes 60, and sometimes 90. Perhaps it has as much to do with the seed as the soil. It has a lot to do with His sovereignty, but one thing is certain: whatever grew up in the Lord, the Lord Jesus was satisfied with it, and the Father was satisfied with it. I have nothing more to say to you except to repeat myself.

Christ's soil allowed the mysteries of the kingdom to grow in Him, spread, and come out into our universe; in Him the heavenly realm sprang up and grew. The mysteries of the heavenly realm grew because His soil was soft. Would you just say soft? And it was deep. Would you just say deep? I don't know what word we shall use here - uncluttered. You know I don't like to use the word pure, and I appreciate why you're saying it, but it scares me. That just scares me. I'm going to have to be pure soil. It's just soil that's got nothing else in it. It's just soil with nothing else; it's

fertile, but unhindered. There's nothing else intruding. Its soil is unintruded upon. Soil that is sharing space with nothing else.

Farmers call it naked soil. Okay, it's just soil. Besides, soil isn't particularly pure. It's rich. It may be clean, but it's full of a thousand things that help grow minerals, vitamins, and more. I'm not going to tell you everything that's in good top East Texas soil, but it is not intruded upon by anything else. Just consider that a moment, would you? Brothers and sisters, I'd ask you to take that parable, go home, and eat that parable a little bit. Let that parable talk to your spirit, not to your head, and assure it's not to your soul, because the first thing you're going to do is you're going to try to break soil, and you're going to try to throw out rocks, and you're going to try to make deep soil. You're never going to make it. You might look at the one of peerless worth and know that the mystery of the kingdom lies in soft, deep soil, unintruded upon by other things.

If you will see your Lord Jesus Christ with that kind of a field within Him, that would be far better than a thousand other things. I have no illustrations to give you. I have no condemnation to heap upon you. I have no call to draw you to, but I'd say you might take that parable and bring it back to where it came from, and there, behold, it is in the presence of Christ Jesus. Soft, deep, unobstructed by anything else, ready for the seed to fall within Him from another realm. When it springs up, He hears it, and there's growth; there's a response. That's what it is: it's a response, because the soil was just naturally fertile.

He responded, and He heard, and He even began to see. Do you not know that the kingdom of the heavens was in Him? Do you not know that He said the kingdom of the heavens is drawing near? Did you not know that realm now abides in you? I would ask you to take this simple thing. I liked what my brother said the other day. I'm going home to tell them I've been to a conference where I learned how to pray without being there. Brothers, your spirit needs to be fed, cultured, and so forth. Why don't you give your spirit this parable without being there? May your inward parts consider what has been said here today. The Lord will make up the difference better than all the preachers on earth can—a sight of peerless worth.