

Parable of the Sower

Lesson 3

Mark 4:7; Romans 8:9, 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:13, 19-20;
2 Corinthians 6:16

July 30, 2023

Thorny Ground Part 2

INTRODUCTION

“In the beginning...God said, let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...God saw all that He had made and it was very good.” (Genesis 1:1, 26, 31) How apparent this is! God wanted the human race to *be like Him*; he considered his handiwork to be *very good*, which means it should serve His purpose.

It is not unreasonable that, throughout history, God expected His creations to demonstrate their divine *likeness* by living in a godly manner. Because this expectation has not happened universally, God’s only Son endured horrendous suffering and death as *payment* for mankind’s sinful bill.

Believing Christians have within their bodies the Holy Spirit whose presence is a result of Jesus’ delivery following His glorification and a reminder of the price paid for salvation. How can Christian bodies, made by God in His image, not belong to Him?

Memory verse: “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.”

—1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Pray, and read the passages listed above. What questions or observations do you have about them?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. “Seed” represents the word of God in Jesus’ parable found in Mark 4:7. What do “thorns” symbolize?
2. When and where does the Spirit of God establish a home? (Romans 8:9)
3. What is true and proper worship of God? (Romans 12:1)
4. How is God’s will tested and approved? (Romans 12:2)
5. What designation does Paul give to the human body? (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

INTERPRETATION: What do the passages mean?

1. Jesus explains in Mark 4:19 that “deceitfulness of wealth” is one of many thorns that snatches people away from the word of God? What is meant by “deceitfulness of wealth”? (Deuteronomy 8:17; Luke 12:15; 1 Timothy 6:9; James 5:1-3)

2. Remembering that the sacrifice, which Paul urged upon Roman believers (Romans 12:1), should be “living” and also “holy and pleasing to God”, what should be the essence of the sacrifice?
(Romans 6:13, 16; Hebrews 13:15-16; 1 Peter 2:5)

3. In order to avoid conforming to the world, Paul suggests renewing of the mind (Romans 12:2). How does one accomplish such renewal? (Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 2:2-3; Colossians 3:1-2, 9-10)

4. 1 Corinthians 6:19 states, "...the Holy Spirit...is in you, whom you have received from God". How is that possible? What fact assures and what virtues should one possess in order to know that the Holy Spirit actually lives within? (John 7:38-39; Acts 2:38; Galatians 5:22-23)

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. J.B. Phillips wrote, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold." How difficult is it to *not* be so squeezed? Included in the mold are activities that seem harmless. Is it wrong to be a sports or opera fan? How can we discern whether or not a fad or fashion is of the devil's making?

