



Sermon Notes: “Good Ground”

Matthew 13:18-23

7.26.26

The Enemy

- Though the Gospel goes out, Satan is actively trying to take it back.
- God is for you. Satan is against you. Both are true at once.

No Roots

- Feeling “it” and “it” being true are not the same thing.

Crowded Out

- This person is so earthly minded, they become no kingdomly good.
- It’s not what’s growing next to the seed. It’s what’s growing instead of it.

No Two Alike

- Celebrate any harvest God gives — even when it's not yours — instead of quietly wishing you had what He gave someone else.
- A harvest doesn't look the same in every field.
- We don’t measure the harvest by its size. We measure it by the kind of fruit that comes out of it.

So What?

Which field sounds most like your life right now?

The Sower hasn't given up on my field.

For Study, Reflection, Discussion During the Week:

Life Group ICEBREAKER: If someone who knew you well had to honestly name which of the four soils — packed path, rocky ground, thorny ground, or good soil — best described your life with God right now, what do you think they would say? Does their answer match yours?

REVIEW: Review the sermon notes from Sunday. Was there a particular point that stuck with you? What was it and why did it resonate with you?

READ: Matthew 13:18-19 | 2 Corinthians 4:4 | Ephesians 6:12 | 1 Peter 5:8

- The sermon said Jesus wasn't speaking in metaphor when He said "the evil one comes and snatches away the seed." He believed that — actually, literally. And 2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 6:12, and 1 Peter 5:8 all name the same reality. Have you ever considered that the resistance you feel toward God — the skepticism, the hard heart, the "I've heard this before" — might not just be you? What changes in the way you pray and engage spiritually when you take seriously that there is something actively working against the seed taking root in you?
- Darin pointed out that the Pharisees looked straight at Jesus healing people and called it the work of Satan — calling good things evil. The sermon said that's not most of us, but it is the posture Jesus was dealing with when He explained this parable. Where in your life have you noticed the clearest evidence that something is trying to keep the seed from taking root — in you, or in someone you love? How does naming that as spiritual opposition rather than just personality or circumstance change how you respond to it?

READ: Matthew 13:20-21 | Matthew 11:2-3

- The sermon said we can romanticize faith — if we don't feel it, we assume it's gone; if hardship hits, we assume God has left. Then it pointed to John the Baptist sitting in prison, wondering if he had the right guy. The man who baptized Jesus — doubting from a jail cell. The sermon said fast joy and deep roots are not the same thing, and some of the most faithful people who ever lived didn't feel it either, and it was still true. Where in your faith right now are you relying more on the feeling than on the truth? What would it look like to anchor in what's true even when the feeling isn't there?

DEPLOY:

- **Name Your Soil — Out Loud.** *The sermon said it takes humility to name your own soil honestly — it's easier to talk about the soils in general than to own which one is yours right now. This week, tell one person in your group which soil most honestly describes your life with God at this moment — not the one you want to be, the one that's true. Then name one specific thing you're going to do this week to participate in breaking the ground. Let your group pray over it with you.*

Don't Forget:

- Next Week Kaylie Melville will be presenting on her recent Mission Trip. Consider staying after service, next week, to hear about God's work in missions.
- Operation Christmas Child — Christmas in July is now happening! Take a look at the tree on the Welcome Desk
- Consider signing up for the Life Group leader training. There is a sign-up sheet on the welcome desk!

Prayer:

Father, we just looked at our own ground — and some of us didn't love what we saw. Hard places we didn't know were that hard. Shallow roots we thought went deeper. Thorns we'd stopped even noticing because they grew in so slowly. Thank You that this parable isn't a verdict. Thank You that the Sower is still throwing seed — on the path, on the rocks, on the thorns, and on the good ground, all of it, right now. We receive that tonight. For the person in this room whose heart has been packed hard — by hurt, by disappointment, by years of hearing it and nothing changing — we ask You to do what only You can do. Bring the plow. Break up what we can't break on our own. For the one with shallow roots — the fast joy and the slow fade — grow something deeper in them than feeling. Give them a faith that holds when the feeling doesn't. For the one being choked out by the competing things — the worry, the busyness, the lure of what this world keeps offering — help them name the thorns and pull them. And for the ones bearing good fruit — remind them it's still grace. It was always grace. Not one seed was earned. Help us tend what You've given us, ask You for what only You can do, and carry the truth into the week: the Sower hasn't given up on any of our fields.

In Jesus' name, Amen.