



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions Greatest Stories Ever Told Series, Lesson 11

Lesson Title: Sower and the Soils

Take Home Point: Plant God's word in your heart and bear fruit.

Warm-Up:

The study of the natural world has brought us vast knowledge in many areas, answering many questions about what, how, when, and where. Often we can even discover the answer to the "why" questions. For example, in a general sense, we have many answers to these questions regarding migratory birds – where they go, when they go, what they do on the way, and what triggers a migration. It's amazing, and all the more so when you believe that God established this as the migrating birds' way of life. We also understand much about plants – how they grow, what happens when a seed germinates, what soils and conditions are best for a particular plant. But you know what? We don't know why. Why does the seed germinate? What exactly causes it to respond to its environmental conditions? That we don't know.

Read: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23, 45-46; Colossians 2:7a

Observation (What happened?):

What causes the seed of God's word to be received in different ways?

What is different about the man who allows the word to produce much?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think Jesus told this parable?

What does it mean to "understand" the word sown in a receptive heart?

Insight:

Just as we don't understand why a seed begins to grow, we do not understand how God produces his fruit in us and through us as he plants his word in our heart. That is a mystery of the Holy Spirit's work that is beyond our comprehension. We can just be grateful it is so. However, we can participate in that work by developing a receptive, nurturing environment in our heart and mind. How? Simple things. Of course, the first thing is to actually receive God's word - read the Bible, meditate on it, memorize it, study it, let others teach it to you. Don't fill your senses with images, sounds, thoughts, and ideas of this world only. Participate in activities with other believers at and away from church so you can learn from them what God is doing in the lives of others. Ask God how you can serve him and others, in the acts of service you have an opportunity to give out God's living and written word. This strengthens and deepens your own faith and understanding of the good news. These things take time, but what would your opinion be of a farmer who didn't take time to prepare his land for the best harvest possible?

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How receptive are you to the word of God? How often do you read it for yourself to let God speak to you?

Looking back over the past year, what results can you see from believing his word?

Kingdom Quest Year 1 - Lesson 11