



## SAVED TO SERVE

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### THE CONDITION OF GOD'S REMNANT CHURCH THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER, PART 3

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson will continue our series on the Parable of the Sower, looking specifically at the stony ground hearers. For context, let's read Matthew 13:5, 6, 20, 21.
2. Among professed Christians, are there few that are stony ground hearers? John 6:60-66; Matthew 7:13, 14

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**"...Many who make a profession of religion are stony-ground hearers..."** {COL 46.3}

3. **Note:** Let us now look at some identifying characteristics of the stony ground hearers that we may examine our own hearts.
4. What is the first way to identify a stony ground hearer? Matthew 6:24; 1 John 2:15, 16

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**"...It is by halfheartedness in the Christian life that men become feeble in purpose and changeable in desire. The effort to serve both self and Christ makes one a stony-ground hearer, and he will not endure when the test comes upon him."** {COL 50.1}

**"A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish...But this union costs us something...All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is that they try to attach themselves to Christ without first detaching themselves from these cherished idols."** {5T 231.3}

5. Where do the stony ground hearers try to find root? Matthew 13:21 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**"The roots of the plant strike down deep into the soil, and hidden from sight nourish the life of the plant. So with the Christian; it is by the invisible union of the soul with Christ, through faith, that the spiritual life is nourished. But the stony-ground hearers depend upon self instead of Christ. They trust in their good works and good impulses, and are strong in their own righteousness. They are not strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Such a one "hath not root in himself"; for he is not connected with Christ."** {COL 47.1}

6. What is another way to identify a stony ground hearer? John 3:3-9, 10

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**"This is the religion of Christ. Anything short of it is a deception. No mere theory of truth or profession of discipleship will save any soul. We do not belong to Christ unless we are His wholly."** {COL 50.1}

**"...God's word is our standard, but how few follow it! Our religion will be of but little worth to our fellow men if it is only theoretical and not practical. The influence of the world and of selfishness is carried about by many who profess to be following the Bible. They are like a cloud, chilling the atmosphere in which others move."** {4T 234.2}

7. What is the main reason why stony ground hearers fall away so easily? Luke 14:28; Luke 9:23

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**"...But those who in the parable are said to receive the word immediately, do not count the cost. They do not consider what the word of God requires of them. They do not bring it face to face with all their habits of life, and yield themselves fully to its control."** {COL 46.4}

8. Read Mark 4:16. What is the reaction of stony ground hearers when they initially hear the Word of God? Is there anything wrong with their reaction? Matthew 4:21, 22; 9:9

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**“It is not because men receive the word immediately, nor because they rejoice in it, that they fall away. As soon as Matthew heard the Saviour’s call, immediately he rose up, left all, and followed Him. As soon as the divine word comes to our hearts, God desires us to receive it; and it is right to accept it with joy. “Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.” Luke 15:7. And there is joy in the soul that believes on Christ.** But those who in the parable are said to receive the word immediately, do not count the cost. They do not consider what the word of God requires of them. They do not bring it face to face with all their habits of life, and yield themselves fully to its control.” {COL 46.4}

9. In contrast to Matthew and the other disciples, who is another example of someone that received the Word of God readily, yet fell away during times of persecution because he did not count the cost? Acts 13:13

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**“It was here that Mark, overwhelmed with fear and discouragement, wavered for a time in his purpose to give himself wholeheartedly to the Lord’s work. Unused to hardships, he was disheartened by the perils and privations of the way. He had labored with success under favorable circumstances; but now, amidst the opposition and perils that so often beset the pioneer worker, he failed to endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross. He had yet to learn to face danger and persecution and adversity with a brave heart. As the apostles advanced, and still greater difficulties were apprehended, Mark was intimidated and, losing all courage, refused to go farther and returned to Jerusalem.”** {AA 169.3}

10. **Note:** Now that we have identified a stony ground hearer, let us look at the hope for them to be on the good ground.
11. Matthew 13:21 says that they have no root in themselves. What are some scriptures that mention being rooted, grounded, established, or planted in the faith?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is the only hope for the stony ground hearers? John 3:3 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**“The only hope for these souls is to realize in themselves the truth of Christ’s words to Nicodemus, “Ye must be born again.” “Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God.” John 3:7, 3, margin.”** {COL 48.3}

13. Practically, what does it mean to be born again? 1 Peter 2:1-3; 1 Peter 1:22, 23

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

14. How often should we have this born again experience? 1 Corinthians 15:31; John 3:3

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

15. **Note:** To illustrate being born again to Nicodemus, Christ compared the wind to the Holy Spirit. Prayerfully, read the following quotation and analyze how the work of God’s Spirit leads us to conversion.

**“The wind is heard among the branches of the trees, rustling the leaves and flowers; yet it is invisible, and no man knows whence it comes or whither it goes. So with the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. It can no more be explained than can the movements of the wind. A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or to trace all the circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. By an agency as unseen as the wind, Christ is constantly working upon the heart. Little by little, perhaps unconsciously to the receiver, impressions are made that tend to draw the soul to Christ. These may be received through meditating upon Him, through reading the Scriptures, or through hearing the word from the living preacher. Suddenly, as the Spirit comes with more direct appeal, the soul gladly surrenders itself to Jesus. By many this is called sudden conversion; but it is the result of long wooing by the Spirit of God,—a patient, protracted process.”** {DA 172.3}