



SAVED TO SERVE

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THE CONDITION OF GOD'S REMNANT CHURCH THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER, PART 7

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will look at the preparatory work needed to be a good-ground hearer.
2. To recap what we have studied in previous lessons, is there a problem with the sower or the seed? 2 Corinthians 13:5; Psalm 139:23, 24

Answer: _____

“Throughout the parable of the sower, Christ represents the different results of the sowing as depending upon the soil. In every case the sower and the seed are the same. Thus He teaches that if the word of God fails of accomplishing its work in our hearts and lives, the reason is to be found in ourselves. But the result is not beyond our control. True, we cannot change ourselves; but the power of choice is ours, and it rests with us to determine what we will become.” {COL 56.1}

3. **Note:** During Christ's earthly ministry the majority of the Jews were wayside, stony and thorny-ground hearers. Jesus came to teach them how to become good-ground hearers, but they would not listen to the truth.
4. What were Christ's feelings toward the Jewish nation who had rejected Him? Matthew 23:16-17, 19, 24-26; Luke 19:41, 42, 44

Answer: _____

5. Let us now compare the attitude of the Jews in Christ's day to the church today. Like the Jews, what will many do in this final generation, and why will they do it? Psalm 119:126; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4; Revelation 3:17

Answer: _____

“The Majesty of heaven in tears! the Son of the infinite God troubled in spirit, bowed down with anguish! The scene filled all heaven with wonder. That scene reveals to us the exceeding sinfulness of sin; it shows how hard a task it is, even for Infinite Power, to save the guilty from the consequences of transgressing the law of God. **Jesus, looking down to the last generation, saw the world involved in a deception similar to that which caused the destruction of Jerusalem. The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ; the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth.** The precepts of Jehovah would be despised and set at naught. Millions in bondage to sin, slaves of Satan, doomed to suffer the second death, would refuse to listen to the words of truth in their day of visitation. **Terrible blindness! strange infatuation!**” {GC 22.2}

6. How do we today become inattentive hearers when the ‘seed of truth’ is spoken? Ephesians 4:30; Proverbs 28:9

Answer: _____

“...The wayside, the stony-ground, the thorny-ground hearers need not remain such. The Spirit of God is ever seeking to break the spell of infatuation that holds men absorbed in worldly things, and to awaken a desire for the imperishable treasure. It is by resisting the Spirit that men become inattentive to or neglectful of God's word. They are themselves responsible for the hardness of heart that prevents the good seed from taking root, and for the evil growths that check its development.” {COL 56.1}

7. Who were examples of inattentive hearers which also grieved the Holy Spirit of God? Acts 5:1-10

Answer: _____

“In sharp contrast to the example of benevolence shown by the believers, was the conduct of Ananias and Sapphira, whose experience, traced by the pen of Inspiration, has left a dark stain upon the history of the early church. **With others, these professed disciples had shared the privilege of hearing the gospel preached by the apostles. They had been present with other believers when, after the apostles had prayed, “the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”** Acts 4:31. **Deep conviction had rested upon all present, and under the direct influence of the Spirit of God, Ananias and Sapphira had made a pledge to give to the Lord the proceeds from the sale of certain property.”** {AA 71.2}

“Afterward, Ananias and Sapphira grieved the Holy Spirit by yielding to feelings of covetousness. They began to regret their promise and soon lost the sweet influence of the blessing that had warmed their hearts with a desire to do large things in behalf of the cause of Christ. They thought they had been too hasty, that they ought to reconsider their decision. They talked the matter over, and decided not to fulfill their pledge...” {AA 72.1}

“But God hates hypocrisy and falsehood. Ananias and Sapphira practiced fraud in their dealing with God; they lied to the Holy Spirit, and their sin was visited with swift and terrible judgment...” {AA 72.2}

8. What will be the result of many who choose to remain infatuated by sin? Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:7-10

Answer: _____

“The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. They have none to plead their cause; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them.” {GC 668.2}

“It is now evident to all that the wages of sin is not noble independence and eternal life, but slavery, ruin, and death. The wicked see what they have forfeited by their life of rebellion. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory was despised when offered them; but how desirable it now appears. “All this,” cries the lost soul, “I might have had; but I chose to put these things far from me. Oh, strange infatuation! I have exchanged peace, happiness, and honor for wretchedness, infamy, and despair.” All see that their exclusion from heaven is just. By their lives they have declared: “We will not have this Man [Jesus] to reign over us.” {GC 668.3}

9. In order for the seed of truth to be received in the heart, the heart must first be prepared to receive it. What are we instructed to do in Jeremiah 4:3, 4? Hosea 10:12; Mark 1:15 (last two phrases)

Answer: _____

“The garden of the heart must be cultivated. The soil must be broken up by deep repentance for sin. Poisonous, Satanic plants must be uprooted. The soil once overgrown by thorns can be reclaimed only by diligent labor. So the evil tendencies of the natural heart can be overcome only by earnest effort in the name and strength of Jesus...” {COL 56.2}

10. Not only does the hearer of the Word have a work to do, but the sower also has a work to do to prepare men's hearts to receive the truth. In the work of ministry, what is often overdone, and what should be done more? Matthew 4:23

Answer: _____

“The sowers of the seed have a work to do in preparing hearts to receive the gospel. In the ministry of the word there is too much sermonizing, and too little of real heart-to-heart work. There is need of personal labor for the souls of the lost. In Christlike sympathy we should come close to men individually, and seek to awaken their interest in the great things of eternal life...” {COL 57.1}

“...Our religion will be of but little worth to our fellow men if it is only theoretical and not practical.” {4T 234.2}

“Theoretical discourses are essential, that all may know the form of doctrine and see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole. But no discourse should ever be delivered without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel, making a practical application of the truths set forth, and impressing upon the people the fact that the doctrine of Christ is not Yea and Nay, but Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus.” {4T 394.3}

11. What are new converts not taught when they first come to know Jesus, which causes them not to have root? Hebrews 6:1, 2; Ephesians 2:19, 20

Answer: _____

“So the sowers have something to do that the seed may not be choked with thorns or perish because of shallowness of soil. At the very outset of the Christian life every believer should be taught its foundation principles...” {COL 57.2}

12. Are we only to focus on the foundational principles of the faith? Hebrews 6:1; 2 Peter 1:5-8

Answer: _____

“He should be taught that he is not merely to be saved by Christ's sacrifice, but that he is to make the life of Christ his life and the character of Christ his character. Let all be taught that they are to bear burdens and to deny natural inclination. Let them learn the blessedness of working for Christ, following Him in self-denial, and enduring hardness as good soldiers. Let them learn to trust His love and to cast on Him their cares...” {COL 57.2}

"I saw the necessity of the messengers, especially, watching and checking all fanaticism wherever they might see it rise. Satan is pressing in on every side, and unless we watch for him, and have our eyes open to his devices and snares, and have on the whole armor of God, the fiery darts of the wicked will hit us. **There are many precious truths contained in the Word of God, but it is "present truth" that the flock needs now. I have seen the danger of the messengers running off from the important points of present truth, to dwell upon subjects that are not calculated to unite the flock and sanctify the soul. Satan will here take every possible advantage to injure the cause.**" {EW 63.1}

"But such subjects as the sanctuary, in connection with the 2300 days, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, are perfectly calculated to explain the past Advent movement and show what our present position is, establish the faith of the doubting, and give certainty to the glorious future. These, I have frequently seen, were the principal subjects on which the messengers should dwell." {EW 63.2}

"As I saw what we must be in order to inherit glory, and then saw how much Jesus had suffered to obtain for us so rich an inheritance, I prayed that we might be baptized into Christ's sufferings, that we might not shrink at trials, but bear them with patience and joy, knowing what Jesus had suffered that we through His poverty and sufferings might be made rich. Said the angel, "Deny self; ye must step fast." **Some of us have had time to get the truth and to advance step by step, and every step we have taken has given us strength to take the next. But now time is almost finished, and what we have been years learning, they will have to learn in a few months. They will also have much to unlearn and much to learn again. Those who would not receive the mark of the beast and his image when the decree goes forth, must have decision now to say, Nay, we will not regard the institution of the beast."** {EW 67.2}

13. What will give us joy and keep us from the attractive power of worldly pleasures? Hebrews 12:2; Psalm 126:5, 6

Answer: _____

"...Let them taste the joy of winning souls for Him. In their love and interest for the lost, they will lose sight of self. The pleasures of the world will lose their power to attract and its burdens to dishearten. The plowshare of truth will do its work. It will break up the fallow ground. It will not merely cut off the tops of the thorns, but will take them out by the roots." {COL 57.2}