

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository
Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

151- Jesus Begins Teaching in Parables- Part 7
The Parable of the Four Kinds of Soil- Part 6

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Matthew 13:1-9;18-23

1 That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea.

2 And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach.

3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow;

4 and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.

5 Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil.

6 But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out.

8 And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.

9 He who has ears, let him hear."

18 "Hear then the parable of the sower.

19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.

20 The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

21 yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.

22 And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

23 And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

This is the final Sermon on the first Parable of Jesus found in **Matthew 13**. And as I told you, previously, there are seven Parables in this chapter:

1. The Parable of the four Kinds of Soils (v. 3-9; 18-23)
2. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (v.24-30;36- 43)
3. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (31&32)
4. The Parable of the Leaven (v. 33)
5. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (v. 44)
6. The Parable of the Costly Pearl (v. 45&46)
7. The Parable of the Dragnet (v. 47-50)

... and then Jesus gave a very short “*mini-Parable*” in verses 51&52.

And the Subject of all of these Parables is the “*Kingdom of Heaven*”- in What the Kingdom is; *How* we are to *understand* this new Kingdom; and *how* genuinely saved people will relate to it.

Now the Fact that Jesus is having to speak to the people in Parables about the Kingdom of Heaven shows us that what the average Jew believed and had been taught for the last 400 years *previous* to Jesus’ Ministry- about the “Kingdom”- was Wrong. And so, Jesus is “correcting the Record” so that those who love and obey Him- will have a better Insight into just what the Kingdom is and HOW it is radically Different from the natural, political Kingdom of Israel- that had been put forth by the unsaved and hypocritical Pharisees over the *previous* four Centuries.

Among the many other Man-made and wayward Falsehoods, the Eschatological View that the Pharisees taught- involved a Future with a completely “natural” Kingdom of Israel with *physical* Boundaries that encompassed ALL of the Land that God originally gave to Abraham that went from the Nile River on the South to the Euphrates River on the North (**Genesis 15:18**). The “Messiah” that the Jews of the 1st Century were anticipating was NOT God in human Flesh (*Immanuel*)- but was a natural Man, who would act as a “Warrior/King/Politician”. This Man would raise up an Army of Jews, who would, *first*, *vanquish* the Roman occupying Gentiles; *repatriate* the Jews, who had been dispersed because of War and Persecution; *subjugate* (either by War or Persuasion)- ALL of the Gentile Nations of the World; and then “*sit down*” (signifying his complete Victory) in the Throne of King David and literally “*rule the World with a Rod of Iron*” (Justice and Equity) – for a “*thousand years*”- which in their Understanding meant, “*forever*” or “*a very long period of Time*” (**Psalm 2:8&9**)!

So, because of the Perversion of the Pharisees, of whom Jesus said, **“You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?” (Matthew 23:33)**- the average Jew of the 1st Century (including Jesus’ Disciples) was NOT looking for a “Messiah”, who would **“... save His people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21)**! And this is Huge!

And so, as soon as Jesus entered His earthly Ministry- He had to accomplish several things all at once. And among them were these ten:

1. Fulfill the Old Testament Prophecies concerning Himself
2. Live a perfectly sinless Life
3. Fulfill the Law of Moses
4. Bring to an End the *inferior* Old Covenant (making it Obsolete)
5. Expose the Pharisees as false Teachers
6. Condemn the Teaching of the Pharisees- *including* their Eschatology
7. Establish the *superior* New Covenant
8. Prove His full Deity through Signs; Wonders; Miracles; and spiritual Gifts
9. Correctly interpret the Old Testament
10. Save ALL whom God had chosen at that Time

... and also teach His Disciples WHAT the Kingdom of God is.

Another very Important Issue of Context is to understand that the normal Way that the ancient Jew worked to have Peace and to *co-exist* with pagan, gentile, Dogs, was either by *forcefully* subjugating them in War; or by the Threat of War (Blackmail); or by Persuasion. There was NOT then and there is NOT now- any *major* or consistent Effort by the Jews to CONVERT the Gentiles- so they may become “fellow-heirs” of the natural Kingdom of Israel.

Judaism has NEVER been a “*missionary Religion*”. And while Judaism has *always* accepted Converts- the basic Mindset the average Jew had back in the 1st Century as well as Today- is that God chose the Jews and did NOT choose anyone else! And while that was really “*too Bad*” for the Gentiles- it supposedly gave the Jews “*automatic Favor*” with God- for no other Reason other than being born Jewish! And the Jew possessed that sinful Mindset *primarily* because of the *warped* Theology of the Pharisees that *dominated* 1st Century Israel!

In fact, it was *these* Issues (along with others) as to WHY the Christian Church categorically *condemned* this Jewish Eschatological View as being a full-blown Heresy in the early 4th Century!

Now, as I have already told you- using Parables was a very *common* Way that religious Leaders taught the people. But what made the Parables of Jesus so *unique*- is because, normally, Jewish Leaders used Parables to help make “unclear

Issues” become “MORE Clear” while Jesus used Parables to make “unclear Issues “MORE Unclear” and “MORE Confusing” to those who were NOT chosen for Salvation. Please look again at **Matthew 13:10-17:**

10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

11 Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

12 "For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.

13 Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

14 In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;

15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'

16 But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

17 For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

... and that is truly “*marvelous in our eyes*”!

Now the Hebrew word, (*pala*; Strong’s #6381) that was translated as “**marvelous**” in the Bible- has to do with *the eye and mental and spiritual Contemplation*. So, the word, “*marvelous*” does NOT always mean something that is “*exciting*” or even what most people would consider, “*Good*”. For something to be “*marvelous*” has to do with it being very “*Odd*”; and something that is so out of the Ordinary- that it *requires* you to take the Time to “see” or “contemplate” or “ponder”- *long and hard*- before you can understand it! So, something that is “*marvelous*” is something that “*marvels*” your eyes and mind and thoughts or *something to which you gape at in stunned Silence as you see it unfold before your eyes; and something you would have to Contemplate using both your mental and spiritual Faculties to understand!*

And so, Jesus using Parables in order to *purposefully* HIDE the Truth from some people- is so Odd; so out of the Ordinary; so Strange; so Weird; and so Unlike what most people think of Him- that we have to ponder this- *long and hard*- if we are going to understand it!

And so, in this *first* Parable- Jesus is teaching at least three things:

1. Gospel Evangelism
2. The Impossibility of Salvation
3. God's Sovereignty in Salvation

... so, let's look at these one at a Time.

1. Gospel Evangelism

The *ultimate* Goal of God for all that He created is- "*Worship*". God *desires* to be "Worshipped"! God is "white-hot" in His Passion to be worshipped! And He has promised *horrific* Punishment if He is NOT worshipped! And so, God has gone to great Lengths to make sure that He IS worshipped!

But ALL of Creation worships God- *automatically*- except Man. Everything God made- worships God simply by doing what God made it to do; and by operating in the Way God made it to operate- except Man.

Because of the Fall- we ALL possess a sinful and rebellious Nature. And so, what we normally *love*; what we normally *enjoy*; what we naturally *want*; what we *value*; *admire*; and *treasure*; and what brings us the MOST Satisfaction in this Life- is NOT God! It is Sin; Self; and Darkness! And that's what it means to be "*Lost*". So, being "*Lost*" is NOT merely WHAT we "*do*"- it is WHO we "*are*". And in our "lost State" or our "lost Condition"- we DO NOT love God. And so, we DO NOT worship Him! And we DO NOT love God- because we CANNOT love God. And we CANNOT love God- because we DON'T WANT to love God! So, we can say that being "*Lost*"; and being "*Sinful*" stops "*Worship*" from happening!

Now God *could have* left us like that. But that would have *robbed* Himself of the Worship that He is *entitled* to receive. And so, God created "*Salvation*"- so that lost Humans could be so radically *transformed* (by what God alone does for them and at great Cost to Himself)- that they would- *naturally and normally*- love God; *value* God; *treasure* God; and *enjoy* God! And that Gift of "*loving God*" would, in turn, produce, "*Worship*"! And so, for Humans, "*Worship*"- is:

Struggling against the Lusts of our Flesh (by the Power of the Holy Spirit) to be found humbly and joyfully submitted to the Authority of Scripture in our daily Lives- all to the Glory of God

... and that *ongoing* Struggle is based on the Love for God that God Himself gives to us!

But in order for God to *save* us- He has to sovereignly *draw/drag* us to Himself! Because our fallen Nature makes us run and hide from God! And so, God created “*Evangelism*”- so that “*Salvation*” would happen! Because “*Salvation*” is what will cause “*Worship*” to happen!

So, because of the Fall- *Worship* does NOT come *first*. Obeying God’s Commandments does NOT come *first*! Following Rules does NOT come *first*! And improving our own “*Morality*” does NOT come *first*! What comes *first*- is “*Evangelism*”!

Now I already told you that the religion of the Jews of the 1st Century (as well as Today)- did NOT and does NOT promote or put forth any major Effort to convert the Gentiles into Jews. So, *Evangelism* was practically *non-existent* among the natural “*Sons of Abraham*”.

But look what Jesus said in the first part of verses 3&4:

3 Behold, the sower went out to sow ...

4 and as he sowed ...

... so, in ALL four kinds of Soil (Hearts)- the Seed was sown!

And in verse, 19, Jesus said the “Seed” that is sown is

the word of the kingdom

So, *unlike* the “*Children of the Kingdom of Israel*”, who lived under a “*Come and See*” Covenant- the “*Children of the Kingdom of Heaven*”, who live under a “*Go and Tell*” Covenant- really care whether lost people are saved. We care that there are Areas where *Worship* doesn’t exist. And so, our Divine Mandate is...

... Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. (Mark 16:15b)

... and after we go and preach the Gospel, we have been *commanded* to...

... make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you... (Matthew 28:19b&20a)

... and the Divine Authority by which we may go to the Nations of the World; Insert ourselves into their Lives; Preach the Word of the Kingdom of Heaven (the Gospel); call ALL people from every Walk of Life to Repentance; to cast off ALL Sin and false religions; to fully believe in and obey the glorious Savior, Jesus Christ, and then hold them Accountable to live a Life of humble and joyful Worship is:

- **All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (Matthew 28:18)**
- **and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:20)**
- **The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.” (Psalm 110:1)**

So, yes, we rejoice that we have been chosen! But, NO! we do NOT stop there. The Auspices of the glorious New Covenant *compels* us to sow the Seed of the Word of the Kingdom- which the Bible calls, the “Gospel”- into the Minds and Hearts and Ears of EVERYBODY who are NOT already part of that new, glorious Kingdom- and who do NOT already *love* and *worship* God!

And that Evangelism will produce Salvation; which will produce a Love for God- that will produce genuine “Spirit and Truth” Worship of God!

So, even though Evangelism is very Common in *our* Day- it was “radical Theology” when Jesus spoke these Words on that Day! So, in this Parable- Jesus is literally *creating* Evangelism! And by creating Evangelism- Jesus is also categorically *condemning* the Absence of Evangelism in the Pharisees and in those who follow them, who couldn’t care less that the Gentiles were going to burn in Hell forever!

But also notice that there is NOT any other Way to Evangelize- other than the one, single Method that Jesus taught here:

Sow the Seed of the Word of the “Kingdom of Heaven” to EVERYONE who is already Lost

And that means that ALL of the Arguments about “*Methods of Evangelism*” in the modern Church AND all the various Attempts at trying some other Method- is Wrong and a complete waste of Time! There is ONLY one Method: EVERY Believer is to sow the Seed to ALL the Lost: Preach the Gospel!

But we must take Heed to ourselves. Because if the Knowledge that we have been chosen and predestined by God for Salvation- causes us to be Unconcerned and Uncaring and Unburdened that Lost people will spend ALL of Eternity screaming in Agony in a Lake of Fire- then we are NOT any better off than the Pharisees; and we are deceiving ourselves!

Because Worship is *deserved*- Salvation is *needed*. And because Salvation is *needed*- Evangelism is COMMANDED! But, it is NOT true, as many believe, that the Work of Evangelism is relegated to a certain class of Believers while the rest are free to go Home and relax and watch the Game. If you love God; and if you love people (which are the two great Commandments)- you WILL preach the Gospel to ALL Creation! And if you don't- please don't try to convince me that you're saved.

ALL Believers are to sow the Seed of the Gospel to ALL the Lost- on the Job; at the Store; in the Classroom; at the Market; at Home; on the Internet; through the Mail; and on the Streets! And YES! You WILL be persecuted; you WILL be shunned; and talked about and maligned; and some of you may be thrown in Jail; they may assault you; and you may even be killed! But God will be honored; Jesus Christ will be exalted; and you will hear those precious Words:

Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' (Matthew 25:21)

2. The Impossibility of Salvation

In this Parable, Jesus taught that it is neither Normal nor Natural for *anyone*, who is Lost, to hear; believe; and obey the Gospel! So, Salvation is NOT Hard; it isn't Difficult! No, Salvation is IMPOSSIBLE! ONLY God can save the human Soul! We CANNOT save *ourselves*- because Salvation involves radically transforming WHO we are! And the four types of Soil in this Parable, which represent WHO we are- and which represent the various Conditions of the human Heart- ALL had a couple of things in common:

1. The Sower sowed the Seed of the Gospel to ALL of them
2. They ALL "heard the Word"

... and three were NOT saved while one was.

And the Question is, “WHY”? Why were three kinds of people NOT saved while one WAS? Doesn’t God want EVERYBODY to be saved? Wouldn’t universal Salvation be MORE glorious to God than for some to go to Hell?

Now the usual Answer is, “*Well, God gave us all “Free-Will” and we can choose to “accept” the free-Gift of Salvation or reject it!*” That is the most common Way that people explain this Problem today. Yet that is NOT what Jesus taught in this Parable- at all!

In EVERY Case- the Seed was sown to them ALL and they ALL “heard the Word”! So, it was NOT some “willful Choice” on the part of three of them to *reject* the Word that kept them Lost! Jesus did NOT teach that! What kept those lost people- Lost- was the normal, natural, and original Condition that the Soil already had! So, it was WHO THEY ALREADY WERE- that allowed them to hear the Word yet remain Lost!

But I would suggest to you that this is the Wrong Question in the first place. The Question is NOT “*WHY does God save SOME but NOT ALL?*” The *real* Question; the *most Important* Question; the greatest Mystery is: “*WHY does God save ANYONE?*” Because ALL of Humanity- rich and poor; free and bond; Male and Female; cultured and uncultured; white, black, red; brown, yellow; and purple with green dots- ALL of Humanity has the very SAME fallen, rebellious, sinful, depraved, lost, and hard Heart- that has the Ability to physically hear the Gospel preached- but has NO Power or Ability or Desire to believe the Gospel; obey the Gospel; or to love and worship God!

So, what Jesus is illustrating in the *three* Examples is the absolute *Impossibility* of Salvation! And what He is illustrating in the *fourth* Example- is the Sovereignty of God in Salvation!

We are commanded to preach the Gospel to EVERYONE! Yet EVERYONE will NOT be saved. WHY? The Answer to that Question is NOT that Man is in charge and has the final Determination as to what he will or will NOT believe or love or worship. NO! That is false Teaching! The Bible has NEVER taught that!

What the Bible teaches- *clearly and repeatedly*- is that God is NOT merely “Sovereign” in Creation- but He is also absolutely “Sovereign” in Salvation as well! The Concept of “Human free-Will” or Human Self-determination” is NOT found anywhere in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible. It is an entirely Man-made; false Teaching that is NOTHING but a “Doctrine of Demons”!

The Bible teaches that ALL of Mankind absolutely has a “Will” and, therefore, can make Choices- all Day long. But, because of the Fall- neither our “Will” nor any of our “Choices” qualify as being “Free”. They are NOT “*Autonomous*”. ALL of our Choices are *predicated* on WHAT we *love*; WHAT we

want; and WHAT we *desire*- so much so- that NOBODY is able to choose *anything* that is *contrary* to his Loves; Wants; and Desires- unless He is *externally* coerced!

Okay, but WHY do we *love* what we love? WHY do we *want* what we want? And WHY do people *desire* what they desire? The Loves; Wants; and Desires of ALL Humans are fashioned and formed and they flow out from- our “Nature”- which is WHO we “are”!

So, what kind of “Nature” do lost people have? A *fallen* Nature; a *lost* Nature; a *sinful* Nature; a *rebellious* Nature and a Nature that is *totally* Depraved! So, what does that unsaved Nature *love*? The Bible teaches three things: Sin; Self; and Darkness. But what a fallen Nature does NOT and CANNOT love- is God; or things “Things of the Spirit of God”. And so, without any external Coercion- those *sinful* Loves; Wants; and Desires will NEVER produce Choices that *favor* God or the Things of the Spirit of God. And so, left to himself- without a sovereign Insertion and Interruption and Imposition or Coercion by God- the lost Person will NEVER “choose” to believe; repent or be saved- in a million years! God has to sovereignly, supernaturally, miraculously, radically, and eternally *transform* the Nature of that Individual- FIRST- all by Himself- or that Person will NEVER believe; he will NEVER repent; and he will NEVER be saved! That is how *pervasive* “Lostness” is!

And God could have left us in that Condition- and remained perfectly Holy and Righteous. But in His great Mercy and Grace- God chose (God DOES have “Free-will”)- to do FOR us what we CANNOT do for ourselves! And so, based solely on what God alone did for us- even though it cost the agonizing Death of His own Son- God chose to reach toward some of the Lost and powerfully and effectually transform their fallen Nature!

And with that new Nature- those people WILL see; they WILL hear; they WILL believe; and they WILL be saved! And that is what the Example of the fourth Soil in this Parable teaches. So, let’s read **Matthew 13:8&23** again together:

8 And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.

23 And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.”

What we must understand is that the phrase “**good soil**” that Jesus used here does NOT mean that this fourth Group of people were “Better” or “morally

Superior” from the other three. NO! In fact, it is very possible that this *fourth* Group could have, initially, been much WORSE than the other three.

Contrary to what the Jews of the 1st Century were being taught by the Pharisees- Jews are NOT in a “better” spiritual Position from Gentiles. They do NOT have a “leg up” on other Groups. They are NOT “morally superior” to anyone and are NOT saved by Birthright; Nationality; Genealogy; Race; or Ethnicity. And even though MANY people believe that today- the Bible has NEVER taught that.

What the Bible teaches is that under the inferior Old Covenant- God chose the Jew- as a Group- to be the Recipients of His Grace and Mercy- “ABOVE” or “to the Exclusion” of all the other peoples of the World. Yet, *personally and individually*, God said they were:

- Stiff-necked
- Hard-hearted
- Rebellious

... and a People, who *delight themselves* in sinning against God!

But being “chosen for Salvation”- as a Group- also carried with it- the Responsibility for each individual Jew- to actually love and worship God! So, the Punishment for NOT loving and NOT worshipping God is far greater on them than the rest!

And that means the “Sovereign Election” of the Jews in the Old Testament (as a Group) is NOT a Testimony of how inherently godly or holy or righteous the Jews were- but rather a glowing Testimony of how Gracious and Merciful God is!

Now there is a Truth- that is absolutely biblical- and that has been taught in the Christian Church for nearly its entire Existence- until the last 200 years or so- that I want to discuss here. And let me warn you ahead of Time- this Doctrine; this Teaching; this biblical Truth is Offensive. It is, in every Respect- “Marvelous” and so, it WILL *require* us to think and ponder- long and hard- to understand it. This Truth is also hard to teach and hard to believe. So, why teach it? Because its True; and because it answers Questions like these,

- Why doesn’t God save EVERYBODY?
- If God can sovereignly change the Nature of one Person- why not change the Heart of ALL people?
- Wouldn’t God receive MORE Glory if EVERYBODY was saved?
- How can God get any Glory in people who are burning in Hell?

And I think these are great Questions. But they are NOT new. People have been asking Questions like this for over 2,000 years. But ALL Questions like these- stem from the SAME Misunderstanding about God. And that Misunderstanding is the false Concept that God can ONLY receive Glory for saving people by His Grace. And that, as far as the people in Hell go- well, God *wanted* to save them; He really *tried*- but He *couldn't* save them because they wouldn't *let* Him. And so, God actually LOST the people who are in Hell. Therefore, Hell is a tragic and terrible DEFEAT for God!

Now with all due Respect to the people who teach this- Statements like these are pure Blasphemy! Statements like this *devalue* God; they *minimize* God and His Sovereignty; while *elevating* Man and his own so-called “*Self-Determination*”. And those Statements also flow out from a fundamental Misunderstanding about two very Important Truths:

1. God's *absolute* Sovereignty
2. Man's *radical* Ruination

So, while MANY people *say* they believe that Man is “Fallen” and that God is “Sovereign”- in Practice and in Reality- they DON'T! Because when it comes to this frightening Truth- they very quickly *abandon* BOTH Sovereignty and Ruination.

Okay, here we go- so buckle up. ALL of WHO God is- is glorious! There is NOT one Part of God that is MORE glorious than another. And there is NOT a single one of God's “Excellencies” that are “Better” or “Higher” or “more Useful” or that bring God MORE Joy- than ALL the Rest. We CANNOT separate God into various Parts. One of the fundamental Truths about God- is that He is “ONE”. So, He is NOT merely the Sum of His many Attributes.

The Bible teaches that God created the World and everything in it- so that two of God's Excellencies could be displayed; seen; and praised:

1. The Glory of God's Grace/Mercy
2. The Glory of God's Justice/Righteousness

... and they BOTH bring God Glory! And they BOTH *require* sinful people.

The very best Way that we can see and praise the Glory of God's Grace and Mercy is when it is displayed on wicked Sinners- and saves them! Because we know that the ONLY reason that person was saved- is because God *chose* to save him- before the Foundation of the World and before he did ANYTHING “Good” or “Evil”!

God sovereignly *overrode* his natural and normal Rebellion and CAUSED him to be “born again” (1Peter 1:3)! And the Result was that this person now *loves* God and seeks to *worship* Him!

And the best Way we can see and praise the Glory of God’s Justice and Righteousness is when it is displayed in the Judgment of the Wicked. And that glorifies God- just as much- as when He saves Sinners! Because we know that the ONLY Reason they remained hard-hearted and wicked- is because God NEVER intended to save them in the first Place. Now He didn’t do them any Harm- He didn’t *make* them sin- He simply left them alone and allowed them do whatever was in their Heart to do.

Now we really don’t like this Truth- because to us- this is terrifying! But the Issue is- that the Bible clearly teaches it! And that makes it to be Right and True! And the Reason we fear this- is because we are all Guilty! But God is NOT Guilty and so, He is exalted and magnified- He is glorified when He damns unrepentant Sinners!

We must remember that Sin *insults* God’s Glory; it *offends* His Righteousness. That’s what makes Sin to be “Wrong”. Sin is NOT Wrong simply because it destroys our Lives. Sin DOES destroy our Lives- but that alone is NOT what makes Sin to be “Wrong”. Sin is Wrong because it *robs* God of the Glory that He is *entitled* to receive. And so, if God did not damn all Sin- He would be agreeing with us that His Righteousness was NOT worth defending.

So, Hell is NOT a Loss for God! The Screams of the Damned in Hell are the *loudest* Sounds under Heaven that Sin is *infinitely* Sinful; that God is *infinitely* Righteous; and that Grace is *infinitely* Magnificent! Therefore, God, casting unrepentant Sinners into the Flames of everlasting Fire- does NOT testify that God *wanted* to save them but *couldn’t* because they wouldn’t *let* Him. God’s righteous Judgment testifies that God NEVER intended to save them in the first Place!

But to those whom God DID choose to save- they are the Recipients of His unearned and undeserved Mercy and Grace- and they WILL hear the Gospel; they WILL believe the Gospel; they WILL repent; they WILL put their Hope and Trust in Jesus and in His finished Work; and they WILL be saved! And that is the Testimony of how glorious God’s Grace is!

Okay, but what did Jesus mean when He said,

8 ... and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty
23 ... who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty

Now a Farmer in Israel in the 1st Century would be *enormously* blessed if he had a Field that bore him 10-12% Fruit! NOBODY had a 30-fold yield much less

60 or 100! So, Jesus is using Hyperbole here to say that the Fruit of the Redeemed is infinitely *greater* than any Fruit of some natural Soil!

Any of these three Examples of Fruit would have literally overwhelmed any Farmer back then- because anywhere between 10 & 12 fold Fruit was considered a huge Harvest. So, thirty, sixty, and a hundred- fold would have been beyond Imagination! So, what Jesus is saying is we're NOT all going to bring forth the same amount of Fruit. All of our Fruit will be godly and ALL who are saved WILL bear Fruit. But the *amount* of Fruit we bear will differ because we're *gifted* differently. We're *devoted* differently. And we have *differing* Opportunities. But ALL of those whose Soil has been MADE to be “Good” WILL bring forth godly Fruit- even though the Amounts will differ.

Part of the Meaning of the Parable of the Man who gave his three Servants different amounts of Money- in **Matthew 25**- is that whether God gives you little or much- you CAN glorify God with whatever God gives; and God WILL reward you! But DON'T *waste* what God gives you! And DON'T waste your Life pursuing things that have been made; and things that are passing away!

Amen. Let's pray!

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your Pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.

