



## The Parable of Spiritual Growth

It is interesting to note that some people, when they accept Christ, are sort of like a rocket. They take off and just keep going higher and higher. They bear fruit, more fruit, and more fruit on top of that. Others shoot up with a burst and then crash and burn. Some grow faster than others do.

Here in Matthew 13 we are going to discover the seed of the Word of God falling on different types of soils that represent the human heart. God sows the seed in your heart, but you decide what kind of soil your heart will be.

### Practical Principles

1. The Highway Hearers. This is a group of people you tell about Jesus and they just don't respond, or they might respond with hostility. These people have a hard heart because of sin. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:4, "Satan, who is the god of this evil world, has made him blind, unable to see the glorious light of the Gospel that is shining upon him or to understand the amazing message we preach about the glory of Christ, who is God" (tlb).
2. The Rocky Road Hearers. This speaks of the seed that falls in stony places; initially these people hear the word and receive it with joy, but in the end have no root. These people seem to have the most dramatic conversion, but as soon as it gets a little tough, they forget about it because they have no roots or depth.
3. Those that are choked out by weeds and thorns. Luke 8:14 says, "And that which fell among the thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasure of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (kjv). These hearers are so concerned or obsessed with physical things that they forget about spiritual things. It chokes them out.
4. The Fruitful Hearer. You want to be a fruitful hearer. In verse 15 of Luke it says, "But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance" (nasb). Patience

is the word used but perseverance is a better translation. These hearers apply the Word and produce fruit.

#### Relevant Reminders

- God has given you everything you need to grow spiritually. God will keep you, but you need to keep yourself in the love of God.
- You determine what kind of soil your heart will be. But in order to grow spiritually you must abide in Jesus Christ.

#### Applicable Actions

Are you a rocky road hearer? You hear the word. It bounces off you like water off a duck's back. Are you a thorny hearer—a person who has thorns and weeds in your life that chokes out the Word? Maybe you are a rocky road hearer. There was a moment in your life where you made a profession of faith but then you just walked away from it. It is not too late to change that. God will hold us responsible for what we have heard. If you are not in a place spiritually where you need to be, make that commitment or recommitment to Christ today.