

Nehemiah Fischer
4/29/2015

Preparation for class:
James 1:16-21

Outline/Plan for the next four classes:

Parable of the sower:

- (Part One) Seed beside the road: Hardheartedness and spiritual warfare.
- (Part Two) The rocky soil: Temporal view of salvation and Christian suffering.
- (Part Three) Soil among thorns: False view of the greatest good.
- (Part Four) Good soil: Proper understanding according to the eternal perspective.

(Part One) Seed beside the road: hardheartedness and spiritual warfare

1. The parable of the sower (Matt. 13:3-23; Mark 4:2-25; Luke 8:1-19).
 - a. This is the first parable concerning the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 13:11) and the kingdom of God (Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10).
 - i. The Jews anticipated the messianic kingdom (Isa. 9:6, 7; Jer. 31:31-34; Dan. 7).
 - ii. Jesus came and offered the kingdom but he was rejected (Matt. 3:2, 12:22-50; Mark 1:15).
 - iii. After being rejected, Jesus began to teach the mysteries of the kingdom (Matt. 13:11).
 - iv. The mysteries did not and cannot nullify any prior kingdom promises made by God. The mysteries add certain elements about the program of the kingdom that were unknown before the Messiah was rejected (Matt. 13:52).
 - b. Jesus spoke in parables so that those who seek truth will find understanding and those who do not seek truth will not obtain understanding (Matt. 13:11-16). Parables can provide richer understanding but require thinking. A parable usually takes something relatable to help express something less relatable.
 - c. It is recorded that Jesus explained many of the parables to the disciples in private (Mark 4:34); however, the parable of the sower is one of two parables recorded with a clear explanation from Jesus.
 - i. Proper understanding of this parable will aide in understanding all other parables and the word of God in general (Mark 4:13).
 - ii. It is not because this parable contains symbolic words that can be applied to other parables. It is because this parable challenges the listener to evaluate his heart when taking in the word of God.
 - d. The seed clearly refers to the word of God (Luke 8:11), but should be viewed in the context of the kingdom of God (Matt. 13:19). As the heaven studies have brought to light, all Bible doctrine should be understood in relation to the eternal kingdom.
 - e. The sower refers to Jesus and those who teach his word (Mark 4:14).

2. The soil alongside the road: Hardheartedness and Satan (Mark 4:14), the evil one (Matt. 13:19), the devil (Luke 8:12)
 - a. Satan by his system takes away the seed, but it is the condition of the heart that allows him to take it away.
 - b. The condition of the soil/heart:
 - i. A compacted road refers to a hardened heart. The seed cannot penetrate the surface and the word cannot penetrate the heart.
 - ii. Hearing the word they do not understand (Matt. 13:19). This parallels the Jewish leaders who rejected his teaching. Specifically, Jesus is trying show that the soil pertains to the heart/attitude toward the word (Matt. 13:13-15).
 1. The unwillingness to see truth is a refusal to change. The Jewish leaders had a religious system in which they saw no need to seek truth.
 2. The Jewish leaders were motivated by evil/wicked desires (John 8:40-44). Self-righteousness and legalism precludes one from understanding the word of God. This is a demonic attitude toward the word of God (James 3:14-16).
 - iii. The ultimate issue is attitude about truth as such (2 Thess. 2:10-12; Rom. 1:25).
 - c. Jesus introduces the reality of the angelic conflict and spiritual warfare.
 - i. Further insight can be gained by looking at the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:24-30, 37-39).
 - ii. Satan wars against God by planting his own seed (satanic philosophies).
 - iii. Satan actively works to keep people from being saved (Luke 8:12).
 1. This makes a good case for giving someone the gospel more than once.
 2. This also makes a case for repeating to hardhearted believers (Heb. 5:11-12).
 - d. Satan's method of removing the word of God:
 - i. Spiritual warfare is largely misunderstood in contemporary Christianity.
 1. Satan is more concerned with the way people think than with what they do (2 Cor. 10:3-5).
 2. Putting on the armor of God is useless if you do not understand the fight. Many people are fighting themselves while thinking they are in a battle with the devil (Ephesians 6:10-12). The battle is much bigger than personal problems.
 - e. Satan was after the mind of Eve more than the act of eating a forbidden fruit (2 Cor. 11:3, 13-15; 2 Tim. 2:24-26).
 - f. Satan is always trying to sell a lie and deceive as many as possible (2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 12:9, 20:7, 8)
 - g. Satan's philosophy is not necessarily to keep one from reading the Bible but rather to encourage a philosophy that makes the Bible seem so ridiculous or so hateful that it needs no serious thought.
 - i. In a world where evil has become good and good has become evil, the Bible has become evil.
 - ii. Consider how hard it would be for someone who believes entirely in naturalism to accept the miracles of the Bible. (It is impossible)

- iii. Consider how the embracing of homosexuality, feminism, and abortion can deter one from Christianity. Satan is behind the philosophies that embrace these actions.
 - iv. Understanding the nature of a rational (intellect) being helps one to see how false views can keep a person from understanding and accepting the word of God.
- h. It is possible for believers to be hardened to truth due to false doctrine, false philosophy, adherence to a system, or by overvaluing temporal goods.
- i. Consider how difficult it is for contemporary Christianity to understand metaphysics. (false philosophy)
 - ii. Consider why the Jewish leaders rejected Christ. (false doctrine and strict adherence to a system)
 - iii. Consider why most of contemporary Christianity does not truly live in the eternal perspective. (false philosophy, false doctrine, adherence to a system, overvaluing temporal goods)