

Open Line Bible Study Lesson Nine January 23, 2018

Scripture Texts: Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-10, Luke 8:4-15

Tonight's Subject: The Challenge, (What did those hear that did not hear)

In last week's lesson, we gave much attention to the meaning of the word heart contained in the Scripture. In that lesson, the content was in-depth and more to consider than most would know is taught what the heart means when referred to in the scripture. In conclusion I stated that our heart is like a garden where you will find many things planted both good and bad. This will be explained and considered in more detail later. The garden analogy is a great way to consider what the scriptures mean when referring to the heart. In John 15:1, JESUS states, "I am the true Vine and my Father is the gardener". When you hear the word gardener what do you think? Obviously, we think of someone who works within a garden or their garden. Keep in your mind the image of your Heavenly Father being a gardener who works in HIS garden which is your HEART! This will change our perspective about what we are, whom we belong to and who is at work within our life. The MASTER GARDENER IS AT WORK WITHIN YOUR HEART! The quicker we know this by revelation and live in cooperation and obedience to the gardener the better off we are! Let's look through the book of Proverbs at the state and meaning of the heart. These verses bring further enlightenment to our knowledge about the parable sower.

The parable is JESUS explaining the condition of the heart. Look at Proverbs 15:11, "Death & Destruction lie open before the LORD! How much more the hearts of men!" DID YOU SEE THAT!!! In other words, the heart lies open before the LORD! Only the LORD can see the depth of our heart which is like JESUS looking at the condition of the heart in the parable sower. If death and destruction can be examined, the heart likewise can be examined too. This verse implies several characteristics about the LORD's observation tendencies and priority. Death & Destruction are subservient to the LORD's authority. The LORD can see whatever HE determines to see in them. D&D are incapable of hiding from the LORD anything found within their parameters of control or territory. The verse states in so many words, "since D&D is under the LORD's authority, then of course, the heart is too!

Apparently, the verse also implies that the LORD is more concerned about what HE sees within the heart than what HE sees in D&D. Probably b/c GOD can change the heart but GOD cannot or will not change D&D. GOD controls D&D but GOD cannot or will not change them. The heart is seen and examined by the LORD b/c HE desires to work within the heart. He desires to change and transform the heart. The heart is HIS primary focus, not D&D! In using the garden analogy as used in scripture, eventually pure hearts are cultivated and harvested into the eternal Kingdom. Hearts that remain un-submissive to the LORD are identified with D&D and are burned up. This imagery is strong but parallels the NT teaching how our FATHER either purifies or burns up impurity within our life. This is taught within John 15:1-6. So JESUS is the sower of the truth of HIS Kingdom walking throughout the garden of every person's heart casting HIS seeds within each heart! This analogy is thought provoking!

May the Spirit of the fear of the LORD captivate all of us! D&D is pursuant of your heart. The gardener is pursuant of your heart too! Which seed will have its way in our hearts? Another perspective to consider here is this. The heart can only avoid the false authority and seeds of D&D as it is first submissive to the Gardener! So consider the following. Between the three forces of the Gardener, the heart and D&D there are two sequences of authority here. If possible, imagine this in a diagram you could create. First, if the heart is unredeemed then here is what we see within the garden. The first supreme authority is always the gardener, our Heavenly Father. But since the heart is unredeemed and uncultivated and thus under the false authority of D&D the second source of power and authority in this picture is D&D. The third force is the condition of the heart.

Notice here, that D&D are between the Gardener and the heart! Thus we think of the euphemism “getting between myself and my friend, etc.” On the LORD’s side of HIS work this doesn’t stop HIM from reaching out to unredeemed hearts but it does hinder the heart from reaching out to the gardener. Our LORD can easily get through D&D to reach a heart. But the reciprocal is much more challenging. The heart cannot overcome D&D except by the intervention of the FATHER’s grace! D&D will work to keep its control of unredeemed hearts away from the Gardener but D&D does not have the final say in this dilemma! The final say belongs to the Gardener and the heart! Then we have the second diagram to consider.

Again, the first supreme authority is always the gardener, our Heavenly Father.

GREAT NEWS HERE! The gardener has redeemed the heart in this garden and has begun his pruning work in that heart! Thus the heart has bypassed D&D and moved into second place in this sequence of authority. D&D are now in third and last place! The great news is that the gardener has gained the control of the heart and the heart is learning to receive and accept the seeds of the gardener and to reject the seeds of D&D! Thank you JESUS! Unfortunately until the heart further understands this process, the heart is still very vulnerable to the deceptive seeds and work of D&D. No matter how well developed and nurtured the heart becomes as long as we are within the garden of this world our hearts are susceptible to the seeds of D&D. Which see will the heart receive, believe and adhere to? The sower parable is all about this question!

Now look at Proverbs 16:1-2. What do these verses teach us about the depth of the heart? Within our heart we have the ability to create or feel or dream or think about our plans. But in the depth of our heart only the LORD can enable our tongue to eventually adequately describe what lies there. Our tongue as directed by our mind does not have the ability to articulate what is in the heart except GOD gives us the grace to do so! In other words the complexity of the heart is more profound than the mind and tongue can understand and describe. Our heart needs the help of the gardener FATHER GOD to prosper. Our hearts left to their own will fail to see their greatest best dreams come to pass. Verse 2 teaches us that we cannot properly judge or see the depth, motivation, purity or lack thereof in our heart. Until Christian maturity is developed we are prone to justify our actions and motivations. Ultimately the LORD judges our motivations within the heart. We cannot see into ourselves except the LORD allows us to see within ourselves.

In brevity, we are incapable of looking into our own heart with the ability to be thorough, accurate guided by nothing but HOLY SPIRIT given truth to analyze and interpret what lies in the heart. ONLY the gardener can do this completely and perfectly.

This question is asked for further thought and preparation for the next lesson on February 6th. Please remember, we do not have a lesson on January 30th. As we concluded last week we asked, "If the heart is the central focus of the sower parable then why is it not specifically referred to in the story line?" To begin considering the answer to that question look at the answer JESUS gave the disciples in M 13:11-13, Mk 4:11-13 & L8:10. In each of these verses they all three separate persons into two or more groups in how they listen.