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THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

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From one week to the next, I don't know what my topic will be. There are even weeks when I am not sure if I will have anything to write. During the first few weeks of the Covid closure, my readership dropped to almost nothing. It was so low that I wondered if this blog/vlog had run its course. I prayed about it and decided to keep writing as long as the Lord gave me something to write. I decided to practice obedience. It occurred to me that the Sunday morning time slot had become competitive. Before the virus, we had one church to attend, but now, with all of the churches posting their message online, there was a smorgasbord of messages from which to choose. My message was one of many. I am not a church pastor, but the Lord has charged me with sowing seeds among my community of readers, which is why He continues to give me a message to share each week. I pray that the seeds sown through this blog reach good soil and will produce a crop, a hundred, sixty, or thirty times sown.

Jesus once told a parable called, *The Sower*, and Matthew, Mark, and Luke recorded it. *3A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. (Matthew 13:*



Sowing seeds, as in the Word of God, during a pandemic is not an easy task. There seems to be so much more information out there that the message of Jesus can seem convoluted given the present realities of our lives. As Americans, we are experiencing an unforeseen, unprecedented invisible fear-factor. We've seen record job losses, a down-trend in the economy, and some have endured it without toilet tissue. Our country is suffering and grieving thousands of lives. Additionally, there is racial tension and division like no other time in the past forty years. Adding to the confusion is social media offering everyone's message a platform. Every message is not a godly message.

Jesus explains that when we hear or read the word of God, one of four things can happen. We can reject it, think about it, accept it for a time, or accept it and flourish. When the seed, the Word of God, is scattered in your direction, on what type of soil does it fall? Is your heart like the path, the hard soil? Does the Word of God merely enter your presence without you choosing to interact with it? Is your heart too hard for it to penetrate and take root? Have you seen too many things in your life that you believe

require an explanation, and you are unwilling to accept that God's plan is God's plan. As the Lord said to Job, *Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.* (Job 38:4)

Is your heart like the rocky places *near* the soil? Maybe you hear the Word when you are sitting in church service, but as soon as you leave, it's status quo. If so, examine the potential causes. Are you connected to a lifestyle of sin that seems more fulfilling than a lifestyle within God's plan? Are you afraid of what you might lose if you trust God and only Him? Maybe you hear the Word, but believe your sins are too great to qualify for forgiveness, so you harden your heart that His Word cannot penetrate.

Do you hear or read the Word of God, but remain unchanged? Are you, ye of little faith? Do you wonder if God is so good, why the world has so many problems? Understand that once sin entered the world, it separated man from God. Sin is the cause of suffering. The blood of Jesus is the only atonement for sin. Through the blood of Jesus, sin is forgiven that we each may walk the path God has set before us.

Have you allowed thorns to choke out your seed? Were you at one time walking in the light, but now, after experiencing some difficulties, allowed doubt and uncertainty to change your heart? *God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.* (1 John 1:5-7)

I must admit that for many years, my soil, my heart, was like the path. I relied on my own mind, my own research, and my own plans. If I found myself in a bind, and I needed God, I knew I could always pray, but even through prayer, I had not surrendered my life to Him. I was striving to be a good person, but never sure of the measuring instrument to know what was good enough. I hoped that when I died I would go to heaven, but I wasn't sure. I went to church, but I didn't study the Word of God on my own. The messages sounded good, but as long as I stayed in my right mind and made good decisions, I didn't need all that. And Jesus, yes, his blood would forgive all sin, but my sins, they weren't that big to need blood to atone for them, why, I was a good person! What I was unaware of was the sin of pride. *In his pride the wicked man does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God* (Psalm 10:4) Yes, it says wicked. Surely the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of Heaven. Once I began to study the Word, the seed that had been sown found good soil. It began producing a crop. I have more love, peace and joy than I ever before and I am driven to share it with all who care to partake.

Yes, this virus situation has been hard. It has totally disrupted our plans. It makes us feel as if life is uncertain. I am an educator and we don't know if schools will meet in person this fall. Not knowing is stressful. If we trust the One who knows we can take solace in the fact that the future is His to reveal to us. We are also experiencing the retraction of the racial veil that has segregated our country for years. People are speaking up and pointing out the wrongs and disparities. It's hard. I, personally, was raised not to discuss race. It's hard to now have those discussions and share experiences and perspectives. None of these things should cause our hearts to harden. God is still God. Jesus' love is still available to all who wish to embrace it.

If you would like more information on softening your heart, please reach out to me at kim@kimberlyga.com

The scriptural explanation of the parable of the Sower.

¹⁹When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ²²The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²³But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.” (Matthew 13:19-23)