



THE BROOKSVILLE BULLETIN

Brooksville church of Christ
604 W. Fort Dade Avenue, Brooksville, FL

April 3, 2022

Children And Church (Alex Pete)

I heard someone say a few days ago, "See, that just goes to show you that you can raise your kids in church all you want to, but..."

It shattered my heart. All because that kid had made a mistake. All because that kid's sin was brought to light.

Let me just tell you - we don't raise our kids in church so they can grow up perfect. We don't raise our kids in church because it magically makes them unable to sin or holier-than-thou.

We do, however, raise our kids in church so that WHEN they mess up and WHEN they fall short, they know just WHO to run to.

So they know that their Lord and Savior will NEVER leave nor forsake them no matter how big or small their mess up might be.

So they know their Heavenly Father will always leave the 99 if

they are that ONE that needs saving.

So they will know what grace is like and give it out freely.

So they will know the unconditional love of their Father and love those around them just the same regardless of anything else.

So they know that there is absolutely NOTHING in this world they could do that our Savior's blood hasn't already covered.

I will never apologize for raising my children in church.

I will never apologize for making sure our family makes church a priority.

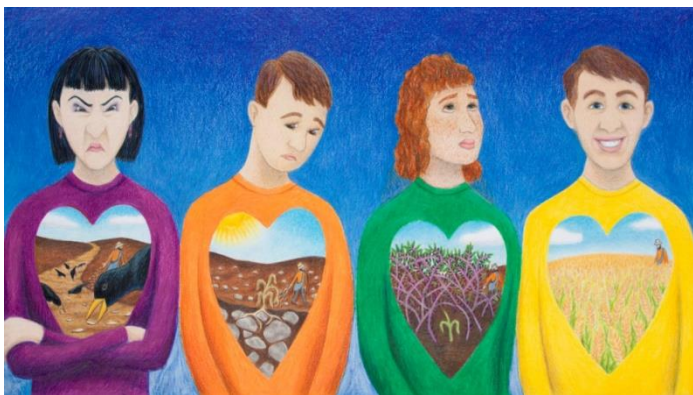
Because it's more than just a song and a sermon, it's more than just a memorized Bible verse in Sunday School. It's for when this cruel world we live in comes knocking on their door; they personally know the solid rock on which they stand. It's so they know there is nothing too dirty that He can't make worthy.



The Parable Of The Soils (Ken Weliever)

I grew up on a small farm in central Indiana. My Dad worked in the factory and we farmed as a sideline means to feed a few pigs and cows. And sometimes for a cash crop.

Farming sure has changed since the 1950s and '60s. We used a 2-row corn planter. Today corn planters can range in size from 6 rows to 48 rows. But imagine how farming has changed since Bible times?



In our passage today is another one of Jesus' agricultural parables. It is often called "The Parable of the Sower." But it could also be called "The Parable of the Soils." Some commentators have called it "the parable of parables." In one sense, it's like four parables in one. It is one of the few parables that Jesus explains the meaning of.

To refresh your memory, take a moment to read the text.

The parable highlights three paramount points. (1) The importance of hearing. The word

"hear" is used at least seven times in this text. Not just superficial hearing. But really listening. Apprehending. And absorbing. (2) "The seed is the Word of God." God's Word must be sown. And like the seed, there is life to reproduce. To procreate. To multiply. And bear fruit. (3) The success of sowing is not so much the sower and definitely not the seed. But it is the soil that is the heart of the hearer. This parable is all about hearts.

So, this raises four very important, personal, and relevant questions for each of us.

#1 Do you have a hard heart? Seed that falls on the wayside soil that is hardened and packed down will not produce anything. Like the birds of the air, the devil quickly comes and snatches away any chance of the seed germinating.

Honestly, the hard heart is difficult to understand. But some people, either through preconceived ideas, personal prejudices, or hurtful experiences, have an impenetrable heart. They are antagonistic or apathetic to the gospel message. Satan has removed any chance of the seed penetrating their heart.

#2 Do you have a shallow heart? This is represented by the seed falling on rocky ground. Like a plant that may bring up through the thin soil on the ground covered by limestone that soon withers because it cannot take root, so is

the one who doesn't grow spiritually and become "rooted and grounded in the faith."

We've all seen people excitedly obey the gospel. They are joyful. Maybe tearful. They seem genuinely converted. Then suddenly, they disappear. What happened? Their short-lived commitment could have been due to temptations, trials, or persecution from others.

#3 Do you have a crowded heart? This heart has enough soil to take root and grow. Yet, like the weeds in a field that overtake the plant, the Word is strangled and snuffed out. Why? Jesus offers three problems that are still issues today.

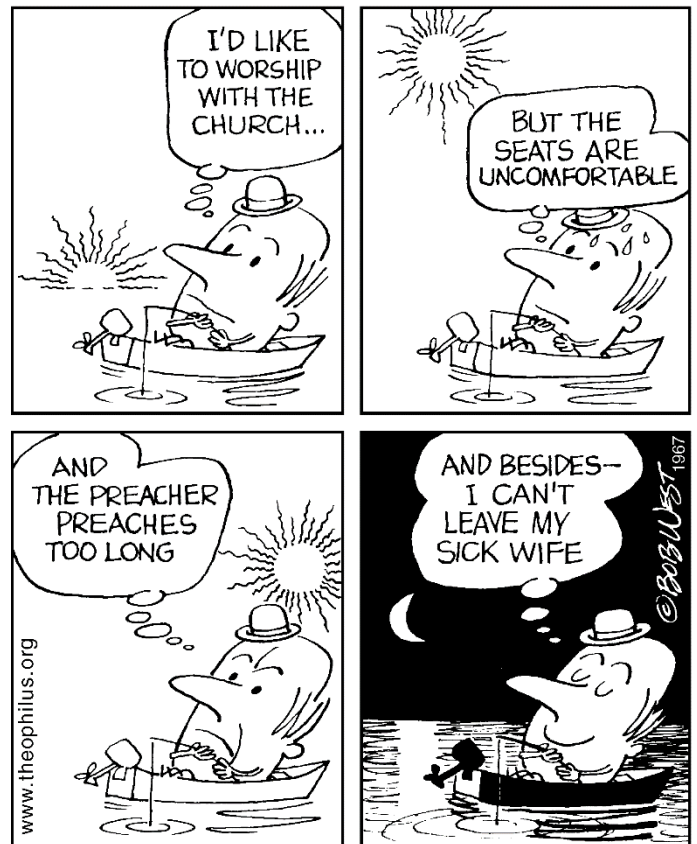
Cares. Excessive and inordinate anxiety or worry deprives the heart of the spiritual nourishment it needs. In His Mount Message, Jesus plainly says, "Don't worry about tomorrow." In it He says, "God will take care of you."

Riches. Wealth can be a wonderful servant, but it's a terrible master. We either control our money, or it controls us. How many have fallen away in the pursuit of material success? Wealth is not wrong. But when we trust in it and make it the center of our lives, then it will crowd out the Word.

Pleasures. Not all pleasure is sinful. There are diversions in life that bring us enjoyment, relaxation,

THEOPHILUS

Fishing for an Excuse



and satisfaction. However, an unhealthy obsession with pleasure can replace Bible study, prayer, worship, fellowship, and discipleship growth.

#4 Do you have a good and honest heart? The soil of this heart is fruitful. It receives the Word. Assimilates it. Applies it. And allows it to reproduce. Of course, not all soil produces the same amount of bushels per acre. Even among the good ground, some soil is richer and yields a greater crop.

The fruit of this soil may be seen in a godly life. In ministry. In evangelistic outreach. In discipleship growth. In warm fellowship. In character development. In charitable giving. And in heartfelt worship.

For evangelistic purposes, it's helpful to understand that not everyone responds the same way to the gospel. Not everyone accepted Jesus. Not everyone

obeyed the apostles' preaching. And not everyone will favorably respond today. Satan is always at work hardening hearts. Injecting obstacles. Introducing objections. Tempting with diversions. And testing with trials.

For each of us who desire to remain faithful, we must continually cultivate the soil of our hearts. Water it. Fertilize it. And hoe out the weeds.



There is one thing worse than not coming to church, and that is to come and do nothing about the message one hears. James tells us that hearing without doing means self-deception. (Vance Havner)

Seven Probing Questions To Ask Yourself (Selected)

1. Am I so critical that I see only a person's failures and not his good points?
2. Am I so childish that people must handle me gently lest I be offended?
3. Am I mature enough to handle hurts and disappointments without feeling mistreated and making everyone else miserable?
4. Do I hurt people while boasting, "I believe in saying what I think?"
5. Can I be completely trusted with confidential information?
6. Am I guilty of making sarcastic remarks about the success of others?
7. Am I big enough to admit when I am wrong, or do I seek to excuse myself by blaming others?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, you still have room for growth in your Christian life!

Brooksville Church of Christ

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Times of Services

Sunday Bible Class for all ages (10:00am)

Sunday Worship all Welcome (11:00am & 6:00pm)

Wednesday Bible Class for all ages (7:00pm)

Supporting the GOSPEL in other places:

☞ Jamey Hinds, Hollywood, Florida; Roy Fenner, Panama City, Florida

☞ Zeke Flores, Columbus, Texas; Philip North, Branson, Missouri

☞ The saints in Nicaragua

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