

## SERMON OUTLINE

**SERMON TITLE:** Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Matthew 13:1-22

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #2040

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this outline produced from a sermon preached by Adrian Rogers while serving as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. This outline is intended for your personal, non-commercial use.

In order to ensure our ability to be good stewards of Adrian Rogers' messages, Love Worth Finding has reserved all rights to this content.

Except for your personal, non-commercial use and except for brief quotations in printed reviews, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means –electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other– without the prior permission of the publisher.

Copyright ©2024 Love Worth Finding Ministries, Inc.

1) INTRODUCTION

- a) In many ways, the Bible is a love story, but it is also a mystery story.
  - i) There are mysteries that need to be discovered and unlocked.
- b) The Bible is not an open book to those who are the enemies of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
  - i) But it is plain and sweet to those who have certain mysterious truths revealed to them.
- c) The Bible is God's love letter to His children.
  - i) If we read it and don't understand it, then it is because we have been reading someone else's mail.
  - ii) It is a message written to a particular class of people.
- d) There are mysteries in the Word of God.
  - i) We cannot pry truth out of the Word of God.
  - ii) There are certain truths that have to be revealed to us.
- e) In Matthew 13, there are seven parables.
  - i) Jesus called these parables the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.
- f) The parable we will look at today deals with the seeming failure of the Gospel.
  - i) When we look at the world with its wickedness and the church with its weakness, failures, disappointments, and many times sin, we may have the idea that the Gospel is not all that it claims to be.
    - (1) We may think that perhaps the Gospel has failed.
  - ii) We look around, and there is disappointment.
    - (1) The disappointment causes doubt, and doubt causes despair.
  - iii) But when we study these seven parables, or mysteries, of the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven, we find that everything is exactly as God said it would be.
    - (1) And it will give rise to great faith in our hearts and in our lives.
- g) Jesus was the master teacher.
  - i) Nobody ever taught like the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (1) As a matter of fact, even His enemies had to say that no man ever spoke like this man.
      - (a) John 7:46
  - ii) Who could withstand the teaching of Jesus?
    - (1) Who could controvert, argue, or confuse Him?
    - (2) Yet, the Lord Jesus taught in such a way that little children could understand Him.
- h) There are several things we need to notice about the master teacher.
  - i) The method of His teaching:
    - (1) Matthew 13:1-3
      - (a) People crowded Him so much that He had to get into a boat and get a little way off shore so He could have room to speak.
    - (2) He spoke in parables.
      - (a) Matthew 13:10

- (b) The word “parable” reminds us of the word “parallel”.
  - (i) The two words are related.
  - (c) A parable is an earthly story that has a heavenly meaning.
- ii) The mystery of His teaching:
  - (1) Matthew 13:10-11
    - (a) There are some on the inside, and there are some on the outside.
  - (2) There is hidden truth in the Bible that cannot be known by human wisdom.
    - (a) Man’s wisdom and intellect are not enough.
    - (b) We cannot pry truth out of the Bible no matter how smart we are.
    - (c) There are some people to whom truth is given, and it is withheld from other people.
- iii) The motive of His teaching:
  - (1) Jesus wanted to reveal to them certain things.
    - (a) Matthew 13:12
      - (i) The Lord said that He was going to teach certain things to those who have certain things.
        - 1. He was letting them in on a secret.
      - (b) Jesus saw certain things in these people.
        - (i) They may have been tax collectors, fishermen, or ordinary people.
          - 1. But they had something on the inside.
          - 2. They had a desire to know truth.
            - a. Do you desire to know truth?
      - (c) Psalm 25:9
        - (i) The word “meek” means “teachable” and “guidable”.
          - 1. Are you teachable and guidable?
            - a. If you are, then God wants to share His sacred secrets with you.
    - (2) There are others who He is going to hide things from.
      - (a) Matthew 13:12-13
      - (b) Jesus spoke in parables to reveal and to conceal.
      - (c) Matthew 13:12 means, spiritually, that the rich get richer.
      - (d) Why spiritually do the rich get richer?
        - (i) In the material world, suppose you had two businesses that you invested in.
          - 1. One business immediately began to lose money and was mismanaged.
          - 2. The other business immediately began to grow and make money for you.
          - 3. You would then take the money you invested in the business that is losing money and put it in the business making money.

- a. You would give to him that hath; and to him that hath not, you would take away even what he has.
    - (ii) If someone doesn't have the drive or incentive to make that business work, then you would take what you have invested and invest it somewhere else.
  - (e) There is a truth about truth.
    - (i) If you don't use it, then you will lose it.
    - (ii) Truth is not something we can just put in our pocket and say, "Well, that is interesting."
      - 1. It is not meant to be interesting.
      - 2. It is meant to be disturbing enough that we will obey it.
        - a. We must use it.
    - (iii) Truth not used is taken away.
  - (3) To those who have, He is going to give more.
  - (4) To those who have not, He is going to take away even that which they have.
- i) Matthew 13 is the very first time Jesus used parables.
  - i) Jesus didn't come teaching in parables.
  - ii) He began to teach in parables at this stage.
- j) Why did Jesus teach in parables?
  - i) Matthew 12:24
    - (1) Hostility began to rise against the Lord Jesus Christ.
      - (a) The Pharisees began to criticize and to find fault.
  - ii) It was His righteous judgment.
    - (1) Matthew 7:6
    - (2) Jesus was not going to take the pearls of His truth and cast them before those who accused Him of having a demon.
    - (3) To those who want to know the truth, it is given.
    - (4) But to those who don't want to know the truth, He will take away even the so-called truth they think they have.
  - iii) He taught in parables, not merely to make it clear, but to also make it obscure.
- k) In today's message, we will look at the first of these seven sacred secrets.
  - i) This is one of the most prominent and well-known parables in all of the Bible.
  - ii) It is the Parable of the Sower.
    - (1) Matthew 13:3-9
      - (a) "Sowed" in this passage means that He was planting seed.
      - (b) Not everyone that day had ears to hear.
      - (c) But to those who can understand (those who have ears to hear), let them hear.
    - (2) We find three basic things in this parable:
      - (a) The seed
      - (b) The sower

(c) The soil

- (i) We will look at each of these three in today's message and ask ourselves the question, "Has the Gospel failed?"

2) THE SEED IS THE WORD OF GOD (MATTHEW 13:18-19)

- a) Matthew 13:3
- b) Matthew 13:18-19
  - i) The seed is the Word of the Kingdom.
    - (1) The Word of the Kingdom is the Bible.
- c) The Bible is like a seed because it has life.
  - i) 1 Peter 1:23
    - (1) The Bible is alive.
  - ii) Hebrews 4:12
    - (1) In this verse, the word "quick" is the word we get our word "zoology" from.
    - (2) The word "powerful" here is the word we get our word "energy" from.
  - iii) The Bible pulsates with life.
    - (1) It is not like any other book.
    - (2) There is power in the Word of God.
- d) The secret of a seed is that it germinates life.
  - i) John 6:63
- e) We can plow all we want, we can fertilize all we want, and we can irrigate all we want; but if we do not put a seed in, then we are not going to have a crop.
  - i) There are preachers who specialize in plowing, irrigation, and fertilizer, but they fail to put in the seed.
  - ii) It is not enough to till the soil.
    - (1) You have to sow the seed.
      - (a) Matthew 13:3
  - iii) A church that is not a Bible-preaching church is not going to grow and reproduce because the life comes from the seed.
  - iv) We will never be soul-winners without sowing the seed.
    - (1) There are many ways to do it.
    - (2) Pray that God will make you a seed-sower.
- f) The seed is the Word of God.

3) THE SOWER OF THE SEED IS JESUS CHRIST (MATTHEW 13:3)

- a) Matthew 13:3
- b) Matthew 13:37
  - i) The Son of Man was a term that Jesus used to describe Himself.
  - ii) Jesus called Himself the Son of Man because He was both God the Son and the God-Man.
    - (1) This was one of His favorite designations of Himself.
- c) Jesus Christ the sower is shown scattering seed with a lavish hand.
  - i) Matthew 13:3-8

- ii) He was not careful about the seed.
    - (1) Some seed fell on the worst sod.
    - (2) Some fell on stony ground.
    - (3) Some fell among thorns.
    - (4) Some fell on good ground.
  - iii) He scattered seed everywhere.
  - d) The Lord Jesus has taught us to do the same thing.
    - i) John 20:21
    - ii) As He is a sower, we also are to be sowers.
      - (1) He is our example.
    - iii) Begin to scatter seed everywhere.
  - e) We never know when the seed is going to sprout.
    - i) Don't be a soil tester as much as a seed sower.
    - ii) Many times, we think that our seed is going to bring forth fruit, and it does not.
    - iii) Sometimes, we think we are sowing on stony ground, thorny ground, hard ground, and shallow ground; yet, it brings forth fruit.
    - iv) The Bible says to watch and pray.
      - (1) Matthew 26:41
    - v) Just scatter the seed.
- 4) THE SOIL REPRESENTS THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE (MATTHEW 13:4-8)
- a) The main emphasis in this parable is on the soil.
  - b) There are four kinds of soil in this parable.
  - c) The soil represents the hearts of those who hear the Word.
    - i) Matthew 13:4-5
    - ii) Matthew 13:7-8
      - (1) In this passage, "good ground" represents those who hear.
    - iii) Matthew 13:15
      - (1) We sow the seed in people's hearts.
  - d) There are different kinds of hearts.
  - e) There are three basic reasons why a preacher can preach and no one responds, or why a soul winner can witness and no one responds to the witness.
    - i) The seed has no reception.
      - (1) Matthew 13:4
      - (2) Matthew 13:19
        - (a) Satan always attends church.
          - (i) He sends an emissary if he doesn't attend himself.
        - (b) When the seed is sown (the Word is preached) and someone's heart is a hard heart (a wayside heart), Satan comes like a bird and steals the seed right off the surface.

- (i) Because while the seed is being sown, their mind is on other things, such as what restaurant they are going to go to or all that they have to do tomorrow.
- (ii) Satan steals away the seed because the seed has no reception in their heart.
- (c) In Bible times, the wayside was what we would call today the sidewalk.
  - (i) It was packed down soil.
  - (ii) Many times, it was a path through a field or alongside of the field that had been trampled on.
    - 1. It had been trodden underfoot by this world until it became so hard that it was impenetrable.
- (3) The seed is the Word of God, and the sower is Jesus Christ Himself.
  - (a) There is nothing wrong with the seed.
  - (b) There is nothing wrong with the sower.
    - (i) But the heart is so hard that the seed has no reception.
      - 1. It cannot get in.
      - 2. There are many people like that.
        - a. Matthew 13:19
- (4) A person's heart can get hard.
  - (a) Hebrews 3:15
  - (b) Anything we do long enough, we get good at.
    - (i) If someone rejects the Gospel long enough, then he becomes a professional Gospel-rejecter.
  - (c) Some say that preachers don't preach like they used to, but some of them do.
    - (i) Some people just don't hear like they used to.
- (5) The Bible speaks of those whose conscience is seared with a hot iron.
  - (a) 1 Timothy 4:2
  - (b) There are services where the Holy Spirit of God moves like a fire across the congregation.
    - (i) But there are people who are not moved at all.
      - 1. They are not touched because the seed does not get in.
      - 2. Their hearts are hardened.
      - 3. They are like the wayside that has been trampled on.
  - (c) Hebrews 3:15
- (6) If you have any inclination to come to Jesus, then do it.
  - (a) Don't play with this thing called salvation.
  - (b) John 12:37-39
    - (i) Notice the sequence in this passage:
      - 1. At first, they would not believe.
      - 2. Then, they could not believe.
- ii) The seed has no root.
  - (1) The Word gets in, but it does not get down.

- (2) Matthew 13:5
    - (a) When the Bible says “stony places”, it does not mean soil with a lot of stones in it.
      - (i) It means soil that is shallow.
      - (ii) In Israel, there are great limestone ledges and limestone strata under the earth.
        - 1. There may only be a half inch of earth on top of solid rock.
          - a. That is what the Bible calls “the stony place”.
  - (3) The shallowness causes the seed to sprout.
    - (a) It is warm with the sun beating upon it.
    - (b) The seed is right on the surface.
    - (c) It springs up immediately.
  - (4) Matthew 13:6
    - (a) This seed had no root.
  - (5) Matthew 13:20-21
    - (a) There are shallow individuals who are living in the realm of emotion.
  - (6) Our emotions are the shallowest part of our nature.
    - (a) Salvation is the deepest work of God.
      - (i) God doesn’t do the deepest work in the shallowest part.
    - (b) Many times, people have an emotional spasm.
      - (i) They get into meetings, certain kinds of music, certain kinds of preaching, and so forth.
        - 1. They say, “Yes, I want to be a Christian.”
      - (ii) But let the sun get up, let tribulation come, persecution come, and they are gone.
        - 1. They did not lose their salvation.
          - a. They never had it.
          - b. The seed got in, but the seed did not get down.
    - (c) If your heart is a shallow part, then it will be scorched; and you will wither.
- iii) The seed has no room.
  - (1) Matthew 13:7
    - (a) In this verse, “choked them” literally means “it crowded them out”.
  - (2) Matthew 13:22
    - (a) Riches are deceitful.
    - (b) The seed could not get free.
      - (i) It was choked by all of these things.
  - (3) There was a rival crop.
    - (a) That rival crop was undisturbed, like many people.
      - (i) They just want to add Jesus Christ on.
      - (ii) They don’t want to make Jesus Christ all.
      - (iii) They want salvation as a byproduct.



- (b) The thorns, since the time of the Garden of Eden, represent that which is cursed.
  - (i) They represent sin.
- (c) Unless there is repentance, a person is not saved.
  - (i) Many people don't understand what repentance is.
    - 1. Repentance is not being broken over your sin.
    - 2. Repentance is being broken from your sin.
      - a. Matthew 1:21
  - (ii) Jesus didn't come to save us from Hell.
    - 1. He came to save us from sin.
    - 2. If He cannot save us from sin, then He cannot save us from Hell.
- iv) In each instance, there was nothing wrong with the sower and nothing wrong with the seed.
  - (1) We are to scatter the seed.
    - (a) We cannot take credit if the seed grows.
    - (b) We cannot take the blame.
    - (c) What we must do is to make certain we are teaching the Word of God.
- f) But there was a fourth kind of soil; and with this soil, there was no refusal.
  - i) The heart was open.
  - ii) Matthew 13:8-9
    - (1) This passage describes the open heart of someone with sincerity who hears the Word of God.
  - iii) The way to test your life as a Christian:
    - (1) Is there fruit in your life?
    - (2) Has your life been changed, or are you just a church member?
    - (3) Is the Bible real to you?
    - (4) Is there joy in the Holy Spirit?
    - (5) Is Christ Lord?
    - (6) Do you have a desire to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
    - (7) What right do you have to call yourself a follower of Jesus if the fruit of the Spirit is not there?
- g) Maybe you think that you are just bad soil, and it is not your fault.
  - i) The Bible teaches that the soil can do something about itself.
  - ii) Jeremiah 4:3
    - (1) Fallow ground is ground that hasn't been plowed or cultivated.
    - (2) God says to put the plow in and break it up.
      - (a) Get the thorns out; be willing to repent of your sin.
  - iii) Hosea 10:12
  - iv) You are not destined to go to Hell just because your heart is hard.
    - (1) Break up the soil.
      - (a) Psalm 51:17
- h) Ezekiel 3:7

- i) Ezekiel 2:5
- j) Whether they hear or whether they do not hear, it is not our business.
  - i) Our business is to scatter and sow the seed.
    - (1) Some will fall on hard ground (the wayside), and there is no reception.
    - (2) Some will fall on stony ground, and there is no root.
    - (3) Some will fall on thorny ground, and there is no room.
    - (4) But some will fall on good ground, and it brings forth fruit.

## 5) CONCLUSION

- a) Has the Gospel failed?
  - i) Absolutely not.
  - ii) There is nothing wrong with the seed.
  - iii) The problem is always the soil.
- b) When we have ears, He lets us hear and lets us understand.
- c) Why don't you break up your heart?
- d) Why don't you put the plow in, repent, and get the weeds out?
- e) Receive the Word, and ask the Lord Jesus to put the Gospel seed in your heart.
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16