



The Living God Ministries, Inc.

Montgomery & Spanish Fort, Alabama

September 6, 2019

Warm hellos to you dear brethren, co-workers and spiritual family here on the Coast of the Gulf of Mexico, and scattered children of God.

My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed!

Choices

I remember when our children still lived at home, one of the unique challenges we would face on occasion was when we made a decision to go out to eat for dinner.

The idea gained enthusiasm quickly, until we began to decide “where” would we go to eat?

Each person, and we were only 4, usually desired a different restaurant. It sometimes became quite involved. We simply had difficulty coming to consensus, sometimes then simply deciding to just stay home and eat dinner there.

Sound familiar?

We’ve been talking about the parables given by Christ in one of our nightly fellowships with the Living God Ministries. A fairly simple one came to mind.

I’m talking about *The Parable of the Sower and the Seed* found in Matthew 13. It talks about choices.

Christ spoke to the multitudes from a vessel on the water while they stood intently listening on the shore. Perhaps His voice carried better, or perhaps he was able to sit on a seat in the boat, we don’t know for sure.

In this parable what strikes me is that we see Christ illustrating how people make “choices” once they hear God’s Word explained to them.

Each person hears the Word of God. Then what happens?

There is a different response from these different types of people. Not unlike you and me. What’s interesting, is they individually respond differently after hearing God’s Word.

Christ helps us all by explaining what the parable means. A true teacher instructs us, and then clarifies to help us better understand, so we can in turn then teach and share with others.

He first explains the response that comes from a person whom God has not called yet. Matthew 13:19 *When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.* In all fairness to this person, they really never had a clue what they heard or read.

Christ then goes on to explain the other responses from those who did indeed understand His message because God had called them. Their eyes were obviously opened.

These responses showed that they indeed grasped the meaning and understood what our Savior was teaching. But, they made different choices with their responses, and for very different reasons as well.

Notice verses 20-21 *But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.*

So at first this person is joyful to receive Christ's Words. However, but it does not root itself deeply, or sink in, and the joy only lasts for a little while. He's a real spark, maybe even talking about his new found truth with many. His enthusiastic response soon though becomes quenched, flickers out, and is gone. Why we might ask?

Peer pressure perhaps from those around him? He focuses more on pleasing people around him than his Creator, God. We don't want to unsettle anyone, and definitely not offend others we might conclude.

Why my neighbors or co-workers or family might not agree or like what I am doing, and I sure don't want to be considered weird now do I? What will others think? Are there many out there who believe like I do? Doesn't seem like it.

To avoid being uncomfortable or standing out as "different" he simply rejects what God has called him to do, and he rejects the change of life it involves. He goes about his business.

Let's notice verse 22 *Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.*

Here we see someone who has a little different perspective. He or she is not really concerned about the opinions of others around him or her.

But he or she does have a different problem. This person refuses to put God first, above all else in their life. An all too common flaw for all of us if we are not careful to stay tuned in to God.

Matthew 6:33 admonishes us all pretty succinctly. Jesus also said in Matthew 22:37 "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

This person becomes distracted with the daily cares of this life, and puts his own needs first. He might desire to have a certain standard of living, social status, feeling welcomed and comfortable by those who he has become accustomed to that think like he does, and are his friends.

He's become quite busy taking care of his own needs and rejecting what God has asked him to do.

He's too busy to make time for a relationship with God, and thereby rejects the calling.

Now let's notice verse 23 *But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

Ah! Now we see a person who understands God's Word thanks to the opening of his mind by God, begins to live it, and as he bears fruit, produces Godly fruit and changes to what God desires him to be, bit by bit, growing.

Each person then produces to various degrees based on multiple factors unique to each of us and our talents and yielding to God.

This individual takes this calling and responding by choice sincerely, and soberly. He puts what he now understands into practice, not just by his words but by action and deeds and from the heart.

He sees his life begin to change in a very real tangible way!

Now, here is the important part. Of all the examples and choices made, only this person is chosen by God for salvation. Yes, here God Himself makes a choice.

He makes a choice to place God first as focus in his life. Period. He also makes a commitment to his Maker, and holds fast to and keeps it. He does not quit, or give up when faced with adversity, challenges or difficulty.

You see friends, the choices we make are important! What restaurant we choose to dine in with family is not necessarily a spiritual choice. But the choice we make in response to God's calling is important. Will we make the right choice? That is all up to you.

...as I close this letter, as I do every Friday evening...as we enter His Sabbath...reflect on this with me, will you?

And again, may God continue to richly bless you. Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.

-**Scott Hoefker** (Pastor and wife (Gayle) The Living God Ministries Gulf Coast)

The schedule for this week's Sabbath is:

September 6th / Friday: Gifts for the Lord/ Praises/Gifts and Prayers to welcome God's Sabbath 7:00 pm (via Teleconference live connect with Stephen Glover and Friends.)

September 7th / Saturday: Spirit and Truth Worship Services 10:15 am, with local services held in Montgomery with the message by Whit Moorner. (All others are welcomed and encouraged to connect live to Worship Services via our normal phone conference).

Local services for Spanish Fort this Sabbath will *combine* in Mobile with the *Church of God Mobile, Sabbath Day* starting at 10:00 a.m. A potluck noon meal will follow.

September 7th / Saturday: Sabbath Fellowship Study (Interactive Bible Discussion) **4:00 pm** from Montgomery. (Connecting live with all others via telephone conference).

Next Sabbath's Schedule:

September 13th / Friday: Gifts for the Lord/ Praises/Gifts and Prayers to welcome God's Sabbath 7:00 pm (via Teleconference live connect) with Stephen Glover and friends.

September 14th / Saturday: Spirit and Truth Worship Services 10:15 a.m., with local services held in Montgomery with the message by Scott Hoefker (All are welcome and encouraged to connect live to Worship Services via our normal phone conference). There will be no local Sabbath Services for our congregation in Spanish Fort this Sabbath.

September 14th / Saturday: Sabbath Fellowship (interactive Bible Discussion) 4:00 pm *from* Montgomery with Stephen Glover (connect live to all others via telephone conference).

September 14th / Saturday: Board Meeting of the LGM at 7:00 p.m. after sunset.

Telephone Ministry (English): Call **1-712-770-4700**; then, when asked, enter Code **112165 #** to join.
(Note: All callers are muted and must press *6 to comment and *6 to resume mute.)
All times are listed in Central Standard Time zone.

Our Daily Bread Recordings

Sunday through Saturday / Our Daily Bread [listen anytime 24/7 to a recorded 15 minute message] Call 1-712-770-4709 (note this call in number is different and ends in "9"), then when asked, enter code 112165# [reference code numbers are on "Spiritual Fellowship Opportunities" on this website <http://www.tlgministriesgc.org> or at "Resources/Archives" on <http://www.haggai114.net>]

Daily Fellowship Opportunities

Sunday – Friday / **Morning Sacrifice** (Prayers & Scripture Reading) at 6:00 a.m.
Sundays / **History & Background of the Gospels** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Scott & Friends]
Mondays / Africa Discipleship at 7:00 a.m. [Glovers & Moses]
Almond Branch Fellowship at 6:30 p.m. (Interactive) (Stephen & Friends)
Tuesdays / **Haggai Fellowship** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. (Interactive) [Stephen & Friends]
Wednesdays / Africa Discipleship at 7:00 a.m. [Glovers & Moses]
1st & 3rd Wednesday / **Sons of God Fellowship** (Young men training) at 6:30 p.m. [Stephen & Friends]
2nd & 4th Wednesday / **Lydian's Fellowship** (Ladies) at 6:30 p.m. [Esther/Gayle & Friends]
Thursdays / **Mt. Carmel Fellowship** (Interactive) at 6:30 p.m. [Hoefkers & Friends]

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