

Why Some Are More Spiritual Than Others

~Other Speakers G-L: John Hames:

"But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold" (Matt. 13:8).

Jesus here compares the willing, responsive heart to grain sown in good soil. How simple and yet suggestive are all of the parables of the Savior.

You will notice that the good seed in good ground did not all yield the same amount of grain, but varied considerably.

In this chapter I shall attempt to explain to the convert why some Christians are more spiritual than others.

There are but few people who realize the fact that there is a vast difference between spiritual fruit and gifts. A person may be endued with the gift of faith, the gift of wisdom, the gift of discernment and many others, and yet be greatly wanting in love, joy, peace, etc., etc. It is often the case that a humble laundress or scrub girl brings forth more of the fruit of the Spirit than a great speaker or gifted theologian.

In closely observing the text, you will notice the cause of this unequal grain bearing was neither in the ground nor the seed. The text infers that both the seed and the ground were good. However, we must all frankly admit that there was a cause for this shortage somewhere. We must also relieve our minds of the thought that the Lord of the harvest was as well pleased with this shortage as He was with the hundredfold grain. No farmer is as much delighted with the short nubbins of corn, small potatoes and dwarfed pumpkins as he is with the well developed ones. Of course, he makes himself satisfied, but he would rather they had all been large, well-developed ones.

Now in order to fully obtain the truth right here, it will be necessary for us to briefly paraphrase a field, and thus become familiar ourselves with some of the conditions and environments which frequently dwarf good seed in good ground. By this method I believe we will be more capable of grasping the simple truth contained in the lesson.

The first thing that will affect grain or vegetables planted in good ground is, the shade of a tree. We have all, no doubt, noticed, while in the country, how slender and dwarfed the grain, potatoes and vegetables were which grew under a tree. The cause for this was that the tree prevented them from getting the full benefit of the sun. In the Christian life, while some people are extremely devout, conscientious and careful, there are others who allow themselves to be brought under the influence of some apparently innocent thing or practice which keeps their sun of joy about half eclipsed all the time. Just as the grain under the tree fails to get any thing but the morning and evening sun, just so these souls fail to live beneath the meridian blaze of the joy and peace that crowns a fully abandoned life.

The first way we will notice in which one's life can become shaded and dwarfed is, by trimming too close to worldliness and shallow religion. Yet another way is by making a few hasty moves or speaking a few rash, hasty words, and thereby getting out of immediate touch with God. So many times workers have been out of touch on this line, and thereby let many an opportunity of doing good slip by. Perhaps an opportunity to pray

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some soul through or give a timely word of encouragement, but as they were dry, beclouded and tied up in their own soul, the opportunity was lost forever. Oh, dear one, always keep out into the clear, undimmed favor of God! Do not allow any person or thing in any way shade your life.

The next thing that will dwarf vegetation in even good ground is to not keep it frequently bugged and wormed. Sometimes one-fourth of a farmer's crop is lost in this way. So is it in the spiritual life, where some of God's children are ever open to new light, and ready to lay aside anything which may be found a hindrance to their spiritual progress, though ever so small; there are others who do not give up things so cheerfully nor are they so willing to lay aside "every weight." Dear convert, if you would be a well-developed Christian, bringing forth "the hundredfold" fruit, you must hold frequent self-examination and thus keep the bugs and worms from devouring your spiritual life and dwarfing your soul.

Not being deeply cultivated is sometimes the cause of a blasted crop. Oftentimes during dry times when the farmer fails to get rain, he finds it necessary to cultivate his corn deeply and thus give it moisture. The principal reason why we have so many tame, shallow mamby-pamby holiness professors today, and such few with a deep, rich experience, is because of the large percentage of shallow preaching they receive. In order to have a crop of Christians after the order of Paul, Wesley, Fletcher and others, it will be necessary to have the same "gospel plow" preaching Â– something that will plow the people up from (a) to (z). O Lord, send us some more of that class of preaching that will at one time make us feel that we are in hell in a lake of fire and at another that we are in heaven upon the streets of gold! Many converts have been instructed to avoid deep preaching, close class meeting and that class of workers who go deep and plow through; but I declare unto you, reader if you want an experience that will stand the wear and tear of earth and hell and mount up to glory to live with God forever, you will have to be plowed deep.

Misappropriated fertilizer will sometimes cause grain and vegetation, even in good ground, to become unfruitful. Just as the farmer has various kinds of fertilizer to refresh and hasten the growth of his grain and vegetation, so has the Lord. Whenever He wishes to develop our prayer life, He puts on the fertilizer of pressure and opposition. When He desires to increase and strengthen our faith, He apparently leaves us in the dark for a while. If He wishes to increase power, He puts us under a long fast. If He wishes to wean us more thoroughly from our friends and loved ones, He will incense them against us and stir them up to persecute us. If He desires to increase our humility and give us a sweeter and more gentle and tender spirit, He will put on the fertilizer of voiceless grief and tears. If we humbly receive it without murmuring or chafing, we will receive a deeper and richer experience, but if we yield to a complaining, pining spirit, we will thwart God's plan and thereby lose in our souls. Reader, let us aim, not only to bring forth thirtyfold and sixtyfold, but a hundredfold to the glory and praise of His precious name.