

Elder Ronnie Loudermilk



Hearing The Preached Word (part 1)

Matthew 13:3-4, "And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up:"

The Parable of the Sower has received diverse interpretations through the generations of Christianity. Many Bible students have set forth efforts to declare what the focus of this Parable is/was. When comparing the Gospel of Matthew with the words of Jesus recorded by Luke, we are forced to take one of two positions on what this parable is teaching. Luke 8:12 says, "Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." This one verse will force the reader to conclude one of two things. Either the gospel is instrumental in regeneration (new birth), or there is a temporal deliverance for the saved (born again) in hearing and taking heed to the gospel ("lest they should believe and be saved"). I whole heartedly ascribe to the 2nd. The gospel in no way or form is part of the eternal salvation of God's people. The children of God are all saved the same way, by grace and grace alone. The gospel is the good news of the perfect, finished work of Jesus Christ and the instruction for the lives of God's children in this temporal world. The devil has no power to hinder or thwart the work of God's eternal salvation, but knoweth that he hath but a short time to separate the children of God from a temporal fellowship (in this world) with their Father in heaven (Revelation 12:12).

In the verses previously cited, we read about the sower (the one who preaches the word), who sowed, and "some seeds fell by the way side". The "way side" is the path around, and even through, the garden where the workers would walk. These paths were beaten down and the earth was compressed by the footsteps of all those who walked thereupon. This ground was hardly ready to receive seeds as it would be considered unprepared earth. The seeds that fell upon these areas would sit on top of this unprepared ground waiting, as easy prey, for the fowls of the air to pluck them away. This ground would then represent a child of God who has not prepared himself/herself to receive the preached word. You may ask yourself, "How can I prepare myself to hear and receive the preached word?" The answer is simple! By prayer, study, meditation and an obedient life to the commands of God. Every child of God should consider the importance of the gospel to them. The Spirit empowered gospel of Jesus Christ is both spiritual food and daily instruction for the child of grace who hears. Since the gospel carries with it this much importance for us, we should carefully consider preparing ourselves to hear it by breaking up the fallow ground of our lives (Jer 4:3; Hos 10:12) and humbly receive the Words of God. Amen!