

## Elder Ronnie Loudermilk



### Hearing The Preached Word (part 4)

Matthew 13:8-9, "But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirty fold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Thus far, in this parable told by the Lord, we have considered the unprepared hearer (wayside), the temporary hearer (stony places) and a worldly hearer (among thorns). Now, in the verses previously cited, we find fruitful hearers. This hearer, as described by the Lord in this portion of God's Holy Word, should be the goal of every person who claims to be a believer in Jesus Christ their Savior. And the question would then arise, "How can I labor in going forward/toward the goal?" As an answer to this question, I would ask the reader to consider the following:

(1) In Matthew 13:9 we read, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." The emphasis in this verse is taking heed that you hear. In Mark 4:24 we read, "Take heed what you hear:..." In Luke 8:18 we read, "Take heed therefore how ye hear:..." The three gospel writers, who are always in harmony, record the parable slightly different and yet have the same theme, Use Your God Given Ears! How many of us fail to give the hearing ear that we have, by grace, to the teaching of God's Word. Jesus said we should take heed that we hear, what we hear, and how we hear. By doing so, we will be fruit bearers in His service.

(2) James 1:19-25, being a doer of the word and not a hearer only! For any person to be a doer of the word, he/she must first take heed in hearing. The child of grace who will give his/her ear to the preached word and labor to live by it, according to James 1:25, "shall be blessed in his deed." James teaches us in 1:21 to "lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." James, in this verse of scripture, is calling on the born again child of grace (grafting is done from life to life, not life to death) to separate themselves from an ungodly, worldly lifestyle and give their ears to the instruction of God's Word, which will provide a temporal salvation to the doer of the word.

(3) The first three represented in the parable! The parable describes to us those who need to plow up the ground (unprepared hearer, wayside); those who need to break up the ground of stony hearts (temporary hearer who is soft toward the persecutions of the world, but hard toward the commands of God, stony places); and those who need to hoe out the ground (among thorns). We should receive this instruction and plow up the ground of our lives; break up the stony places in our hearts; and hoe out the cares of this world, that we may be fruitful hearers of the word.

Finally, in closing, I would ask the reader to consider a verse of scripture that exhorts and convicts me as much as any other in God's Word. Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Amen!