

MESSAGE 2:

THE ENEMY OF THE SEED

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Luke 8:4-12 (NASB)

⁴ When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: ⁵ "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled underfoot and the birds of the air ate it up. ⁶ Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. ⁸ Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." ⁹ His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable meant. ¹⁰ And He said, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. ¹¹ "Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. ¹² Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved."

MESSAGE GOAL: The goal of this message on *The Enemy of the Seed* is to identify the tactics used by Satan to hinder the spiritual growth and transformation of the soul God wants to occur, even in the seed of the gospel message that has been sown in the "wayside" soil of the human soul.

INTRODUCTION: If your vision is distorted, everything you see is unclear. If things are unclear, you need something to clarify what you're seeing. You need assistance with your vision so that you can see things clearly. You may not realize that things are unclear until you put glasses on and begin to see things clearly for perhaps the first time.

Jesus' parable in Luke 8 makes it inextricably clear that in order for the Word of God to do its work in our lives, the soil of our hearts must be ready to receive it. The seed is flawless, but if the soil is not conducive to its growth, the person will never see what the seed was designed to accomplish.

We are made up of three parts: body, soul, and spirit. Your spirit is that part of you that allows you to communicate with

God. It is the signal that allows you to enter into the unseen spiritual realm in which God operates. If you are living in defeat and not living in victory, the parable makes it clear that the problem is with your soil, your spiritual receiver, so to speak. Everything that the seed is designed to become is resident within it, but it must have the right location to grow.

In verse 12, Jesus introduced us to Satan, our archenemy, who is standing ready to snatch away the seed of the gospel that was sown so that the person goes nowhere spiritually. Satan knows that if the Word of God ever gets implanted in the right soil, he can't stop it. So he wants to keep the Word from getting to where God wants it to go. Satan's job is to keep the seed of the Word from germinating. Jesus said Satan does this by taking away the seed sown on the soil by the road or wayside.

Wayside soil was not ground the farmer plowed and prepared for the seed. It was where people walked, the hard, densely packed earth along the road or well-worn path. The difference between the good soil and the wayside soil is the difference between your lawn and your sidewalk. The sidewalk is far too hard for good seed to grow in it. In Jesus' parable, this soil represents people whose hearts and souls are hardened and unreceptive to the seed of God's Word. These people may be exposed to the Word, even on a regular basis. They are those who hear but don't listen—who hear, but don't care.

When Mark tells this story in Mark 4, he adds that when Satan comes and takes the Word from a hardened heart, he does it "immediately." The reason Satan needs to move in quickly is to get the seed before there is a change in the soil. He does not want this soil to become soft, because if the soil becomes soft, it might open up to the seed. He must get the seed while it is on the wayside.

If Satan didn't get to you in time because you're saved, then he wants to keep the seed that has been sown in your spirit from growing into a mature, victorious life.

our society's problem
is not solely our *government's* problem.
it is **the church's** problem.
it is *our* problem.



SERMON POINTS:

1. IF WE DO NOT USE IT, WE WILL LOSE IT:

The seed of God's Word must be cultivated or it will be snatched away by Satan

- A hardened soul and refusal to hear God's point of view makes a person worse off than if he had never heard it at all
- When there is no growth due to hardness, what little the hardened person has will be taken away

It is possible even for saved people to become hardened and allow Satan to steal the seed

- It is possible for someone to hear God's Word and yet regress spiritually (James 1:21)
- The devil wants to keep the seed of God's Word from taking root in the soil (John 10:10)

2. THE GROWTH PROCESS REQUIRES TIME AND PATIENCE:

All truth comes to us in seed form

- When we hear God's Word, we are hearing it in a way that is not yet developed
- In order for the seed to become developed, there must be a growth process; we cannot get the product of spiritual maturity without going through the process

3. WE NEED TO REACH CHILDREN WHILE THEY ARE YOUNG AND OPEN TO CHRIST:

We need to be diligent in instilling God's Word in young hearts

- This is why parents should seek to lead their children to Christ early
- The secular culture wants to harden children, and will if given enough time

Sometimes we have to pray difficult prayers for those whose hearts have become hard

- To be hard spiritually means to resist God
- When that happens, it means the devil can quickly rein this person in; we need to pray that God will break up the hard soil, which can be painful

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

DISTORTED VISION:

A man once got glasses for the first time and said he was shocked at how clear things were. He had gotten so used

to having a distorted view of everything that a distorted view looked normal to him. But when he got his glasses, he saw things as they were really meant to be seen. It was like seeing things in high definition (HD). We all know about HD. It is normal today to request or even require HD in order to get a sharp picture on our televisions so we can see the idiosyncrasies and expressions on a person's face and see clearly all the details in the background scenery. We are born with distorted souls, yet it is God's desire for us to have an HD experience with Him, one where the color is sharp and clear and the picture is not full of ambiguity. The soul needs something to look through in order to clarify reality, because you can get so used to not seeing clearly that you think not seeing is seeing clearly!

CLASS EXPERIMENT:

Most of us had the chance early in our school days to plant a seed in a cup and then watch it grow. The teacher usually did that to illustrate the growth process of a flower or something else. But because as children we didn't understand the seed principle, we would plant something and then run to see it the next day, expecting the thing to have grown up overnight into a full plant. It was hard to be patient and wait for the seed to take root. Too many Christians are like that in their spiritual lives. They want the product, the blessing, of the seed without having to go through the process of development. People who look for instant maturity will be disappointed, just as school kids are disappointed when the seed in their cup doesn't sprout overnight.

BACKGROUND BIBLICAL HISTORY AND CULTURE:

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM:

This term refers to the one-thousand year rule of Christ when He comes back a second time to establish His throne, defeat His enemies, and rule from the city of Jerusalem. Various Old Testament prophets, Isaiah in particular, pictured an ideal age when a child would be able to play freely with a poisonous snake, and the lion and the lamb would lie down together in peace. They were describing the millennial age when Christ will rule in perfect righteousness. The millennial kingdom is described in Revelation 20:1-3, and Revelation 19 makes it clear that we as the body of Christ in this age will return with Him and rule with Him in His glorious kingdom.

**our mission field is not merely across the sea.
it is across the street.**



SERMON LINES:

This message will help the audience grasp the importance of preparing the soil of their hearts so that the seed of God's Word does not fall on hardened soil where it cannot grow.

This message will also help people understand that as believers we have a dangerous, relentless enemy in Satan who is determined to steal the seed and ruin us spiritually in any way he can, just as he tripped up our first parents in the Garden of Eden.

QUOTES BY DR. TONY EVANS:

"A refusal to obey God's point of view makes you worse off than if you hadn't heard it at all, because even that which you have will be taken away. So you can actually hear God's Word and regress; you can get worse having heard God's Word if there is a hardened heart."

"If you come to church or wherever you're hearing the Word and there is not an openness of the soul to receive it, you have told the devil, 'Get here quick, because I'm giving you the right to snatch away what I just heard.'"

"You've seen hard people. In fact, now it's cool to be hard. Well, to be hard spiritually means to resist God, and to do that means that the devil can quickly rein you in."

