



FRANKLIN ROAD

baptist church

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NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 7, 2017

ARE WE UP FOR IT?

PASTOR ANDY JOHNSTON

IN SUNDAY SCHOOL WE HAVE BEEN GOING THROUGH MANY OF THE PARABLES AND THE LAST FEW WEEKS WE HAVE BEEN STUDYING "THE SOWER" FROM MATTHEW 13:1-23. THE FOUR TYPES OF SOIL IN THIS PASSAGE ARE OBVIOUS TO US (THIS IS WHY THEY MAKE GREAT OBJECT LESSONS), BUT THERE IS AN INTERESTING BLOCK OF DIALOGUE (VV. 10-13) THAT CHRIST DELIVERS TO THE DISCIPLES AFTER HE TALKS ABOUT THE FOUR SOILS:

¹⁰ AND THE DISCIPLES CAME AND SAID TO HIM, "WHY DO YOU SPEAK TO THEM IN PARABLES?" . . . I SPEAK TO THEM IN PARABLES; BECAUSE WHILE SEEING THEY DO NOT SEE, AND WHILE HEARING THEY DO NOT HEAR, NOR DO THEY UNDERSTAND.

LIKE MANY TODAY, THOSE TWO-THOUSAND YEARS AGO HAD AN IDEA OF WHO THE COMING MESSIAH WOULD BE. THEY WOULD REMEMBER SUCH PASSAGES AS DANIEL 2:35 THAT SAYS,

³⁵ THEN THE IRON, THE CLAY, THE BRONZE, THE SILVER AND THE GOLD WERE CRUSHED ALL AT THE SAME TIME AND BECAME LIKE CHAFF FROM THE SUMMER THRESHING FLOORS; AND THE WIND CARRIED THEM AWAY SO THAT NOT A TRACE OF THEM WAS FOUND. BUT THE STONE THAT STRUCK THE STATUE BECAME A GREAT MOUNTAIN AND FILLED THE WHOLE EARTH.

THEY WERE RIGHT TO BELIEVE THAT THIS "STONE" WAS THE MESSIAH THAT THEY LONGED FOR, BUT THEY WERE DEEPLY WRONG IN HOW & WHEN HE WOULD ACCOMPLISH THIS. THEY HAD WRONGLY INTERPRETED A PASSAGE BECAUSE THEY IMPARTED THEIR OWN MISGUIDED IDEAS INTO IT.

AS WE KNOW, THEY WANTED THE HOSANNA NOW; BE THE ALEXANDER THE GREAT WE ALL DESIRE. THEY WISHED AND BELIEVED HIM TO BE SOMETHING HE WAS NOT (OF COURSE NOT YET). THIS WAS THEIR HINDRANCE; NOT UNDERSTANDING WHO HE WAS AND WHAT HE WAS TEACHING THEM. THEY HAD A PRECONCEIVED IDEA OF WHO THEY THOUGHT HE SHOULD BE.

THIS IS WHY THEY CAN LOOK RIGHT AT HIM (SEE) AND LISTEN TO HIS TEACHINGS (HEAR), AND NOT KNOW WHO HE IS (THIS WAS PROPHESED BY ISAIAH 6:9-10). THEY HAD NO IDEA THAT WHEN HE TAUGHT, HE WAS TEACHING THEM ABOUT HIMSELF AND HIS UNIQUE MINISTRY. THEY COULD NOT UNDERSTAND IT BECAUSE THEY WERE LOOKING FOR THEIR OWN WANTS AND DESIRES.

NOT MUCH HAS CHANGED TODAY. PEOPLE REFUSE (THE HARD SOIL), WITHER AWAY (ROCKY SOIL), AND SOMETIMES GET TAKEN OVER (WEEDY SOIL), BECAUSE OF A MISGUIDED IDEA OF WHO JESUS CHRIST REALLY IS.

I BELIEVE THE CHURCH IN AMERICA TODAY COULD BE DANGEROUSLY RESIDING IN THE WEEDY SOIL. WE HAVE SO MANY DIFFERENT WEEDS THAT WE CAN ALLOW TO TAKE OVER OUR LIVES THAT IT IS HARD TO ACTUALLY DIFFERENTIATE WHAT IS MORALLY GOOD AND RIGHTEOUS. WE ARE CALLED TO BE CHILDREN OF GOD ABOVE REPROACH IN THE MIDST OF A CROOKED AND PERVERSE GENERATION, AMONG WHOM YOU APPEAR AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD (PHIL 2:15B).

CHRIST IS THE SOWER BUT HE HAS ISSUED US TO GO (MATT 28:19-20) INTO THE WORLD AND BE A LIGHT, ACCURATELY HANDLING HIS WORD (II TIM 2:15), AND ALWAYS READY TO MAKE A DEFENSE IN HIS NAME (I PETER 3:15).

LET US PRAY THAT THROUGH THE SPIRIT (ALWAYS THROUGH THE SPIRIT) WE DESIRE TO BE USED SO THAT OTHERS CAN ACCURATELY SEE AND HEAR THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST. FOR THIS TO HAPPEN WE MAY NEED TO WEED A LITTLE. ARE WE UP FOR IT?