



*Sermon Series--Crop Failure
Part One—Lack of Preparation
Matthew 13:3-23*

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Objective Sentence: Everyone can avoid crop failure by not making three mistakes associated with crop failure.

Introduction One: Eileen Ruth Borg was born March 29, 1922 [she is the grandmother of Austin Ruth]. In the early part of 2013 this 91 year old lady, the daughter of a Methodist Minister, she knew her demise was near and she needed to get her house [spiritual life] in order. Nancy Chapin and I went to her home and baptized Eileen at her kitchen sink (**Mark 16:15-16**). Miss Eileen wanted to give me a gift as a token of her gratefulness; so I loaded up a small lemon tree she gave me planted it in my back yard. Eileen died a few months after she was baptized [December 2, 2013] but the lemon tree lived in her memory for three years. It produced about twenty lemons in 2014 and at least that many in 2015 but in the early part of 2016 it died—I killed it accidentally of course. The reason it died was because I put too much fertilizer on it. So I took the life of an innocent tree because I was ignorant of the **soil** in which it was planted, I was ignorant of the **trees need** and I was also ignorant of the fertilizer used.

Read Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23 NKJV Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: “Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸ But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears to hear, let him hear. ¹⁸ “Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only

for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. (**Lack of Preparation, Dedication, Cultivation**)

- #1 Lack of Preparation** (*Matthew 13:19* When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away [the seed that] was sown in his heart. This is he who received **seed** by the wayside.)
- A. Paul George:** *The Wayside hearers are the ones where seed was sown beside the road. The heart of these persons are compared to a public highway hardened by the constant traffic of the world (1 John 2:15-17). Here, the heart is unresponsive and unreceptive. If there is no humbling of the heart before God, no seeking wisdom from above, there will be no “understanding” of the Word; and the Devil will “catch away” what we have heard or read.*
- 1. Preparation is a Lifelong Process** (*Pastor Dan:* Preparation is a lifelong process that must continue through every season of our lives.)
- a. **Hosea 10:12** Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD, till He comes and rains righteousness on you.
 - b. **Wayside Soil:** Strongs (hod-os) and (Websters) defines *wayside soil* as the soil that has not been prepared for planting. The wayside is a road; route, or highway; the edge of the road, or an area close to side of the road.
 - c. **Pastor Dan:** A field that is not prepared for planting will not yield. Some believe that their spiritual life is going to just happen without any effort on their part. God has given us a body that we must nurture, a mind that we feed and a heart that we must develop.
 - d. **Scriptures for Reference:** **Matthew 5:5; 6:33; 11:28-30; John 7:37-38**
 - e. **Eerdmans:** Seed spread on an unprepared field becomes food for rodents.
 - f. **Luke 22:28-32** And the Lord said to Simon, “Simon! Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift *you* as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to *Me*, strengthen your brethren.
 - g. **Pastor Dan:** If you don’t do any work in your garden than you will get nothing out of it. If you fail to work the field of your heart than you will not get a harvest.
 - h. **1 Peter 5:5-8** Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. ⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. ⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (**Luke 10:19** I give you power ... over all the power of the enemy.)

Closing and Invitation: **Isaiah 55:5-11** **Seek the LORD** while He may be found, **call upon Him** while He is near. ⁷ **Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return** to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. ⁸ “For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor *are* your ways My ways,” says the LORD. ⁹ “For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. ¹⁰ “For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and

bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹ so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.