

# Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. It is an honor to have you worshipping with us today! This information is provided to help you feel welcome and "at home."

## Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship some people remain seated, some stand, others kneel, many clap, and some lift their hands. The outward expression is not the issue - it is what is in your heart that counts. Just relax and enjoy the presence of God.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

## Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

## Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

---

We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

{turn page over}

Pastor Bob Wine

July 19, 2009

## GOD WEARS CAMOUFLAGE

Matthew 13:1-23 (Mark 4:1-20, Luke 8:4-15)

- Many can't see God in life unless they know what they are looking for. **1 Corinthians 2:14 (BBE)** "the natural man is not able to take in the things of the Spirit of God: for they seem foolish to him, and he is not able to have knowledge of them, because such knowledge comes only through the Spirit."
- Why would God want to camouflage Himself when He wants to be close friends with every person? ... because God is a **gentleman**.
- The same light that inspires the birds to start to sing also causes rats to hide.
- The hungry person will "sing" and seek for more truth.
- It's God's normal style to require us to seek to know His truth. **Isaiah 44:3** "I will pour water on him who is thirsty..."  
**Jeremiah 29:13** "You will **seek me** and find me when you seek me with all your heart."  
**Matthew 5:6** "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."
- There is rich gold buried in the "mountains" of the **Bible**; and unless you take time to mine it out by study and reflection, you may even be bored reading it!  
**Matthew 13:3-9 (NLT)** 3... "Listen! A farmer went out to plant **some seeds**. 4 As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a **footpath**, and the birds came and ate them. 5 Other seeds fell on **shallow soil** with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. 6 But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died. 7 Other seeds fell **among thorns** that grew up and choked out the tender plants. 8 Still other seeds fell on **fertile soil**, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! 9 Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand."

## TRUTH IN A CAMOUFLAGED STORY

- Jesus uses seed and four types of soil to illustrate a **spiritual principle**.  
**Luke 8:10** "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables ..."

**- Digging Deeper -  
"God Wears Camouflage"**

For personal or small group study

Week of July 19, 2009

---

- Jesus explained in Matthew 13:19 that the seed in the parable represented the teachings about **God's Kingdom** -- the message Jesus preached the most.

### THE FIRST TYPE

- Hard, packed soil that rejected the truth.

**Romans 1:21 (NLT)** "they knew God, but they **wouldn't worship him as God** or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, **their minds became dark and confused.**"

### THE SECOND TYPE

- Receptive soil, but very rocky underneath -- like having a half inch of good topsoil spread over pavement.
- This represents those who start to explore God's truth, and it starts to sprout in their heart, but their interest fades and isn't strong enough to grow much **roots**.

### THE THIRD TYPE

- Productive soil, but also had thorns that choked out God's truth that drained the joy out of them so the purpose for their existence wasn't fulfilled.

#### Two specific thorns:

1. "**Worries of this life**" ... so many voices calling for your time, energy, money, etc. that there is no time for your quiet time with God.
2. "**The deceitfulness of wealth**" ... It offers more than it can produce.

*The happy man is NOT the one who has the most,  
but the one who **needs** the least.*

### THE FOURTH TYPE

- Good soil that produced one hundred, sixty and thirty-fold.
- These are the ones who are "**Christ-focused**".

**Acts 20:24 NLT** "my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God."

- This is the place that satisfies a person more than anything in life.

**Matthew 13:16** "**blessed** are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear."

**Now, you decide ... "Am I the type of soil I really want to be?"**

If not, you will need to make some serious changes in how you think. The Bible calls that "repentance." Being willing to turn around through loving, trusting and obeying God.

**QUICK REVIEW:** Which point or scripture passage was the most significant to you personally in this week's message? Why?

### GROUP DISCUSSION or PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Read Matthew 13:3-9 and 13-23. If you would have been in the crowd when Jesus shared this story (parable) how would you have felt? Why? How would you describe this parable to a bunch of city kids who had never seen a field?
2. How do the four types of soils described in Matthew 13:3-9, 19-23 represent a person's heart? To whom did Jesus direct this story? What is "the crop" this seed is supposed to produce? Or what is the point of this story? Why do you think God compares the seed to His Word?
3. What happened to the seed in each kind of soil? How is the seed doing in the soil of your heart? What makes the good soil, good?
4. If you were to take God seriously, really seriously, for thirty days what would it mean in practical terms? [explain your answer]
  - a) Plowing up soil and starting over
  - b) Removing a few rocks
  - c) Doing some serious weeding
  - d) Letting God do His thing
5. What helps a believer develop deep "roots" which prevents them from stalling or falling away? [Psalm 1:1-3; Romans 5:3-4; Colossians 3:1-4; Ephesians 4:1-3]
6. What worries in your life have the potential to choke out your love for Christ? How can you free your life from these thorns? [Matthew 6:31-34; Joshua 1:8-9; 24:15-16]