

October 12 Answers

- 1) Jesus taught the people using **parables**, not because they were the clearest form of teaching, but because parables were not readily **understood**. He did this in order to fulfill Scripture: “I will open my mouth in parables” (Matt 13:35; Ps 78:2) and “You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive” (Matt 13:14–15; Isa 6:9–10). Jesus was led by the Spirit to speak in parables so the truth would be **hidden** from those who didn’t want to see, yet **open** to those who did. Although Jesus’ disciples didn’t always understand every parable, they got better with **practice** (Matt 13:51), and Jesus told them, “To you has been given the **secret** of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables” (Mark 4:11). This teaches us the importance of having a heart that is open to the truth. Indeed, the parable of the soils makes that very point, and it teaches us that there are forces at work which try to keep God’s Word from bearing fruit. First, Satan and his demons try to keep the Word from taking **root** in people’s hearts. This shows us that we must be **persistent** in our efforts to win the lost. Second, affliction and persecution try to **uproot** the faith of new believers. This shows us that we must be diligent to **disciple** and care for those who are newly saved. Third, the worries and riches and pleasures of life try to **choke** the faith of believers. This shows us that we must be on **guard** against the deceitfulness of riches and the busyness of life. If we want to be good soil, those who hear the Word with an honest and open heart, then we must hold fast to the Word, water it with obedience, and persevere to the end by faith.