

SC Church  
9.5.2021

Cultivating the Soil of our Heart  
Keeping an open heart to the truth of God's Word

A. Intro: Closed or Open?

B. Big Idea: Daily Maintenance is required to keep our hearts open to the Lord

C. Scripture:

Matthew 13:3-9

3 He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: "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." NLT

Matthew 13:18-23

18 "Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds: 19 The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts. 20 The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. 21 But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word. 22 The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced. 23 The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!" NLT

D. The Four Types of Soil – Receptiveness to the truth of God's Word

a. Footpath – Hard Soil

i. Proverbs 14:12

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. NIV

b. Shallow & Rocky Soil – Immediately receive God's word with joy, but don't do the work to develop deep roots. Problems and trials or persecution come and they fall away.

- c. Seed that fell among the thorns - Message of Christ gets crowded out by life – worries, wealth, worldly pursuits
  - d. Good Soil – True understanding of God’s Word and God uses this understanding to bring transformation personally, in your family, and your world.
- E. How do we keep the soil of our Hearts in good condition?
- a. Cultivate the Soil of our Hearts
    - i. 2 Timothy 3:16  
All scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
  - b. Go Deeper
    - i. Remain in Him
      - 1. John 15:5 NLT – Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.
    - ii. What does going deeper mean for you and me?
      - 1. Regular time with God and His word.
      - 2. Experiencing True Community
        - a. Acts 2:42  
They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. NIV
- F. Close: What is the condition of your heart today?
- a. Psalm 51:10 NLT - “Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me.
  - b. Next Steps
    - i. Memorize: Psalm 51:10 – Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me.
    - ii. Evaluate: Is my heart open to receive God’s word daily? What tends to choke out my spiritual life?
    - iii. Action: Daily examine yourself and bring a trusted friend into the conversation.