



Luke 8:4-18 Part Deux

Last week we discovered these verses about the soils and this week we look at the soils again but from a little different perspective. Instead of seeing the soils as representing the lost and the saved, this week we looked at them from a believer's standpoint. The assumption we are taking this week is that as Christ-followers, our hearts can be represented by these illustrative soils.

The Parable of the Soils

Read Luke 8:4-18

"And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable, "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold."

As he said these things, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear. "And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience. "No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light. Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away.""

Recap a little of Andy's sermon from last week –

The soil of the -

- Hard heart
- Shallow heart
- Distracted heart
- Fruitful heart

This week Michael mentioned these two resources – (both really focused on Christ followers)

George Whitfield - How to Hear a Sermon

Tim Keller - this parable gives us three tests

1. Beware of listening to the message with a hard heart
2. Beware of listening to Jesus message with a shallow heart - a service that He provides
3. Beware that the Word of God is received by a distracted/divided heart

Every time we read, study and hear the Word, a good question to ask is, "How is the soil of my heart ready to hear and receive the Word today?" (So . . . as we study and discuss right now, how is the soil of your heart?)

Jesus goes on to cover more this concept of the fruitful heart –

"Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you." But he answered them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."" Luke 8:19-21 ESV

Jesus is not rebuking his mother and brothers here.

He is leading to - who gets in to the family.

DNA - it's what makes us, us. - deoxyribonucleic acid - the fundamental and distinctive characteristics or qualities of someone or something, especially when regarded as unchangeable.

Ask, Who are you? How do you describe yourself? (Many times we focus on our physical attributes, our personality, our role . . .)

Identity in light of the parable of the soils. What about us?

Followers of Jesus -

- With a hard heart (Saints) Ephesians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Peter 1:15-16;
- When we become so concerned with others holiness, we become harsh and ignore our own sin. – This happens when we think we have graduated from sin. We become the sin police. Always pointing out someone else's sin and fail to see the sin and frailty in your own life. We try to require others to have to live up to our expectations.
- With a shallow heart (Sufferers) Hebrews 4:14; 1 Peter 2:21; - only focused on your suffering; Jesus becomes your fixer and to make you feel better - He is not a spiritual service provider.
- With a distracted/divided heart (Sinners) Jesus has a large part of me but not all of me. 1 John 1:8; Romans 7:19-20; We can idolize our sinfulness. Attempt to follow Jesus and idolize my sinfulness. I confess it but I don't repent of it. Make excuses for our sin rather than confession - this chokes out the fruit. I cuss a little but I love Jesus. We seem leafy but not fruitful. What kind of fruit is God bearing in your life?
- With a fruitful heart - (You are a saint. You are a sufferer. You are a sinner.)
- I am a child of God. I suffer along with others. I know I am a sinner and I confess and repent. Am I growing in our knowledge of saint, sufferer and sinner?

We see Paul's progression as a Christ follower as writes in the New Testament. He says he is,

1. I'm the least of all the disciples.
2. I'm the least of all Christians.
3. I'm the chief of all sinners.

As we mature in Christ, we begin to see ourselves as saint, sufferer and sinner. How do you think that looks in your own heart right now?

Take time for prayer requests and spend time praying for the soil of the hearts of the group.