



We should all want to have good and receptive hearts because it is the only way to be pleasing to God. This is important because serving and pleasing God is our sole purpose in life.

become bad soil and the hearts don't get hard or stony or thorny again.' As was true of the first three points, this is going to take a lot of patience and a lot of love. Being patient and showing constant, unwavering love will result in maintaining good soil and good hearts.

It needs to be noted that the sower is only responsible for sowing the seed. It is everyone's own personal responsibility to cultivate and maintain his or her own heart. So, how does your heart look? Which one of these soils best represents your heart right now? If our hearts are not the good soil, we've got some work to do, and those around us who are faithful also have some work to do to help us. If our heart is like the good soil, we've got some work to do to maintain it. In this case also, those around us who are faithful need to work to help us maintain that heart of good soil.



Faithful Sayings Issue 11.4 January 25, 2009

Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.

● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

11.4

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

JANUARY 25
2009

Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Fred Perez
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Curtis Carwile

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"The Seed
is the Word
of God"
Luke 8:11

Maintaining & Cultivating Good Soil (Mark 4:1-20) by Curtis Carwile

I'm not a big plant-person. I don't do well with them. Some people say that, instead of having a green thumb, I have the black thumb of death. Becca, on the other hand, has that green thumb. She loves growing things. She has told me that if you want to grow something, you have to do some things to get it to grow up



nice and healthy. You have to find out what you want to plant and then find a place to plant it. Then, you have to prepare that soil for the planting. Once it's planted, you have to water and make sure it gets plenty of sunlight and some

people even say that it helps to talk to it.

Spiritually speaking, we want what we plant to do good and grow up nice and healthy. What we choose to sow is the Seed or the Word, which is Jesus Christ. That includes all the Truth He and His Apostles taught by the Holy Spirit. Where we choose to sow it is in the hearts of everyone with whom we come in



Olsen Park church of Christ

contact. We want those hearts to be good and productive, not for our own glory, but for the glory of God.

There are four soils that represent four hearts in Mark 4. The packed soil (vs.4) is a heart that is difficult to penetrate and therefore won't grow. The stony soil (vs.5) is a heart that doesn't have strong roots and withers when troubles come. The thorny soil (vs.7) represents a heart that likes Jesus, but likes too many things of the world as well. As a result it chokes out the ability to grow in Jesus. The good soil (vs.8) is a heart that receives Jesus and grows without any "heart trouble." The last soil-heart is the type that we should all have. Any of those previous heart-soils can be cultivated into the good soil; it's just going to take some time and effort. Also, cultivating the good soil isn't good enough. We need to maintain it. That, too, will take some time and effort.

So, what can we do to cultivate and maintain the good soil and heart?

1. With the packed soil, we will face people that will not be willing to listen to the Gospel at first. What we need to do in those situations in order to convince them is to be good examples and someone worth listening to. We need to speak gracefully and be kind & helpful. Eventually, this may break up their hard hearts to the point that they will listen to us talk about Jesus.

2. With the stony soil, we will face a lot of people that will be honest with the Scriptures and obey God. However, when the trials of the world come, they will fall away quickly. In addition to being good examples, we need to associate ourselves with every Christian in order to strengthen and encourage them. This is going to require more from us than just meeting three times a week when we come to worship as a congregation. We need to be around each other all of the time. Also, we need to bear one another's burdens. That requires more than just helping someone out of a singular predicament; it requires us being there through the whole ordeal. That means that we are going to have to be involved intimately in other people's lives. That is going to require us to get out of our comfort zone. It's going to take a lot of humility from everyone involved. This can "de-stone" people's hearts so they will not fall away when troubles come.

3. With the thorny soil, we will see a lot of people that will obey the Gospel and seem to be doing great, but then the world starts calling them again and they begin to falter. They may not fall away or die, but they don't grow to their full potential with all of those distractions. In addition to being good examples and being involved in each others lives, we need to pray with these people and for these people, studying with them and continuing to study with



them in order to remind them why they chose Jesus over the world. This will weed the garden of their heart so that they will be able to grow to their full potential.

4. With the good soil, we see the heart we are all to have. It's a heart that is good and healthy and productive. We need to maintain it so it doesn't