



Repentance Tabernacle Church

RepentanceTabernacle@gmail.com
www.RepentanceTabernacle.org (984) 369-5171

Degrees of Receptivity in Spiritual Sowing!

Scripture: Mark 4:9-20

Soil quality and condition are vital to successful growing, whether it is a potted plant or one's spiritual life. Jesus revealed the importance of soil in the **Parable of the Sower and the Seed**. The sower is the Son of man (Matthew 13:37) and His ministers (Mark 16:15). The seed is the Word of God (Mark 4:14; Matthew 13:19; Luke 8:11). As disciples of Jesus, our great desire is to produce spiritual fruit.

When the sower sowed his seed for a harvest, he spread it far and wide over the field. He wasn't stingy with the application in hopes the ground will soak up the seed, nurture its contents, and produce a healthy harvest. However, he had no way to control where the seed fell, which is why some fell on wayside ground, some on stony ground, some on thorny ground, and thankfully, some fell on good ground.

Just as there were different types of soil that received the seed, there are different conditions of the heart to receive the seed of the gospel. Unfortunately, the wayside ground, the stony ground, and the thorny ground are not conducive for growth. Each person who has the opportunity to hear the Word also has a choice of how to receive it. **The response is in direct relation to the condition of the heart.** We hear with our ears, but there is a deeper kind of listening with the mind and heart that is necessary in order to gain spiritual understanding from Jesus' words. Jesus' words were for the honest seekers.

Hearing the Word with a closed mind is like hard soil that is packed down so the seed cannot penetrate the hardened earth. A closed mind is the result of a hardened heart. These people hear the Word, but it falls on a closed mind and doesn't have time to penetrate before the enemy swoops in like a bird and plucks it from their hearts. **We would do well to pray for our minds and hearts to be receptive to God's Word.**

Productivity depends on receptivity. The truth of the good soil is the revelation that anyone, anywhere can receive the message of the Kingdom, mix it with faith and obedience, and live a life that is productive spiritually. **We are not called to inspect the soil; we are called to sow the seed.** It is up to God and the hearers where the seed falls and how it grows. In Mark 4:9 Jesus declared, "He said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

We can hear the Word and discard it. To free us from bondage of a corrupt heart, God has promised that through the work of salvation, He would give us a select treasure. *"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh"* (Ezekiel 36:26). This new heart is fashioned by the Word of God, so its nature is one of righteousness and purity.

The call from God is to hear the Word, understand it, and then apply it to our hearts. When we do our part to ensure the ground of our hearts is receptive and the seed is sown in our hearts, spiritual fruit is the natural result. We do not cause the growth; only God can make things grow. Paul says to the church at Corinth, one planted, another watered it, but God gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6). However, God has given mankind free will, and given us the ability to prohibit spiritual growth in our lives. Therefore, as we work with God, He will bring the increase into our lives. **The seed of His Word is powerful, producing an abundant harvest.**

We must prepare our hearts to be good soil, so we are able to receive the Word. The Bereans *"received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily"* (Acts 17:11). It is important to receive the Word with a heart that is ready to obey. This means we are prepared, with an open heart and a committed spirit, and we accept God's instructions without hardness. We are charged with allowing the Word of God to provide both ongoing protection and spiritual cleansing. There is no greater resource for keeping our hearts right throughout life than a continual, intimate relationship with God's Word.

Also, when we hear the Word and it penetrates our hearts, we are called to action. Just as Noah rose up and built an ark to save his family from the Flood, so we feel the urgency to respond to the commands in God's Word. We discover the joy of walking in fellowship with the Lord. As we find our sure footing, rooted in His truth, we long to share truth with those we come in contact with so they can be saved also. **We should make it our mission to say, "I will hear and faithfully obey the Word of God today."**