

On Fertile Ground

May 21, 2017

“Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn’t have deep roots, they died. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. 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!”

“Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds: 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. The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. 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. 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. 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!”

Matthew 13:3b-8, 18–23, NLT

Our hearts are in _____ of _____

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” **Jeremiah 17:9, ESV**

The _____ starts with a _____

“...train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.” **1 Timothy 4:7b–8, ESV**

“Commit yourself to instruction; listen carefully to words of knowledge.” **Proverbs 23:12, NLT**

The journey requires _____ and _____...

“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” **James 1:2–4, NKJV**

“Better is the end of a thing than its beginning, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.” **Ecclesiastes 7:8, ESV**

...and _____ on God’s _____!

“If you don’t know what you’re doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You’ll get his help, and won’t be condescended to when you ask for it. Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought.”

James 1:5–6a, The Message

“He takes no pleasure in the strength of a horse or in human might. No, the Lord’s delight is in those who fear him, those who put their hope in his unfailing love.” **Psalms 147:10–11, NLT**