

THE TAKE AWAY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sunday, December 19, 2021

Message Summary:

In this week's message, Pastor John Carter taught us how to put the word of God into our hearts so that we can act on it, and therefore benefit from it. It is the work of God that is in your heart and your mind that you are *acting on* that will transform your life. The Word of God is compared to a seed. Seeds have the power to do whatever they are coded on the inside to do, but they have to be planted in order to produce what is stored up inside of them. Like a seed, in order to benefit you, the Word of God has to be planted in the good soil of your heart and watered to ensure that it grows and produces fruit. But often, like it tells us in Mark 4, we struggle with other kinds of soil in our hearts that makes it hard for the seed of the Word to grow: (1) hard (wayside) soil that makes it easy for the Word to be snatched away because it never takes root, (2) stony soil that only allows for shallow roots to grow which means that when things get hard, there are no deep roots planted to sustain them, and (3) thorny soil that chokes the progress of the Word with the deceitfulness of riches, the cares of this world and the desire for other things. We have to deal with these unfruitful soils in our heart so that when we receive the Word into the good soil of our hearts, it grows!

Key Scriptures:

- Read Mark 4:1-20 which is the parable of the Seed and the Sower
- [1 Peter 1:22-23 NKJV] 22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, **through the word of God which lives and abides forever...**

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is the Word of God described as a seed?
2. What are the three types of soil that don't allow the Word to grow and produce fruit?
3. How do you guarantee that your heart is like good soil? What do you need to do?
4. What fruit do you want to see in your life in this season?

Life Application:

This week as you study the key scriptures, consider what Pastor John said, "One of the main reasons Christians do not bear fruit from the Word is not because they have not heard the Word, watched messages or listened to podcasts. It is because the Word has to share space with all of this other stuff in your life. No wonder its not bearing fruit! You have to make room in your heart for the word to grow. Deal with your wayside soil!" Ask yourself these questions this week: How do I create rich soil in my heart so the Word can grow? What weeds in my life do I need to pull out so the Word has room the put down roots? If you want the Word to bear fruit in your life, you have to till the soil of heart, turn it over, deal with the weeds, the rocks and the thorns and make room for God to move!

This Week's Memorization Scripture:

[Psalm 19:14 NKJV] *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer. (all of Psalm 19 for extra credit)*