

TOPSOIL - 2
“Hard-Hearted”
April 23, 2023

Dirt is where the growth happens.

The kind of dirt you have will determine the kind of growth that you see.

The Parable of the Sower

Luke 8:4-5 “One day Jesus told a story in the form of a parable to a large crowd that had gathered from many towns to hear him: ‘A farmer went out to plant his seed. As he scattered it across his field, some seed fell on a footpath, where it was stepped on, and the birds ate it.’”

Luke 8:6-8 “Other seed fell among rocks. It began to grow, but the plant soon wilted and died for lack of moisture. “‘Other seed fell among thorns that grew up with it and choked out the tender plants. Still other seed fell on fertile soil. This seed grew and produced a crop that was a hundred times as much as had been planted!’ When he had said this, he called out, ‘Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.’”

Luke 8:9-10 “His disciples asked him what this parable meant. He replied, ‘You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of God. But I use parables to teach the others so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.’ And he’s quoting Isaiah out of the Old Testament. ‘When they look, they won’t really see. When they hear, they won’t understand.’”

Luke 8:11-13 “This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is God’s word. The seeds that fell on the footpath represent those who hear the message, only to have the devil come and take it away from their hearts and prevent them from believing and being saved. The

seeds on the rocky soil represent those who hear the message and receive it with joy. But since they don’t have deep roots, they believe for a while, then they fall away when they face temptation.”

Luke 8:14-15 “The seeds that fell among the thorns represent those who hear the message, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. And so they never grow into maturity. And the seeds that fell on the good soil represent honest, good-hearted people who hear God’s word, cling to it, and patiently produce a huge harvest.” (NLT)

The seed represents God’s Word.

1 Corinthians 3:6 “I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow.” (NLT)

We can focus on God’s promise or our circumstances.

One leads to fruitfulness; the other leads to barrenness.

Ezekiel 33:32 “To them you are like a singer of love songs, one who has a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument; they hear what you say, but they will not do it.” (NRSV)

How’s your heart?

Proverbs 4:23 “Guard your heart above all else...” (NLT)

One of the challenges of having a hard heart is that a hard heart makes it difficult to recognize a hard heart.

SIGNS OF A HARDENING HEART:

- Cynicism
- A short fuse
- Bitterness

- An unforgiving spirit
- Closed/Shut down
- Not teachable
- You assume the worst
- Resentment
- Major loss can lead to a hardened heart if not dealt with healthily
- Defensiveness
- Unmet expectations
- Bad church experiences

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

1. Stop trying and start tilling.

Get involved, serve somewhere, join a small group.

2. Stay curious and open.

Ask questions. Allow God to speak to your heart and be open to Him using you in whatever way He leads.