

Set Free - Pt 1

Break Up Your Fallow Ground

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I. I Will Pour Out My Spirit

3 For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring; God is willing to pour out the Spirit and bless His people with His presence.

—Isa 44:3

- A. He is available, He is not a God who is far off and unreachable.
- B. He is moving where there are hungry and thirsty people.
- C. Key Thought: We have our part and God has His part. He will not do our part and we cannot do His part.

II. Break up you Fallow Ground

Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you.

—Hos 10:12

- A. The metaphor is the heart pictured as ground in a field.
- B. Not all barren ground is the same. Some ground is dry, but some ground is fallow. Dry ground is thirsty and ready for rain. Fallow ground is hard, resistant. Dry ground needs rain. Fallow ground must be broken.
- C. A field becomes fallow through inattention. Fallow ground is neglected ground that has become hard and unproductive. It's a field that used to be fruitful and the soil was supple, but now it's hard and

the richness of it is gone.

D. There is a distinct pattern here: Breaking up Fallow Ground -> Sowing Righteousness -> Seeking God -> God Rains Righteousness -> Reap Loyal Love

III. What Does Fallow Ground in the Heart Look Like?

A. Fallow ground looks like a heart that knows what is right but doesn't feel the urgency to change. It lacks zeal and intentionality. Fallow ground in the heart continues in patterns of dead works, though rain has fallen and seed has been sown.

B. There can be much "seed" sown, but nothing grows.

C. No matter how much rain comes, nothing grows.

D. The more rain falls and the sun shines, the harder the ground becomes if it is not intentionally broken up.

IV. How Does the Heart Become Fallow?

So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

—James 1:19-22

A. Practically speaking a heart can become fallow several ways:

- Compromise
- Complacency
- Distraction
- Disappointment
- Unresolved Pain

B. Choosing what is unrighteous or neglecting what is righteous -

thoughts, speech, and actions – is what causes the ground of your heart to become fallow.

C. James called it being a doer of the word and not a hearer only, deceiving yourselves (James 1:22) The essence of self-deception is believing you are doing the word simply because you have heard the word.

D. Fallow ground is a heart that hears repeatedly, doesn't respond, and then deceives itself into thinking it has. You can sit under the Word, feel the Spirit, and still not change – because hearing without doing doesn't soften the heart, it hardens it.

V. Breaking up Fallow Ground and Reaping Mercy

A. Always starts with leaders first.

- It requires the leaders to lead in repentance and hunger for God. Our leadership and staff must address our own areas of fallow ground directly. Whatever areas of sin and compromise are present, we must turn to the Lord.
- Seeking the Lord by allowing the Lord to have room to speak and to move in our lives individually and corporately
- Responding quickly and directly to the Lord's leading

B. Reaping in Mercy is receiving "Chesed", God's loyal, covenant, faithful, merciful, love. When we break up the fallow ground we will receive the rain of righteousness and the harvest of mercy in our lives individually and corporately.

C. We seek the Lord until... we don't stop short. We seek Him continuously in faith and expectation knowing that He is present and longing to meet us.

D. He will rain righteousness on us. He wants to manifest His presence and power more than we want it. He is willing a desirous to move.

E. Raining righteousness is the release of grace and power that transforms a people.