



## The Voice: The Surface

It's important that God's Word continues after the message. At Celebrate, we find that we will quite often talk over this week's message long after our experience is over. That's because God has impact. The Sermon Discussion Guide is designed to help you continue the conversation all week.

This weekend, we focused on the first of the four soils in the *Parable of the Sower*.  
*Matthew 13:1-9*

### The Hard Path of the Hardened Heart

#### 1. Is this me? Is my heart hardened?

In Scripture, God equates a hardened heart to those who have closed ears and minds. We must not only hear, but also listen and understand. What does it mean to really listen? How are you doing in showing grace, love and forgiveness?

*Matthew 13:3-9, 13-15*

#### 2. What are the symptoms?

Discuss which of the following symptoms you are currently experiencing: lack of concern for others, worrying a lot, preferring isolation, rarely give (time, money, gratitude), hold onto grudges, feel like a victim, be defensive, experience mood extremes. In what part(s) of your life do you see these symptoms? Which of these symptoms affect you the most?

#### 3. What are the causes?

Of all of the causes of a hardened heart (tradition, pride, unbelief, sin), perhaps the most common cause is hurt. Like the foot path, our spiritual hearts can become hardened when we feel we are being constantly "walked on" by others. We try to control things to avoid being hurt again. So, "What are you so mad at?" (Quote from *Sea Biscuit*). What are you trying to control? What is controlling you?

#### 4. How do I get healed?

Allow God to examine me; spend much time reading God's Word; make lists of who has hurt you, who you have hurt, and how you have hurt God; pray and ask forgiveness of God and man; and lastly, bury the lists.

*Psalm 139:23-24; 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrew 4:12; Psalm 51:10; Psalm 119:15;*  
*Matthew 6:14-15, 18:21-22; Psalm 103:2-3*

### What's Next

- Open up to allow God to examine your heart?
- Establish a quiet time each day to read God's Word. Join a Bible Study.
- Create the lists highlighted above and pray for God's strength as you seek forgiveness from those you have hurt.