

I. REVIEW

A. Hearing, Receiving, and Responding

1. How the soil receives the seed makes a difference.
2. It is possible to hear without receiving.
3. The necessary response.

B. Reaping the Harvest of Healing

1. The necessity of hearing with spiritual ears.
2. Making sure the seed gets into the depth of the soil (heart).

II. GUARD AGAINST AN UNDESIRED HARVEST!

A. The Parable of the Growing Seed

1. Mark 4:26-29

NKJV “And He said, ‘The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. **For the earth yields crops by itself:** first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.’”

2. The Kingdom of God operates by the seed time and harvest principle.

a. You reap what you sow!

b. **Galatians 6:7**

NKJV “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”

3. The soil is designed to grow whatever seed is sown.

a. We must choose the seed wisely for the desired harvest.

b. Failure to guard the soil from undesired seed will produce an undesired harvest.

B. How Did the Thorns Get in My Garden?**1. Mark 4:14-20**

NKJV “The sower sows the word. And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word’s sake, immediately they stumble. Now these are the ones sown among thorns; *they are* the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept *it*, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

- a. **Wayside:** The wayside was the hard, packed-down ground beside a path or road where seed could not penetrate the soil.
 - This soil is so packed and hard that the seed doesn’t even get beneath the surface.
 - This seed produces nothing!
- b. **Stony Ground:** Represents a heart that receives the Word quickly and joyfully, but the Word never develops deep roots.
 - Stony ground receives the Word with excitement but does not stay with the Word long enough for it to become deeply rooted.
- c. **Thorny Ground:** Thorny ground represents a heart that hears and receives the Word but allows other things to crowd it out.
 - The Word is received, but competing influences choke its effectiveness.

PASTOR’S NOTE: **Wayside:** The Word never gets in. **Stony Ground:** The Word gets in but does not get rooted. **Thorny Ground:** The Word gets in and begins growing but gets crowded out.

C. How Did the Thorns Get into the Soil?

1. The thorns had to come from a seed.
 - a. The soil already contained the roots or seeds of thorns.

b. **Matthew 13:7**

KJV “And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.”

2. Seeds that produced thorns continued to enter the soil.

D. Two Things We Must Consider

1. What has been previously sown?
 - a. When you are sowing for a harvest, you must be mindful of what has already been sown into the soil.
 - b. What was previously sown can affect what you are presently trying to grow.
 - Examples: Fear, negativity, religious tradition, past experiences, wrong information, etc.
 - c. It is possible to be sowing healing Scriptures today but experiencing the effect of what was sown yesterday.
2. What is being sown today other than healing seed?
 - a. Be careful what seeds you allow into the soil of your heart.
 - b. The wrong seed can grow up and choke the harvest of the right seed.

E. Too Many Voices

1. Luke 8:11

KJV “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.”

2. God’s Word is not the only word that can be sown into your heart. Other words can also take root and produce a harvest.

3. Proverbs 12:14

KJV “A man shall be satisfied with good by **the fruit of his mouth**: and the recompence of a man’s hands shall be rendered unto him.”

F. The Example of Israel's Harvest of Defeat

1. Numbers 13:31-32

NKJV "But the men who had gone up with him said, 'We are not able to go up against the people, for they *are* stronger than we.' And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, 'The land through which we have gone as spies *is* a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it *are* men of *great* stature.'"

2. Numbers 14:1

NKJV "So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night."

3. Notice the effect that the WORDS of the spies produced:

- a. Their negative words produced a harvest of fear, worry, despair, hopelessness, etc.
- b. Their negative words, sown into the hearts of the people, produced thorns that eventually choked out the seed of what God had said resulting in a crop failure.

4. When you are sowing for the harvest of healing, guard your heart against seed / words that may produce an unwanted harvest that will cause a healing crop failure.

- a. Every word you continually hear has the potential to become a seed in the soil of your heart.

G. Practical Insight

1. Be selective of the voices that you allow to speak over your life, especially when sowing for a harvest.
 - a. **Spiritual Voices:** Listen to ministry that strengthens and reinforces your faith for healing.
 - b. **Other Voices:** Surround yourself with voices that strengthen your faith, reinforce God's promises, and keep you moving toward your healing harvest.

2. Avoid unwanted seed.

- a. Just as you avoid unwanted seed in natural soil, avoid negative voices that sow unwanted seed into the soil of your heart.
- b. Guard what and who you continually listen to.
- c. Extremely limit or stop conversations that continually sow and feed doubt, fear, and unbelief.
- d. Inwardly, reject negative words immediately.

H. Three Types of Voices That Are Potential Sowers

1. Medical Professionals

- a. You can respect medical professionals and receive necessary medical information without allowing that information to become the controlling meditation of your heart.
- b. Receive the medical report as information, not as the seed you continually sow into your heart. Know what the doctor has said, but keep your heart anchored in what God has said.

2. Unbelieving Friends and Family

- a. These are people in your life who do not share your faith and may even speak openly against what you believe.
- b. While you may already know where they stand, you must still guard your heart against their words.
- c. Repeated exposure to words of doubt and unbelief can influence your thinking and eventually affect what you believe if you allow them to take root.

3. Sincere Friends and Relatives

- a. These may be people who genuinely love and care about you, yet they may not understand the spiritual side of your faith journey.
- b. They may not intentionally challenge your faith, but their conversation continually centers on the medical report, statistics, treatments, symptoms, and the experiences of others.
- c. Without realizing it, their words can keep your attention fixed on the natural circumstances rather than strengthening your focus on God's Word.

I. Guard Your Heart

1. Remember, the soil of your heart will produce from what is continually planted within it.
 - a. Guard your heart from unwanted seed and intentionally fill it with the good seed of God's Word.
 - b. Keep that seed before your eyes, in your ears, and in your mouth.
 - c. Continually sow it, water it, and give it opportunity to take deep root.
 - d. Protect the soil, nurture the seed, and stay with the Word until the harvest comes!

2. Proverbs 4:23

NKJV "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it *spring* the issues of life."

ISV "Above everything else guard your heart, because from it flow the springs of life."

- a. The phrase "*above all else*" emphasizes priority.
- b. Solomon is essentially saying: "*...of everything you are responsible to protect, give special attention to your heart...*".
- c. Why? Because **your heart is the soil from which your life grows**.
- d. What becomes established in your heart eventually influences your believing, speaking, choices, and direction.