



What's Your Heart Condition?

Week of July 31, 2016

These discussion questions can be used the week following the message. You can use these questions for personal growth and development, or as a guide for your Connect Group discussions.

Message Recap:

Read Matthew 13:18-23

Jesus explains the word of God is like the scattering of seeds. The seeds land on various soil types: hard, rocky, thorny, and good. Each person is a soil type. Those who hear God's word and do not understand are hard soil. The rocky soil represents those who joyfully receive the message but have no roots. Those hearers who are quickly distracted by worldly desires are in the thorny soil. Finally, there are those who are of good soil who hear, grow and produce fruit. We are all represented by a soil type and we get to choose the the type we will be. It's time to choose to be the fertile soil that accepts the love of Jesus and bears good fruit.

Pray

Jesus, I want to be a hearer that bears good fruit. Please grow me to be like you and expand the harvest 50, even a 100 fold. Give me wisdom and insight to lead others from the hard, rocky or thorny soil to choose the good soil you provide.

Getting Started

- What has been your experience in farming or gardening?
- Why do you think Jesus chose this parable to talk to the crowd? How do you think they would have related to it?

Listening Deeply

1. Jesus talks of four soil types. Why do you think he choose those specific soil types? Go through them as a group and discuss what each soil type means when you apply it to people. (i.e.: The stony path represents someone with _____.)
2. Which of the four soils in the parable best describes you, your attitude about Jesus, and/or the outcome of the seeds that have been planted in you?
3. Why does the church continue to spread seeds on those who represent the hard, thorny, or rocky soil? In what ways is this being accomplished?
4. Considering the world and our communities today, what other ways could the church body spread seeds? What opportunities are we missing out on both as a church and as individuals?
5. Can a person move their life to the good soil? How?
6. Living in the good soil is hard work. Why is that? What specific effort is needed to continue to grow in the good soil and be fruitful?
7. What will you do in the coming week to live in the good soil and bear more fruit?

Living Wide in Jesus

We can choose which soil represents our heart. Which soil type will you be? Do you need to change your soil from the pathway, or the thorns, or the rocky soil to the good, fertile soil? Have you settled in the good soil, but are in need of rejuvenated growth? This week is an opportunity to do a soil check. Which of your gardening skills need to be refined or developed? How's your fruit production? It's time to take action - fertilize (organically of course), water, prune, plant, transplant or do whatever is needed to produce more of God's abundant fruit that he's planned for you to bear.