



Then the devil took him up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. “I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them,” the devil said, “because they are mine to give to anyone I please. I will give it all to you if you will worship me.” Jesus replied, “The Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’” Luke 4:5-8 (NLT)

- The kingdom we pursue demands our worship.

Understanding the Kingdom:

- Every kingdom has a constitution.

Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (MSG)

- The constitution of the kingdom can only be changed by the one who created it.

Flowers and grass fade away, but what our God has said will never change. Isaiah 40:8 (CEV)

The entirety of Your word is truth, and all Your righteous judgments endure forever. Psalm 119:160

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Hebrews 13:8 (ESV)

For I am the LORD, I change not... Malachi 3:6

These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life, homeowner improvements to your standard of living. They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who built his house on solid rock. Matthew 7:24

What is a parable?

- A parable is an earthly example with a heavenly truth.

He (*Jesus*) told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: “Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn’t have deep roots, they died. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.” Matthew 13:3-9 (NLT)

- The seed is the Message of the Kingdom.

- The soil is the condition of our heart.

- The only one responsible for the condition of your heart is you.

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. Proverbs 4:23 (NLT)

He replied, “You’ve been given insight into God’s kingdom. You know how it works. Not everybody has this gift, this insight; it hasn’t been given to them. Whenever someone has a ready heart for this, the insights and understandings flow freely. But if there is no readiness, any trace of receptivity soon disappears. That’s why I tell stories: to create readiness, to nudge the people toward a welcome awakening. In their present state they can stare till doomsday and not see it, listen till they’re blue in the face and not get it. Matthew 13:11-14 (MSG)

The meaning of the four soils:

- The soil along the path: A hardened heart.

The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don’t understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts. Matthew 13:19 (NLT)

When anyone hears news of the kingdom and doesn’t take it in... Matthew 13:19 (MSG)

We break up the hard soil when we willingly accept the message.

- The rocky soil: A purely emotional heart.

The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. But since they don’t have deep roots, they don’t last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God’s word. Matthew 13:20-21 (NLT)

Removing the rocks requires that we increase our personal commitment.

- The soil among thorns: A distracted heart.

The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God’s word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced. Matthew 13:22 (NLT)

We eliminate the thorns when the message of the kingdom is our first priority.

- The good soil: A ready heart.

The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!” Matthew 13:23 (NLT)

A ready heart is a prepared heart.

The seed cast on good earth is the person who hears and takes in the News, and then produces a harvest beyond his wildest dreams.” Matthew 13:23 (MSG)

Three Steps For cultivating a good heart:

- Hear God’s Word

- Accept God’s Word

- Apply God’s Word

Don’t fool yourself into thinking that you are a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. Act on what you hear! James 1:22-25 (MSG)



TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions that can be used in Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- Why is our heart important when it comes to the kingdom of God?
- In your own words, what does it mean that every kingdom has a constitution? What does it mean that Word of God is the constitution of the Kingdom of God?
- How does it make you feel that you are the only one responsible for the condition of your heart?
- Talk through the points of the four soils.
- What is another way we can break up the hardened soil of our heart?
- How do we increase our personal commitment to the message of the Kingdom?
- How do we make the Kingdom message our first priority?
- In your own words, what does a prepared heart look like?

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Today's Talk..



Cultivating a Heart for the Kingdom

Sunday, September 7th, 2023

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