

## Monday Morning Rewind – April 28, 2008

Good morning! As you get ready to go on your way today and start your week, have you thought about the condition of your “soil”? On Sabbath, we revisited Jesus’ famous parable of the sower and the seed. We learned that conditions have to be just right in order for seed to germinate and grow. Those conditions include water, oxygen, and proper temperature.

In the parable, the “seed” is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). The Word of God is His “seed” or “sperma.” It is imperishable and contains life—His life. Everything needed to produce the Jesus life is in His Word, There is spiritual food in its pages that will nourish the embryonic Christian, but unopened or unheard, the Word is dormant. Something needs to happen in order to start the process of spiritual germination so that the new-born Christian grows and produces the fruit of a Godly life.

That “something” starts with the quality of the soil where the seed is planted. Jesus tells of four different soil types, which turn out to be descriptions of people. Each receives or “hears” the Word differently, and the hearing has a direct bearing on the effectiveness of the gospel in the receiver’s life.

Rewind to Luke 8:4-18 and ask yourself if you’re 1) A “wayside” hearer – indifferent and hardened to the gospel with no need of God or His salvation? 2) A “rocky-ground” hearer – possessing a “shallow” Christian experience that rises and falls with the tide of emotion and what’s exciting at the moment. This person suffers from spiritual A.D.D. and have just enough of the gospel to keep them from catching the real thing. The bottom line is that they’re selfish and won’t let the Word penetrate deep enough to change them. And when trouble comes, they lose their faith. 3) A “thorny-ground” hearer – attempting to produce the fruit of a Christian life without leaving the old life. The “thorns” of life’s worries and cares, the pursuit of wealth, and amusement, compete for the nourishment that the Word needs to grow, and soon the Word is strangled out of the life. 4) A “good ground” hearer – responsive to the softening influence of the Holy Spirit and sincerely “deep” or interested enough for the Word to “germinate” and bring new life in abundance.

Remember, there is a link between receptiveness and obedience (“hearing”) in uniting us to Jesus. Hearing is believing. Hardness, shallowness, and preoccupations are like a bad cell phone signal. And God is yelling, “Can you hear me now?” “How about now?” What kind of reception do we really have to the Word? What is the quality of our relationship with Christ? Appearance is not obedience. Dogma is not obedience. Religious activity is not obedience. Wishing, hoping, imagining, desiring...none of these is obedience. Only obedience is obedience--actually putting the words of life into practice. (See Luke 8:21 - “My mother and brothers are those who hear God’s word and put it into practice.”)

Check the condition of your soil today and then ask God to do the gardening necessary to ensure that His Word takes root in your life. –Pastor Randy