

Well Grounded

Big Idea: The seed of God's Word has the potential to make our lives abundantly fruitful but there is a prerequisite. Our hearts need to be well grounded: soft, deep, and weed-free enough for that seed to grow widespread roots.

Last week we learned about the mustard seed potency of God's Kingdom, but the parable of the sower helps us understand how to receive the seed and how to grow a root system that permeates every part of our lives.

NorthRidge has just gone through a season of preparing our hearts. Right now, this is a soft-hearted church: people are open and vulnerable with each other; we care more about serving others than we do ourselves; and we are developing a receptivity to hearing the Word and acting on it. The roots of God's Word are growing deep here and the promise is that if we persevere, we will experience a great harvest.

This is one of the first parables Jesus told His disciples and to help them (and us) out, He also explained it. His explanation is sufficient, helping us guard against attitudes that resist or restrain the growth of God's Word in our lives.

1. Trampled and Fouled Up

And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it.... Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved." Luke 8:4,5,11,12

2. Shallow and Rocky

"And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture.... And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away." Luke 8:6,13

3. Thorny Situation

"And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it.... And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature." Luke 8:7,14

4. Well Grounded

"And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold." As he said these things, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear.... As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience. Luke 8:8,15

Look over the types of soil that Jesus describes and see which one(s) may apply to you. Hopefully we all identify with the well-grounded variety, but we may have been another type before and/or may tend to become another type when the condition of our heart is neglected for a while. What can you do to keep your heart soft, deep, and weed-free?