

How about our hearts? Are they prepared to receive the seed of God's Word? Or are there hindrances that keep it from growing and bearing fruit? Jesus identified three kinds of thorns that spring up and choke out the seed--"the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things" (Mk. 4:19).

If you've grown cold toward God's Word, if it's not firmly established in your life and producing fruit, it may be that you're too concerned about this world with its riches and distractions. Tear out those thorns! How much fruit you'll harvest depends on how well you prepare the soil. --DCE

*It may not be some heinous deed
That chills our heart and chokes the seed;
It's often just a trifling toy
That grabs our eye and steals our joy. --Gustafson*

To bear good fruit, clear out the weeds of distraction.



Central Mountains Baptist Church

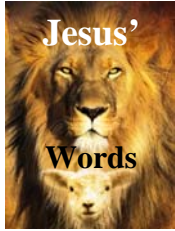
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Prepared Soil

The ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit. --Luke 8:15.

Jesus used that kind of word picture in the parable of the sower. The seed is the Word of God, and the soil is our hearts. The "noble and good heart" (Lk. 8:15) receives the Word, retains it, and produces fruit.





The Greatest Invitation

(John 5:16) "For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath."

From John 7:31-52 we can state that there are two great steps to fulfilled living:

1. Finding personal

_____ , verses 31-36, 45-47

(John 1:1-5) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. {2} He was in the beginning with God. {3} All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. {4} In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. {5} And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."

(John 1:14) "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

(John 1:12) "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:"

(Isaiah 12:3) "Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation."

(Psalms 118:1) "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! ..."

(Psalms 118:25) "Save now, I pray, O LORD;"

(Psalms 118:29) "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! ..."

(Isaiah 55:1-2) ""Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; ... {2} Why do you spend money for what .. does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, .. And let your soul delight itself in abundance."



Which do you choose?



2. Helping others find _____ , verses 38-52

(Acts 2:38) "... Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

(Acts 1:8) ""But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.""

(Psalms 126:6) "He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him."

(1 Corinthians 15:58) "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

(Deuteronomy 18:15) ""The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,"

(Jude 1:22-23) "And have mercy on some, who are doubting; {23} save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy (with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.)" [NASB]

