



Ground Work

In the parable of the sower, the sower sows the seed (Mt. 13; Mk 4; Lk 8). The seed is the same but the results differ according to the ground. Seed that lands on the hard wayside never penetrates the surface. Seed sprouting in rocky ground does not last through heated challenges. Seed sprouting in thorny ground gets choked out by the competition. Only in the good ground, (the good and honest heart, Lk 8:15) is appropriate fruit produced.



This raises a question then, what type of ground are we? What we need to be - and what we need to be now - is good ground. Yet perhaps many of us can also recall times when we ourselves were hardened, or shallow, or double-minded. Which brings up another question: Can we improve our soil, and what can we do to that end?

The parable of the sower is not directed particularly to those questions. It is focused on how the different types of heart respond to the broad spread word. But turning to some other passages, and employing a further illustration, let's consider the following.

When you see a field of rich, dark, tilled topsoil, you are not looking at something that happened through carelessness. Though years past it may have been hard, briar filled, or full of rock, someone showed enough care and determination to bring it to the point where it's receptive and fertile.

Biblical Principles: David's heart had become hard by 2 Samuel 11, but it became softer in 2 Samuel 12 and Psalm 51. Facing our sin is an important part of penetrating the heart. Hard ground is not tilled with soft feathers, but with a blade (Acts 2:37; Heb. 4:12). The Psalmist and the Hebrew writer warn us, "Harden not your hearts" (Ps.95 & Heb.3), and James instructs us to "receive with meekness, the implanted word," (James 1:21). Having received the word, "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16). And since no man can serve two masters



(Matt.6.19-24), we must resolve where our interests are laid up, and not allow thorns and thistles to be our yield (Heb. 6:7:12).

If we remain in his word (John 8:31), and if we remain in him (John 15), we can bear fruit, be pruned, and bear more fruit. We are to "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness" (Eph. 5:11) "And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful. (Titus 3:14).

What type of soil are you? What type of soil would you like to be? May we receive with meekness the implanted word.

By Scott Smelser

How Long Has It Been Since You ...

Took the time to go see someone who lives alone? Wrote a letter to someone whose name crossed your mind? Read the Bible to someone too ill to read for themselves? Encouraged someone who was having a hard time being a Christian? Prayed earnestly for someone who was falling back into sin? Tried to have a Bible study with someone you knew was lost? Told a teen that you were proud of their efforts to live for



GLAD TIDINGS

Christ? Spent more time on your knees praying, than on the phone talking? Informed your family of your love and your appreciation of them? Thanked God for His many blessings, and actually named several of them?

If it has been too long, what are you going to do about it? And when? Time and opportunities are limited and therefore priceless. Let this little list of questions serve to encourage and remind you to be about your Father's business. **Copied**

Order of Worship May 22, 2022

Song Leader—AM	Gary Barber
Song Leader—PM	Michael Young
Lord's Table	Steve Frazier
Sermon—AM	Devin Barber
Sermon—PM	Devin Barber

Pray for our nation and the Ukrainian war to come to an end NOW! Also, continue prayers for those that we've been asked to pray for, and for the free course of the gospel. *1 John 5:14*

Editor: Steve Frazier

Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.

Jacksonville, FL 32220

Meeting times of the church

Sunday

09:00 am Bible Classes

10:00 am Worship 05:00 pm Evening Worship

Wednesday

7:00 pm Bible classes

Evangelist: Devin Barber

Phone: 904-210-5036

www.mariettacoc.com

Hebrews 10:24-25