

# Spiritual Growth

10-4-23

Mark 4:13-20

## I. Soil (heart)

- A. Proverbs 4:23 (AMP) - "Watch over your heart with all diligence; for from it flow the springs of life."
- B. Matt. 15:17-20
- C. You can read all the devotionals that you want and feel a little better about yourself, but if you really want to be changed by God you're going to have to give Him permission to change your heart.
  - 1. Ask God for a new heart - Ezekiel 36:25-27
    - a) This takes humility to recognize that even small parts of your own heart might be hard and barren.
  - 2. Our hearts have to be plowed and churned so that it is soft and pliable for God to mold.
    - a) This is a joint effort between us and God. - Jeremiah 4:3-4

## II. Roots

- A. Roots provide stability and strength, but also draw the nutrients from the soil to provide for the rest of the plant.
  - 1. Becoming deeply rooted in something is the process of becoming so convinced of it's reality that nothing can convince you otherwise.
    - a) Deep-Rooted = existing for a long time and very difficult to change : firmly established.
- B. Integrity and reliance upon God alone.
  - 1. The developing (or deteriorating) root system takes place underneath and out of sight. What we do when we are by ourselves reveals our heart and what we are grounding ourselves in.
    - a) Bob Schultz - Practical Happiness
    - b) The person who has learned to honor God in even the smallest matters of life has truly rooted themselves in Him and His love.
  - 2. 1 Peter 3:13-17
    - a) If we know in our hearts that we living out of a free conscience and being rooted in God and Christ then we have no need to fear other people.
    - b) Eph. 6:5-9
    - c) Proverbs 10:9 (YLT) - "Whoso is walking in integrity walketh confidently, and whoso is perverting his ways is known."
- C. Anchor
  - 1. Stability (unwavering)
  - 2. Hebrews 6:18-19
    - a) 1 Colossians 1:3-6 & 21-23

b) Eph. 3:14-21

### III. Action

- A. Being intentional with our development and working our spiritual muscles.
  - 1. Matt. 7:24-29
- B. Seek to develop your own faith rather than relying on someone else's like your pastor or parents.
  - 1. Ask questions. Ask yourself why you believe what you believe. See if you can find scripture to support what you believe.
- C. Hold fast to your convictions - Romans 14:23
- D. Sometimes we so caught up in self development and self discipleship that we don't put any effort in helping other people to develop.
  - 1. When we help other people wrestle with hard questions or difficult circumstances it helps and develops our own faith as well.
    - a) Proverbs 27:17 - "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."
    - b) This process cannot happen if we are not anchored in Christ. We will be too worried about hurting someone's feelings by sharing our thoughts or opinions.

Luke 2:52 - Jesus had to grow both physically, socially, and in His connection with God. So we should too.