

If you're not standing in temptation & persecution.

How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.

¹⁰ I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

¹¹ I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Ps. 119:9-11

If you tend to want to rule your Kingdom instead of letting God reign.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Ps. 119:105

Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me.

Ps. 119:133

If you love God's Word

"Consider carefully what you hear," he continued. "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. ²⁵Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him."

²⁶He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.

²⁸All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. ²⁹As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

Mark 4:24-29

so shaded from the sun by the distraction of the thorny weeds that it lives and dies naturally, but without fruit. This is quite different from the fate of the seed in the stones, but perhaps even sadder.

²⁰Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown.”

But the **good soil** is the person who has given up all her human ambitions. She opens herself up to the Kingdom and allows God’s vision and provision to take hold. She will produce fruit — the Kingdom will become new seeds saturating every part of her life and everything she touches — because she was willing to undergo a total change of heart and mind.

Difference between the three bad soils and the good soil. With the three bad soils, Jesus tells what’s in the soil: all kinds of obstacles (hardness, rocks, weeds) . However, he doesn’t mention anything about what’s in the good soil. That’s because good soil is simply soil that doesn’t have any obstacles to God’s message and work. Jesus is saying that it’s not your education, worth, character, or anything else about you that makes you good soil. Rather, it is your openness to God’s vision and provision for your life — his Kingdom.

Takes the stuff the “crap” in our lives and turns it into nutrition. We literally grow from the garbage that is in their life feeding the new life.

I’ve been through disappointment, hurt, heartache, and I’ve lived long enough and studied God Word to understand it and be thankful.

Andre Crouch - Through It All

If your heart is hard through pain and hurt

humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. James 1:21

Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you. Hosea 10:12

They are so hard and calloused that the seed of God's word can't even penetrate all their emotional walls and defenses. They have a worldview that says "the world is a harsh place, and you must protect yourself for all those who would take advantage of you — and religious people are among the worse!" And so anyone who shares any message from God, even though it might heal them, is ignored, or even attacked.

¹⁶Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. ¹⁷But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.

The **second soil** is a person who is always looking for the next best thing. When he hears God's message, he latches on to it as the solution to all his problems, but his commitment is shallow. On the surface he seems fine, but when the real difficulty and pain of growth comes around, his faith is shown to be only skin deep. He quits before God's work gets very far along and he's off to the next thing that's going to solve everything — a book, a relationship, a job, an addiction, etc. This is because, in his worldview, the problems and the answers in the world are all simple and external. He's afraid to take himself and life to a deeper level.

¹⁸Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; ¹⁹but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.

Materialism is the worldview of the **third soil**. He believes, in the core of his being, that the material world is more real than anything else. While he initially turns to God for the benefits he thinks he will receive — such as prosperity, health, happiness, or protection — he never really surrenders life to God. Eventually, the Gospel will be choked out of his life because there is no room in his personal kingdom for an all-consuming King like God. When God asks for control, he will attempt to isolate him, politic him, or evict him.

The seed that falls among thorns does not die, as does that from the seed that falls on stony places. Rather, it is "unfruitful". Presumably it lives, but

Revolution2 – Embracing the Truth

If you want to know what I believe watch how I live. – Anonymous

We all live with certain tags which identify us. Husband, father, pastor, white heterosexual male, Christian, **disciple**.

None are enough to fulfill us. When we're adopted into God's Kingdom it becomes our primary identity.

This (Bible) is the revolutionary's handbook. In it are all the plans to overthrow the rulership of the Kingdom that still tries to lay claim to our lives. It also speaks of a lifestyle that attracts other to Christ.

Why doesn't the Word of God thrill us, challenge us, ignite a passion for God and people within us, give us hope, comfort, faith?

Why is that some grasp the treasures this holds and so many do not?

Q: What is your biggest challenge to reading the Bible? (Discuss at table)
Lack of time, lack of understanding, not interesting, not a reader?

One day Jesus told a parable and it confused everyone even the disciples.

Watch this... (VIDEO) 3 min.

Mark 4:13-20 Answers the question, why some grow in their faith and others do not.

Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? ¹⁴The farmer sows the word. ¹⁵Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.

The **first soil** sounds very much like someone who has been constantly trampled by people and situations.