

為神，讓我成為好土 “Being Good Ground for God”

¹⁹ 凡聽見天國道理不明白的，那惡者就來，把所撒在他心裡的奪了去，這就是撒在路旁的了。²⁰ 撒在石頭地上的，就是人聽了道，當下歡喜領受，²¹ 只因心裡沒有根，不過是暫時的，及至為道遭了患難，或是受了逼迫，立刻就跌倒了。²² 撒在荊棘裡的，就是人聽了道，後來有世上的思慮、錢財的迷惑把道擠住了，不能結實。²³ 撒在好地上的，就是人聽道明白了，後來結實，有一百倍的，有六十倍的，有三十倍的。」
太 13:19-23

如果神是不斷的播種祂的話給我，究竟有多少種子是我還沒有察覺在我身上之前，已經給那惡者奪取了呢？又或者，有多少話語曾感動我一陣子，但是，當麻煩或玩樂分散我心的時候，結果就消逝了？到底有多少（百分之多少）神的話，能植根於我，又能結出果子？簡單來說，我到底是什麼土壤？

我愈來愈察覺，在一天裡面，我靈的土壤是常常在變的。有時候，我是很接納神和他人；但是，有些時候，我會關閉，或是很表面，或會感到空洞，那種子不能進到很深。

在這比喻中，主耶穌其中要我們注意的是這土壤的深度。在石頭的地方是沒有泥土，種子是不能生根，以致不能結果子。好土卻可以吸收種子到很深入的地方，把它培養、提供養料，讓有空間使那植物萌芽生長。

一個注重靈命的人會用時間準備心靈的土壤：藉禱告讓心靈鬆弛，有接收能力；再加入肥料，就好像藉學習和默想，能夠建立最理想的狀態，讓神的種子成長。這樣運作就能阻擋疑慮和自我縱容的雜草叢生。這樣的土壤能預備作更貴重的用途；因為他會栽培種子，確保觸動他內心的，就能把它發芽生長。可能他會寫札記，以致在後來回頭看的時候，能深刻他對這種子的認識和經歷。又可能他會通過神給他有關靈命成長的領受，他可以引進一些靈修操練在他的生活當中。

要維持靈命成長其中一樣必須的，是學習保持心靈的好土。這種境況是按照你生命的取捨，我們的「土壤」是我們在裡面被造的，同時是我們從那裡建造的。

耶穌要我們來注意我們靈性常變的土壤，如果我們的靈性常維持在好的狀態，我們就能接受神進入生命的深處，而結豐富的果子，影響是超越自己以及他人，因為我們所做的是從一個好的源頭而來的。

¹⁶ 憑著他們的果子就可以認出他們來。荊棘上豈能摘葡萄呢？蒺藜裡豈能摘無花果呢？
¹⁷ 這樣，凡好樹都結好果子，唯獨壞樹結壞果子。¹⁸ 好樹不能結壞果子，壞樹不能結好果子。太 7:16-18

思想問題：

1. 用一些時間去看看你內心的土壤。你認為神所撒的種子落到這土壤會怎樣？
2. 是什麼會導致你對神的話接受更多或更少？有什麼東西是可選擇去幫助你更多的接受？
3. 對你來說，什麼是把神的種子栽培、提供養料，讓它沒有阻礙的萌芽生長。

禱告：求神指示在你的生命中，怎樣保持一貫好的，能接納種子的好土。表達你願意不單是接受來自神的一切，而且是要結出主要在你身上的果子。

8. "Being Good Ground for God"

When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. (Matthew 13:19-23)

If God is continually sowing the seed of His word in my life how much of that seed gets snatched away by the evil one before I'm even aware of it landing on me? How much of it moves my heart for a moment but, as troubles or pleasures distract me, ends up ultimately dying? What percentage of God's word actually takes root and becomes fruitful in me? In short, what type of ground am I?

I am increasingly aware of the changing consistency of the "ground" of my soul throughout the day. At times I find I am quite receptive to God and to other people. At other times I feel closed off, more superficial, less porous. The seed no longer penetrates deeply.

The depth of our ground is certainly one of the things Jesus is drawing our attention to in this parable. The rocky places have no topsoil. There is nowhere for the seed to take root in order to bear fruit. The good ground however is able to receive the seed deeply—to nurture it, to provide it with nutrients, and to remain uncluttered enough for a plant to eventually push through.

A spiritually-minded person spends time preparing the ground of their heart, keeping it loose and receptive through prayer, adding nutrients through study and meditation in order to create the optimum conditions for God's seed to grow. They work to keep the weeds of anxiety and self-pampering at bay so that their ground can be used for more noble purposes. They learn how to nurse the seed to ensure it will germinate after it has touched their hearts. Perhaps they keep a journal so that they can later return and deepen the knowledge or experience that this seed has represented. Or perhaps they introduce new disciplines into their lives, the result of some insight God has shown them about their spiritual growth.

Learning to maintain good ground is one of the most essential conditions for spiritual growth. It is according to the state of your soul that you both receive life as well as beget life. Our “ground” is the place in which we are created, as well as the place from which we create.

Jesus wants us to consider the ever-changing ground of our souls. If our souls are kept in good condition we will receive God deeply into our lives and bear rich fruit beyond ourselves, into the lives of others. All we do will come from a good place.

By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit.

Matthew 7:16-18

Questions:

- Take a moment to consider the “ground” of your heart. What do you think might happen to the seed that God sows in this type of ground?
- What makes you more or less receptive to God’s word? Are there things that you can choose to help you be more so?
- What does it mean for you to nurture the seed God has given you, to provide it with nutrients and to keep the space around it uncluttered?

Prayer: Ask God to show you how you might more consistently maintain good, receptive, ground in your life. Express your desire to not only receive deeply the things of God, but also to bear the fruit that the Lord desires in you.