

"WEEKLY WISDOM"
By Pastor Darryl Baker

For The Week of 06.14.10

HOW GOD'S WORD WORKS - PART #2"

Mark 4:20 But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept *it*, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

We began this new series of teachings last week in talking about how God's Word works in our lives. With the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit we can see great things happen. I can remember when I was growing up in Montana we looked forward every year to summer, not only because of the long cold winters, but also because my mom would plant a garden in our back yard. We could hardly wait to harvest the carrots, onions, celery, and watermelon just to name a few things we enjoyed growing. So it is with the Word of God. When you learn how it works you get an expectation that begins to grow within knowing that harvest time will come.

Thus Jesus in Mark chapter four tells us the parable of the sower. He was teaching us here how we through the seed of the Word of God can harvest the things of God in our life. This is how God's Word works. As we have already covered last week the first key for us is to have a sower who sows the Word of God into our life. If they aren't sowing all that scripture teaches us we have a right to as a child of God, our harvest will not be complete. This is why it is so important to find the sower (pastor) God has for your life. This is also why satan works so hard to keep people out of church, especially where all of God's Word is taught. No seed, no harvest. But once we find that sower we have to make sure we provide good ground for that seed. As our foundation verse states when sown on good ground you are going to get a harvest. This week we will begin to look at the four different heart conditions (soil) that Jesus speaks of in this parable.

Mark 4:14 The sower sows the word.

Mark 4:15 And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.

The first of the four heart conditions Jesus speaks of is "wayside soil", which if you have ever been on a farm you know is the outer ground around the fields where the seed is planted. This soil is quite hard because it is routinely traveled on by the farmer and others. When you then scatter the seed in the field as they come alongside this wayside soil seed falls on this ground, but Jesus describes it in verse four of chapter

four as the seed that the birds of the air come and devour. He then describes this analogy in verse fifteen as the soil in which satan comes immediately and takes away the seed (word) which was sown.

So this week we are talking about "wayside soil", what it is and what we must do to avoid becoming wayside soil. Also if we already are wayside soil what we must then do to get rid of it. As we pointed out earlier because it is the soil where many travelled upon, this makes the soil hardened. What Jesus is talking about are those whose hearts are hardened. What we must do is to avoid having a hardened heart. What causes our hearts to become hardened toward God? There are two primary things that make this happen. Let's look at the first.

Heb. 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

The one thing that is probably most obvious to the body of Christ that will harden ones heart is sin. If any Christian chooses to live a life of willful sin, which means you know what you are doing is wrong but you choose to do it anyway, you are going to harden your heart toward God. Sin does not change God's heart toward you. Because of the sacrifice that Jesus made for us He bore all our punishment through the work of propitiation, which means He satisfied to the full the wrath of God by taking all our punishment. But what sin does do is cause our hearts to be turned from Him. Doing so will cause our heart to become more hardened toward God.

A hardened heart is one that is insensitive, non-responsive to, and unyielding to another. This is why we then would no longer be receptive to God's Word and therefore it is easily taken by the devil. One who has a wayside heart never sees God's Word produce, for they receive no true revelation from God's Word. It is not in their heart long enough to produce any revelation of God's truth. It is true that Christians will still do those things that are sin in the eyes of God, but we must make sure we recognize when we do and immediately turn back to God. If you have a stronghold of some kind in your life go to God and godly leadership until you get free from it. But what you definitely don't want to do is live in willful sin. This is only going to make you more and more insensitive to God, and provide more opportunity for the devil to take advantage of your life.

Mark 6:52 They still didn't understand the significance of the miracle of the multiplied loaves, for their hearts were hard and they did not believe.

Here we have the second reason hearts become hardened toward God. The disciples here were astounded as Jesus had come walking to them on the water, and then calmed the very storm that had been raging against the disciple's vessel. They were greatly amazed, beyond measure

by this miracle. Jesus then tells them that the reason their hearts were hardened is because they hadn't understood the significance of the miracle in Jesus multiplying the loaves and feeding over five thousand people just before this incident. The word for this means they did not meditate on or focus upon what God could do, but on the result of the miracle. Simply put, their focus was on the things of the natural, not fully on God.

Heb. 4:7 again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "*Today,*" *after such a long time, as it has been said:*

*"Today, if you will **hear His voice,**
Do not harden your hearts."*

Here in Hebrews we are being told the same thing. When we don't take the time to give our attention to God, to hear His voice, our hearts will become hardened toward Him. The more they do the less impact God's Word will have, for it is being snatched away from us as our focus is not on God. What you give your attention to you are going to become sensitive to. What you don't give attention to the more hardened or insensitive you become. We don't have to necessarily hear the voice of God speaking directly to us everyday as a voice we hear with our ear, but if we will take time to pray, go to the Word of God, and do so with a desire to know God we will hear what He is saying.

This affects believers more than sin in most people's lives. If you only take five or ten minutes of your day to read God's Word, pray, or spend time with God, yet you fill up on hours of television, computers, etc., we are going to become hardened toward God. This will cause the Word to have less and less impact on our lives. This is one of the reasons why Christians hear the Word and then wonder why do I have such a hard time believing God's Word? This is why scripture tells us to guard our hearts for; our heart is the very source of where life comes from. Faith is of the heart. When your heart is hardened God's Word cannot even take root to begin to produce faith.

Mark 4:24 Then He said to them, "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.

Take note of two key things Jesus said here about what we are hearing. What we hear has to do with what we are giving our attention to. Jesus said first of all to take heed "what" you hear. God knows that we are going to hear things from time to time that are not going to help our life. But when we have a choice over what we hear we need to heed the Lord's warning about taking heed to "what" we hear. Then He said with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. You see if we are going to fill our time up with things that have nothing to do with developing our relationship with God, then we are not going to see a godly harvest of His Word. If we instead

give God a small measure of our time, five to ten minutes a day, and we give a big measure to movies, sitcoms, games, computers, etc., that is what we are going to harvest.

God is not against us enjoying some of these things, but if He gets only a few minutes of our time, and these things get hours, the results will be obvious. The more our heart is insensitive toward God, the easier it will be for satan to snatch God's Word away even though we are hearing truth that can change our life. What we must do to change this if it is already a problem should be obvious. We need to change our priorities and adjust our time in what we do. The more hardened our heart is toward God, the less His Word will produce in our lives. The less hardened our heart toward God, the more we are going to see the seed of God's Word produce what God desires in our life. That is always good.

See You Again Next Week For More
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MAY GOD'S VERY BEST BE YOURS!
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