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CHECK YOUR SOIL

What condition is your heart in? Because, according to Jesus, the problem is not usually the seed...the problem is the soil.

Before you blame the seed....**check the soil.**

How do we know this is a heart issue?

⁴⁵ *A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.* **Luke 6:45 NLT**

1. WHY DID JESUS TEACH IN PARABLES?

- They were actually a form of revelation and judgment.
- Parables revealed truth to those who wanted God...Good men vs. Godly man
 - He was revealing the truth to those who were willing to seek it.

2. PARABLES EXPOSED THE CONDITION OF THE HEART.

- They revealed what was already inside people.
- Some listened and became hungry for God.
- Others listened and walked away unchanged.
- The story was the same.
- The response was different.

3. PARABLES MADE PEOPLE THINK.

- Jesus was not interested in creating passive listeners.
- Parables forced people to wrestle with truth long after the sermon was over.

³ *He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: "Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds." ⁴ As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. ⁵ Other*

*seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. ⁸ Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! ⁹ Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand." ¹⁰ His disciples came and asked him, "Why do you use parables when you talk to the people." **Matthew 13:3-10 NLT***

THE WORD OF GOD REVEALS WHAT IS ALREADY IN YOUR HEART.

The Gospel doesn't create the condition of the heart—it reveals it.

The Word exposes:

- What we love
- What we fear
- What we trust
- What we worship

^{12a} *For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword...* **Hebrews 4:12a NLT**

- The Word doesn't just inform us.
- It exposes us.

NOT EVERYTHING THAT GROWS IS HEALTHY.

The rocky soil received the seed immediately. The thorny soil also grew. Both had growth. Neither had fruit. That's huge.

Jesus is teaching that growth and fruitfulness are not the same thing.

²² *But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ^{23a} gentleness, and self-control.* **Galatians 5:22-23a NLT**

The evidence of spiritual maturity isn't attendance. It's fruit.

WHAT YOU TOLERATE WILL EVENTUALLY CHOKE WHAT GOD PLANTED.

¹¹ *He replied, "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but others are not. ¹² To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them. ¹³ That is why I use these parables, For they look, but they don't really see. They hear, but they don't really listen or understand." **Matthew 13:11-13 NLT***