

SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 17.08.25

PREACHER: PS NATHAN BEAN

Tending the Soil of Your Heart - Spiritual Growth, Good Soil Pt. 2

BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

BEING [HEART], THINKING [MIND] & DOING [BODY]

[A PERSONAL REFLECTION]

Conviction of a Disciple:

A mature disciple lives with a heart after God—a heart that stays soft, hungry, and willing to be transformed by the implanted Word. This heart doesn't settle for past fruit but remains open to ongoing growth through repentance, obedience, and grace.

OVERVIEW

We are not called to be good soil once, but continually. Spiritual growth is not passive or automatic—it is a lifelong process of tending to the soil of our hearts. In this message, Ps. Nathan called us to personal responsibility, humble acceptance of the Word, and a deep hunger for God that leads to real, supernatural transformation. The fruit of our lives—thirty, sixty, even one hundredfold—depends on how we receive and respond to the implanted Word.

ACTION

Step 1: What weeds—distractions, desires, or behaviours—might be choking your spiritual growth right now?

Step 2: Are you still hungry for the things of God, or have you settled into spiritual passivity?

Step 3: What's one area of your life where you could "make a start" today, even if the change feels overwhelming?

THOUGHT

SCRIPTURE: Mark 4:14–20; James 1:19–25; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11

It's one thing to hear the Word. It's another thing entirely to let it take root and truly change us.

Jesus, the good sower, calls us to be good soil—not just once at conversion, but over and over again. That's the confronting heart of the parable of the sower. We don't graduate from being receptive. We don't hit a point where the work is done. We're invited into a **lifelong posture** of openness. The question isn't *was I good soil back then?* It's *am I good soil today?* Am I soft? Am I humble? Am I letting the Word go deep enough to challenge me, reorder me, and shape me into someone who looks more like Jesus?

Because the same soil that produces good fruit is also great at growing weeds. Distractions, compromises, and unexamined habits don't need an invitation—they just need neglect. And over time, they choke the life out of what once was tender and alive. Weeds don't look threatening at first. In fact, some of them look almost identical to real fruit, right up until maturity. But their seeds are empty, their promises hollow, and their growth deceptive.

In our current culture - even within the church - we need to be reminded that God's Word isn't just more content to consume. It's not a clever teaching or a motivational idea. It is a supernatural seed—the very life of God—implanted into our lives. And when received humbly, it brings freedom, blessing, and transformation. The book of James tells us to *humbly accept the Word planted in us*, and that it *can save us*. (James 1:19–25) Not just eternally, but day in and day out. It saves us from lifeless religion. From cultural compromise. From what we think we need. From ourselves.

So, how do we know that good seed is growing? We feel it in our hunger. We see it in our willingness to change. Not because we're trying to earn God's approval, but because we've already been washed, sanctified, and justified by the love of God. That kind of grace doesn't leave us stuck. It calls us forward into new life - Kingdom life.

We don't get to fix everything in one day, and that is good. In fact, it's kind of the point. But maybe today is the day we begin, or begin again. One weed at a time. One honest prayer. One decision to trust again. One choice to walk away from something that's choking your life.

You are not what you were and you are not alone. The Spirit is already at work in you. And Jesus, the Gardener, is not finished. Not even close.

So let Him plant. Let Him prune. And let your life bear fruit that only He could grow.

DISCUSSION

[A GROUP REFLECTION]

1. What does “humbly accepting the Word” look like in real-life decisions or habits?
2. Why is it easier to identify weeds in others’ gardens than to name and uproot our own?
3. What would change in our community if we truly believed we were “not what we were”—washed, sanctified, and justified?

PRAYER

Jesus,

We open our hearts before You today. We don't want to be just hearers of Your Word, we want to be good soil, ready to receive and respond. Help us to name the weeds, hunger for more of You, and humbly accept whatever You're saying to us. Thank You for the grace that meets us in the struggle and the power to become who we're called to be. May our lives bear fruit, thirty, sixty, even one hundredfold, for Your glory.

Amen.