



DISCIPLESHIP ESSENTIALS SERIES

SUNDAY 27TH AUGUST 2023

Topic: Discipleship Essentials – Finishing Well

Luke 8:4-15

Speaker: Ps Sam Toms

Central to Following Jesus is the need to change

God's word can bring transformation

The condition of our heart is key to this.

4 Soils of our heart (Luke 8:4-15)

- Hard soil
- Dry soil
- Contested soil
- Good Soil

Good soil is a good heart, good character

Good soil – developed – Compost BIN

Take everything to the Lord – This is how we finish well!



THE DISCIPLESHIP CHALLENGE 2023
GROWING & GOING





This passage has salvation overtones that often we can miss the discipleship heart that Jesus is really challenging. We can jump into our theology of once-saved, and miss the heart of the passage of being receptive to God's word. I would encourage you this life group to recognise the significance of not missing the trees in the forest by getting distracted discussing theology of salvation. This can be a big distraction. What is key is that we are called to have soft, receptive and engaged hearts to the word of God. This is a discipleship issue through and through, as we seek to allow the spirit of God to challenge, change and convict us of hearts that are not aligned with God's will.

The Hard soil in verse 5, often creeps up over time. We don't wake up over night with hard hearts. It often is the case of developing hard hearts by failing to forgive, by holding onto bitterness.

Q. Who do you struggle the most to forgive? (only share if appropriate, but likely we all have someone that comes to mind)

Our flesh struggles to forgive until justice is served. Eventually justice will be delivered when Jesus comes back again and presides over the living and the dead. (John 5:26-29) When we trust God to be the Judge, a fair and good judge, we are released of the pressure to feel the Burden of justice. We still fight for the poor and oppressed, and fight institutional corruptions and abuse, but ultimately we can forgive, knowing justice will be served. This can be a hard reality to live out, but the freedom gained is significant.

[Read Hebrews 3:8](#)

Q. In what other ways can we protect, guard and maintain a soft heart towards God and his word?

The second soil is the parched soil (vs 6). This really is those who have accepted a faith in Jesus, but haven't done anything with it. They haven't watered or fed or engaged with Jesus in a authentic way over a long term. Watering isn't a flood, it's a continual dripping.



Q. What needs to change in your life to have a healthy watering of your spirit?

Q. Who is someone that you can make an accountability partner to help you with this commitment?

The third soil is the contested soil (vs 7). This soil is choked out by distractions. This is really a lack of proper priorities. Idols are anything that becomes more important than your relationship with God. The first command is to 'not have any other Gods' (Exodus 20)

This is often subtle. We don't typically have statues of idols in our culture, but we do have the same temptations.

Q. What is your greatest idol threat that is an ongoing distraction from your walk with Jesus?

The good soil is the soil that God's word has the most freedom to develop and grow within.

The idea of a compost bin that takes all our rubbish, breaks it down into nutrients and creates beautiful soil is a good analogy of the way God takes our emotions, experiences and failings and breaks them down into wonderful and nutritious soil that he generates and grows his Spiritual gifts within.

Q. What does bringing everything to the Lord in prayer look like to you?

Pray that the garbage in your life is dealt with appropriately, engaged in genuine conversation with the Lord. This is a key ingredient in how we finish well!