

STILL.HEAR.

LISTENING CLOSELY TO JESUS

PART 1: Soil Samples

PART 2: A Serious Lack of Judgement

PART 3: For the Birds

Whoever has ears, let them hear.
~ Jesus

APPETIZER: A New Kind of Story

Matthew 13:10-17

Parables have a dual purpose:

1. They help separate the crowd and the committed.
2. They help teach disciples deeper truths.

2 Timothy 2:7

“Understand” = *SYNIEMI*: to put together; to assemble the pieces.

It can just happen to us as a gift, but most often is the result of us doing focussed, concentrated, mental work.

Keep the discussion going at bruxy.com!

Post questions as comments in the “STILL. HERE.” blog series.

DINE IN: Assessing Our Soil

Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23

- The Sower = Jesus
- The Seed = The Gospel (the message of the kingdom)
- The Soils = Human Hearts



What prevents God's Good News from growing inside us?

1. Apathy. Not caring to understand. Hard hearted. Closed minded.
2. Shallow, superficial, thin, merely emotional, comfortable faith.
3. Distraction of wealth: getting it, keeping it, worrying about it.

TAKE OUT: Cultivating A Receptive Heart

God gives us three means to cultivate good soil...

1. The Spirit
2. The Scriptures
3. The Church

HOMEWORK... This Week's Meditation: **Matthew 13:3-9**

Each day, read through the entire passage (**Matthew 13:1-23**), then meditate just on the parable itself (**verses 3-9**). Pause, pray, and listen at whatever point God seems to be speaking to you. Don't hurry. Open your mind and your heart to the voice of God.

NEXT WEEK: A Serious Lack of Judgement (**Matthew 13:24-30**)

Home Church Questions

HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. Have you been practicing daily meditation? If not, why not? If so, how is it going? What have you learned – about Jesus, about life, or about yourself – so far?
2. Review the sermon – any lingering questions or helpful revelations?

HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

3. Read **Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23**, slowly, more than once, in different translations.
 - a. What verse, phrase, word, or idea stands out to you the most? What might God be saying to you through this?
 - b. The Parable of the Soils is really a kind of parable about parables and how they work. In your own words, why did Jesus teach in parables?
 - c. The first group (the path) and the last group (good soil) seem obvious: non-believers and true disciples. But what about the middle two groups: the rocky soil and the thorny soil. Do you think they are two groups of non-believers or two groups of Christians (struggling, misguided, distracted, fruitless Christians)?
 - d. Each of the four soils points to a definitive category of person, but they may also symbolize seasons we all go through. Talk about ways you might have seen yourself in each of these categories in different seasons or situations in your life.
 - e. If our hearts have grown hard, what actions do we have to take to begin to receive healing from Jesus? Look at **verse 15**.
4. Take five-ten minutes for quiet meditation on this parable. What has the Holy Spirit been highlighting to you? Stay with that and listen.

HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

5. What has the Holy Spirit been saying to you this week?
6. Find out how you're all doing in life and pray for one another.