

End a series...

Dirt

How fertile is your soul?

We compared soil to our soul...

We talked about the difference between *bad soil and good soil...*

- **Bad Soil**
 - Hard to dig in.
 - Tears up machinery
 - Not good for producing crops
 - **Good fertile soil is great...**
 - Build a good foundation for your house
 - When you have a good soil – you can produce great crops!
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In the same way... that fertile soil produces great crops...

- **A fertile soul/heart can produce great spiritual crops as well!**

- **A soul that is ready to receive the seed God wants to plant in us; and produce a spiritual crop for Him.**
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In part 1 we also looked at a parable in Matthew 13 – that Jesus told about 4 types of soil and the seed that was planted, and what did or didn't grow from the seed that was planted in the different kinds of soil

In the parable...

- **God -- is the Farmer...**
- **We're -- the Soil...**
- **Seeds -- are the seeds of salvation that God wants to plant in us!**

Seed that was cast on for types of soil...

- 1st - **FOOTPATH** – Hard packed – seed was on top of the ground – so the birds just ate it.
 - 2nd - **SHALLOW SOIL** – not deep enough to take root – so it died.
 - 3rd - **THORNY SOIL** – grew up – but got choked out by the thorn bushes.
 - 4th - **FERTILE SOIL** – good soil that produced a great crop.
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Question we answered was...

How do we cultivate a fertile soul to receive the seeds that God wants to plant in us?

1. A fertile soul PREPARES for seed.

- **We open our heart and accept seed of salvation.**
- **We cultivate a daily relationship with Jesus.**
 - Read the bible
 - Praying
 - Developing Christ-centered friendships
 - This is how we prepare for Growth.
 - And this is how God produces growth in us.

2. A fertile soul GROWS and SOWS.

When you prepare your soul for God to sow spiritual seeds – you will grow.

- *As you read your bible...*
 - *As you pray*
 - *As you cultivate Christ-centered friendships*
 - YOU WILL GROW.
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But... Not only should a fertile soul be busy GROWING...A fertile soul should be busy SOWING!

- *Once we accept the seed of salvation and cultivate a relationship with Jesus – **not only are we the SOIL – but we also become the SOWER!***
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WHAT'S A SOWER?

- **SOMEONE WHO PLANTS SEED!**

- What seed are we called to plant?
 - Seeds of faith in Christ.

As believers we are called to sow!

- Every believer in the Bible – had one characteristic – they all told others about Jesus.

If our only hope is Jesus?

- **Then we have to believe that Jesus is the only hope for the rest of the world too.**
 - **Therefore the church is the hope of the world.**
 - **Why because Jesus has given us the ministry of spreading His name.**
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Last week...

This sowing starts with... our FAMILY.

- YOUR MARRIAGE
 - YOUR KIDS/GRANDKIDS
 - Is where our SOWING SHOULD BEGIN!
 - ***Sow the WORD – through our words and actions.***
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Focus today...

But we are called to sow seeds in the **WORLD.**

- There is no such thing as private Christianity.
- We are called to share what God has done for us!

○ **“IF IT’S A FAITH WORTH HAVING – IT’S A FAITH WORTH SHARING!”**

- If Jesus has really changed you – you should want to share Him with others.

It's a gift to share our faith with others....

Let's look at a powerful verse in the bible that shows us that we are called to SOWING SEEDS IN THE WORLD...

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2 Corinthians 5:11-21 - *11Because we understand our fearful **responsibility** to the Lord, we work hard to **persuade others**. God knows we are sincere, and I hope you know this, too. **12**Are we commending ourselves to you again? No, we are giving you a reason to be proud of us, so you can answer those who brag about having a spectacular ministry rather than having a sincere heart. **13**If it seems we are crazy, it is to bring glory to God. And if we are in our right minds, it is for your benefit. **14**Either way, Christ's love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. **15**He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer **live for themselves**. Instead, they will live for **Christ**, who died and was raised for them. **16**So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! **17**This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a **new person**. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! **18**And all of this is a gift from God, who **brought us back to himself** through Christ. And God has given us this task of **reconciling people to him**. **19**For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of **reconciliation**. **20**So we are Christ's **ambassadors**; God is making his appeal **through us**. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" **21**For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ."*

Back Story...

- God created a perfect world for man to live in.
 - **Man sinned.**
- Because of Sin – man was separated from God.
- Before Christ – man had to make sacrifices to God – to be made right with Him.

- Then because God loved us so much – **HE GAVE JESUS – AS THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE – ONCE AND FOR ALL!**
 - o **So that we could be brought back into a right relationship with God!**

And if we want to have a right relationship with God – we must accept His Son's love and forgiveness – and surrender our lives to Him.

This is called RECONCILIATION.

- Being made right with someone or reconciled.
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So what's our role as believers?

- We are called to the ministry of reconciliation.
- **We are called to sow into others seeds of Christ – so that they will believe in Him and be reconciled to God!**

This is the privilege and calling of every believer!

I believe our culture is becoming more and more hardened to the gospel – therefore what we used to be able to do...**like knock on doors, or share a tract may not be as affective in reaching people with the gospel.**

So what's the most affective way of sowing seeds of faith in the world?

I'll give you a few things that I've seen work in my own experience with sowing seeds of faith in those who don't know Jesus...

- 1st - **We must be authentic.**

What do I mean by being authentic?

- Someone who is **genuine and real.**
- Not fake and hypocritical.

Jesus gives a good example...of being authentic.

- **Mark 2:13-17** - *“Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at **Levi’s house**, many tax collectors and “sinners” were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the “sinners” and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and “sinners”? On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but **sinners.**”*
 - Did you notice ***who Jesus was with?***
 - Tax-collectors and Sinners
 - Did you notice ***where he ate super?***
 - In their homes.
 - Did you notice ***how many people were attracted to Jesus?***
 - A lot
 - Why?

- **Cause He was genuine and real.**
 - *And He didn't see these people as below Him, but as people He came to save.*
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We too must be authentic...

We genuinely desire to...

- Know them
- Serve them
- Develop a friendship with them
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- 2nd - **It must be done in love.**

- **1 John 4:7-8** - *"7Dear friends, let us continue to **love one another**, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a **child of God** and knows God. **8**But anyone who does not love does not know God, for **God is love.**"*

Not only was Jesus Authentic.

- He genuinely loved people!
- He showed it in His...

- *Words*
 - *Kind*
 - *Patient*
 - *Merciful*
 - *Grace*
 - **Actions**
 - *Provided for them physically.*
 - *Emotionally*
 - *Materially*
 - *Spiritually*
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We are called to imitate this love...

- Love one another.
- Love comes from God
- When we love – we show we are followers of Christ and know Him.
 - And when we DON'T LOVE – we show that we are not pleasing to God!

- *Love is the thing that attracted sinners to Jesus.*
 - **And Love is the thing that will attract others to us**, so seeds of faith in them!
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I believe that for most people in the world today.

- Sharing our faith **has to start with act of love.**
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“Sowing seeds of faith means... we don't see people as projects, but as people we love!”

EX - Used to you say you're a Christian or even a pastor and everyone just trusted you and would give you some time.

- **Now-a-days...you have earn the right to speak into peoples lives.**

- We earn it through love of them and by loving and caring for others.
- Serving the poor
- Feeding the hungry.
- Clothing kids
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- **This is the love that opens doors for us to sow seeds of faith in the world!**

1st – It must be authentic.

2nd – It must be done in love.

For the world to receive the seeds of faith we are called to plant...

- 3rd - **It must be a lifestyle.**
- **Ephesians 5:2** – “Live a **life** filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.”

Sowing seeds isn't just what we DO, it's WHO we are.

- Sowing seeds doesn't just happen on a Sunday or at a church event.
 - Sowing seeds needs to be a **LIFESTYLE.**

EX – JOHN 4 - Jesus is our example of this...

- He met the woman at the well.
 - THE WELL FOR US IS...
 - A common place most people went to everyday.
 - EX – Work
 - Golf Course
 - Round up club
 - Restaurant
 - He didn't ask her to **come to the temple and hear a sermon** – although it still works to share the gospel at church.
 - **As He went about His day – He shared His love and forgiveness with those He came into contact with.**

The world is looking for...

- **AUTHENTIC PEOPLE**
- **WHO LOVE OTHERS**
- **LIVE A LIFE THAT TRULY SHOWS THEY LOVE GOD AND LOVE OTHERS.**

- So, At the bottom of it all – **Jesus has to be real in our lives.**
 - We have to convinced in the depths of who we are that Jesus is worth sharing.

- We have to be in love with Him!
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This is why reading our bible, praying, and having Christ-centered friendships are so important.

- ***When people look at us*** – they ought to see someone that is striving to love God the best we can.
 - Not PERFECT – But always a Work in PROGRESS.
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Being both the soil and the sower... God has called us to...

- Get busy growing.
- Get busy sowing.

How fertile is your soul?

Pray:

Thank you for calling us to ministry of planting seeds of faith in others.

Help us to be authentic, Love others, and live a lifestyle that shows we truly believe you are who you say you are.

Raise Hand:

I want God to use me to make an eternal difference in the world?

I want to build authentic relationships, love others, and live a life to bring others to Jesus?