

GROWTH RESOURCES

THE SEED OF GOD'S WORD

Mark 4:14-20 Teaches us the importance the Word of God place in regards with how the Kingdom of God works

- In the natural realm, if you do not prepare the ground and plant, don't be surprised if nothing grows.
- When a person has a **beautiful garden you will know that they have put effort in that.**
- **According to what is growing in your life, I can see what seeds you have planted**, even if I wasn't present when you planted the seeds.
- Spiritual realm people wonder: why am I not getting healed, having prosperity, answered prayer, why does my relationships fall apart? **But they did not TAKE THE WORD OF GOD and the PROMISES in the WORD OF GOD and SOWED IT IN THEIR LIVES.**
- **To not know the Word of God is like not planting but expecting a harvest.**
- The reason people **don't live in victory** is because they are **not PLANTING THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD in their hearts.**
- If you take THE SEED OF GOD and PLANT IT IN YOUR HEART, you **will LITERALLY RECEIVE A SUPERNATURAL MIRACLE AND HARVEST.** *(Proverbs 4:21) Let them not depart from your sight; keep them in the center of your heart. (v.22) for they are life to those who find them, healing and health to all their flesh. (Psalm 107:20) He sends forth His word and heals them and rescues them from the pit and destruction.*

How does the Kingdom of God work?

1. The Kingdom of God works **on the principle of the WORD OF GOD** that **just like seed YOU MUST PLANT IT IN YOUR LIFE.**
2. **The Word of God must BECOME ALIVE TO YOU. It must be a REVELATION.**

It is the SEED that brings forth the fruit and not the ground

1. The ground does play a role. **The ground can allow the seed to fully grow or it can hinder the WORD OF GOD from doing his work. (the law – prepares the heart)**
2. **But it is not the ground itself that produces fruit, but the SEED.**

What hinders the Word of God from working within our lives?

1. Person Number 1. Hear the word of God but is not focused on God.

(Mark 4:15) The one along the path are those who have the Word sown [in their hearts], but when they hear, Satan comes at once and [by force] takes away the message which is sown in them. (Matt 13:19) While anyone is hearing the Word of the kingdom and does not grasp and comprehend it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the roadside.

- The word cannot sink into the ground. **If Word does not enter your heart Satan steals it.**
- **The only person from which Satan is allowed to steal the Word is the first person.**

- **UNDERSTANDING let the word sink in.** If you don't have understanding, you will not apply it. You have to hunger and thirst after righteousness.
- **It is not God that determines the condition of your heart. You determine it.** Some people get one revelation after the other in the same church as those who sit their but are not being changed. **SO THIS IS WHY WE PREACH THE LAW TO SINNERS, BEFORE PRESENTING THE GOSPEL**
- *(Psalm 19:7) The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.*
- *(Romans 3:19) Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. (Romans 3:20) Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.*
 - So God's law tells us what sin is. It makes us conscious of our sin. It shows us the condition of our hearts.
- *(1 John 3:4) Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, **sin is lawlessness.***
 - That is why we open the 10 Commandments, God's divine law, to show a sinner precisely what he has done wrong. "Do you consider yourself to be a good person?" Have you ever lied? **(present Way of the Master).**
 - A person has to see that he has offended God by violating His law.
 - When the sinner becomes convinced of the law as a transgressor, the heart is being prepared to receive the good news of the gospel and to receive the Word of God.
- *(Romans 7:7b) I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. (would have had no consciousness of sin or sense of guilt)*
- *(Galatians 3:24) So the law was our schoolmaster until Christ came that we might be justified by faith.*
- **The law doesn't help us. It just leaves us helpless.**
- **It doesn't justify us. It just leaves us guilty before the judgments by the Holy God.**
- **The law helps to show you the condition of your heart.**
- **And the enemy steals to word from this first person, because the soil is not prepared, he does not see that he needs it, he does not see the condition of his heart, he is not trembling before the throne of a holy God. He thinks he is going to heaven, but he is focused on other things in life.**

2. Person Number 2. Is excited about the Word of God, but have no root to fasten Word in life

(Mark 4:16) And in the same way the ones sown upon stony ground are those who, when they heard the Word, at once receive and accept and welcome it with joy; (v.17) And they have no real root in themselves, and so they endure for a little while; then when trouble or persecution arises on account of the Word, they immediately are offended (become displeased, indignant, resentful) and they stumble and fall away.

- **Sometimes these people are very demonstrative, but have no depth in their spiritual lives.**
- Some are very excited and you think it is awesome they have changed, but it is **ALL SHOW AND NO GO. ALL SMOKE AND MIRRORS**, but there is no real commitment in their hearts.
- **Their laughter isn't turned to mourning, and their joy isn't turned to heaviness over their sins. When the law is not preached, sin is not seen as exceedingly sinful. Their hearts are not right.**
- **There is no trembling before a holy God, there is no contrition, no sorrow for sin.**
- **This is a genuine false conversion experience as they believe only for a while.**
- **If the seed is shallow it looks good on the surface, but they haven't got deep enough to grow strong roots. They have no real nutritional value.**

- There is a lack of moisture. There is no thirst for the living God.
- They serve God to enhance their lifestyle and therefore when the first trouble come they are offended, displeased, resentful and they walk away from God for their hearts are not truly committed to the Word of God. They do not hunger and thirst for the righteousness of God.
- You can't build on the fruit if you have no roots.
- The deeper the root, the longer it takes to see the fruit on the surface. It takes time. If you have a good root system you can stand the test of times.

3. Heart Number 3. Is excited about the word and it starts to grow, but then comes the riches and desires of the world and it takes the word of God away.

(Mark 4:18) And the ones sown among the thorns are others who hear the Word: (v.19) Then the cares and anxieties of the world and distractions of the age, and the pleasures and delights and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches, and the craving and passionate desire for other things creep in and choke and suffocate the Word, and it becomes fruitless.

- **What is killing the Word of God in our lives? Being constantly busy**, even with the things that aren't sin. Facebook/News - brings the problems of the world immediately to your life's door.
- **Weed grows all around the beautiful flowers in the garden and stops these plants from getting all the right nutrition.**
- **When I am constantly busy it is difficult to get myself to focus on God's Word.**
- **ILLUSTRATION.** An Indian man who saw many people being raised from the dead was very powerful in his walk with God. In 1910 this man went to New York by ship. It took him a month or two to get there and a year's meetings were planned ahead of time. He walked 30 minutes in the city of New York and immediately took a ship back home. He said *"There is no purpose for me to minister here. Their lifestyle will not allow the Word of God to fill their hearts"*. **So there is no depth in Godly Character (no root in themselves).**

4. Heart Number 4. This person takes care of the seed, his attention is not being led astray.

(Mark 4:20) And those sown on the good (well-adapted) soil are the ones who hear the Word and receive and accept and welcome it and bear fruit – some thirsty times as much as was sown, some sixty times as much, and some [even] a hundred times as much.

- **Every time you meditate and plant seed in your heart you are starting a process of growth that cannot be stopped.**
- **God has enough seed in His Word that when you plant it in your heart and cultivate it, you get advantages from that Word 10, 20 or 30 years later.**
- *Mark 4:26) And He said, The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seed upon the ground, (v.27) And then continues sleeping and rising night and day while the seed sprouts and grows and increases – he knows not how. SLEEP – it takes time.*
- **When the Word of God works you don't always see the full manifestation of it immediately.**
- **It is a growth process. You cannot jump immediately to where you want to be.** There is no short-cuts of getting there.
- **To the measure that you put time in to seek God will determine the measure of your growth.**

THREE TESTS THAT EXPOSES THE CONDITION OF THE HEART

One plant looks small on the outside, but grows good. Another plant looks good on the outside, but when the sun shines on him it reveals what is going on in the soil (the part we cannot see). **The same in the spiritual.**

The sunlight in the spiritual reveals the heart condition of the professing convert. **It reveals that which we cannot see.**

What does the sunlight represent? Tribulation, Temptation and Persecution.

1. **Tribulation** (Matt 13:21) *Yet it has no real root in him, but is temporary (inconstant, lasts but a little while); and when affliction or trouble or persecution comes on account of the Word, at once he is caused to **stumble** [he is **repelled and begins to distrust and desert Him Whom he ought to trust and obey**] and falls away.*
2. **Temptation** (Luk 8:13) *And those upon the rock [are the people] who, when they hear [the Word], receive and welcome it with joy; but these have no root. They believe for a while, and in time of trial and temptation fall away (**withdraw and stand aloof**).*
3. **Persecution** (Mark 4:17) *And they have no real root in themselves, and so they endure for a little while, then when trouble or persecution arises on account of the Word, **they immediately are offended (become displeased, indignant, resentful)** and they stumble and fall away.*

THE WORD OF GOD IS PART OF THE PILLARS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

In Acts 2:42 we find that the early church of Acts was built on four basic pillars of Christianity. The Bible says **Acts 2:42 and they steadfastly persevered, devoting themselves constantly to the instruction and fellowship of the apostles, to the breaking of bread [including the Lord's Supper] and prayers.** Still today these things are crucial to Christian survival.

- Compromising in any of these very important areas **causes us to struggle in our walk with the Lord.**
- Each one of these areas brings specific, important elements into our lives.

The apostles' doctrine speaks of the Word of God and more specifically a **belief system about God and His purpose** for humanity.

- **The Word should form the foundation on which we build our every decision and in this way our very lives.**
- Jesus teaches about this beautifully when He tells the **parable of the wise man and the foolish man who both built the same structures and then faced the same challenges** (Luke 6:46-49).
- **The difference in their lives was the outcome – one house could withstand the storm and the other collapsed.**
- The same principle still holds true today – the person who build his/her life on the **Word can expect their life structure to weather the storms and challenges of life** whilst those who build on opinions and human thinking will find their lives destroyed through the obstacles and turmoil we sometimes face on earth.
- **It is important for us to make the Word an integral part of our lives.**

THE WORD OF GOD RELEASES FAITH IN OUR LIVES

John 8:31 teaches that *"If we abide in His word [hold fast to His teachings and live in accordance with them], we are truly His disciples"*.

- In addition to this, **only those who know the Word, in the sense of having made it a part of themselves, can be set free by it.**
- The Word of God **heard and meditated upon generates faith in our hearts.**
- *Hebrews 11:1 teaches that it is absolutely impossible for us to please God without faith.*
- Romans 1:17 confirms this by stating that *the just, the righteous, God's children, live by faith.*
- **Since the Word generates faith in us, we find ourselves unable to live lives of faith without being steeped in the Word of God.**
- The Word teaches us that we should make it our **conscious aim to not be ignorant** by studying to show ourselves approved (2 Tim 2:15).
- **Ignorance has the same consequences as failure to respond to the Word we know, it is not an excuse and should be actively avoided.**

KNOWLEDGE THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD BRINGS US TO A PLACE OF CHOICE

Making it a matter of importance to get the word and to reach a place of knowing what the Word says is however **only the first step in living the spectacular life God has planned for us.**

- Just like the Israelites had the Word close to them, in their hearts and in their mouths, we also should have it in our hearts and in our mouths. In Deut 30:14-16 the nation of God is confronted with the fact that **knowledge, although vital, only brings us to a place of choice without making the choice for us.**
- When we know what the Word says on any given topic, **we are still at liberty to choose against it.** God's heart for us, as very clearly spelled out when **He implores His people to choose life, is that we should live and prosper.**
- **In spite of His desire for us to flourish, our own decision as to the options of blessing and curse that is given to us in the Word is the determining factor with regards to the outcome we will experience.**

A LIFE OF VICTORY IS ONLY POSSIBLE WHEN WE TAP INTO THE WORD OF GOD

Although it is evident throughout the Word that conquest and victory are part of our God-given make-up and that the Lord therefore expects us to live lives that reflect this, it is only possible if we tap in the Lord through the Word.

- In Matt 12:33 we learn that **a tree is known by its fruit and that we speak out of the abundance of our hearts.**
- **We need only to listen to what we are saying in our everyday life and interaction to know what the content of our hearts is.**
- **Should this not be in line with what the word says, the answer lies not in changing our speech but rather in changing our heart?**

HEART LEVEL CHANGE IS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD AND SPIRIT

Heart-level-change is only possible through the working of the Holy Spirit as we spend time in God's presence.

- **True repentance as evidenced in a changed heart and altered behaviour always happens in the presence of the Lord before it happens anywhere else.** When we repent before the Lord, He forgives us and cleanses us of all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9)
- Refusing to acknowledge that we have sinned and are in need of forgiveness **is evidence towards the fact that we do not have the Word in us.**
- **Because we acknowledge and understand our desperate need for God to forgive and change us, we spend time in fasting and prayer.**

CONTINUAL GROWTH ONLY HAPPENS THROUGH THE WORD OF GOD

Through our relationship with the Lord we continually learn and grow.

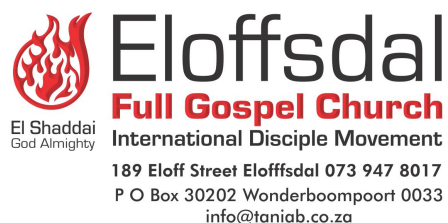
- Our practical application of what we've learnt position us to speak and teach accordingly.
- Since we live by the words of our mouths, on a daily basis speaking our worlds into existence, it is vital for our survival to have the Word (the apostle's doctrine) inside us.
- In addition to this we need to learn from people whose teaching carries the weight of their lives and also in turn be teachers that teach through personal testimony.

Isaiah 55:10-11 gives us the beautiful promise that not a single word spoken by God will ever return to Him without having done what it was sent to do.

- His Word in our mouths provides others with spiritual bread from which they can eat and be nurtured.
- It is also a source of seed from which others can sow into their circle of influence.
- Just like a farmer that sows and then patiently waits for the seed to grow we should continue sowing the seed of the Word even if we don't see immediate results.

I WANT TO FINISH WITH THE FOLLOWING REMINDER FROM PART 1:

- Every time you meditate and plant seed in your heart you are starting a process of growth that cannot be stopped.
- To the measure that you put time in to seek God will determine the measure of your growth.



If you would like to speak to someone about your situation, we would love to help you and pray with you. Please contact the El Shaddai FGC Offices or you can email us at info@taniab.co.za