

Your Spiritual Secret to Bearing Kingdom Fruit

In a recent devotional, we discussed how we learn about faith from others, and today, we will learn to grow our faith by the study of God's Word.

Jesus shares with us a parable in Luke 8:14-15 about how faith grows in different types of spiritual soil. Let's look to these Scriptures to learn how to grow our faith. "And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience."

Obviously, when we read this portion of Scripture, we sense a pricking in our spirit, and we do not want to be found among those with thorny spiritual soil. But how do we prevent this from happening in our faith walk with Jesus? What measures can we take to prevent thorns from producing in our spiritual soil? Firstly, we need to examine our own hearts, judge our thoughts, words and actions against the Word of God. Ask ourselves, "Have I allowed life's worries to overrun my mind and emotions?" "Are the riches and pleasures of this world controlling me?" "Am I in the same condition, spiritually speaking, as I was last year in this area of life?" If when we judge our hearts and find that our faith seeds have been choked out by the weeds of this world, we need to pull the weed seeds out of our spiritual gardens, change out the soil and replant our gardens. How do we do this?

- Admit to God that we are not where we should be in our faith walk.
- Ask Him to forgive us for allowing the things of this world to choke out our faith.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you into all truth.
- Open up your Bible and read it, study it, speak it and

this time, live it.

After reading this portion of Scripture from Luke 8:14-15, can you honestly say to yourself that you have overcome these weaknesses and temptations in your life and are stronger in the faith than you were last year? You will know that you are growing in the faith as you can look at the fruit being produced in your life. Healthy vegetation produces from good soil that is filled with the necessary nutrients to produce good fruit. But even though you may have a strong crop now in your life, you still must maintain a lifestyle in the Word of God. For even strong and healthy soil, if not tended to properly, will get depleted and only be able to produce thorns, those spiritual weed seeds that are not healthy for us and hurt us in our physical lives.

In Joshua 1:8, God shares the secret to growing our faith and living it out successfully, "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

Let's pray this simple but heartfelt prayer together:

Father God, In the name of Jesus, as I examine my faith walk, I see things that I know are displeasing to You and are preventing me from being where I should be with You, spiritually speaking. Forgive me for allowing the cares of this world to suppress my faith and prevent it from growing strong. Holy Spirit, I ask You to lead me and guide me into all truths in Your ways as I make a quality decision and open up my Bible and read, study, speak and live out Your Word today. In Jesus' name I pray, amen. {eo}

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