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We are diving today into **HOW GOD'S WORD WORKS, Part 2**. The Word of God is not just information; it is the MOST transformative power on earth! It can take the lowest, most broken sinner and completely transform them into a son or daughter of the living God! (QR code: Understanding God's Word)



But what is my role in seeing God's Word come alive in me? It begins with hearing, not just with our physical ears, but with our spiritual ears, a heart that desires to hear His Voice. In fact, faith comes by our hearing His Word as we lean in with focused, expectant attention. (Proverbs 4:20-22; Romans 10:17)

The condition of my heart determines how God's Word works in my life.

Jesus used the **four soils** in **Luke 8:4-15** (also Matthew 13:3-23 and Mark 4:2-20) as a vivid illustration of the condition of the human heart and its ability (or inability) to receive the seed of God's Word. In Mark 4:13, Jesus even said that if we do not understand this parable, we will not be able to understand any of the parables. Hearing the Word is not the issue, **the condition of the heart** is what determines whether the Word bears fruit or not.

Jesus described the heart as four very different kinds of soil. Each one reveals how the heart responds to the seed of God's Word...

1. **THE PATH** | Here the seed of God's Word does not penetrate the hardened heart, and Satan immediately steals the Word so that there's no fruit.
 - **Biblical people:** The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law. Matthew 13:10-17 *Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand... For this people's heart has become calloused...* (John 5:37-38)
 - **Action:** A hard (hardened) heart is often a proud heart, like the Pharisees. Genuine repentance with a corresponding action and humility are required.
2. **BEDROCK** | This soil represents the hidden places in our lives—deep wounds, resentment, and unconfessed sin. God's Word begins to grow, but eventually it collides with those hardened areas. Many "believe," but it is often only a mental agreement rather than full surrender. When truth confronts them, they fall away because the Word never penetrated deeply enough to bring true transformation.
 - King Saul (1 Samuel 10-15) began with humility and prophesied, but fell away due to pride, disobedience, and insecurity.
 - Many heard the truth from the Lord but turned away because it offended them. (John 6:60-66)

John Mark is a powerful illustration of someone who received the Word, believed, and even experienced ministry, but when pressure, fear, or discomfort hit the hardened places in his heart, he abandoned Paul at a critical time in ministry! (Acts 15:36-41) However, through repentance and a change in mindset, the rock was broken he became one of Paul's dear partners. (2 Timothy 4:11) He also went on to write the Gospel of Mark for Peter!!

- **Action:** Jeremiah 23:29 *"Is not my word like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?"* His presence (fire) reveals what's covering the hard places in our hearts, and His Word (hammer) cracks the rock. Our part is to submit ourselves to His Word, believe it, and let it shape our thoughts and our behavior.

3. **WEEDS** | Just as weeds choke out nutrients in the soil, the pursuit of money, identity, comfort, pleasure, and self-focus chokes out spiritual growth, preventing God's Word from maturing and producing fruit.

- **Bible people:**

In Matthew 19:16-22 the rich young ruler was unable to act on Jesus' invitation because of his wealth and possessions. He received Jesus' words joyfully at first, but when Jesus' call touched his treasure, the "thorns wrapped tight."

God's Word was choked by greed and worldly image in Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5:1-11)

In 2 Timothy 4:10, Paul writes that one of his co-laborers, Demas, deserted him because he "loved this world." Demas started strong in ministry, but the pull of worldly desires grew until it crowded out the Word of God in his life."

Note: This is the most common soil among believers today. The seed is good, but it's **crowded out** by busyness, anxiety, ambition, and the pursuit of comfort.

- **Action:** Weeds grow naturally; fruit grows intentionally. Identify what competes for your attention and make a solid decision to "weed" your life frequently! Repent and turn from the idolatry of our American society and the things it values! Remove distractions, simplify life, and put God's purpose first again.

4. **THE GOOD SOIL** | This soil represents the heart that's prepared and not cluttered with competing priorities or worldly values. Here God's Word doesn't just take root... it grows, matures, and produces lasting fruit. The Greek is "echo," being pregnant with it, and patiently bearing fruit through endurance.

- **Biblical people:**

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is an example of good soil. When God spoke, she responded with faith and full surrender: "Let it be to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)

Paul showed the same pattern. Once a persecutor, his life became extraordinarily fruitful when he surrendered his life to Christ (Acts 9) and brought the Gospel to the Gentile world!

- **Action:** Good soil isn't perfection, it is a pliable heart that believes, obeys, and by persevering produces fruit.
- Keep your heart soft through repentance. Stay consistent in your walk with the Lord. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead and shape the important areas of your life. Every day, we are one of the four soils.
- The real question is: *What kind of soil will my heart be today?* It's a daily "heart check," intentionally creating space for God, dealing quickly with what might steal the growth of God's Word in our lives.