

# Cultivating the Heart

Jesus often used agricultural metaphors to teach spiritual truths. One great example of this is in “The Parable of the Sower” (Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23). The sower is the teacher, the seed is God’s word, and the four soils represent hearts. The soils represent the various ways in which people will respond to the gospel. The only productive soil that pleases God is the good one (Matthew 13:23).

We don’t develop soils that bear fruit for the Lord overnight. It takes patience and a lot of cultivating our hearts. Let’s consider four ways to nurture and water the seed.

## By Learning

- The word of God must be both planted and watered in our hearts (1 Corinthians 3:5-7).
- We must continually fill ourselves with the knowledge of God’s will (Colossians 1:9-10).
- We must be humble enough to acknowledge our need to know more about the Lord and the amazing grace He offers (1 Peter 2:1-2; 2 Peter 1:6; 3:18).
- We water our hearts with God’s word when we read it every day, come to Bible classes, and take advantage of the numerous online teaching resources.

## By Evaluating

- God demands that we practice the things that we learn from His word (James 1:22-25). God’s word is a mirror that reveals how we look spiritually and how our hearts look before God.
- It is not enough to merely read the Bible and hear sermons. We also have to do it! We also have to make sure that we are implementing the teaching!
- This is the point that Paul is making when he uses the metaphor “walk” (Colossians 1:10; 2:6-7). The language refers to living for Jesus. It refers to walking in a manner in harmony with the gospel.

## By Protecting

- God demands that we guard and protect our hearts (2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8; Psalm 119:9; Proverbs 4:23).
- We must protect our hearts against immorality (Matthew 5:27-28).
- We must protect the hearts of our children (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 4:23).
- We must protect our hearts against hypocrisy (Matthew 5:8).
- We must protect our hearts against false teaching (2 Timothy 4:1-4).

## By Trusting

- Trusting God is something that we must do from our hearts. We need to trust His word, promises, and goodness (Psalm 23:6).
- Trusting in God’s goodness involves understanding that He will do what is best for us in every part of our lives. It consists in trusting Him when we pray, suffer, and grow in the kingdom.
- We must trust that if we cultivate the field our hearts with His word, in time, the crop He has promised will come forth (Matthew 13:23).

## Conclusion:

Is your heart right with God?

- Shawn Jeffries