



INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Dr. Peter D. Wyns

Entry 6 - 8

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Passing the Faith Test

I do not want the soil of your heart to be hard, weedy, rocky or shallow, but some people have a heart like that. Jesus told the story of the sower and the importance of receiving the seed of God's kingdom. He classified people according to how they hear and respond to His word. Those who hear God's word and embrace it have good soil in their heart; they have a heart full of faith. That faith will continue to grow if they make room for it. Your heart must be tender, like a farmer's field that has been tilled. The farmer breaks up the soil to make it soft and loamy, ready for a good crop. This is an important detail for your life. Yield your heart to the farmer; keep the soil tender or God's word may depart from you, get snatched up by the devil, or be choked out by the world.

Jesus said, "*A farmer went out to sow his seed ... some fell along the path ... some fell on rocky places ... other seed fell among thorns ... still other seed fell on good soil.*" Mt. 13:3-8, 18-23

It is possible to lose the seed of God's word and lose your faith as well. The devil steals the seeds on the path of a hard heart. Persecution and troubles will cause the seed to fall away on rocky soil. Worries or riches can choke God's word on the thorny ground.

All of these soil types received God's word in the beginning, but when hearts refuse to be tender, the word of God is taken from them. Originally, the seed was received, but some of it landed on the path, the rocky places or on thorny ground. Many folks receive God's word initially, but not everyone will humble themselves so that their faith can endure. The real test is not who receives God's word in the beginning, but who will allow it to live in their hearts through all of life's trials. Faithfulness is the real test of faith. Do you need a spiritual check-up and a spiritual tune-up?

Everyone can pass this test because the farmer's field is large and full of good soil. God has made room for us; He is the Lord of the harvest and we are His field.

The thorns, the hardened path and the rocky places are on the edges of a field. No Christian should live near the edges of the field because the seed can be moved due to harsh winds, floods or interference from birds or animals. Someone, who has at one time, surrendered to Christ can lose the good soil of faith because of life's disappointments. Likewise the seed that first landed on the path (a hard heart) can be blown onto good soil if the lessons of life bring tenderness, humility and faith.

A test of faith is won when we guard our heart and keep it tender in the time of trouble. Then, the soil remains good and faith continues to grow. Millions of people have passed the faith test and you can as well. For a good example, look at the faith of Joseph.

"By faith, Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones." Heb. 11:21

Joseph had faith, even when his end was near. The Israelites would one day, leave Egypt and he wanted his bones to go with them to the Holy Land. Four hundred years later it happened, like he said.

Faith was still alive at the end of Joseph's life. That means he passed the faith test. He kept his heart tender and God's word continued to find good soil in him. He faced extreme trials. They could have caused him to lose his faith. He came under pressure and the soil of his heart could have shifted from being good soil to being thorny, rocky or hardened on the path of adversity and disappointment.

Compare his trials with your own.

1. Joseph started on good soil. He had powerful prophetic dreams that pointed toward greatness.
2. He was thrown into a pit, betrayed and almost killed by his brothers. That is the rocky soil of trials and persecution.
3. He became head of Potiphar's house and was busy with the business of life. That is the thorny ground that could have led him away from God.
4. He was falsely accused of attempting to rape his boss' wife and was thrown in prison. That is more rocky ground.
5. He was kept in prison for years. His heart could have become hardened like the soil on the path. Then, when he was dis-

couraged and things did not make sense, the devil could have snatched the word of God away from him and stole his faith.

6. After years passed he was released from prison and became the Prime Minister of Egypt. He was tempted with the distractions of wealth and worldliness (thorny ground) but he kept the faith and a tender heart.
7. When his brothers came to Egypt, Joseph was still tender hearted. He embraced them and continued to walk with God. He retained the good soil of his heart. He allowed his faith to grow by continuing to hear and embrace the will of God.

Now it's your turn to face the faith test.

1. Have you allowed your struggles to bring hardness and doubt? Have you withdrawn from God to the hard path where the devil can steal the word of faith from your heart?
2. Has persecution from enemies or betrayal from brothers or sisters led you to the rocky soil of bitterness, emptiness or numbness?
3. Has wealth or worldliness led you to the thorny ground of distraction and separated you from God?
4. Throughout your life, have you kept your heart tender before God even though you have faced terrible disappointments and endured many unbearable hardships?
5. Do you hear God clearly?
6. Do you understand and embrace His ways more than ever before?
7. Do you have more love, faith and peace than ever before?

If you can answer no to the first 3 questions and yes to the last 4, then there is good soil in your heart. If not, I suggest that your heart has become hardened, weedy or rocky. You need the farmer to break up the fallow ground and renew a right spirit within you.

Recently, we saw hundreds of people receive healing and deliverance, but one man in the crowd did not receive his breakthrough. He needed to humble himself. I explained that he must begin to speak faith and have a good confession, but he would not even repeat a good confession when I led him in prayer. He refused, saying, he had to be honest. He would only confess the mess he was in. That bad confession told the demons about his failure and their success. He was only fueling and strengthening his enemy. Pride, intellectualism, and a hard heart, blocked his faith. Jesus said that the quality of the soil in our heart is based on how well we hear and receive. I gave this man advice, but he refused to hear it. He would not allow good soil into his heart.

Take a look at your heart. You may need to some healing. If you lack peace, love or faith, then humble yourself before the Lord, repent of your sin, forgive others, and speak good confessions. The farmer will come, put you back in the field, and restore good soil in your life. You are destined to bring forth 30, 60 or even 100 times what was sown. **AΩ**



Christians for Messiah Ministries

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