

## It's Difficult to Know What Type of Soil We are.

I have noticed that Christians tend to avoid thinking about many scary things that Jesus said, perhaps assuming that they don't mean what they seem to say. But what if they mean exactly what they appear to say?

In all three of the synoptic gospels, Jesus told a parable by describing four types of soil.<sup>1</sup> Because He explained the meaning of the parable to His disciples, we can understand it with certainty. The implications should strike fear into all of us because only the people represented by the fourth type of soil will be in heaven. All people represented by the other three soils are headed for everlasting punishment in hell.

If a man is not frightened by this parable, it is because he thinks he is one of those represented by the fourth type of soil which Jesus calls "good soil." Just yesterday, a good brother told me that he is 99.9 percent sure of it.

All of us want to think that we are part of the good soil. By writing this article, I am not saying that we are not part of the good soil. But if you can be patient with me, let me ask a question as a means to provoke thought and discussion. What if none of us are part of the good soil? I realize that just by raising this question in this way, many Christians who read this far will dismiss this entire article as fringe and stop reading at this point. But what if I can show you that there is biblical reason for me to raise this question? (And again, I am not saying that we are not a part of the good soil here.) Let us consider the soil types briefly.

**Type one:** People who have heard the gospel but did not comprehend it.

**Type two:** People who heard the gospel, receive it with joy, but they stop following Jesus when persecution or trials arise.

**Type three:** People who hear the gospel and begin following Jesus but later become unfruitful because they get wrapped up in the cares of this age and the comfort that money affords.

**Type four:** People who hear the gospel and follow Jesus even when trials and persecutions arise and their lives contain righteous fruit of varying degrees.

Since we claim to be born again, Bible-believing Christians who understand and believe the gospel, we can probably conclude that we are not characterized by the first type of soil. But are we a part of the second soil type? For most of us, there is not conclusive evidence that would allow us to eliminate this possibility. After all, most of us have not had the occasion of facing the type of persecution that we read about in our New Testaments. While we may be a part of the good soil, how can we know for certain that we are not a part of soil type two?<sup>2</sup>

In harmony with Jesus' teachings, Paul taught that the only people who will "make it to heaven" are those who suffer (and continue suffering) with Jesus. He said that we are "*heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together*" (Romans 8:17).

---

<sup>1</sup> **Matthew 13:19-23** *When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. <sup>20</sup> "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup> "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. <sup>22</sup> "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. <sup>23</sup> "But he who received seed on the good soil is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

<sup>2</sup> This should be even more concerning for people who are afraid to tell unbelievers that they are Christians.

[Back to the Free Articles and Media page.](#)

Paul told the Christians at Thessalonica that their endurance through persecution and trials was clear evidence that their manner of living to that point was worthy of the kingdom of God.

*“We ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, <sup>5</sup> which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer” (2 Thessalonians 1:4-5).*

At this point in their lives as Christians, they had good reason to conclude that they were not a part of the second soil type since they have been enduring the persecution and trials. Since most of us have not experienced that type of persecution, we have no conclusive proof that if it suddenly were to come upon us, we would continue to follow Jesus. So, at this point, it is difficult for us to rule out the possibility that we might be type two soil.

Probably more troubling is our consideration of the third soil type. While we can't rule out the possibility that we might be type two soil, is there reason to conclude that we actually are type three soil? I am speaking now to Christians living in 21<sup>st</sup> century America. By the standard of the New Testament, most of us have been living the luxurious life of the rich man described in Jesus' parable in the sixteenth chapter of Luke.

Those described as the third soil did not immediately apostatize like those of the type two soil. It was a gradual process over time that caused the righteous fruit to diminish and then be choked out. Like a frog in water that slowly comes to a boil, they were unaware of what was happening to them. The people of the third soil type have no idea that they are on their way to hell. They think that their hearts might be a little cold but since they still hold to their doctrinal beliefs, they assume they are headed for heaven.

In light of our cushy life that has not undergone significant persecution, can we really be 99.9 percent sure that we are not a part of the type two or type three soils? The only people who should have the strongest confidence that they will be in heaven are those who suffer with Jesus and continue to suffer with Him. I am not saying here that all of the Christians living today in the United States are headed for hell. I am merely pointing to scripture that should cause us to be prayerfully concerned.

But there is a biblical remedy and it is likely coming our way before too long. If you have not noticed the utter insanity of the world around us lately<sup>3</sup>, wake up. Suddenly, the world may start hunting down Christians so they can be exterminated. If you do not sense the growing animosity, maybe you need to start watching a little non-Fake news. If you don't know where to look for it, email me and I will give you some suggestions.

Note: If you are growing weary of articles like this, please remember that each of us has different spiritual gifts. Mine incline me to write stuff like this.

*Thomas Bear, June 9, 2019*

Οὐαὶ μοί ἐστιν ἂν μὴ εὐαγγελίζωμαι (Προς Κορινθίους Α 9:16)

---

<sup>3</sup> Just to clarify, I am NOT talking about President Trump. On the contrary, I am talking about the rampant lawlessness and growing animosity against all things that God calls righteous, including His saints.