

Listen, watch, or read the sermon on the website if you missed it. Turn to the back for an outline of the sermon.

This weeks reading the 2015/16 reading plan included: Genesis 1-4; Matthew 1-4

Ice-Breaker: What was the best or worst “beginning” or “start” that you ever had at something?

1. Together read the Parable of the Sower in Luke 8:4-8, 11-15. Jeff essentially categorized the soils as rejecting God’s word, neglecting God’s word, crowding God’s word, or treasuring God’s word.
  1. Discuss the differences between these soils. What would each one look like in our time and culture? (Don’t get hung-up on trying to discern if the first three soils can be a believer or not)
  2. Tell the group which soil you honestly think describes the current state of your heart attitude toward God’s word.
2. Jeff described a major problem with our soil as humans.
  1. What is the necessary first step in tending to our hearts as natural humans and why?
  2. Tell the group when you took that step and briefly state what brought you to this.
3. The first four verses of Proverbs 2 contain the instructions of our loving heavenly Father.
  1. How would you summarize the instructions from this section of the Proverb? Be sure to discern the different levels of engagement (head and heart) and the various parts.
  2. Which part of the instruction would you say you have not been following?
4. Jeff suggested that Proverbs 2 gives us instruction to till the soil of our hearts.
  1. What were the messages he suggested for the different soils?
  2. And what would it look like to apply each message in your life?
5. Jeff challenged us to make being good soil our highest resolve in 2015.
  1. Do you intend to do this? If so, how?

Sermon Outline:

## **Being Good Soil**

**My Actions:** (Found in vv. 1-4)

- Look or listen carefully to see clearly what is in God's word
- Devote myself to understand truly what it says
- Seek the help of the Holy Spirit by persistent prayer and reliance upon God
- Make the pursuit of knowing God the highest pursuit of my life

**God's Response:** (Found in vv. 5-15)

- He teaches me to submit my life to his rule and to have communion with him
- He transforms me... changing what my mind considers wisdom and what my heart delights in

**The Outcome:** (Found in vv. 16-22)

- I am delivered from the captivity of sin and death
- I am given the blessing of obedience and life