



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC After the Altar

SPEAKER

Ps Darren Kuek

THEME Redigging the Brethren Well

DATE

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13), Jesus describes four ways in which we can respond to His Word. But only one of these ways bear fruit for the Kingdom of God. In this sermon, Ps Darren led the church to explore factors that hinder our fruitfulness for the Lord, and the approach and attitude that we should adopt in order to be fruitful.

WHAT PREVENTS FRUITFULNESS IN OUR LIVES?

1) The Hard Soil (Matthew 13:19): Issue of Posture

The first thing that hinders fruitfulness is the lack of understanding of the Word. This however does not refer to an intellectual issue, but rather, a posture that arises from nonchalance to the Word of God. When we listen carelessly, and not intently, to the Word, it does not go into our hearts, which renders the Word ineffective. The opportunity to bear fruit is then stolen away. This is the hard soil – a person with little or no understanding of the word.

The good soil on the other hand is a heart that adopts the right posture with the intent to listen with understanding.

How then can we gain understanding, and posture our hearts to listen?

- Have the fear of the Lord (Proverbs 9:9-10) : Adopt a posture of humility, reverence and a holy fear of the Word whenever it is being shared.
- Remove Preconceived Prejudices: Have an open heart and mind to receive the Word of God and be receptive to teachings and corrections. Instead of focusing on the seeds (miracles), let's focus on making the soil (ourselves) good.
- Meditate on the Word: Review, ponder and meditate repeatedly on the Word that was taught and allow ourselves to gain understanding from the Lord.

2) The Rocky Soil (Matthew 13:20 - 21): Issue of Perseverance

The second thing that hinders fruitfulness is the lack of deep roots in the Word. We may grow wide during times of plenty, but it is in times of trials and tribulations that we begin to search and dig deeper into the Word. By persevering, pressing on and holding fast in difficult times, we anchor ourselves in the Lord and grow.

How can we continue to grow dependent and grow deep in God during difficult times?

- God's Presence (Philippians 4:7)/; Come before God, present our requests to Him, and His peace will guard our heart.
- God's People: Find a band of brothers and sisters with whom we can journey and share our struggles with.

We should persevere and dig deep in God's presence and trust that He will see us through and bring about the kind of fruits that He has for us in our lives.

3) The Thorny Soil (Matthew 13:22): Issue of Priority

The last thing that hinders fruitfulness are the cares of life (family, work, studies, provision, pleasure) which preoccupy our mind and take away our capacity to bear fruit. Though these are legitimate concerns, it becomes an issue when we put these above the place of Jesus in our lives. We may become very busy with everything else, such that we have no time to bear fruit for God.

How do we put God's Kingdom in first place?

- By practising unceasing prayer: We can do so by keeping an open channel of communication with God throughout the day. When we seek Him first, we can trust that He gives us exactly what we need (Matthew 6:33).

CONCLUSION

Bearing fruit is dependent on what happens after we hear the Word of God. We can be doing many things and think that we are being fruitful. But the question we should be asking ourselves is, "Am I fruitful in the eyes of God?" It is about running the right race to bear fruits for His Kingdom (Matthew 13:23).

Let us posture ourselves to listen to His Words with intent, persevere through hard times, and prioritise His Kingdom first at all times. Don't chase after shadows, don't be in the wrong race. We want to be fruitful for God and hear Him say at the end, "Well done, my good and faithful servant!"

QUESTIONS

1. How does God define fruitfulness? Share some examples of fruits that God wants us to bear as believers.

2. In what ways are you like the hard soil, the rocky soil or the thorny soil and why? Share honestly on where you think you are at right now.

3. Ps Darren shared about of a man of God, Mr Thio Gim Hock, the CEO of OUE, who humbled himself to receive the call of evangelism at an altar call, which resulted in many salvations. Think of someone you know who has the right posture in responding to God's Word and the godly fruits that they bear. How does this inspire you to live your life for God?