

Study 11

DON'T HATE, DON'T LIE, DON'T NEGLECT THE WORD

First Peter 2:1-3

Decisions. We all make them. Even not making a decision is making a decision. The fact that we can make decisions reinforces the notion that God has created us with the power to choose. Perhaps every step we take in life is based on the *choices and decisions* we make. Becoming a Christian involved a choice and a decision.

1. Observe Colossians 2:6. What relationship does a person's original conversion have to their on-going walk with the Lord?

2. What kind of conversion is God looking for in people? (Psalm 119:2; Jer. 24:7; Matthew 22:37)

Jesus told a parable of seed sown in four kinds of soil. Each different kind of soil resulted in different levels of success. The soil that was open, broken and moist was the soil that bore the best crop. In the same way Jesus was making two points. Firstly, as evangelists of His gospel, we can expect mixed results. Secondly, He was saying that we can respond to God's Word in different ways.

OUR HEARTS ARE OUR FARMS

A grain farmer must maintain his soil. It is his livelihood. He knows how to irrigate it. He knows how to rest it. He knows how to sow it. But he also needs to be able to prepare it for sowing. When he rests his land, it is called fallow land.

- 3. What relationship does God make to a farmer's fallow land, and the preparation required in our hearts in order to be fruitful for Him, in Hosea 10:12?

- 4. But before the farmer can plant in his fallow ground, he must do something. What did God tell Jeremiah to do that resembles this task of the farmer? (Jer. 1:10)

Just as our hearts are like a farmer's field, they are also susceptible to weeds and other foreign things that take root. Peter mentions five things that specifically may have taken root in believers' lives. Note these five deadly weeds and discuss how they might be planted in a heart -

Malice _____

Deceit _____

Hypocrisy _____

Envy _____

Slander _____

Along with these things that take root in our lives, the New Testament also mentions some others- bitterness (Heb. 12:15), and the love of money (1 Tim. 6:10).

- 5. In First Peter 2:1, who does Peter say is responsible for the removal of these weeds from our lives?

FILL THE VOID

The process of ridding ourselves of these weeds is supplemented by replacing them with something that is fruitful.

6. What are believers told to replace these things with by craving for something instead? (1Pt 2:2)

7. What is the aim of this craving? (1Peter 2:2)

Salvation is being born again. But it is also an ongoing experience. Just as when a baby is born, there was growth that made that possible, and that same kind of growth continues in the life of that baby after they're born, so with our conversion. When we become a new Christian, we are born again and we are like spiritual babies. Our first cravings are for milk. Our spiritual milk is knowledge of the Word of God.

Our salvation gives us a taste that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8). This motivates us on to maturity. We need to have the milk of the Word to nourish us onto spiritual maturity where we crave for the meat of God's Word. May we be like a tree planted by streams of living water as we meditate day and night on God's Word and obey what we read.

Amen.