

“Tilling The Soil Of The Heart” #2

- Ron Stullenbarger -

We are looking at a vital spiritual practice to all those seeking to grow in God: *tilling the soil of the heart*. Jesus spoke in Matthew 13 of two different types of soil — hard and soft. God longs for us to till the soil of our hearts that we might be receptive to the seed of His word and bear fruit.

One of the most powerful ways to till the soil of the heart is through **worship**. Authentic worship is a powerful exchange of God pouring His love out on us and us giving Him our hearts in return. In worshipping through singing, our hearts naturally become soft and receptive to God’s love as we encounter His goodness and engage in adoration of the only One worthy of our affections.

God created music with an innate ability to affect us at our core. Music has the power to fill us with peace, joy, and anger; it can cause tears to well up in our eyes and even make the most mundane events beautiful. Songs can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us. By consistently engaging in worship through singing, we provide a framework for the Holy Spirit both to till the soil of our hearts and to fill us with the seeds of God’s presence and perfect character.

The Bible is brimming with admonishment to worship through song. Paul tells us in Colossians 3:16, *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”* Hebrews 12:28 says, *“Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.”* Scripture is so clear about the importance of worship because God longs for us to be a people marked by consistent reminders of His unconditional love. He longs for us to live in response to His presence and plans rather than struggling through life by placing our trust in the world over Him.

God longs to reveal His heart to us in worship. He longs to meet us in our room, car, workplace, and “house of worship.” We were created to encounter God and engage in the recurring act of giving and receiving love throughout our day. When we worship here on earth, we posture our heart towards eternity. Making the willful choice to give our affections to the One we will spend eternity with, we also discover our purpose for which we were made: to live in unhindered communion with our heavenly Father.

If you feel like the soil of your heart is hard -- that your life isn’t marked by the fruit of the Spirit or you can’t escape from a temptation — simply take some time and encounter God in worship. Of course, “worship” is much broader than just corporate worship. God’s presence is wholly available to us today. His love and grace are steadfast towards us. May our time in prayer be marked by the nearness and power of the Holy Spirit as we encounter the unconditional love of God.