

**Be careful how you listen... (Luke 8:4-15)**

Type of Soil	Why?	How?
<p><b>Path (v5)</b></p>	<p><i>We can hear God's word but Satan loves to snatch it away (v12)</i></p>	<p><b>How should we pray before, during and after a Bible Study/Sermon/Quiet Time?</b>  <i>Pray during the week expecting God to speak. Pray for those leading/preaching but also pray for ourselves to receive it. Pray that God wouldn't allow Satan to snatch away what we hear.            Pray at the beginning of the study but also at the end of study and pray about what we are going to hear/read not just needs of the group. This is a spiritual battlefield so let's pray accordingly.            Pray that God would help us not only to hear and understand what he's saying but also help us to do what he's telling us to do.</i></p>
<p><b>Rocky Ground (v6)</b></p>	<p><i>We can hear God's word and initially respond with joy but it doesn't last because of tough times (v13)</i></p>	<p><b>How can we prepare for trials so that we won't wither when they come?</b>  <i>This is perhaps the hardest of the application questions so don't worry if you don't get too much from it. Try to focus the discussion on how we prepare before trials come rather than how we respond when trials come. One simple way to prepare is to make sure that we are regularly hearing the Bible taught on Sundays, regularly studying it in Home Groups and regularly reading it for ourselves. These will help us to develop the perseverance we need when tough times come.</i></p>
<p><b>Thorns (v7)</b></p>	<p><i>We can hear God's word but it's choked by either the good or bad things of life (v14)</i></p>	<p><b>What good and/or bad things do you find most distracting?</b>  <i>In our busy affluent lives there are so many good and bad things that can distract us from spending time reading, hearing and studying God's word. For each of us there will be different things such as work, the busyness of family life, social lives, leisure etc. In many cases these are good things, gifts that God has given us to enjoy. The danger is that these good things become distractions.</i></p> <p><b>What good or bad things get in the way of you being at church/ Home Group/ having a Quiet Time?            What can you change?</b>  <i>This requires a bit of real honesty. Perhaps therefore it would be best to break the group into smaller groups of 2s and 3s to discuss this. For some of us our weekends are so full of things that we don't have the time or energy to be at church on Sundays. For others of us the busyness of work during the week makes home group hard to get to. Similarly there could be all types of distractions that stop us reading the Bible for ourselves. Hopefully the group can help one another to see what practical changes might help.</i></p>

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<p><b>Good Soil (v8)</b></p>	<p><i>We will produced a harvest if we hear God's word, retain it in our hearts and persevere in obeying it (v15)</i></p>	<p><b>What will help us to retain God's word after a sermon, Home Group or Quiet Time?</b>  <i>Writing down 1 thing that you are going to change/ do because of what you've read/heard. Come back to that every day in your Quiet Time and pray about it.</i>  <i>Choosing 1 verse from the passage that you are going to memorise to help you apply God's word.</i></p> <p>What will help us to keep on obeying what we've heard from God's word?  <i>Focus more on application - see second session.</i></p> <p>What practical things could you do differently to help your group be better at doing and not just hearing God's word?  <i>Encourage the group to read the passage before coming.</i>  <i>Begin each week by talking and praying about the applications from the previous week? How have things changed? How can the group keep praying for one another? If you agreed to memorise a verse then can people remember it? How has it helped them?</i></p>