

Persevering and Producing

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Different Results

- Ignoring or rejecting the Word
- Immediate joy in receiving the Word, but shriveling when the heat is on.
- Hearing but not maturing because the Word is choked by cares and pleasures
- Hearing, understanding, growing to maturity, and producing fruit.

Can someone be saved but then be lost?

**A true believer cannot be lost.
Eternal life cannot die away.**

“And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should **lose nothing of all that he has given me**, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have **eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day.” (John 6:39-40)

Imperishable, inseparable

“I give them eternal life, and they will **never perish**, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.” (John 10:26-30)

Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

Perseverance of the saints (eternal security)

All those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives. Only those who persevere to the end have truly been born again. (Wayne Grudem)

Does the parable of the soils contradict perseverance of the saints, or confirm it?

A reborn heart understands, perseveres, and produces

As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and **understands** it. (Matthew 13:23)

But the seed on good soil stands for those with **a noble and good heart**, who hear the word, retain it, and **by persevering produce a crop**. (Luke 8:15)

Why results differ

To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, **nor do they understand.** (Matt 13:11-13)

Why results differ

I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will... no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. (Matthew 11:25-27)

Many are called, but few are chosen. (22:14)

Four kinds of hearts

- **Hard hearts:** path
- **Shallow hearts:** rocky soil
- **Cluttered hearts:** thorny soil
- **Noble hearts:** good soil

Hard hearts

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. (Matt 13:19)

- Hardened by anti-Christian education and entertainment
- Hardened by skepticism and cynicism
- Hardened by years of church and Bible
- Hardened by repeated stubbornness

Shallow hearts

This is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. (Matt 13:20-21) ...they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away” (Luke 8:13)

- Feel-good faith, instant gratification
- 5% of crusade converts join & stay in church
- 70% leave church by age 22; 80% by age 30

Going deeper

Deeper relationships: "Though research is ongoing, it is already revealing a promising pattern: youth involved in intergenerational relationships in church are showing promise for stronger faith in high school and beyond." (*Leadership*, Sept. 2009) Yet the article neglects parents and home discipleship.

Deeper gospel: Plant real seed (Scripture), and cultivate depth (real conversion). Why chase big (but short-lived) numbers in shallow soil?

Cluttered hearts

The cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. (Matt 13:22)

...choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life (Luke 8:14)

- Worries, hassles, arguments, busyness
- Family, TV, toys, studies, job, golf
Facebook, friends, finances, shopping
- No space to study and live the gospel

Noble hearts

This is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.” (Matt 13:23)

The seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart (Luke 8:15).

- Understands gospel and counts cost
- A good heart has been made ready

Soil preparation

- *The seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart. (Luke 8:15)*
- Break up your unplowed ground and do not sow among thorns. (Jeremiah 4:3)
- Break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord. (Hosea 10:12)
- Rid yourselves of all offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. (Ezekiel 18:30-31)

Given new birth, guarded by God

According to his great mercy, **he has caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, **who by God's power are being guarded through faith** for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter 1:3-5)

Chosen to bear fruit

- You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last (John 15:16).
- But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. (James 1:18)

Persevering and producing

If you are not persevering and producing, you were never truly born again.

- But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Matthew 10:22, 24:13)
- For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. (Hebrews 3:14)
- If we endure, we will also reign with him (1 Timothy 2:12).

Keep on keeping on

Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised... But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls. (Hebrews 10:35-39)

God preserves. We persevere.

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness...

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. (2 Peter 1:3,10)

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. (Philippians 2:12-13)