

## Perfect Husbandry

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### Scriptures:

Ephesians 3:14-19

Jeremiah 17:7-8

Colossians 2:6-7

Psalm 1

Luke 8:4-8,11-15

We have a huge oak tree on our property that drops hundreds of acorns each year. If we don't get out there quickly enough and rake them all up we end up with a lot of baby trees that are really hard to remove. Why? Because before the little sprouts appear above the soil, the acorn is sending down long, strong roots.

What does this teach us? Oak trees are well known for their strength, stability, durability and their ability to withstand storms. Those roots that bore deep down into the soil are vital to the survival and health of the tree. It is through these roots that the tree sucks up the nutrient filled water from the soil that makes it healthy. And, unless the tree is healthy, the fruit will not be abundant or healthy, it will be sparse and undersized.

In scripture we are often told we will be like trees planted by the water when our relationship with God is alive, has depth and is being fed by His Life giving nourishment. Being deeply rooted in God guarantees our stability, durability, ability to withstand storms and it guarantees that we will produce healthy, abundant fruit.

In the parable of the sower, we are told that the seed is the Word and that the different types of ground represent the different attitudes of those who receive the Word. For the seed to flourish the soil needs to be friable, it needs to have been prepared so that the seed will germinate, send down deep roots and grow to bring forth abundant fruit. When we continue this analogy of good soil, let us examine what "good" soil needs to become good.

Firstly, it needs turning over, breaking up and all the rocks removed, and this is not easy work. Then it needs nourishment, the right balance of fertiliser and moisture; without moisture, abundant, verdant plants and trees do not grow well. The more the soil is dug over and prepared, the better the roots will be able to burrow down and be established. Most importantly, caring for this soil is an ongoing process. Soil needs continual feeding and watering, it needs weeding and tending to ensure that the precious seed will grow unimpeded and flourish.

When we look back on our lives there is a temptation to think that what happened before we knew and understood Who God is and that Jesus is His Only Son and the only Way to eternal life, was wasted time. Not so. Every tiny thing that happened to us, every major event we went through, as well as all the mundane "stuff" in between was preparing the soil in our hearts to receive the precious seed of Life. All of the tears we shed, the rocky obstacles that needed removing, the times of learning and waiting were known by and watched over by our Father God. Just as a farmer knows the exact time to

sow the seed so that it grows well, God knows precisely when our soil is ready to receive His Word.

As those tender young roots begin to grow, God also knows what we need to do to tend the soil of our hearts. He knows we need the right food, plenty of living water and copious weeding. Jesus says He is the Bread of Life, He is the Living Water, our Father is the Husbandman who prunes and tends the plant and the cares of this transient life are the weeds that will try and choke the Word.

As we feed on and obey His Word, keep our eyes focussed on Him, our minds and souls full of His Precious Love, our roots will grow deep and we will flourish.

**Prayer:** Father God, thank You for allowing the soil of our hearts to be well prepared and nourished, give us the grace to keep feeding on You, to keep the weeds away so that our roots go ever deeper into You. Amen.