

Personal Transformation or Change

Jesus told a parable about four types of soil and their fruit-bearing capacity that is a good analogy for personal transformation in Matthew 13:1-9 and 18-23. The different types of soils embarked on a journey of transformation or change from being just bare or fallow land to fruit-producing land.

In the parable, we can deduce that God the Father is the farmer. The seed is like an area of life that we are seeking transformation or change based on message from God. It can be in respect of our behaviour or reaction to issues of life, workplace, health, financial or marital issues etc. The parable speaks to the state of mind, attitude or heart of an individual at the point of hearing a message or deciding on transformation or change goal. The different soil types can also represent stages we go through before a message bears fruit in our lives or we are transformed. For example, we did not all become committed or born-again Christians on the first day we heard the gospel preached to us.

The soil types speak to our capacity for transformation or change. The “Road or Pathway” soil represents the mind of an individual that is not aware of the need for a change; not ready for transformation; or not ready to accept/embrace a change message. The “Rocky Ground” soil represents the mind of an individual that is aware of the need to change but has no sense of urgency about it. The “Thorny Weeds” soil represents the mind of an individual that has the awareness, desire, and sense of urgency to change but no sustained effort to stick to the change or transformation plan. Inability to stick to the transformation plan is a result of being overcome by fears and worries about the cost of the change; and temptations of the old ways.

The “Good Ground” soil represents the mind of an individual that has clarity about the change message and understanding of what it means to her life. For a “good ground” mind there is awareness, desire, sense of urgency, support for transformation/change, and sticking to transformation or change plan. Only a “good ground” mind has transformation or change possibilities of 100-, 60- or 30-fold depending on use of support resources within and without of the individual. Think about a change or transformation that you are seeking and check the state of your mind based on the description above. If you are not experiencing any change or transformation, you may do a self-check after reading the next paragraph to determine what you need to work on to reach the goal you want to achieve.

There are three main things we need to do to achieve personal transformation or change in any particular area of our lives as follows:

1. Awareness, Desire and Urgency for Transformation or Change

- Be aware of your need for a transformation or change
- Desire to be transformed or changed
- See the need for change and the importance of acting immediately.

2. Develop a Strategy and Plan for Transformation or Change

- Current State - Where are you now?
- Desired State- Where you want to be? - be clear as to how the desired state will be different from your current state, and how you can make that desired state a reality.
- What you need to do to move from current to desired state – information/ knowledge required, people to contact, skills, training and support
- Identify exactly what you will be doing differently as a result of the transformation or change. Develop an incremental plan to reach your desired state.
- Identify people that you may go to for support and assistance to reach your desired state.
- Pick people that can help you remove as many barriers as possible so that your transformation becomes a reality.
- Identify people around you that may not support your desired state.

3. Make your Plan Happen & Stick to It (Put your faith to work)

- Work your plan diligently and celebrate your successes. Hold on to your new way until it becomes a part of you.
- Communicate your strategy and plan to reach your desired state to your support group. Be sure they understand and accept the vision and the strategy as much as possible.
- Do not be discouraged by comments and actions of people that do not support your achievement of your desired state.