

How's your garden

***There are Four groups considered Christian, however all four are NOT Christian!**

1.) Refused when called, 2.) Started then backslid 3.) Ineffective immature Christian 4.) The Ideal Christian

What happens to the seed depends on the ground - Luke 8:11-15 - 11 "This is the meaning of the parable: The **seed is the word of God**. 12 Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13 Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. 14 The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. 15 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. (Matt 13:18-23, Mark 4:13-20)

GROUP	THE SEED	THE RESPONSE	RESULT	OUTCOME
Refused when called	Hear the Word	does not understand it	Satan takes it	They do not get Saved.

Not understanding is a choice - Hos 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. "BECAUSE YOU HAVE REJECTED KNOWLEDGE, I also reject you as my priests; BECAUSE YOU HAVE IGNORED THE LAW OF YOUR GOD, I also will ignore your children.

God made it so we have all we need to know Him - Rom 1:18-20 - 18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because **God has made it plain to them**. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Not what "you do", but what "you are" will dictate your inheritance, it's your choice- 1 Cor 6:9-11-9 Do you not know that **THE WICKED** will not inherit the kingdom of God? **DO NOT BE DECEIVED: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders** 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

The refusing will be shown in our life-purpose - Rom 2:8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

There are those that believe they are Christians, but under their own standards and beliefs - Titus 1:15-16 - 15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are CORRUPTED and DO NOT BELIEVE, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. 16 **They claim to know God, BUT BY THEIR ACTIONS they deny him**. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

There are going to be many who falsely think they are Christians and are in for a rude awakening - Matt 7:21-27 - 21 "**Not everyone** who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **ONLY HE WHO DOES THE WILL OF MY FATHER** who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' 24 "**THEREFORE** everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

To reject God's Word is to reject God - 1 Thess 4:3-8 - 3 **It is God's will that you should be sanctified**: that you should avoid sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, 5 not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; 6 and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. **The LORD WILL PUNISH MEN FOR ALL SUCH SINS**, as we have already told you and warned you. →

→7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. 8 Therefore, **HE WHO REJECTS THIS INSTRUCTION DOES NOT REJECT MAN BUT GOD**, who gives you his Holy Spirit.

If you are truly a Christian it will be displayed in HOW you live –

How my walk is-1 John 1:6-7 - 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, **we lie** and do not live by the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

How I love others - Matt 25:41-46 - 41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me. ' 44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' 45 "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' 46 "**Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.**"

GROUP	THE SEED	THE RESPONSE	RESULT	OUTCOME
Started then backslid	Hear the Word	receives it with Joy but Have no root (Religious)	Last a short time when Trouble, testing, persecution BECAUSE OF THE WORD	They Fall away

We must give up EVERYTHING - Luke 14:33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has CANNOT be my disciple.

Trying to do it based on you - Gal 5:4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have **FALLEN AWAY FROM GRACE.**

Shrinking back dooms us for Hell - Heb 10:35-39 - 35 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. 36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. 37 For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. 38 But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." 39 **But we are not of those who SHRINK BACK and are destroyed,** but of those who believe and are saved.

Falling away is a disastrous choice made by many - Rom 1:21-25 - 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. 24 Therefore **God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.** 25 They **EXCHANGED THE TRUTH OF GOD FOR A LIE**, and **WORSHIPED AND SERVED CREATED THINGS RATHER THAN THE CREATOR—** who is forever praised. Amen.

To Knowingly continue to reject Christ - Heb 10:26-29 - 26 **If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, 27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.** 28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 **How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot,** who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

Some will come to know Christ and decide to turn back (it's called backsliding) - 2 Peter 2:20-21–20 IF THEY HAVE **ESCAPED THE CORRUPTION OF THE WORLD BY KNOWING OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST** and are again entangled in it and **overcome**, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. 21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than **to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.**

Like the Israelites the choice to stay in Christ is ours to make - Rom 11:17-21 - 17 If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18 do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. →

→19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." 20 Granted. But they were broken off because of UNBELIEF, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, HE WILL NOT SPARE YOU EITHER.

Only those who are truly with Christ will stay with Christ - 1 John 2:19 They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

GROUP	THE SEED	THE RESPONSE	RESULT	OUTCOME
Ineffective immature Christian	Hear the Word	Worries of Life, deceitfulness of wealth, pleasures, & desires for other things	Choke the Word making it unfruitful	They do not mature

Our lives are measured based on what we invest in our ministry - 1 Cor 3:11-15 - 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. 15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

It is necessary for all Christians to mature - Heb 5:11-14 - 11 We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. 12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who LIVES ON MILK, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But **SOLID FOOD IS FOR THE MATURE**, who by constant use have **trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.**

Church service purpose is to lead us to maturity. if you miss it, you don't mature - Eph 4:12-13 - 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God **and become mature**, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

They miss the valuable purpose of trials - James 1:2-4 - 2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

By not maturing there are important messages from God we will not get - 1 Cor 2:3-7 - 3 I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. 4 My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, 5 so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power. 6 We do, however, speak **a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age**, who are coming to nothing. 7 No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.

Even as Christians we will live a life feeling defeated due to us having the wrong life perspective - Phil 3:13-16 - 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. 15 **All of us who are mature should take such a view of things.** And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. 16 Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

We struggle because we allow ourselves to be distracted - Col 3:1-4 - Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, **set your hearts on things above**, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your minds on things above, NOT on earthly things.** 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When **Christ, who is your life**, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

God's Word gives the remedy, all we have to do is apply it - 2 Peter 1:5-9 - 5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. →

➔8 For **IF YOU POSSESS THESE QUALITIES IN INCREASING MEASURE, THEY WILL KEEP YOU FROM BEING INEFFECTIVE AND UNPRODUCTIVE** in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

GROUP	THE SEED	THE RESPONSE	RESULT	OUTCOME
The Ideal Christian	Hear the Word	Has a noble heart, understands, accepts, retain & persevere in the Word	Produce a harvest	Reaping an abundance

An ideal Christian's life-purpose is evident - Rom 2:7 To those who by **PERSISTENCE IN** doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.

Life belongs to God - Rom 12:1 - Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — **this is your spiritual act of worship.**

Will live by Faith - 2 Cor 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.

This faith will be displayed - James 2: 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Not loving the world - 1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Love displayed & displayed correctly - 1 John 3:18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with ACTIONS and in TRUTH.

Obeying and Imitating Christ- 1 John 2:3-6 - 3 We know that we have come to know him IF we obey his commands. 4 The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

***You don't try to obey Him to get saved, but you know you are saved if you are obeying him**

Become "SELFLESS" - Matt 16:24-25 - 24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

We choose to live to win others - 1 Cor 9:19 Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave TO EVERYONE, to win as many as possible.

Will have a TRUE CONTINUAL relationship with Christ NO MATTER WHAT - John 15:1-5 - "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 **REMAIN IN ME**, and I will remain in you. **No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.** Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Remain - meno (men'-o); a primary verb; to stay (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy):

Doing exactly what my father tells me - 1 John 5:1-4 - Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 **THIS IS HOW WE KNOW THAT WE LOVE THE CHILDREN OF GOD:** by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 **THIS IS LOVE FOR GOD: TO OBEY HIS COMMANDS.** And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

What all dedicated Christians live to hear - Matt 25:21 "His master replied, '**WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT!** You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

Best advice for your Garden - Phil 2:12-13 - 12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed — not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence — continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

