



RESULT-BASED LEARNING

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Contrary to the thinking of some, the church's Bible school program should be **result-based learning** instead of teacher or curriculum based learning. The emphasis must not be on having a warm-body in the classroom covering antiquated notes in a less than enthusiastic manner. The word of God is "a living, active and powerful two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12).

Yes, we must have teachers, but according to Jesus' teaching in the Parable of the Sower, we must recognize it is all about the soil (hearts) the seed is sown in—about the students. In this parable Jesus focuses on the different types of hearts the word (seed) is sown in. Those who heard Jesus' lesson could understand it quickly because the soil in the regions of Galilee fit his categories. Read Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23 for the full account. Some seed is planted in: (1) hard ground, (2) rocky ground, (3) thorny ground, and (4) good ground.

This parable is a message to teachers. It reminds us clearly of the challenge we will face when sowing (teaching) the word. The soil represents the hearts of hearers. It affirms that good seed can be sown by a teacher but reception and fruit production depends on the soil (heart). Jesus makes it clear that even seed sown in good ground doesn't produce the same quantity of fruit in each heart: *"But he who receives seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty"* (Matthew 13:23).

With a lot of work the other soils could have been prepared to be productive, but they weren't. The same is true today in Bible classes. Every student can learn but it all depends on his or her heart—the type of dirt the seed falls into.

While it is clear that the word of God is designed to produce results, and that God desires results; results will not always occur from our teaching because the student is in control of the reception.

Jesus' parable is also teaching that just because we have sown the seed our work is done. No, it has only just begun as we work to prepare the soil for the planted seed to



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grow in. Here is how Paul described it: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:6).

We also may learn from Jesus' parable that there may be a best time and not so best time to plant the seed. Jesus said on one occasion, "I have many things to tell you, but you are not ready to receive them" (John 16:12). Reception depends on preparation on the part of both teacher and student.

The goal of result-based learning is CHANGE in the student's: (1) awareness, (2) knowledge, (3) thinking, (4) beliefs, (5) feelings, (6) skills, and (7) behavior. There are also numerous sub-set goals which include changes in (1) judgment, (2) decision making, (3) spiritual practices, (4) solving problems, (5) habit management, (6) routines, (7) direction, (8) information, (9) desires, and (10) relationships.