

Daily Devotional



David Welsh | Are We Painted or Stained? | Jan. 23 | Heb. 4:12

■ day one { surface or penetrated?: Matt. 23, Heb. 11 }

What are some of the things you do to make yourself look good outwardly? As you got ready for church this week, did you make a special effort to really look good? What about the things you did to look good internally? Are we as prepared to look as good for God as we are for the people around us? Are we going through the motions with no apparent change? Are we looking good on the outside but nothing changes inside? When it comes to our Christianity – to our personal walk with Jesus – are we “painted” or “stained”? Is our Christianity only surface deep – painted on – or has our relationship with Christ penetrated deep and changed our life dramatically?

■ day two { hard or soft?: Exodus 6:1-9, Matthew 13:1-23 }

What, if anything, makes your heart hard and unresponsive – either to those around you or to God? One of the things that make us unresponsive to the things of God is that we have hardened the surface of our hearts, either through circumstances or selfishness. What is the status of your heart? Regarding your responsiveness to God and His Word, is your heart hard or soft? How do we go about making the soil of our hearts more receptive to God? God continually proves Himself to be our faithful provider and protector. What will it take to soften your heart so that God can penetrate the surface?

■ day three { soak the soil: 2 Timothy 2:15 }

What are some things that soften your heart? It could be a child, or a pet or someone speaking kind and loving words. What softens your heart toward God? Is it only when things go right? But unless we get to really know God, we don't have much chance for Him to soften our hearts. How do we do that? By spending time with Him. If we spend time with Him in His word and in constant and continuous then the living water that comes from Him can soften our hearts even in the midst of the most devastating circumstances.

■ day four { remove some of the soil – cast: 1 Peter 5:7 }

What worries tend to plague you? Are they things that keep your mind occupied so that you cannot allow God to penetrate your mind? Think about what aerating the soil does for your yard. Compare that to aerating your heart. Sometimes we need to aerate our hearts to get rid of those things, those habits, and those disappointments that have hardened our hearts and kept God from penetrating deep within. How do we do that? Read today's scripture verse.

■ day five { fix & renew: Heb. 12:2, Rom. 12:2, 2 Cor. 4:16-18 }

Is there some thought, memory or hurt that needs to be removed from your heart before you can be free? We get used to painting over the hurts or flaws in our lives and putting on a good face. But are we really free? Think about what being inwardly free can do for your spiritual life. Read 2 Cor. 4:16-18. Jesus wants to rescue us and stain us with His love from the inside out with His transforming, life-freeing message of love, grace and freedom. Pray that Jesus will stain you with Who He is.

■ a word from the writers

This daily devotional and a weekly bible study for Life Groups that coincides with the current sermon is also available on the church website: ccc.org. We loved to hear your comments or suggestions. Email the writing team at: lampr@ccc.org.