**A “Good Soil” Project For Believers**

Fellow Believers,

We are called to represent the Lord because we are His Body. As you may know this means it is with our hands, feet, face mind, mouth and other parts of our physical and mental make-up that we present to the world Who Christ is. This is an awesome task but one on which we must proudly embark because it’s also a privilege. The world is largely loveless, disunited and may be said to be in disarray because it will not recognize Christ and his Teaching. Nevertheless evangelization is occurring and those who are not travel-overseas-missionaries can help give the Gospel foothold around the world, particularly where they are, by preparing Good Soil in readiness to receive the Good News. We can do this whether within our family or across the world, which today’s technology permits. The Lord’s Parable of the Sower, (also known as Parable of Seeds or of Soils) teaches that God’s Word operates best on Good Soil from which to expect the highest yields. He said:

“*… Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times*.” (Matthew 13:8; Mark 4:8; Luke 8:8)

And he explained this part of the parable as follows:

“*…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.”* (Matthew 13:23; Mark 4:20; Luke 8:15)

Therefore believers have a duty to help prepare Good Soil for the Gospel to reach as many as possible.

This Gospel of Jesus tells us, in essence, to love God, love one another and so, live in unity and peace. Troubled minds cannot produce these attributes. For that reason, peace of mind (PoM) or inner peace (IP) is necessary for love, unity and peace to grow. The chances are greater when PoM or IP grows in non-Christians for these individuals to be more readily transformed into Good Soil in which the Gospel will easily succeed in putting down strong roots. So that’s our Project: To teach ourselves to have more PoM/IP so we can teach ‘the world’ to have it.

*Specialize in Increasing Soil Yield*

Within this context of preparing good soil, the principal the task is to learn what to do about healing our fear, anger, sadness, shame, guilt, discontent, ego and the many other feelings that take away mental peace. We will then know how to go with the flow, be ourselves without any falseness, give forgiveness, show compassion, and for the most part be more trusting of one another. These skills and qualities are teachable to everyone. They are the emotional reactions or behavior that frequently stand in the way of our loving ourselves and loving others. When we succeed in achieving the goals of emotional healing we experience PoM/IP; and another name for it is “Happiness”! Happiness as a goal, unless appropriately defined, appears both commendable and corruptible. This is one level of approaching the matter; a higher level is found in your own practice of the faith within which a superior quality of joy is achievable. Either way you can start by learning ways to control your reactions to yourself and others and have lasting happiness. You may use information on Google written by people with related academic degrees; but avoid those wanting you to buy something and those that are too complex or do not make logical sense to you. Some sites on the Internet provide step-by-step instruction or explanation (for example, www.findinnerpeace.co <https://www.findinnerpeace.co/publications/>). While on this site be sure to check out the Mass Mental-Health Education for Everyone (MMEE). It is designed to teach PoM/IP.

Millions of books are being sold online. Again, hopefully, you will not go too far wrong if you stick to authors with academic degrees. This will help to cut back on the number of books to review; and for some a glance at the title will disqualify them. Others will appear authentic and more to the point (for example, “TO YOUR HAPPINESS: A Self-Healing Guide to Peace of Mind”, on www.findinnerpeace.co/publications). Make sure you read the book blurbs. For courses online look for those run by universities and are open to anyone such as advertised by Yale University at https://www.coursera.org/learn/the-science-of-well-being. Joining groups in your area that are geared to this need could be very helpful; but get recommendations. When we know something is wrong but not how to fix it, getting therapy is an excellent option, perhaps through a government agency or support group. It is important to acknowledge that our emotions are God-given for the specific purpose of telling us that an event to which we are attending is important in some way; and point us in the direction of a response. Our negative and positive emotions help us navigate our world. PoM/IP however develops when we succeed in reducing the power or longevity of our negative or trouble-causing emotions whether to ourselves or to others and increasing our knowledge and practice of the constructive ones.

Emotions are designed to act automatically for only a very short time and then our reasoning ability is supposed to take over to help us find the best way to proceed. When we continue to relate to or continue to think about a bad situation we are facing along the same lines as that brief emotion, we feed that emotion and give it more power and longer life. So the trick is to find a way to interrupt the ongoing unhelpful emotional reaction and introduce another that’s more desirable.

*Practice Makes Perfect*

Learning to do this skill needs practice in order for us to be able to exit the unwanted behavior and allow the power of our rational reasoning to increase. No doubt some people are already skillful at doing so by choice. In this way we develop the self-control that makes PoM/IP possible, which ensures a person will maintain the quality of Good Soil in which Christ can do good work. We need self-discipline not only for our own growth but also as example to those we may be able to teach Good Soil habits by their observation of or direct interaction with us. Whether from admiring our calmness and reasonableness and wanting our faith because of our PoM/IP or because they just want a better mental state from witnessing our happiness and joy, we are doing valuable work for the Gospel in nurturing Good Soil.

This is a project worth spreading. It is the same kind of ministry as John the Baptist’s. The angel Gabriel’s words when he appeared to Zechariah announcing the birth of his son, John the Baptist, were:

“*… he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous – to make ready a people prepared for the Lord*.” (Luke 1:17)

Preparing God-Ready Soil is of great value to the Salvation Mission. The people Paul met in Berea were Good Soil because “*…they received the message with great eagerness…*” The King James Version reads: “*… with readiness of mind…*” (Acts 17:11b).

The Gospel that’s to be planted on Good Soil is itself essentially about PoM/IP. Isn’t this what the angel announced to the shepherds at the birth of Christ?

“*… Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people*.” (Luke 2:10)

The Contemporary English Version puts it this way:

“*Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy*.” (Luke 2:10)

When Jesus was leaving the earth He left His Special Peace with His disciples. The most commonly used Greek word for “peace”, means peace of mind. He told them:

“*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you*.” (John 14:27)

Paul gives the following advise followed by an assurance to Christians of receiving the ultimate kind of PoM or IP:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace (of mind) of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

And Jesus describes the quintessential reward when we work to bring PoM/IP to others in these words:

“*Blessed are the peacemakers* [those who cause PoM]*, for they will be called children of God*.” (Matthew 5:9)

The Good News Translation reads:

"*Happy are those who work for peace* [to produce PoM as God prescribes]; *God will call them his children!*”

Clearly, the Good Soil Project does appear critically necessary for today’s world where there’s no shortage of greed, self-service and anxiety but above all, godlessness. Indeed under the shine of Christ’s Light evil of any kind cannot exist. So it is despairing that so many still do not know Jesus as a personal, enlightening Savior. When one ponders what to do, what part to play, it is heartening that one can receive this project as one of the many gifts that the Holy Spirit apportions as He sees fit. You may feel convicted to participate in this mission to convince as many as can be reached that we each need to learn to take charge of our emotions. This calling is completely and undeniably appropriate for each believer. You may sense that the Lord has removed any chance of your trying to argue your way out of this Mission by giving you a special opportunity or burden.

*Be Ready with Your Gospel of PoM/IP*

PoM/IP means an undisturbed state of mind. Of course we cannot get or maintain this 24/7; nor is that humanly possible. We need however to learn to bring problematic emotions under control as fast as possible whenever they show up. The mind that is mostly settled or peaceful is ready to accept positive, empowering messages. That mind is much more ready to receive the Gospel than the dark or heavy mind, although sometimes it is such a mental state, which precisely is the reason for someone accepting the Gospel Message. At times it seems that evangelization of the non-Christian, with inner peace is just a matter of time. In the mean time, with universal PoM/IP the world is a happier and therefore safer place. Security measures do not guarantee happiness (whether by acquiring wealth or investing in physical devices) because for some fear is always lurking in the wings. On the other hand dark deeds never come from a happy and peaceful mind. Indeed when we ensure the happiness of all, the safety of all is guaranteed. Moreover the Lord will be pleased with the Good Soil we help to produce, knowing its potential. As well, we will have excitement and moral legitimacy to join with others in eliminating darkness and evil. Yes, everyone can have peace of mind as some do most of the time despite huge problems in life. You too can; but it does take diligent practice. That’s the only way!

Therefore since we are Christ’s Body and His representatives on earth it becomes our responsibility to learn to have, at least, the basics of PoM/IP whether from the bible or modern psychology or both; so we can make it available to others [Don’t forget the MMEE program]. It is our job to prepare yourself and the Good Soil. It will be much easier to scatter the Gospel of God among people with PoM/IP. Right now in a world full of greed, evil intentions, hopelessness and apathy, such as ours the Gospel Message is being suppressed, attacked, misunderstood, disallowed exposure. If you agree, would you make the pledge today and start publicizing the value of PoM/IP? Your next step then is to plan how you will go about acquiring your own PoM/IP. We need to also pray about it. May God bless our efforts! Now for your pledge:

I pledge to do everything possible to acquire peace of mind and contribute to preparing "Good Soil" for the sake of the Gospel.