

## **ReFocus Guide: Growing into Who We're Meant to Be**

### **Focus:**

The life of someone who follows Jesus is cultivated over time and growth depends on the condition of our hearts. Jesus teaches that God's word is like seed, and we are the soil. Our spiritual maturity is not instant; it takes time, attention, and a willingness to be shaped by the Spirit.

### **Day 1: What Kind of Soil Am I?**

**Scripture:** Matthew 13:1-9 (CEB)

[Some] seed fell on good soil and bore fruit... in another case a yield of sixty to one, and in another case a yield of thirty to one.

—Matthew 13:8 (CEB)

### **Reflection:**

Jesus describes four kinds of soil, but most of us carry all four inside us. There are places in our hearts that are hardened, shallow, crowded, and open. Spiritual growth begins with awareness. What kind of soil are you offering to God today?

### **Questions:**

What area of your life feels like hard or shallow soil right now?

Where do you see signs of fruitfulness? What is one thing you can do today to tend to your soul?

### **Prayer:**

God, help me see myself clearly. Soften the hard places in me and prepare my heart to receive Your word. Amen.

### **Day 2: When We Don't Understand**

**Scripture:** Matthew 13:19 (CEB)

Whenever people hear the word about the kingdom and don't understand it, the evil one comes and carries off what was planted in their hearts.

### **Reflection:**

Sometimes, we hear God's word but don't fully grasp it—whether due to distraction, confusion, or spiritual resistance. Jesus teaches that without understanding, the truth doesn't take root. The Spirit invites us to keep seeking, asking, and listening until the seed sinks deeper.

**Questions:**

When have you heard a message from God that didn't quite "land" in your heart? What helped you come to understand what you first ignored? What helps you stay curious and open when you don't understand right away?

**Prayer:**

God of wisdom, I confess that there are times when I don't understand what You're trying to teach me. Keep my heart open. Help me return to Your word until it takes root. Amen.

**Day 3: Cleaning Out the Thorns****Scripture:** Matthew 13:22

The worries of this life and the false appeal of wealth choke the word, and it bears no fruit. –Matthew 13:22b

**Reflection:**

Even when our hearts are open, the noise, the busyness, the demands of life can crowd out our connection to God. Worry and worldly distractions compete for our attention. Tending the soil means choosing what stays and what needs to go.

**Questions:**

What are the "thorns" that are choking out your spiritual growth right now? How can you make more space for God this week?

**Prayer:**

Gardener of my soul, show me what needs to be cleared away. Help me release what is crowding You out. Amen.

**Day 4: Growth Takes Time****Scripture:** Matthew 13:23 (CEB)

But as for what was planted on good soil... they bear fruit and produce. – Matthew 13:23a

**Reflection:**

Growth doesn't happen all at once. Understanding and spiritual maturity develop gradually just a plant has to grow before it can mature and produce fruit. The Holy Spirit tends to our hearts as we stay open and faithful. God isn't looking for perfection, but fruit that lasts.

**Questions:**

When have you been tempted to rush your spiritual growth? How did that work for you? What small step can you take today to deepen your spiritual roots?

**Prayer:**

God of patient love, help me to grow at Your pace. I trust that You are working beneath the surface, bringing new life. Amen.

**Day 5: What Growth Looks Like****Scripture:** Galatians 5:22-24 (CEB)

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the self with its passions and its desires. – Galatians 5:22-23a, 24 (CEB)

**Reflection:**

The outcome of good soil is fruit. A visible change that comes from life that is guided by the Spirit. As we allow God to transform us, we begin to live differently. The attributes of the fruit of Spirit are not tasks to complete but signs that we are rooted in Christ.

**Questions:**

Where is God transforming you so that your life shows the fruit of the Spirit better? What is one selfish desire that the Spirit is leading you to set aside?

**Prayer:**

Spirit of Christ, grow Your fruit in me. Shape my heart to reflect Your love and bring grace to the world through how I live. Amen.

**Closing Prayer:**

Gardener of my soul, prepare the soil of my heart. Clear away the weeds and stones. Help me receive Your word with trust and understanding. Let my life bear Your fruit. A fruit that is lasting, generous, and full of love. In Jesus' name, Amen.