**“Choosing The Better Thing”**

**Dec-30-31, 2023**

**Speaker: Ralph Delgado**

**Opening:** [15 mins] We suggest you begin with an opening prayer and then a brief “catch up” or “icebreaker” before moving into the *scripture reflection* and *application questions*.

**Scripture Reflection:** [20 mins]Read **Luke 8:11-15, Prov 4:23.** After allowing the group time to reflect on the passages ask them to share what most stands out to them.

**Application Questions:** [40 mins](*These questions will help you and your group dig deeper into the weekend sermon. Feel free to edit or use only those which fit your allotted time.)*

1. Ralph began his sermon by saying, *“When you put your faith in Christ, you receive salvation & God’s grace for fruitfulness in your life.”*
   1. Where are some areas of your life where you would like to experience more of God’s grace for fruitfulness?
2. Ralph said human hearts can become hardened by, *1) continual, unrepentant sin. 2) pridefully thinking your way of doing life is better than God’s. 3) suffering a setback, disappointment, or unmet expectation which turned to hopelessness or despair.*
   1. Share if any of these 3 (or perhaps something else) has ever had a role in causing hardness in your heart. Do you feel as if your heart is still hard in that area or has God softened your heart? If so, how did that happen?
3. One of the types of hearts in the parable of the Sower which prevents fruitfulness is a “cluttered heart*.”*
   1. Where might God be inviting you to say “no” to something – or someone – to create the space to say “yes” to the better thing of spending time with Jesus?
4. Ralph said, *“Some fruitfulness can only happen as a result of ‘enduring’ the ‘tests & trials’ that come our way.”*
   1. Describe a time when you may have “fallen away” in a time of testing? As you head into 2024, are there any practices God is inviting you to develop that will help you endure the tests & trials that come your way?

**Closing & Prayer**: [15 mins]

* Have each person in your group share a prayer request, and then have someone pray for them.
* Pray that the CA church family would choose the better thing of regular time with Jesus
* Pray that God would bless CA with the fruitfulness He desires for us in 2024