

Word Studies for the Three Good Soil Verbs

(From Page Two of the Good Soil Seminar Workbook)

Suniemi (συνίημι = suniēmi)

The word *suniemi* (commonly translated “understand” or “comprehend”) literally means to send or bring together, thus in this case it means to put things together mentally so as to comprehend or make sense of it (activity of the mind denoting assembling of individual facts into an organized whole).

Matthew 13:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

Comment: When someone hears God’s Word and does not understand it, he or she becomes spiritually vulnerable to the deceptive work of Satan to twist it into a misleading non-truth. For that reason, it is important that we do what is humanly possible to present the gospel in such a way that unbelievers, with the help of God’s spirit, can clearly understand it so that it makes believable sense to them.

Luke 24:44-45 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ Then He said to them, “These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.”

⁴⁵ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

Comment: The disciples of Jesus undoubtedly possessed a lot of Old Testament knowledge, as well as the teachings of Jesus. But it was not until Jesus appeared to them after His resurrection that their minds were opened in such a way that they comprehended it (put it all together in their minds) clearly, especially the redemptive truths related to Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

Acts 28:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ saying, “Go to this people and say:

*‘Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand;
And seeing you will see, and not perceive;*

Comment: While a house prisoner in Rome, Paul had a significant ongoing evangelistic ministry with many Jews. Some were convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ and Savior, but others would not believe. Paul likened this to what God told the prophet Isaiah when He commissioned Isaiah to ministry (Isaiah 6:9-10)—some people who hear God’s message continually will never understand it.

Acts 28:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ *For the hearts of this people have grown dull.*

*Their ears are hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed,
Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears,
Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.”*

Comment: Continuing the thought (and quotation from Isaiah 6) from the previous verse, Paul applied the principle of God’s prophetic warning given to Isaiah to the situation at hand in his ministry—the hearts of the Jews who chose not to believe Paul’s message were calloused; they had willfully closed their eyes and ears and hearts to God’s truth and had chosen to not understand it.

Paradechomai (παραδέχομαι = paradēchōmai)

The word *paradechomai* (commonly translated “receive” or “accept” or “embrace”) is intensified by the prefix *para* (near or by one’s side); thus *paradechomai* conveys the idea of embracing—to receive with open arms, to welcome (also, to acknowledge as one’s own).

Acts 15:4 (NKJV)

⁴ And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.

Comment: Paul, Barnabas, and other leaders from the church in Antioch were sent to Jerusalem to discuss a serious doctrinal view that had been imposed upon them by some teachers from Judea who had visited the church in Antioch. Paul and his companions must have wondered whether or not they would be welcomed by the church in Jerusalem. But, this verse indicates that they were received warmly (welcomed) by the church, no doubt with the embraces that would have been customary for such warm receptions. The use of this word in this context helps us to understand the way in which a repentant, believing person receives the gospel.

1 Timothy 5:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.

Comment: Paul’s choice of the strengthened version of the Greek word for “receive” (*paradechomai*) probably indicates that an accusation by only one witness against an elder should not be *welcomed, embraced, or entertained warmly*. While it may not be possible to avoid hearing such an accusation, it would be wrong to embrace it as true and valid. Thus, when the word is used with reference to receiving God’s Word, the gospel, it certainly indicates something more than that just the response of hearing; it implies that the one who hears also embraces the gospel as being true and valid.

Hebrews 12:6 (NKJV)

⁶ *For whom the LORD loves He chastens,
And scourges every son whom He receives.”*

Comment: The writer of Hebrews used *paradechomai* to express God’s act of bringing a new believer into His family. The word conveys a warm, welcoming, embracing reception. When a believing person genuinely receives the gospel, it is done with this same kind of warm, welcoming embrace.

Katecho (κατέχω = katēchō)

The word *katecho* (commonly translated “hold” or “hold fast” literally means to hold something down; in a positive sense it means to hold it tightly or grip it so as to protect it from being taken or snatched away.

1 Corinthians 11:2 (NKJV)

² Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered *them* to you.

Comment: Paul established some God-ordained traditions in his ministry of church planting and maturing. Although the church of Corinth was carnal and weak in some ways, apparently some of the members of that church held fast (tightly) to the traditions that God delivered to them and Paul praised them for their faithfulness in this regard. In the same way, true believers-followers of Jesus Christ will hold tightly to the gospel which they have clearly understood and embraced for salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:2 (NKJV)

² by which also you are saved, if you *hold fast* that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

Comment: Paul had preached the gospel in Corinth and many had received it and were standing firm in that faith. Paul explained that if they were truly saved—they had sincerely believed—they would hold fast (tightly) the word (the gospel) that he had preached to them.

Hebrews 10:23 (NKJV)

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful.

Comment: There is a human perspective and a divine perspective in the continuation of a believer's salvation. From a human perspective, we are exhorted to hold fast (tightly) to the confession of our hope. There is human effort that God expects of us. However, the good news is that God has promised to be faithful to the salvation promises He has given us, even though our capability for holding fast falls far short of being adequate.