

Viewpoint - by Ross Anderson

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This season has been a friendly one so far for flower beds and gardens. Pike Nurseries has made a catchy slogan emphasizing how much fun it is to "play in the dirt!" I've always heard that those who have a "green thumb" have a brown one also.

If you're having success in your yard and garden, you probably have some dirt on your hands. There is like some dirt on your shoes also, and some dirt on your jeans if you kneel in the garden. Of course, there is plenty of dirt to clean up afterward.

Christine Berglund says that new research has shown that there are micro-organisms in the soil that alleviate depression. So if you're getting your hands dirty, it is helping you to feel cheerful! (Did you think that that it was the fresh air and flowers that made you happy?)

Scripture tells us about spiritual dirt, and our attitude toward it. But dear friends remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. They said to you *"In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires: These are men who will divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the spirit. But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the holy spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Be merciful to those who doubt, snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear,----hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh."*
(Jude 17-23

Berglund continues "As our world gets friendlier and more tolerant of sinful behavior and lifestyles, it is going to be more challenging for us as Christians to exhibit clean living and extol its virtues.

are in danger of isolating ourselves as we strive to keep ourselves above the disgusting and reprehensible behavior around us". The answer probably lies in the standard method of gardening. We must come in contact with the world's dirt, but we don't let it rub off on us on purpose. We do it to reap a harvest! "The fields are white unto harvest (John 4:35).

" We also won't track dirt into our own lives. We come into contact with precious souls who need our help in pointing them to God, no matter what kind of depraved behavior they are involved in. But we wouldn't dream of allowing those sins to creep into our own lives any more than we would throw a pair of filthy garden gloves down on our clean table linens".

Christians learn to live in the world without being influenced by it. (John 17:15-17). Jesus asked God sanctify us in truth. Maybe that truth is like a pair of garden gloves--they remind us to be " unspotted from the world". (James 1:27).