



SERIES 2: MARK 4:1-20

Sermon Notes

Text: Mark 3:20-35

Intro:

Parables are short stories about every day life which illustrate deeper spiritual truths.

Parables need a decryption key to be understood. That key is faith.

Mark 4:9-12

The Farmer

The same word used to describe the farmer going out to sow seed is the word used to describe Jesus going out to minister - Jesus is the incarnate God of Israel, renewing the world by his word.

Isaiah 40:8; 55:10-11

The Soil

The soil represents our response to God's word

1. Hard Soil (v. 15)
2. Rocky Soil (v. 16-17)
3. Thorny Soil (v. 18-19)
4. Good Soil (v. 20)

Implications:

1. The Parable provides explanation for why some people fall away
2. The Parable provides important lessons for farmers
3. The Parable provides guidance for the soil

To be good soil, we must be good listeners. When we hear God's word we should follow these steps:

1. Ask, what instruction is God giving me?
2. Ask, how does God's word to me lead me to thank him?
3. Ask, how have I not lived up to God's word?
4. Now I turn this all into prayer...

Conclusion:

Life Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. Do you know any good riddles? Share one with the group. How are riddles similar to parables? Why did Jesus teach in parables?

Study & Discussion:

1. What resonated with you from the sermon? What challenged or surprised you?
2. Read Isaiah 40:8 & 55:10-11. What do these passages tell us about God's word? How do they relate to the parable of the sower? How is God's word like a seed?
3. Consider the four types of soil. What kinds of attitudes and beliefs do they represent? How do you know what kind of soil you are? How do you change your soil type?
4. The parable helps us understand why some people never allow God's word to change their life, and why other people fall away from faith. Have you ever watched someone close to you fall away from faith? What did that process look like? Does it resonate with the teachings of this parable? How do we guard ourselves from going down the same path?

Practicing the Way of Jesus:

To be good soil, we must be good listeners. This week, spend some time reading a passage in the Bible that is familiar to you. It could be the parable of the sower if you prefer. After you finish, go through the following steps as you think about the passage:

1. Ask, what instruction is God giving me in this passage?
2. Ask, how does this passage lead me to thank and/or praise God?
3. Ask, how have I not lived up to God's instructions in this passage?
4. Now I turn this all into prayer...in your prayer, summarize God's instruction, thank him for how he's ministered to you through his word, confess your failures to live up to his instruction, then ask for his help to change and to experience his blessing & fruitfulness.

Prayer: