

The Basics of Christian Discipleship Bible Study

Week 1: Four Kinds of Soil – Mark 4:1-20

Step One – Read the passage through slowly a couple of times. Circle or underline any words or phrases that jump out at you.

Mark 4:1-20 - “Again he began to teach beside the sea. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the sea and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. ² He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ³ “Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶ And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. ⁸ Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.” ⁹ And he said, “Let anyone with ears to hear listen!”

¹⁰ When he was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹ And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret[Ⓜ] of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; ¹² in order that ‘they may indeed look, but not perceive, and may indeed listen, but not understand; so that they may not turn again and be forgiven.’”

¹³ And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. ¹⁶ And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷ But they have no root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.[Ⓜ] ¹⁸ And others are those sown among the thorns: these are the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ but the cares of the world, and the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²⁰ And these are the ones sown on the good soil: they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

Step Two: Taking each word or phrase, ask yourself:

- 1- What is happening in this story that makes these words/phrases meaningful in this story? In what way do these words shape this story?
- 2- What is the Holy Spirit doing through *these particular* words in this story?

Step Three: Looking at each word/phrase and your response to each, ask yourself,

- 1- “What do I think these words/phrases say about God/Jesus?”
- 2- “What do I think these words/phrases say about the others in the story?”

Step Four: Now ask yourself:

- 1- “What do I think God is saying to me in each of these?”
- 2- “Why do I think God is speaking to me regarding this?”

Step Five: Pray, asking God to show you how you should respond to these insights from your study today.

Step Six: Make yourself a little note or reminder of some sort to help you work on this for the rest of the week.

Step Seven: Put the reminder in a place that will help you remember your discipline of working on this insight, like:

- 1- The Refrigerator door
- 2- Car dashboard
- 3- Bathroom mirror
- 4- Nightstand
- 5- Cellphone cover
- 6- Anywhere that will help you in your practice of your discipline.