

### MAIN POINT

Have you ever wondered: How did I get here? Why do we repeat behavior that doesn't work? The book of Romans reminds us that we still struggle with conforming our minds toward the things of God. God gave us our brains, but throughout our lifetime we've learned all sorts of scripts which have shaped us in good and bad ways. Jesus' parable about the four types of soil helps us to locate our self on a journey of development. The soil was hard, rocky, thorny, and good. Truthfully, we go through all these stages in our life. The hard path or road represent a lack of self-awareness, numbness, or ignoring the problems in life. The rocky soil is a reaction to the pain we feel. The thorny soil reminds us that the cares of this world easily distract and entangle us. Finally, the good soil is where we process pain and allow God to grow something good out of it. We don't have to be stuck in one stage but can work through them by doing the following. First, taking responsibility for where you currently are by owning your responses to life. Second, don't waste your pain, but learn from it. Next, don't choke on God's goodness. Finally, and most importantly, press one. Think small, start small, and get big results.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. [Warm Up Question] What is one behavior that you wish you didn't keep repeating? Why?
2. Read Mark 4:1-8. Describe each of the four soils. What in life causes us to be hard? Name two different thorns that people encounter in life. Why do you think Jesus used a story about growing stuff to explain his point?
3. How does our culture tell us to deal with pain? Give an example of a way that people react to pain in unproductive ways.
4. What is the difference between controlling our response to life's challenges versus trying to change how others behave toward us? Why do we have control over our self but not others?

### APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What is one place of pain that you have learned from in your life? What did you learn?
2. What is distractions are "choking" you currently? How are idols driving the pace of your life?
3. What is one way that God is challenging you to think small and start small? How will this help you to get big results. How can your group pray for you?