



— THE GOSPEL OF —
MARK
— SUFFERING SERVANT & SON OF GOD —

Mark 4:1-20 The Parable of The Sower



- We can hear something, but not truly listen/ understand what we are hearing.
- Mark slows down in this chapter, as if to say, “listen carefully”.
- In this passage (and in most of the chapter) Jesus is very emphatic about wanting everyone to listen carefully to what he was saying. (v.3; v.9)

How does Jesus use parables?



- Jesus used parables to **conceal and reveal: vv. 10-12**

“And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, so that

““they may indeed see but not perceive,
and may indeed hear but not understand,
lest they should turn and be forgiven.””

Quick overview of the Parable



The parable is about a seed that is sown in four different soils, yet it only takes root in one of them.

Explanation of the Parable



- We don't need to guess what it is about because Jesus gives us the explanation in vs. 14-20
- But first notice how Jesus responded when the disciples asked for the explanation; vs. 13:

“Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?”

- According to Jesus, understanding this parable is key to understanding the rest of them. But why? We will come back to his...

The Sower: He sows the word of God



Vs. 14- “The sower sows the word.”

- The seed is the word; the good news of the kingdom and Jesus himself.
- This means this parable is about how people respond to the reality of who Jesus is and what He came to do.
- Application: We cannot change the seed, or message that we sow. We must preach the good news of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

Hard Hearts : vs. 15



“And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.”

- The word doesn't settle into the ground because like a well traveled path, these hearts are hardened. Upon hearing the gospel, they reject it immediately.

Shallow Hearts: vv. 16-17



“And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.”

- Though initially received with joy, when temptation or persecution comes, the gospel loses its appeal and is rejected.

The Busy and Crowded Heart: vv. 18-19



“And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.”

- Cares of the world and busyness
- “Deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things”
 - They may provide pleasure for a moment, but it is fleeting. They offer a counterfeit “joy”.

Application: Kills sin before it kills you. Don't feed the sin monster!

The Believing Heart: v. 20



“But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

- The gospel is “heard” and “accepted”
- This people **will produce fruit.**

Back to vs. 13



“And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? “

- If we do not believe and accept the gospel and the reality of who Jesus is, we will not be able to understand his words to us, and we will not be able to bear fruit.
- If our hearts are hardened towards Jesus and his word, if we are content with a shallow understanding of Jesus, or if our hearts are full of love for the world and sin, then we risk proving over the course of our lives that the word never took root in our hearts.

A Loving Warning



This parable is a loving reminder to believers/ citizens of the kingdom to repent of our sin and cling to Jesus daily. To ask the Lord to keep us humble, and to keep our hearts soft towards him.

Our Job is to Preach



It is not our job to try and guess if God will use our preaching of the gospel to harden or soften hearts, to conceal or reveal.

Our job is to share the gospel with as many people as we can.

Questions



1. How does understanding some of the different ways people can respond to Jesus and the gospel better prepare us for evangelism and gospel conversations?
2. Are there men in your life holding you accountable to help you ensure you are fighting sin and bearing fruit?
3. Who are you praying for that you know has a hard heart? Take a moment and pray for them.