



Sermon Series: Kingdom Ways Week 3

Sermon Title: Parable of the Sower

Date: 3/3/2024

Big Idea: What's the condition of your heart?

1. How are you listening?

Mark 4:1-3

The crowd was so big that Jesus needed the acoustics of the sea to be heard. Not everyone in that crowd was there to learn from Jesus. Therefore, Jesus began speaking in parables, a relatable story with an eternal lesson. **Matthew 12:11-13** tells us why.

Some came to learn and have their lives transformed. Some were there for the spectacle; others still came to try to trap him and accuse him of blasphemy. Jesus knew this, so he gave them a chance to self-identify which group they belonged to. He did this through a parable about soils, causing them to reflect on which soil their lives were most like.

2. Which Soil are you

Mark 4:4-8

Do you see yourself in this passage? The 4 different conditions of the heart?

- a) **The Street** – this is the heart that hears the word but doesn't understand it. The Devil comes and takes it away immediately.
- b) **The Rocky Ground** - This person was looking for a quick fix to the problems in life. They hoped that if they got close to God, all their problems would go away. But when others started to judge them for their faith, they quickly abandoned it. God wasn't the solution they wanted.
- c) **The Thorns** - This person attends church and hears the word of God, but it doesn't settle because of life's distractions.
- d) **The Good Soil** - This was the person who had ears to hear the word and live it out. Through the trials, despite the temptations of the world.

By identifying which soil you are, you establish the foundation that you then can begin to invite Jesus into.

3. Are you willing to tend to the soil?

To nurture the soil of our lives, we all need the same thing. The willingness to create Space and time that we're intentionally inviting God's word into. **Mark 4:20**

This is the threefold practice Jesus reveals that makes for good soil even through hard seasons.

- To create a space where we are hearing God's word.
- To create a place to start and hold onto is to plant Jesus' seeds of the Gospel, no matter whether you are a new believer or you've been a believer for a long time. We all need to hear the Gospel of Jesus every day.
- Receive it. Give yourself time to meditate on it. Ask yourself questions. Where is the Gospel touching your life right now? Is it the hardness of your heart? Your Greed? Your Lust? Your insecurity? Your unforgiveness? Is it remembering who you are in him? Is it seeing his hand guiding you and helping those you feel helpless? Is it being gracious toward yourself as he has been toward you? Is it just worshipping him for all he's done and is doing for you and through you?
- Then, finally, give the seeds of God's word time. Give your lifetime to begin to see the work of the Holy Spirit soften your heart and begin to pour out of you. There will come a time when, if you are faithful to nurturing the soil of your life, that fruit will abound.

Jesus wants us to listen, and he wants us to reflect on the soil of our lives and nurture it to receive his word.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **When someone says to meditate on scripture, what does that mean? How do you personally do it?**
- **Does the understanding that there are four responses to God's plan of salvation affect how you evangelize? Explain.**
- **How do you stand firm in your faith and prioritize your time with God when someone tempts you with money, drugs, sex, or business?**
- **Which soil are you, and have you always been that soil?**