

## Life Group Guide – Week Starting 25<sup>th</sup> January 2026

### Key Scripture Mark 4

**Aim:** To explore Jesus' parable of the sower, reflect on the condition of our hearts, and consider our role in scattering Gospel seed with faithfulness and perseverance.

**PRAYER :** Before you begin an open discussion, spend some time inviting the Holy Spirit's presence and power. Not just for your Life Group, but in the dozens of Life Groups that will also be gathering across Everyday Church this week. *Don't rush through this moment!*

#### Opening question:

Ask people to share a brief story about a time they were *surprised* or *frustrated* by an outcome that they expected to have control over (it could be practical, relational, or spiritual).

- What emotions tend to surface for you more easily: surprise, frustration, hope, or impatience?
- How might these emotions link to sharing the Gospel?
- Can anyone share of an occasion when they have shared the Gospel and seen it open up the heart of an individual?

#### Bible verses:

Ask different people to read:

- **Mark 4:1–9**
- **Mark 4:13–20**
- **Mark 4: 26–29**

#### The Power of Parables

Jesus begins with the word **“Listen!”**

- Why do you think Jesus starts this parable that way?
- What might prevent people (then or now) from truly listening?

Parables are simple stories with deep meaning.

- What do you find compelling about Jesus choosing stories like farming, seeds, and soil?
- How do parables challenge both childlike faith and hyper-intellectual faith?

#### The Farmer and the Seed

In the sermon, followers of Jesus are described as **farmers/sowers**.

- What feelings arise when you hear that you are responsible for scattering Gospel seed?
- What fears or hesitations do you associate with sharing your faith?

The parable emphasizes **faithfulness over outcomes**.

- How does this challenge the way you usually measure spiritual success?
- Where have you felt discouraged because you didn't see “results”?

“The seed contains the Kingdom of God.”

- What does this tell us about the power of the Gospel itself?
- How does this shift responsibility away from us and back to God?

## The Soil

Jesus describes four types of soil as pictures of the human heart. Which soil do you most naturally relate to *right now*: hard path, rocky ground, thorny ground, or good soil? *Why?*

- i) For the **hard path**:
  - What experiences, doubts, or disappointments can harden a heart toward God?
  - How does community help protect seed from being “snatched away”?
- ii) For the **rocky soil**:
  - What might shallow faith look like in everyday life?
  - Why do hardship and suffering so often expose the depth of our roots?
- iii) For the **thorny soil**:
  - What “worries,” “wealth,” or “desires for other things” tend to choke spiritual growth today?
  - How do you personally recognize when good things begin crowding out God?
- iv) The sermon suggested three soil-shaping dispositions: **humility, repentance, and awe**.
  - Which of these do you find easiest to cultivate?
  - Which one do you most need to grow in right now?

Take some time now to intercede for one another. If individuals have highlighted a need for humility, repentance or awe, specifically pray into those things for one another. Pray also for our boldness in sharing and displaying the Gospel in the places we spend time during the week.