

# THE GOSPEL OF MARK

MIGHTY SAVIOR – SUFFERING SERVANT

## How Should I Respond to God's Word?

September 24, 2023 | Mark 4:1-20

### Questions for Study and Group Discussion

*\*\* Before you begin, please read Mark 4:1-20*

1. Share any experience you have with gardening (maybe at some point in your past, or whether it's a current hobby). Do you enjoy gardening? Why or why not?
2. How does the quality of the soil affect what a garden produces?
3. In Matthew 4:1-20, Jesus shares one of His most well-known parables. In your own words, briefly summarize what Jesus says in 3-4 sentences. What main point is Jesus trying to make?
4. Look closely at Mark 4:12. What Jesus is saying here is that our ability to receive (or inability to receive) truth from God's Word is often affected more by the condition of our hearts than our physical ears. How can the condition of our hearts make us more or less receptive to hearing from God?
5. Circle or underline the word "hear" every time you see in verses 14-20. What insights can you draw from how often this word occurs in the parable?
6. What are some of the many ways we can hear God's Word (the Bible) today? What benefits does this offer?
7. Do you think there can be dangers that accompany this sort of access to God's Word? Explain.
8. The issue in this parable is not lack of hearing; the issue is response. Why is responding well to truth from God's Word so important? (Want to dig in a little further? Check out James 1:22-25.)
9. Look at each of the three negative responses to hearing the word of God in Mark 4:15-19. What might each of these soils look like today?
  - Pathway soil (vv 14-15)
  - Rocky soil (vv 16-17)
  - Thorny soil (vv 18-19)
10. Now look at the positive response to hearing God's Word that we read about in Mark 4:20. What do you think it looks like for the truth of God's Word to "produce a crop" in you and through you? Work together to develop a list of 6-8 ways God's Word can transform you.
11. How can you cultivate a heart that is "good soil"? What practically does this look like in your life this week?
12. Is there anything else that stands out to you about this passage, or questions it raises for you, that haven't yet come up? If so, share 1-2 of these observations or questions now.
13. What is your biggest take-away from what you've discussed so far? Why?
14. What practical step will you take to apply what you've seen in God's Word?
15. **Challenge:** Identify one way this passage is challenging or encouraging you. Who can you tell about what you're learning this coming week?