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**Point:** Bearing Fruit Is Not Uniform in the Christian Life

I. **Hearing or Listening?**

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**Key Truth:** Receptive Hearts Will Bear Fruit

II. **The Parable of the Sower**

Mark 4:1-20

v. 1-9

The Different Soils

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**Point:** Jesus Knew His Audience

v. 10-12

The Hard Truth about Ministry

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**Point:** Not Everyone Will Respond Favorably to the Gospel

III. **Listen and Abide**

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**Mid-Week Devotional** (Take time this week to pray & respond to the following)

One of our greatest tendencies when reading Christ’s teachings is to look around at other people and wonder, “How does this apply to *them*?” With the Parable of the Sower, this is especially easy to do. We can read about the various soils and their (in)effectiveness in bearing fruit and focus all too much on how other people (Christians and non-Christians alike) fit into the parable.

Certainly, there are times when this kind of social assessment is appropriate. But our first inclination when reading this parable should not be to judge the fruit of another person, but to discern how it applies to our own lives. Are we, even as Christians, “hard” to the truths outlined in the Bible? Are we prone to hide our faith when animosity is directed toward us? Are we willing to set aside the lordship of Christ in our lives when material pleasures seem more appealing?

Asking these questions may lead to some deep soul searching, and Lord willing, it may even yield some necessary repentance. Take some time to pray through these questions this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring you to a place of repentance, so that spiritual fruit may be born.