


POWER OF A STORY



THE PARABLES OF MARK

DIGGING DEEPER

THE SOWER

FEBRUARY 13

Jesus tells the Parable of the Sower to reveal the various ways people respond to God. The parable not only speaks of the sowing of seed but also highlights the different conditions of the heart and how they influence spiritual growth.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own or get together with your group, spiritual running partners, or family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever seen a life transformed? Share a story of a time when you or someone you know went from a hardened, shallow, or distracted heart to a receptive heart.
2. What's the most memorable commercial you've ever watched? What made it memorable? What was the message?
3. Tell everyone about the best team you were a part of. Why was it the best team?
4. Read **Mark 4:1-20**.

Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?):

- What do you notice about the way Jesus describes the different soils?
- What are you curious about in this passage?

Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?)

- What do you learn about God in this passage?
- What do you learn about humanity from the four types of soils?
- Why do you think Jesus taught in parables rather than giving clear instructions?

Now make some applications (what's my response?)

- How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this passage?
- What soil best represents your spiritual life right now: Hardened, Shallow, Distracted, or Receptive?

Why?

- What steps can you take this week to cultivate a more receptive heart to God's Word?
- How can you help others move from a resistant, shallow, or distracted faith to a thriving and fruitful one?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Mark 4:1-20 Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times." Then Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear." When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables.

He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, “they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!” Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

PRAYER

- Thank God for His Word and ask Him to soften hearts to receive it.
- Pray for those who feel stuck in a hardened, shallow, or distracted faith.
- Ask for the Holy Spirit’s guidance in becoming fruitful followers of Jesus.

PRACTICE

1. Engage with Scripture Daily – Set aside intentional time each day to read and reflect on the Word of God. Consider memorizing 2 Corinthians 5:17.

- "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away; behold, the new has come"

2. Examine Your Heart – Identify distractions or obstacles in your life that hinder spiritual growth and take practical steps to remove them.

3. Share Your Faith Story – This week, share with someone how God has transformed your heart and life. Invite them to explore faith with you.