

pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. 1 John 2:15–17 (ESV)

D. Some hearts receive the gospel and produce abundant fruit.

But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold. Mark 4:20 (ESV)

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. John 6:44 (ESV)

Applications

1. **There are four ways people will respond to the gospel when we share it. Their response is not based on the skill of our sowing or the vitality of the gospel seed but on the condition of their heart.**
2. **A heart that truly knows Jesus will always produce fruit.**
3. **This parable is not just about how others respond to the gospel. I should examine how I am responding to the gospel.**
4. **There comes a time, after someone consistently rejects abundant truth about Jesus, that God hardens their heart and so they can no longer repent.**

Life Group Questions

1. Read Mark 4:1-20 to familiarize yourself with the passage. How did these verses change the way you think about sharing the good news of Jesus? What truth did these verses reveal that you did not know?
2. Suffering is part of the Christian life. What do these verses teach us about why Christians suffer? (Galatians 6:12, 1 Thessalonians 3:3-4, James 1:2-4, Revelation 2:10, Romans 8:17, Hebrews 5:8)
3. A love for this world can become more captivating than love for Jesus. What do these verses teach us about how an increasing love for the world affects our walk with Christ? (2 Timothy 4:10, Matthew 6:25-26, Luke 21:34, 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 1 John 2:15-17)
4. DIGGING DEEPER: The reality of God hardening someone's heart to the gospel after they consistently reject abundant spiritual evidence is a new thought for many of us. How does that change the way we share the gospel? What do these verses teach us about this hard truth? (John 12:37-41, John 12:37-41, Acts 28:23-27, Romans 11:8-10, 2 Corinthians 3:15, Hebrews 3:7-14)

MARK THE KING AND THE CROSS

Mark 4:1-20 – The Parable Of The Soils

January 27, 2019

1. The Setting — Jesus returned to the Sea of Galilee.

Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. Mark 4:1 (ESV)

Again he began to teach beside the sea.

A very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land.

And he was teaching them many things in parables,... Mark 4:2 (ESV)

Parables are common truths used to teach a spiritual lesson.

2. The parable of the soils.

"Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. Mark 4:3 (ESV)

A. Some seed falls on hard soil.

"Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Mark 4:3–4 (ESV)

B. Some seed falls on rocky soil.

Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. Mark 4:5–6 (ESV)

C. Some seed falls on thorny soil.

Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. Mark 4:7 (ESV)

D. Some seed falls on good soil.

And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold. Mark 4:8 (ESV)

And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Mark 4:9 (ESV)

3. What is the purpose of parables?

And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. Mark 4:10 (ESV)

A. Parables reveal the message of the kingdom to those who seek it.

And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God..." Mark 4:11a (ESV)

In the Bible, a secret (or mystery) is truth that was not fully understood by people in the Old Testament but is now being revealed by God in the New Testament.

He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything. Mark 4:34 (ESV)

B. Parables conceal the message of the kingdom from those who reject it.

...but for those outside everything is in parables, so that " 'they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.' " Mark 4:11–12 (ESV)

And he said, "Go, and say to this people: " 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." Isaiah 6:9–10 (ESV)

What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day." Romans 11:7–8 (ESV)

So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. Romans 9:18 (ESV)

But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the Lord had said. Exodus 8:15 (ESV)

But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the Lord had spoken to Moses. Exodus 9:12 (ESV)

And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?" Mark 4:13 (ESV)

4. Jesus explained the meaning of this parable.

The sower sows the word. Mark 4:14 (ESV)

A. Some hearts are hard and unresponsive to the gospel.

And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. Mark 4:15 (ESV)

B. Some hearts respond superficially to the gospel.

And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. Mark 4:16–17 (ESV)

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 2 Timothy 3:12 (ESV)

After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. John 6:66 (ESV)

C. Some hearts let worldly desires choke out the gospel.

And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. Mark 4:18–19 (ESV)

"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. Matthew 6:24 (ESV)

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and