

Sermon Notes:

Passage: Mark 4:1-20

Parables: are stories. They help us understand the heart of God, help us understand how the kingdom of God works.

the idea was to set a spiritual truth along side a daily truth of living.

Parables are actually more like riddles than metaphors. For those spiritually hungry they would seek after the truth in them, but for others it would be meaningless.

Matthew 13:12

Jesus explained why He used parables. In teaching by parables, Jesus offered His hearers the opportunity to dig deep and find the truth, or to turn a blind eye to an interesting story.

The bible is a lot like this in general. Are you willing to dig deeper and find the truths, hidden?

The Sower: the sower takes the message of God's word out into the world and spreads it everywhere.

God sows generously, the word goes out everywhere. He doesn't just pick those that he thinks is good soil, but the sower spreads his seed out everywhere. The issue really is not about the sower. The issue in this parable is about the soil.

Foot Path/Hard Heart: v. 15 - hard path maybe equals hard heart. The message of Jesus is never accepted and so Satan takes it away.

Rocky Soil/Shallow Heart:

problems, and persecution.

(very inward focused faith)

Shouldn't life be easier if I am a Christian?

If God is loving why all the evil in the world?

If God loves me why all these problems I am experiencing?

Thorny Soil/Crowded Heart: v.18-19 - the thorns represent worries, our stuff centered lives, desire for other stuff that is not God.

Good Soil/Fruitful Heart: v.20 - some of that fruit is a changed life. which impacts others and plants seeds on other soil.

Galatians 5:22-23

our lives are intended to produce fruit, produce a harvest. A source of life giving nutrition to those around us. To multiply ourselves and the good news to those around us. It is outward centred.

Life Group Discussion

(feel free to use any or all of these questions)

Warm Up:

1. Have you ever had a clear experience where it seemed like God was talking to you or trying to get your attention? describe that experience to the group.
2. What stood out to you about Sunday's Sermon? What was interesting? Confusing? Weird? Thought provoking?

Study & Discussion:

Read together: Mark 4:1-12

When Jesus told his parables sometimes the meaning of them were not very direct. Why do you think that is?

When it comes to communicating God's message to people today in 2019 what could we learn from Jesus method?

Read together Mark 4:13-20

In verse 15 Jesus describes some soil like a hardened foot path. What types of things have you seen or experienced that cause hearts to be hardened?

When it comes to the 3 soils; hard footpath, rocky soil and thorny soil which one would best describe your own personal struggles?

Have you had an experience where the word of God was planted on good soil in your life? What did that look like?

If time allows read together Galatians 5:22-23

God's heart for us is that we would be fruitful. What fruit has God placed a desire in your heart for within this passage?

Application:

I am not convinced that this is a one time experience in our lives.

What kinds of things can we do to make sure that the soil of our lives is cultivated to receive the word of God?

Prayer:

1. Ask for individual prayer requests
2. Is there someone outside the group you would like prayer for?