

**Jesus Christ,
The Son of God**
Studies in the Gospel of Mark

The Sower and the Seed
Lesson 5
Mark 4:1-20

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
January 31, 2021

Outline

Reading of:

Mark 4:1-9 The Sower and the Seed / Parable of the Soils

Mark 4:10 – 12 The Reason for the Parables

What Kingdom?

What is a Parable?

Explanation:

Mark 4:10 – 12 The Reason for the Parables

Mark 4:1-9 vs 4:13 – 20 The Parable of the Sower Interpreted

Mark 4:1-9

The Sower and the Seed / Parable of the Soils

1 And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

4 and it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Mark 4:10 – 12

The Reason for the Parables

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

12 that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

What was Jesus primarily preaching in his early ministry?

Matthew 4:17

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 9:35

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Mark 1:14-15

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Luke 4:43-44

And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

Jesus was proclaiming the kingdom of God... and with his signs he was validating his authority over his creation.

What Kingdom?

- When we think of an earthly Kingdom we usually think of a place with physical borders, and people in it who are ruled by a king
- What did Jesus mean by Kingdom?
- The definition of Kingdom in this context means the domain over which the spiritual sovereignty of God or Christ extends, whether in heaven or on earth
- When Jesus was brought before Herod and questioned by him? Who is the king that Jesus talked about?

John 18:36-38

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?

What Kingdom?

- Jesus said that he was a king of a different kingdom or domain, and that the reason he was born and came into this earthly realm was to bear witness of the truth

- What is truth?

Go to tbcpx.org and click on the link for the Bible Institute, then listen to Lesson 1 to find the answer.

- Who will be in this kingdom from the early realm?

- To the Jew first but also to the Greek (gentiles) who are the called to believe in Christ by faith

Exodus 19:6

and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Romans 1:16-17

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

What Kingdom?

- Will there be the reign of God as king at various times as foretold in scripture? - 1000 yr reign , then new heavens and new earth

Jeremiah 10:10

But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king:
at his wrath the earth shall tremble,
and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

- Then the final new heavens and new earth will display the final reign of Christ

1st John 2:15-17

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

What is a Parable?

parabolé → Parable

from preposition **pará** “alongside, close beside, near, with” and the verb **bállō** “to cast”, “throw” or “place”

- A parable is a short allegorical story designed to illustrate or teach some truth, religious principle, or moral lesson
- It can also mean:
a statement or comment that conveys a meaning indirectly by the use of comparison, analogy, or the like
- Parables can be as simple as a direct comparison needing no explanation, as was shown in Mark chapter 3, or comparisons that do not have an earthly frame of reference that need explanation
- In this specific parable you can also say that it is an illustration of a truth that Jesus was trying to teach his disciples
- In the New Testament gospels there are about 55~60 parables, however many parables in the Old Testament are linked to judgments upon a person or people

Parables of Jesus

PARABLE	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Parable of the Sower	Matthew 13:1-23	Mark 4:1-20	Luke 8:4-15
The Old Versus the New	Matthew 9:14-17	Mark 2:18-22	Luke 5:33-39
Parable of the Landowner	Matthew 21:33-46	Mark 12:1-12	Luke 20:9-19
The Wheat and the Tares (weeds)	Matthew 13:24-30		
Mustard Seed	Matthew 13:31-32	Mark 4:30-32	Luke 13:18-19
The Leaven (Yeast)	Matthew 13:33		Luke 13:20-21
Hidden Treasure and Pearl of Great Price	Matthew 13:44-46		
The Dragnet and the Sea	Matthew 13:47-50		
The Lost Sheep	Matthew 18:12-14		Luke 15:3-7
An Unforgiving Servant and a Kings Wrath	Matthew 18:21-35		
Workers in the Vineyard	Matthew 20:1-16		
A Father with Two Sons	Matthew 21:28-32		
The Minas (Money)			Luke 19:11-27
The Wedding Feast	Matthew 22:2-14		
Parables of the Fig Tree	Matthew 24:32-44	Mark 13:28-33	Luke 21:29-33
The Wise and Foolish Virgins	Matthew 25:1-13		
The Men with Talents	Matthew 25:14-30		
Parable of the Seed that Grows		Mark 4:26-29	
The Man on a Journey		Mark 13:33-37	
The Creditor and Two Debtors			Luke 7:40-47
The Good Samaritan			Luke 10:30-37
A Friend in Need			Luke 11:5-13
Eye is a Lamp to the Body			Luke 11:33-36
The Rich Fool			Luke 12:16-21
The Faithful and Evil Servants			Luke 12:35-47
The Barren Fig Tree			Luke 13:6-9
The Great Banquet			Luke 14:16-24
The Cost of Discipleship			Luke 14:25-35
The Lost Coin			Luke 15:8-10
The Prodigal Son			Luke 15:11-32
The Shrewd Manager			Luke 16:1-13
Lazarus and the Rich man			Luke 16:19-31
Unprofitable Servants			Luke 17:7-10
The Persistent Widow			Luke 18:1-8
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector			Luke 18:9-14

A list of the New Testament gospel comparisons are shown in the following chart which was obtained from Dr. John Custis. Notice that this particular parable covered in Mark 4:1-20 is also listed in Matthew and Luke. The Gospel of John did not record any true parables however.

Venue vs. the Word of God vs. Hearing

- # of people ? Size of audience doesn't mean greater impact
- Knowing Jesus should be a personal one-on-one thing
- Venue doesn't mean greater impact, but this was an ideal setting for a large group

Mark 3:9

And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

- Where there is no obstruction to people hearing the gospel then share it.
- Today we have a parallel situation. We have a perfectly clear pathway to spread the gospel for a while... especially by the internet and radio broadcasting. Post links!

Mark 4:9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Mark 4:11 & 13

The Reason for the Parable – Those who Hear

Mark 4:11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

Mark 4:13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

- This parable is a KEY parable to understanding all the other parables that Jesus will give.

Matthew 13:1-23 Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:24-30 The Wheat and the Tares

Matthew 13:31-32 Mustard Seed

Matthew 13:47-50 The Dragnet and the Sea

- Who is the audience of this special revelation?

- Those who Jesus intended to know this special revelation and understanding of his words.

Mark 4:11-12

The Reason for the Parable – Those who Hear

Mark 4:11-12 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

- Jesus made it clear that not everyone was meant to understand his parables. WHY?
- If a parable was obscure enough it was intended to hide its' meaning from the listener. His parables were intended to educate his followers and be hidden from those not intended to enter the kingdom of heaven.
- Jesus used parables to pass spiritual knowledge and truth onto those who were his own AND
- Use them to pass judgment on those by hiding spiritual truth from those who were not his own.

Mark 4:11-12

The Reason for the Parable – Not all were meant to hear

- Jesus used parables in fulfillment of Old Testament scripture of Psalm 78:2-3 which was a predictor of a judgment that would come upon Israel. The parable of the wheat and the tares is stated:

Matthew 13:34-35

All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

Isaiah 6:9-10

And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Mark 4:13-20

The Parable of the Sower Interpreted / Explained

Mark 4:13-20

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 The sower soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

Mark 4:13-20

The Parable of the Sower Interpreted / Explained

- What's the same? What is different?
- The seed and the sower remain the same for all cases
- The soils for each case are different
- The first three conditions have the same basic result (no fruit)
- The last case, fourth soil yields fruit to various miraculous amounts
- Who is the sower?
- Anyone who shares the word of God. The Great Commission is one of the primary reasons we are called to believe is to share the good news with the lost.
- What is the seed?
- It is the word of God. It is the gospel message. It is the entire story of who Christ is, how he was described and foretold from the beginning of the Old Testament to his life as a man in the New Testament. It is the message of salvation in Christ.

Mark 4:15-20

The Parable of the Soils Interpreted / Explained

- What does the soil represent?
- The main focus on this parable is the soil. That is what creates the difference. It's not the sower, it's not the seed, but it's the soils.
- The soil represents a person's "heart", or the mind.
- Ultimately where does our faith in Christ come from? From God. The preparation of the soil, or a person's mind, to receive the word of God is done in advance of hearing the word by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:8-10

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Mark 4:15

The Parable of the First Soil Interpreted / Explained

Mark 4:4 and it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

Mark 4:15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

- Hardened, closed mind to the gospel, perhaps seared conscience from constant sin or unforgiveness in their life. They are so numb to their own sin, and the sin around them, that they don't even what is naturally right and wrong. Satan has direct involvement in preventing the gospel message from reaching this person's mind.

Mark 4:16-17

The Parable of the Second Soil Interpreted – Stony ground

Mark 4:5-6 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

Mark 4:16-17 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

- False conversion experience brought on by (fill in the blank)?
- Modifying the seed or the sowers broadcasting methods won't improve the chances for seed growth. Remember that the soil must be prepared and that's in the hand of God.
- Testing a true Christian's faith produces endurance...

Mark 4:18-19

The Parable of the Third Soil Interpreted – Thorns

Mark 4:7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

Mark 4:18-19 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

- This group of individuals gravitate toward the things of the world.
- They might come to church but don't typically have any interest in things of the Word of God.
- They want to be entertained and have more interest in social activities than knowing God.
- Any signs of faith will be choked out by the things of the world, and the love of money and the desire for other things of the world.

Mark 4:20

The Parable of the Fourth Soil Interpreted – Good Soil

Mark 4:8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

Mark 4:20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

- You will see a permanent change in this person
- Will be convicted of their own sin and want to turn away from it.
- Will display true fruits of the Spirit, (love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, humbleness, temperance...). We will always bear spiritual fruit in Christ.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

What does this passage mean for evangelism?

- God allowed his words to be conveyed, remembered, recorded, translated, preserved, and communicated to mankind, even today. Read it, know it, memorize it.
- God's method for spreading the gospel is simple. Use the same message used in the Bible, share it with people, God will do the rest. Acknowledge and ask God to prepare the soil, since he's the one causing all the gains, it can't hurt. :)
- Only God can save. He does the work in making it grow in a person. God also guarantees the fruit and the harvest. It will be made manifest in due season, although we may not see the immediate results.
- I would encourage each of you to share the gospel by sharing our links. The Bible Institute, taught by Gary Custis, found on our website tbcpx.org is also an excellent way for people to come to know Christ and to grow in the understanding of the truth. Let these seeds go forth. God's word will not return unto him void.

John 6:39

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.