

Lesson 4**Parables**

Memory Text: "Then He said to them, 'Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him' " (Mark 4:24, 25, NKJV).

I.E. Measure of thought / study = you give to the truth you hear will be = measure of virtue/ knowledge that comes back to you

- This week = study parables found in Mark 4 = parable = story that uses common cultural things / to illustrate spiritual truths
- 1) Sower 2) lamp 3) measure 4) growing seed 5) mustard seed
- By grace of God = come away w/ better understanding of lessons Jesus taught in parables

SUNDAY**The Parable of the Sower**

Mark 4:1-9 ¹And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat in it on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land facing the sea. ²Then He taught them many things by parables, and said to them in His teaching: ³"Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it. ⁵Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. ⁶But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. ⁷And some seed fell among thorns; and the

thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. ⁸But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.” ⁹And He said to them, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

- Jesus doesn't always explain His parables = good to analyze story in order to get most from it
- While most know = seed is Word of God = which Daniel will cover
- Sunday's lesson = examine 4 different types of soil = outcome for seed relies on soil
 - 3 soil conditions = lead to failed outcome = crop failure
 - 1 soil condition = leads to abundant harvest

Instead of one continuous story, the parable is actually four individual stories told to completion in each setting. The length of time for completing the story lengthens with each successive story.

Mark 4:4 as he was sowing, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up.

- **Some hear message = heart = burdened / hardened**
 - devil comes = easily snatches away = seed of Word
 - didn't penetrate heart / mind

Mark 4:5-6 “Other seed fell on the rocky ground where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of soil. ⁶“And after the sun had risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

- **Others hear Bible promises—receive w / joy**
 - Don't cling to them = long enough to **take root**.
 - Circumstances/conditions challenge trust in God=**lose faith**
 - **Reject** eternal power / truth = of God's testimony

- **Accept** = conflicting evidence of our circumstances.

Mark 4:7 “Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it yielded no crop.

- **Some sow His promises—and while focused on Jesus—
roots of faith = nurtured for a while.**
 - Demanding hustle/bustle of life interrupts focus
 - Worldly matters = creep in like weeds
 - Growing out of control = overcome our thoughts.
 - “Weeds & thorns” choke life of God’s Word out of our hearts.
 - i. Quit trusting in His knowledge
 - ii. Return to our limited human understanding.
 - Growth as Christians stunted—no longer acknowledge God’s way of bringing us to maturity.
 - When Quit tending to fertile ground of kingdom of God within (Lk 17:21) = find we have sacrificed = good seed / His Word.

Mark 4:8 “Other seeds fell into the good soil, and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop and produced thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.”

4) But the Word of God that is planted in **good ground** are those who, having **heard the word** with a noble and good heart, **keep it** [receive and retain] and bear fruit with **patience** [persevere to produce a crop].

- Our hearts must be good soil = prepared for planting
- Need/ broadcasting system = for hearing His Word and spreading His seed in our hearts
- Must receive / retain His promises
- Must persevere in obedience to His Word = to produce the fruit of His Spirit = His divine nature

The seed that falls on the good soil takes the longest of all, presumably an entire growing season, as is the normal pattern for a crop.

Three of the stories are about failure; only the last is about success, a good abundant crop. The length of the stories, the longer and longer period of time for each successive story, and the fact that only one story is about success, all point to the risk of failure but the abundant outcome of success.

The parable seems to point to the cost of discipleship and the risks involved, but the abundant reward of following Jesus.