

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 15TH, 2025 // GOSPEL OF MARK

SOIL (MARK 4:1-9)

AGAIN, HE BEGAN TO TEACH

Again, we see Jesus teaching around the Sea of Galilee. This time, He is not escaping a crushing crowd; He is maximizing His reach. As He sits in the boat, He teaches “many things.” Mark does not share every parable or every word, but the Holy Spirit gives us what God intends for us to have through Mark’s account.

- **What we need is here, if we will see it.**

LISTEN!

All of those present on the shore heard the same parables. Each person could hear the very words of God, from God! When Jesus calls them to “Listen!” we realize there is more at stake than a common discussion about planting seeds.

- **We are here. We made it to church, but do we realize that the words we are reading are God’s words? Are we ready to hear?**

CONSIDER THE SOWER

In an agricultural community, many would immediately relate to what would be said next. They would not just hear His words; they would see the event in their minds and make a connection with the sower and the challenges he would face while planting his crops.

- **How do we connect with God’s Word? Are we willing to consider it speaks about us?**

THE SOIL

The sower and the seed remain the same; only the soils change. On the path, birds eat the seed; on rocky ground, the seed sprouts and is scorched; among thorns, the sprouts are choked; on good soil, a crop blossoms.

- **We want to identify with the sower, but in this parable, Jesus is the sower and we are the soil. Jesus is about to explain why some hear Him and others reject Him.**

PARABLES (MARK 4:10-12)

WHEN HE WAS ALONE

Mark takes a break from the story and shares another time when Jesus was with His closest followers and the 12 disciples. They wanted to know more about the way Jesus was teaching—specifically, why He used parables to teach. In the next few verses, they would find out more about themselves and the people around them than they could imagine.

IT COMES IN PARABLES

A parable is much more than a story, and it certainly is not an illustration like a preacher would use in a sermon.

- A true parable gets us deeply involved and compels us to make a personal decision about God’s truth in our life.
- **It gets our attention, and we suddenly see ourselves. If we look by faith, we see God and His truth. How we respond will determine what is next.**

ISAIAH 6:9-10

Jesus told them the “secret of the kingdom of God” was given to them. They embraced His teaching, and the parables revealed Him as the messiah. Others could hear the same words, see the same Jesus, and still reject Him as Savior. Their rejection kept them from perception, understanding, and forgiveness.

- **Obedience is more than looking and listening. We want God, but we are not willing to give ourselves to Him.**

PRODUCE (MARK 4:13-20)

DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

Mark returns to the story of when Jesus shared the parable of the soils. In the next verses, Jesus will explain all the different responses to His teaching. Even with this clear, straightforward teaching, some would not see their own hearts, only an offensive teacher.

- **When we read or hear the Word of God, are we more offended than compelled? What is our action plan—rejection or surrender?**

SOWN ON THE PATH

This soil became hard because it was on the path and too many feet had walked on it.

- Some with hard hearts refuse to believe.
- Hearts can be hardened to the gospel. These dismiss the Word without giving it consideration, and whatever good news they may hear is quickly removed by Satan.
- **This kind of ground needs to be plowed. If getting turned upside down is what it takes, are we willing to see it happen?**

SOWN IN THE ROCKS

This soil is shallow because it had bigger problems to deal with.

- Some will believe as long as it fixes their problems and everything goes like they want it.
- **When we take all the “good parts” of being in this community and ignore our responsibility to enter a deeper relationship with Christ and His Church, we may find that we followed a feeling instead of the Savior. Feelings change; Christ does not.**

SOWN IN THE THORNS

This soil is dangerous because it is feeding other crops.

- Some will hear the Word and would like to add it to their list of things to do.
- **When we say that we believe and follow Christ but everything else in our life is more (or equally) important, we reveal that we are only partially committed to Him, which is, in reality, no commitment at all.**

SOWN ON THE GOOD GROUND

This soil is open to the seed, ready to go deep, and clear of weeds.

- Some will hear the Word, accept it, and bear fruit.
- **Tribulation and persecution do not stop them. Worries, wealth, personal desires, and sinful cravings do not distract them.**
- **Their hearing is active, not passive.**
- **They pursue the Word, allow it to take root, and rejoice when it produces growth.**

FRUIT

There is a promise and a proof in this last verse: “and produce fruit.”

- The only way that we grow and see others grow is when we completely surrender to the sower (Jesus) and the seed (His Word).
- **This is not about who produces the most fruit! The point is that only one response to the sower will produce salvation.**

THE SOWER

- Jesus came to serve and save.
- **He did not keep Himself a secret.**
- **He told them who He was before the parable teaching. He did not just teach the Apostles and close disciples. Anyone and everyone can hear His message. He still shares who He is and what He has done with anyone who will listen.**

THE SEED

- The message has not changed.
- **The good news is still good news to everyone who will “confess with [their] mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in [their] heart that God raised Him from the dead” (Romans 10:9). If the ability of the sower (Jesus) is perfect and the quality of the seed (the gospel) is flawless, why are we having such a difficult time seeing growth?**

THE SOIL

- There are many different heart conditions.
- **What we believe about Jesus will determine the condition of our heart.**
- **If we will just recognize our heart and who He is, He will plow the ground, remove the rocks, and destroy the thorns. The world does not need any more “fruitless Christians.” Are we ready to produce fruit?**