

KINGDOM

the gospel of mark

Week 5 | Kingdom: The Gospel of Mark | February 1, 2015

Opening Up:

- What are you lacking more: personal time, time with others, or time to work?
- What are the symptoms in your life when you have a lack of deep interpersonal connections?
- How do you connect best with others?

Read (or reference): Mark 4:1-34

Discuss:

1. There are 4 types of soil: hard, rocky, thorny, and fertile. What makes the good soil good is hearing and accepting the word. Hearing and accepting puts the seed down deep. What is happening in your life when the word of God goes down deep in you? How do you accept the word as a part of your life?
2. A seed is both weak and powerful. The word is weak in that it is no coercive or barbaric in nature. It is easily discarded. It is powerful in that it has life in its very nature. How have you seen both the weakness and power of the word?
3. How does Satan take away the seed from hard soil? How does trouble take away the seed in rocky soil? How do the cares of this world take away the seed in the thorny soil?
4. Which of the four soils have you identified with over the course of your life?
5. In verses 10-12 the disciples come to Jesus questioning the meaning of the parables. Why does this set them apart?
6. Have you ever been guilty of wanting things from Jesus, yet forsaking a relationship with him? Why does this happen? How do we get to know Jesus?
7. One author summarized verses 24-25 this way: "It means that if you don't apply what you've learned from God, even what you knew will become unreal and you will lose it. Spiritual growth is a lot like riding a bike. If you don't go forward, you 'fall off.'" Why is it important to pay forward what we have learned? Why is generosity in response to the generous gift of Jesus a necessary application?
8. In verses 26-32, the parables of the grain and the mustard seed, we see that the small yet powerful nature of the kingdom of Jesus takes time. We tend to want our spiritual lives to be a series of momentous events. How does seeing spiritual growth as a process (like farming) rather than an event help you to relate to others in the church? Have you ever been impatient with someone's spiritual growth? How do you help a slow-growing believer?
9. In the light of the mustard seed, have you ever been surprised by yours or someone else's spiritual growth? In what way? How does this text shine light on those experiences?
10. Pray.