

Mark Chapter 4

V: 1 Teaching by the sea side. Jesus doing what He normally did, teaching, preaching, and healing.

- This seems like a relaxed atmosphere, teaching by the sea side. (Hawaiian shirt?)
- There were so many people, that the boat that He placed in reserve in the last chapter is now employed so that He can teach without being pressed by the crowd.
- The water with the natural landscape acts as an amplifier, it still does today.
- This multitude that stood on the sea shore, they were eager to be near and to hear Jesus.
- A casual, relaxed setting with a non-casual attitude. I'd like to think that is us.

Nehemiah 8:5-9 ⁵“And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; for he was above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up: ⁶And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, amen, amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. ⁷Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. ⁸So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. ⁹And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha (governor), and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, this day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law.”

V: 2 Jesus begins to teach in parables:

Parable: “To cast alongside”, a story or illustration, a type of comparison to amplify, explain, or make clear a lesson or teaching.

V: 3-8 [The parable of the sower](#):

V: 4 Some seed fell by the **way side**: Onto the foot path, or sidewalk – hardened, compressed ground where the seed doesn't penetrate, it just lays on the surface.

- This can also be a type of heart or attitude; a hardened heart, in-penetrable.

Hebrews 3:15 “While it is said, today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.”

- The fowls / birds always represent the enemy, demonic presence.

- They take it away and eat it; it never penetrates the soil of the heart.

V: 5-6 Some fell on **stony ground**: Looks like regular ground, but it's only a thin layer of soil covering over the top of stone/

- In other words it has all the looks of good / receptive soil – exterior, but interior is hardened to the things of the Lord.

Ezekiel 36:26 (Heart surgery) “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”

2 Corinthians 3:3 “Forasmuch as you are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”

- This points out the need to be rooted & grounded in the Lord.

Colossians 2:6-7 “⁶As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: ⁷Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.”

- Deep roots keep us from being removed during the storms of life, and help us to endure through the droughts.

V: 7 Some fell among **thorns**: Into a thorny area, already established plants that would compete for moisture and nutrients. Being established, taking the lion's share, denying the new seed the ability to even get established.

- Jesus will later explain that these “thorns” are the cares of this life, the things that distract us, divert our attention and energy.

The issue is right priorities:

Matthew 6:33 “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Matthew 22:27 “Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”

V: 8 **Good soil**: Receptive soil, fertile.

- Soil that would actually produce, and re-produce fruit – 30, 60, 100 fold.

John 15:5 “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.”

- God wants us to be fruitful:

Colossians 1:9-10 “⁹For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;”

V: 9 Jesus gave the same admonition to the 7 churches in **Rev. Ch's. 2-3.**

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

- The natural man, non-believer, cannot understand.

1 Corinthians 2:14 “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

V: 10-11 “Mystery” (G-3466) musterion, a truth previously hidden but now revealed, but only to those intended.

- The O/T is the N/T concealed, the N/T is the O/T revealed.

V: 12 Jesus is quoting **Isaiah 6:9-10.**

- It almost sounds as though Jesus doesn't want to tell them in plain language because they might get saved – which is not the case.

2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord... is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

1. The issue is that Jesus could have spoken so powerfully that people would have been forced to concede to the logic of His reasoning and in a sense converted against their will.
2. Jesus instead chose to speak in such a way that would not manipulate them or force them into a decision that they really weren't willing to make.
3. Jesus spoke in parables so that those who wanted to hear would hear, and those that wanted to see would see – and those that didn't, wouldn't.

V: 13 Understanding this parable is the key to understanding the rest of the parables.

- So Jesus gives us a detailed explanation.

Psalm 119:17-18 “¹⁷Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word. ¹⁸Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

V: 14 The seed is the Word of God.

1 Peter 1:23 “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”

V: 15 “Way side” - hardened, un-receptive hearts – it bounces off – then Satan takes it away.

- The opposite of Pentecost;

Acts 2:41 “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

Jeremiah 15:16 “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts.”

V: 16-17 “Stony ground” – shallow soil over rock, no ability to have deep roots.

- This represents a “superficial response” to God’s word.
- Unable to withstand the pressures of life.

2 Timothy 3:12 “Yea, and all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

- Seed germinating in my truck, little green plant.

Ephesians 3:16-19 “¹⁶That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; ¹⁷that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.”

V: 18-19 “Thorny ground” – 3 things mentioned: cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, lust of other things.

- Cares of this world:

2 Timothy 2:3-4 ³Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”

- Deceitfulness of riches:

1 Timothy 6:10 “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

Matthew 6:24 “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

- Lust of other things:

1 John 2:15-17 ¹⁵Love 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. ¹⁶For 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. ¹⁷And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

V: 20 “Good ground”

- The average seed to harvest ratio is 8 to 1; the Word of God yields much more, 30-60-100 fold!

Isaiah 55:11 “So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.”

- Fruit: **John 15:1-8** speaks about the importance of fruit. (Turn to)
- There are different types of fruit:

James 3:18 “And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.” (Righteousness)

Romans 6:21-22 ²¹What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ²²But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” (Holiness)

Romans 1:13 “Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that often times I purposed to come unto you (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.” (Souls)

Galatians 5:22 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love...” (Love)

Philippians 4:15-17 “¹⁵Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. ¹⁶For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. ¹⁷Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.” (Giving)

Colossians 1:9-10 “⁹For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;” (Labor)

Hebrews 13:15 “By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.” (Praise)

- This starts with the hearing of the word:

Romans 10:17 “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

- Then receiving it: taking God’s word to heart – literally.
- That by itself will produce fruit!
 - Notice that only 1 out of 4 types produces fruit, 25% at best.
 - These different soils, different conditions of the heart can be any one of us at any time.
 - It is our choice which type of soil we are going to be.