

- At SonRise – Core Values-
 - Lost people matter to God, therefore they should matter to us!
 - The Church should be culturally relevant while remaining Biblically pure because sound Bible teaching is the catalyst for true life change.
- When we tell people the message of Jesus, usually the response is . . . What? Huh?
- Most people don't hear the word and become Christians, do they? Why?
- If I don't know why, I will be discouraged and not share the word anymore.
- I don't tell people about Jesus because when I do they don't care.
- I must be bad at telling people about Jesus!
- **How's come they don't respond right? Legit question to ask God!**

• The Bible is practical and so is God and **He doesn't want you to be discouraged so he gives us Mark 4: 1-20**. Even better for a farming community.

• People's hearts determine how they will respond to God's word.

Mark 4:1-2 - *Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. ² He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: ³ "Listen!*

• Hearing Jesus message is so important that he puts a stop to the healings for a while to share the word or (sow seed). He says, *"Listen!"*

Mark 4:3-9 ³ *"Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times."⁹ Then Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."*

• So, you read this and you're like, why are you speaking in parables? What you are saying is important. Why make it harder to understand by wrapping it up in a confusing illustration.

Mark 4:10-12 ¹⁰ *When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. ¹¹ He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables ¹² so that, "they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!"* – Reference to Isaiah 6:9 – Why Jesus used Parables.

• Parables are stories that filter people. You either get this and make the spiritual connection and it draws you to God, or you reject it and you don't get anything.

• Later in Mark 4:25 is says, *"Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them."*

• By teaching in parables, Jesus offered His hearers the opportunity to dig deep and find the truth, or to turn a blind eye to an interesting story and avoid a greater condemnation than if they rejected a clearly understood truth.

Mark 4:13-20 - ¹³ *Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? ¹⁴ The farmer sows the word. ¹⁵ Some people are like seed*

along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. ¹⁶ Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. ¹⁷ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ¹⁸ Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; ¹⁹ but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²⁰ Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown."

• **So, what is the seed? It's the Word of God.**

• **The root system of a healthy believer is connected to the Word of God.**

Psalm 1:2-3 - *but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. ³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season*

• You are the farmer. Spreading the Word.

• A WORD ABOUT FARMING- They spread the seed and then plow. They don't know the condition of the soil, where there are rocks, etc.

• The variable is the hearts of the people who hear the Word. When you share the Word, not everyone will respond positively because the word will land on different types of hearts.

• **Don't mess with seed God gives you to sow. Don't change it, Mix it, Hybrid it.**

1. **The Hard Soil (Heart)** – Didn't even purposely put the word there. Hard from being walked on. Like concrete. No room for seed to get in.
 - Some have been sowing the word to a friend for years with no results.
 - Word **not immediately received** so **devil steals** it like a bird. French fries.
 - **Can a hard heart receive the word?** YES. If it is plowed. Painful.
 - Pray for the heart to be softened.
 - **Jer. 23:29** – *"Is not my word like fire? And like a hammer which breaks the rock?"* Keep praying and sowing.
 - **Galatians 6:9** – *"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."* – Don't be discouraged.
 - **Hebrews 3:15** – *"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts and you did in the rebellion."* – When you hear the word you need to act quickly or the devil will steal the word before it is ever plowed.
 - **Satan's strategy.** ^{1st} quickly steal the word before it can germinate in you.
2. **The Rocky Soil (no roots)**- No personal roots. Parent's roots. Friend's roots. Then **trouble** comes and you. **You say, the Word is not worth the troubles associated with it.**

Satan's strategy. ^{2nd} Bring trouble before you understand the Word's worthy
3. **The Thorny Soil (competition).** Other things more important than the Word.
 - To fertile – All kinds of other things in life to take time and energy from the Word.
4. **The Good Soil (Hear, accept, produce)**- If the heart of a person is right they will hear God's word, believe it, and also start sharing the Word (Sowing).
 - **If you are hearing the Word, act now.** *Don't wait or the devil will steal it.*
 - **If you've been sowing.** *Don't be discouraged. Some will land on Good soil.*