

**Title:** A Survey of the Soils

**Passage:** Mark 4:1-20

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Draft Summary:

Survey of the Soils

- First Soil: Hard - rejecting heart
- Second Soil: Shallow - superficial heart
- Third Soil: Thorny - divided heart
- Fourth Soil: Good - hearing heart

Application:

- If you truly belong to Christ, then you are a sower.
- When you sow, make sure you're sowing good seed.
- When you are sowing, sow prayerfully and expectantly.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
  - Why do some believe and some do not after hearing the same Gospel of Jesus Christ?
  - How does this parable encourage evangelism?
  - What do you know about Jesus and what has He done for you?
  - What next steps will you take in response to the sermon?
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## **INTRODUCTION**

- Understanding God's Kingdom Through Jesus' Parables
  - Current series is to focus on Jesus, His Kingship, and His Kingdom.

Mark 4:10-11

And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables,

- "those around him with the twelve" = those who came to listen to Jesus for who He is. Not just merely to hear a good speaker.
- Jesus began speaking in parables and started with the Parable of the Soils as the key one to start because of its great meaning and importance.

- If understand correctly, then able to understand other parables and teachings.
- But if do not understand correctly, then won't be able to truly know Jesus.
  - False theology results in false conversions and false disciples

**Mark 4:8**

***And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."***

- most surprising part of the parable.
  - How can a seed produce what seemed an impossible yield/result?

Question: Why do some believe and some do not after hearing the same Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- Today, there are many false teachers who are not genuine "sowers" from God where they are preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

**PASSAGE:**

Mark 4:1-9

Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and

yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

## EXPOSITION

### **Mark 4:1**

***Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land.***

*Again he began to teach beside the sea.*

- the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus spent much of His ministry (a year and a half)

*And a very large crowd gathered about him*

- At this point in his ministry, many sought to hear Jesus as well as see His miracles and healings.
- Many in the crowds came to Jesus selfishly to be fed or to see miracles.

### **Mark 4:2**

***And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them:***

- parables = To lay something alongside in comparison (a story with a spiritual meaning).
- For many in the crowd there who were there for the wrong reason: parables were riddles.
- For genuine believers in Jesus Christ: parables were revelations of God's truth.

John 8:31-32

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

### **Mark 4:3**

***"Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow.***

*Listen*

- word used 10 times.

- Emphasis for those present to listen genuinely and attentively.

*a sower went out to sow.*

- common knowledge by many in the audience.
- Person would take a handful of seed from a bag and scatter to sow the seed in the fields.

### **First Soil: The Hard Soil**

**Mark 4:4**

***And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it.***

*the path*

- the hard soil
  - the only one that refers to Satan in interpretation.

Meaning = the rejecting heart

### **Second Soil: The Shallow Soil**

Mark 4:5-6

Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.

*Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil,*

- rocks of limestone existed throughout all the land. Would lie just inches below the topsoil

*and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil.*

- at first impression, the crop looked good.

*And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.*

Meaning = The superficial heart.

- Initial response of joy but doesn't last.

### **Third Soil: The Thorny Soil**

Mark 4:7

Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.

*Other seed fell among thorns,*

- like the second soil, it may grow and look good initially.

*and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.*

- but the thorns stunted the seed's growth

Meaning = the divided heart.

### **Fourth Soil: The Good Soil**

Mark 4:8

And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

*And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain,*

- good soil that is clean (no rocks) and prepared (no weeds)

*thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.*

- surprising aspect of parable = supernatural result.

Meaning = the hearing heart.

- heart that responds to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - not because they are better or wiser but because of God's sovereign work in the heart.

### **Mark 4:9**

***And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."***

- phrase occurs 8 times in the New Testament
- said by Jesus (in both the Gospel as well as in Revelation)

## **APPLICATION**

### **Mark 4:14**

#### **The sower sows the word.**

- Be encouraged when sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ
  - Results come only by God's sovereign work of having prepared the heart.

The sower

- anyone who throws seed = anyone who shares the Gospel of Jesus

Luke 8:11

Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

- the key is not the sower. It is the seed.

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

#### **If you truly belong to Christ, then you are a sower.**

- not just pastors or ministers
- Everyone is a sower regardless of background or status or any other characteristic apart from being in Christ.

Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

#### **When you sow, make sure you're sowing good seed.**

Matthew 10:20

For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

- the seed must be the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Question: What do you know about Jesus and what has He done for you?

1 Corinthians 2:2

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- if truly have compassion for another, then share them about Jesus.

**When you are sowing, sow prayerfully and expectedly.**

- "It is a good thing to talk to your friend about Christ but it is also a good thing to talk to Christ about your friend."

James 5:16b

The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

- We put people in prayer in the hand of Jesus