

Stories

Parable of the Sower

What kind of soil are you (Mark 4:2-9, 14-20)? God is sowing the seed of His truth, and how we respond to that truth – the kind of soil we are – determines whether a harvest is produced or not. That harvest is the abundant life Jesus promises to those fully surrendered to His reign and rule in their lives (John 10:10). Some people are disinterested paths where Satan immediately snatches the truth away, squelching any hope of God's truth producing fruit. Others are rocky ground where despite significant encounters with Jesus never develop deep roots; their seed is scorched by the heat and pressures of life. Some are thorny soil where any spiritual growth is choked out by the convenience and worries of day-to-day life. And then some are good soil where a miraculous harvest beyond expectation emerges. We test and determine what kind of soil we are by purposefully examining the fruit of our daily lives. Are we tending and cultivating the soil of our souls, staying connected to other followers of Jesus, stepping out in faith, and spending regular time in worship? When our soil is good, our roots grow deep, and we help build up the roots of those around us.

GET THINGS STARTED

How would you respond to the question: why are you here (i.e., at church, in your group, following Jesus)? What do you hope to gain from (and give to) your faith journey with Jesus? What do you want the fruit of your life to look like?

GO DEEPER

1. When looking at the different kinds of soil in Mark 4:2-9, what is the seed and who sows that seed? Why are these details significant?
2. As Jesus explains the meaning of His parable in Mark 4:14-20, what keeps the seed from producing a harvest in the first three types of soil? Why is it significant that the Kingdom of God in this parable – and the truth of His kingdom – can be rejected or embraced? What does that reveal about God and His kingdom?
3. What makes for good soil that does produce a miraculous harvest, and what is the fruit of that harvest?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. What kind of soil are you? What needs to change so that you become good soil that experiences a miraculous harvest? What is a single, simple step you can take this week to tend the soil of your heart and soul?
2. How deep are the roots of your faith in Jesus? What would deepen or expand your root system? What do you need to say *yes* or *no* to so that you develop stronger roots?
3. How is the kind of soil you are impacting your family or those closest to you?

PRACTICE IT NOW

Take time as a group together to pray that God would make you good soil that produces a miraculous harvest. Ask Him to show you what needs to shift or be addressed in your heart so that you become good soil. Ask Him for the courage to make those changes, so that you can fully receive and embrace the truth of His kingdom. Invite the Holy Spirit to produce in you His fruit and to transform your heart and character.