

*Parables and  
Miracles*

4  
Mark

# Day

# 1

1. Jesus came to preach the good news of the kingdom of God, but many did not want to hear. Therefore, Jesus used parables quite often. He would share an earthly story which served as instruction for those who had a heart to hear and judgement for those who refused. This week in Mark 4 we will look at four parables and one miracle. Read Mark 4 before starting this study guide. Pray asking the Lord to bless your time in his word.
2. Jesus went down to the lake to teach and a large crowd gathered. The crowd quickly became so large that Jesus got into a boat while the people remained on the shore. Mark tells us that Jesus began to teach many things by telling parables. The first parable he taught that day was a parable about a farmer sowing his seed. Read Mark 4:1-8, fill in the chart.

Where the seed fell	The outcome

3. In verse 9, Jesus gave those with him instructions, what did Jesus tell them to do?
4. I like to think I am a good listener but that is not always the case. Becoming a good listener is an attitude of the heart and a honed skill. Here are seven tips to get better at listening to God and to others.
  - Practice silence.
  - Identify the important messages going on around you and devote your attention to them.
  - Have an open mind and a desire to learn truth.
  - Limit all distractions.
  - Ask questions.
  - Listen as if you are going to share it with someone else.
  - Listen with the intention of applying what you have heard.
  - Have a relaxed and positive body language.

Are you a good listener?

Did you see something in the list above you would like to practice to improve your listening skills?

5. Jesus is calling us to listen with the intention of learning and understanding. The revelation of truth concerning the kingdom of heaven is mentioned in verse 11. We did not earn it or deserve it but by placing our faith in Jesus Christ the secret or hidden things concerning the kingdom of God are revealed to us. What do you call something that is freely given to you?  
Read Ephesians 2:8-9, what is your response to what has been given?
6. Can you think of some tactics Satan uses to prevent us from hearing and understanding God's Word?
7. Read 1 Corinthians 1:18 to help clarify. Who are those that Mark described as on the outside; those who are ever seeing but never understanding the teachings of Christ?

8. In Mark 4:14-20 Jesus clarifies the parable for his disciples. Fill in the chart.

Some people are like...	The activity of our enemy, Satan
	The activity of God

9. Identify the farmer, the seed, the soil. Who do you believe each of these represent?

- a. Farmer-
- b. Seed-
- c. Soil-

Who gives the harvest?

10. In the case of the first soil, we see the seed was taken. In the second type of soil, it has no root and so when the pressure of life and persecution comes there are no roots to supply the needed refreshment. This person quickly goes back to their old way of life. This is a very crucial time, what can we do to help this person?

11. In the case of the third soil, the thorns choke it out. I have found that weeding my garden is easiest when the weeds are small. What are the three types of thorns identified in verse 19?

We can only walk in one direction at a time. Are any of these three areas hindering your walk of faith?

12. Read Mark 4:21-25; Matthew 5:14-16 and Luke 8:16, what is the point Jesus is making?

**Matthew 5:14-16** *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

**Luke 8:16** *“No one lights a lamp and hides it in a clay jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, they put it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light.*

13. Read Mark 4:21-25; in the previous parable Jesus spoke of the seed being sown. In these verses he is speaking of light being shared. Read Ephesians 5:6-14 and Romans 8:11; what light is given to those who follow Jesus?

**Ephesians 5:7-14** *Therefore do not be partners with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth) 10 and find out what pleases the Lord. 11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. 13 But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. 14 This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

**Romans 8:11** *If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.*

14. Believers are given a measure of truth revealed to us when we place our faith in Christ. If our desire is to apply it and allow it to illuminate our life, to share it by our example of obedience to this light, the Bible says we will be given more. What are you doing with the truth you have been given? In what way have you placed your light on a stand to maximize its effect on the world around you?
15. Plan to have at least one purposeful conversation today. Think about what that might look like. You do not need to plan out the words, just the purpose. The conversation might start, "I read something interesting in my Bible this morning." Even something as simple as asking "What was the best part of your day? Or what was the most difficult part?" These can spark a purpose-filled conversation.

## Day 3

16. Read Mark 4:26-29, just as the tabernacle was a shadow of heavenly things and not the real thing, Jesus is describing for us the character of God's kingdom. He states, "the kingdom of heaven is like..." What did he compare God's kingdom to in these verses?
17. Jesus stated the farmer went out to work his field. He scattered his seed and then went back home. How odd would it be to see the farmer out in the field begging for the seed to grow? There is no need to encourage or coax the seeds, God has placed it in the DNA of a seed to sprout in the right conditions and grow. What does the seed represent in this parable?
18. What are you doing to spread the word of God?  
If you are a believer, what are some of the ways we can share the good news each day?
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19. Are you being patient with the seed of God's word; willing to give it time to germinate, sprout and grow?
20. In Mark 4:30-34 once again Jesus says *the kingdom of heaven is like...* Highlight these words in your Bible every time you see them. What did he compare the kingdom of heaven to, and what did he say would be the blessed result of it?
21. In nature we understand that seeds take time to germinate and grow. Zechariah 4:10a "*Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin,*" If you are a child of God did you know God is at work in you and is producing change in your heart from the seed of truth planted there. Are you experiencing God's word changing your desires and your thinking? Why not take a minute to thank him.

## Day 4

22. In Mark 4:35-41 we see the seventh miracle Mark recorded in his gospel. Let's take a quick look at the details. The crowd was left behind, Jesus went into the boat with the disciples only.  
What was the problem?  
Who were those affected by this problem?  
Who was the only person who did not seem to be bothered by this problem?  
What was he doing?
23. Have you ever experienced something that caused you great anxiety, you felt alone; like God might not be aware of the events?
24. The disciples went to the back of the boat to wake Jesus. Remember that Peter, Andrew, James, and John were all experienced sailors; this was not their first storm at sea. They left their fishing businesses to follow Jesus. I am quite sure they had done everything they could to stay afloat before waking Jesus. Read Mark 4:38, how desperate had the situation gotten in their opinion?

According to their words what did the disciples accuse Jesus of that day?

# Day

# 5

25. Have you ever expressed something similar? (maybe not aloud but you thought it)
26. When the disciples woke Jesus what did he do?
27. Read verse 41 carefully; do you believe this is what they had in mind when they woke Jesus?
28. How often has Jesus delivered you just as you pictured? (Me either)
29. Jesus stood up and rebuked the wind and the waves. Do a bit of research on the word “rebuke,” then write Mark 4:39 in your own words. Look up the word in the Strong’s Concordance, or a Bible dictionary, and maybe even a good commentary or two.

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30. Jesus’ authority is the key ingredient. Read Mark 11:23; what authority do believers possess? (we will talk more about this when we get to Mark 11)
31. Do you believe Jesus was questioning their previous experiences at sea when he asked them why they were so afraid? If not, what is he speaking to them about? What is he trying to clarify?
32. How did Jesus describe their faith at this point? Read Mark 4:40 in several translations before writing your answer.
33. If we never have storms how can we see the truth about our faith?
34. Have you gone through a storm with Jesus and seen your faith grow?
35. My friend Rene’ often reminds me “God has never failed me in the past, I do not know why I would think he would start now.” When you are filled with fear or doubt, to what or who do you turn?
36. What is your take-away from this chapter?
37. Does knowing that Jesus has all authority and that he loves you very much change your “what if” thinking?
38. Read the verses below and comment on each. In what way do each of these verses speak to our thankfulness and how we should express it?  
*Psalm 28:7 The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him.*  
*Psalm 35:18 I will give you thanks in the great assembly; among the throngs I will praise you.*  
*Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*
39. Write a prayer to God thanking him for all the ways he cares for you. This is not busy work; a thankful heart has no problem expressing itself in words of gratitude.

