

## The Parable of the Sower - Mark 4:1-20

*Topics:* Desires, Gospel, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Perseverance, Spiritual Growth, Teaching, Wealth, Witnessing, Worry

### Open It

1. What illustration would you use to explain your job?
2. What three words would you use to describe your spiritual life?
- \* 3. What do you do to keep your house plants alive?

### Explore It

4. Where does this story take place? (4:1)
5. How did Jesus start to teach the crowds? (4:2)
6. When did Jesus use parables instead of saying directly what He meant? (4:2)
- \* 7. What are the four scenes described in this parable? (4:3-10)
8. How did those closest to Jesus respond to the parable He told? (4:10)
9. In what way did Jesus limit His explanation of the parable? (4:11-12)
10. What problem did this exchange bring up? (4:13)
- \* 11. To what was Jesus referring when He said, "The farmer sows the word"? (4:14)
12. What did Jesus want us to understand about God from this parable? (4:14-20)
- \* 13. What are some obstacles that prevent people from accepting the gospel or hanging on to their faith? (4:15-19)
14. What happens to those who hear the truth about Christ and accept it? (4:20)

### Get It

15. Why do you think Jesus considered Isaiah's words relevant to His preaching about the kingdom of God?
16. Knowing that most of the men in the crowd were farmers and Jesus used an illustration from farming, why did many in the audience not understand His message?
17. Why do you think Jesus explained the "secret" only to his disciples and not to the crowds in general?
18. When and where do we need to listen carefully?
19. To what area of your life does this parable speak?
20. What kind of soil do you think represents you?
21. How will you respond to the coming of the kingdom of God?
22. What can you do—and not do—to make the message "take root" when you teach or tell others about Christ?
23. How does Satan "take away the word" before it has a chance to take root?
- \* 24. What troubles or persecutions cause believers to fall away?
25. What do you think your church can do to help people be better hearers?
26. What can we do to make sure the messages of God's Word take root and grow in us?
- \* 27. How can you make sure that the worries of life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the other desires of the world will not choke the life out of your Christian walk?
28. What is the first step in obeying what we already know to be God's will?
29. What can you do to increase your fruit as a Christian?

### Apply It

30. What is one step you can take to guard against the desires of the world that threaten your devotion to Christ?
- \* 31. In what area of your life do you need to start listening to God?
32. What is one biblical truth that you want to cultivate in your life each day this week?

