

The Gospel of Mark

Lesson 8: Mark 4:1-20

Parable of the Sower (vv. 1-9)

- This is the first parable in position and importance in this chapter
- In the first century, seeds were sown before they were plowed
- An excellent harvest would yield ten to twenty times the seed planted

What is/are the primary lesson(s) of the parable?

Matt. 13:1-9
Luke 8:4-8

The reason for parables (vv. 10-12)

- “mystery” refers to a previously unknown truth now revealed
 - We see this in Colossians 1:24-27 and 1 Timothy 3:16
- Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9-10
 - Those with spiritual discernment will understand Jesus
 - Those who are spiritually blind cannot and will not
 - Jesus’ use of the Isaiah passage has created controversy

How does Jesus’ use of parables relate to God’s OT actions regarding scoffers?

Matt. 13:10-17
Luke 8:9-10

Jesus explains the parable (vv. 13-20)

- Many scholars have rejected this section as being from Jesus
 - They contend that Jesus would not have allegorized the parable
 - There is no good reason to see this as anything other than genuine

Why would Jesus see this parable as needing his disciples’ understanding?

Matt. 13:18-23
Luke 8:11-15

- Jesus explains the major elements of the parable:
 - The seed = the gospel message
 - Four types of hearers
 - The unresponsive hearer
 - The emotional hearer
 - The distracted hearer
 - The fruitful hearer

What does it mean to bear fruit?

Which of these hearers would you consider a genuine follower of Jesus?