

## The Value of Values

### Value #1: Communicating God's Word Unapologetically

Mark 4:1-20

📖 Mark 4:1–13 (NIV84) “Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around Him was so large that He got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water’s edge. <sup>2</sup> He taught them many things by parables, and in His teaching said: <sup>3</sup> “Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. <sup>4</sup> As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. <sup>5</sup> Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. <sup>6</sup> But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. <sup>8</sup> Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times.” <sup>9</sup> Then Jesus said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” <sup>10</sup> When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around Him asked Him about the parables. <sup>11</sup> He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside, everything is said in Parables <sup>12</sup> so that “they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise, they might turn and be forgiven!” <sup>13</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable?”

#### 1. Our hearts can be **too hard** for God's Word to grow.

📖 Mark 4:14–15 (NIV84) “The farmer sows the word. <sup>15</sup> Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.”

#### 2. Our hearts can be **too shallow** for God's Word to grow.

📖 Mark 4:16–17 (NIV84) “Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.”

📖 Colossians 2:6–7 (NIV84) “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

📖 Psalm 1:1–3 (NLT) “Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. <sup>2</sup> But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. <sup>3</sup> They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.”

#### 3. Our hearts can be **too crowded** for God's Word to grow.

📖 Mark 4:18–19 (NIV84) “Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; <sup>19</sup> but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.”

#### 4. Our hearts can be **fertile places** for God's Word to grow.

📖 Mark 4:20 (NIV84) “Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown.”

📖 Isaiah 55:11 (NKJV) “So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”

📖 Isaiah 55:11 (MSG) “...the words that come out of my mouth not come back empty-handed. They'll do the work I sent them to do, they'll complete the assignment I gave them.”

📖 Mark 4:8 (NIV84) “Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times.”

**Digging Deeper:** Which of these soils best represents you? Which soil represents the condition you most often return to? Do you believe God's Word is indeed His word and not just the words of men? Thorns hurt—which thorn has messed with you the most: worry, wealth, or wanting what others have? What weed is choking the Word out of your life?—what are you going to do about it?