



To backslide, you have to first slide forward.

Mark 4:1-20

Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. ² And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ³ “Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵ Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶ And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. ⁸ And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.” ⁹ And he said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” ¹⁰ And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹ And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, ¹² so that “they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.” ¹³ And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. ¹⁶ And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷ And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. ¹⁸ And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹ but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and

the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. ²⁰ But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

Clues

- A parable is an earthly story with a deeper meaning.
- The Seed is the Gospel: Jesus is the Messiah who lived a perfect life, died for our sins, and rose from the dead. Seeds produce what they are.
- The Sower is whoever shares the Gospel.
- The soil represents our heart condition in responding to the Gospel.

This parable is the key to all the other parables! – 4:13 *And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?”*

Heart conditions

- 1) Hard heart: Indifferent
 - Birds devoured the seed – 4:4 *And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it.*
 - 4:14b *when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.*
 - How does Satan take away the word?
 - Lies. Fallacies. Preconceived ideas that “eat up” the Gospel before it’s deeply implanted in our hearts.
 - Christianity is restrictive.
 - The Bible was written by men.
 - There are no absolutes.
 - Christians are hypocrites.
 - You’ve got time.
- 2) Shallow heart: Opportunistic
 - Immediately sprouted and withered – 4:5-6 *Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶ And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away.*
 - 4:16b-17 *the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷ And they have no root*

in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

- Emotional responses that lack brokenness over sin.
- Never slid forward in the first place.

3) Cluttered heart: Interested but distracted

- *Grew but suffocated – 4:7 Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.*
- *4:18-19 And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word,¹⁹ but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.*
 - Distractions: Cares of the world, deceitfulness of riches, desires for other things
 - Never slid forward in the first place.

4) Receptive heart: Receptive

- *Grew and reproduced – 4:8-9 And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”⁹ And he said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”*
- *4:20 But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”*

Q: What is my next step with Jesus Christ?

A: [Connect Card](#)

- I am committing my life to Jesus for the first time.
- I am repenting and renewing my commitment to Jesus.
- I am interested in being baptized by immersion.
- I would like more information on Starting Point class.
- I am interested in serving.
- I want to register for Foundations.
- I am interested in Recovery Church.
- I am interested in joining a small group.