

The Story (vv. 1-9)

“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. He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: ‘Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed.’” (Mark 4:1-3)

The Challenge (vv. 10-12)

- Jesus used parables to separate the curious from the serious.
- Parables revealed the state of the hearts of those who heard them.

The Interpretation (vv. 13-20)

The soils represent four types of people:

- Those with hard hearts who turn away from the word and choose not to accept it;
- Those with superficial hearts who hear the word, show some initial interest, and then fade away when adversity comes;
- Those with distracted hearts who hear the word, but competing interests capture their attention;
- Those with hungry hearts who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit.

The Application

- Share broadly with those around you. (vv. 3-8)
- Walk closely with Jesus to understand his perspective on things. (v. 10)
- Follow humbly with a heart that hears, accepts, and bears fruit. (v. 20)