

Life Group Member Guide

Focal Passage: Mark 4:1-20 CSB
Passage in Context: Mark 4 (CSB)



Bible-Reading Tip: The use of parallel passages such as occurs throughout the Gospels helps to give a bigger and fuller context of the stories, encounters and events in the Bible. For example, we see the context for the writing of many of Paul’s letters (that became known as the Pastoral Epistles) by reading the Book of Acts.

¹ Again he began to teach by the sea, and a very large crowd gathered around him. So he got into a boat on the sea and sat down, while the whole crowd was by the sea on the shore. ²He taught them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ³“Listen! Consider the sower who went out to sow. ⁴As he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵Other seed fell on rocky ground where it didn’t have much soil, and it grew up quickly, since the soil wasn’t deep. ⁶When the sun came up, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it didn’t produce fruit. ⁸Still other seed fell on good ground and it grew up, producing fruit that increased thirty, sixty, and a hundred times.” ⁹Then he said, “Let anyone who has ears to hear listen.”

¹⁰When he was alone, those around him with the Twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹He answered them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to those outside, everything comes in parables ¹²so that

**they may indeed look,
 and yet not perceive;
 they may indeed listen,
 and yet not understand;
 otherwise, they might turn back
 and be forgiven.”^{[a][b]}**

The Parable of the Sower Explained

¹³Then he said to them: “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand all of the parables? ¹⁴The sower sows the word. ¹⁵Some are like the word sown on the path. When they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word sown in them.^[c] ¹⁶And others are like seed sown on rocky ground. When they hear the word, immediately they receive it with joy. ¹⁷But they have no root; they are short-lived. When distress or persecution comes because of the word, they immediately fall away. ¹⁸Others are like seed sown among thorns; these are the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹but the worries of this age, the deceitfulness^[d] of wealth, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²⁰And those like seed sown on good ground hear the word, welcome it, and produce fruit thirty, sixty, and a hundred times what was sown.”

HEAR Bible Reading Method

HIGHLIGHT the passage

- Underline any repeated words or key ideas you see.
- Note any questions you have about what you read.
- In 2-3 sentences, summarize what was said or what happened.

EXPLAIN the passage

- What was revealed about God? His character, desires, and/or actions?
- What was revealed about people? What we are/do or what we should be/do?

APPLY the passage

- From this reading, what truth do you need to embrace?
- By God’s power, how will you THINK, SPEAK, or ACT differently based on what you read?

RESPOND to the passage

- Talk to God about what you’ve seen and learned in this passage.
- Ask Him to help you apply the truth to your life.