

Message Notes
Earth and Hearts
Mark 4:1-20
Jesus: The Gospel of Mark 9
March 27, 2011



Mark 4:1-8 A story about earth and hearts, told from a boat.

1. Why this story now?

Mark 4:1-9

Why do people respond so differently to the Good News?

2. A particularly knotty response

Mark 4:10-12

Isaiah 6

(see also Isaiah 29:9-10, 42:18-20 and John 12:37-41, Acts 28:17-31)

Two ways to understand Mark 4:10-12:

- a. Fact: Accept it, Jesus will meet with much indifference.
- b. Purpose: The message will cause some to be even more stubborn.

3. Earth, earth, earth!

Mark 4:13-20

- Spread the Gospel to everyone; we can't tell good-earth from not-so-good earth.
- God's preparing good-earth gives us sure hope in spreading the Gospel.

Growth Group Questions
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1. Share about someone who sowed seed into your heart—perhaps “unsuccessfully” or “successfully.”

2. Read Mark 4:13-20. What kind of soil have you been in days past? These days? Mark 4:8 and 20 get excited about this bumper crop. What’s the crop you’re seeing in your life? What new crop are you praying for in your life? In someone else’s life?

3. Read and talk about the third kind of earth/dirt/soil, Mark 4:7 and 18-19.
 - a. What are some of the unseen hazards of (our) prosperity? Consider Mark 10:17-31.

 - b. How can we deal with our “desires for other things”? Check out Hebrews 13:5 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. (Remember: God’s commands are really His promises and provisions in disguise: God prompts us and enables us to faith-obey!)

 - c. What are some of the good things about (our) prosperity?

 - d. How have the pulls of Mark 4:19-20 hindered your fruitfulness?

4. Extra digging: Jesus keeps pushing us to listen and understand (Mark 4:3, 9, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 23, 24,) with the implication being when we listen, we will obey. Check out and talk about Ezekiel 33:21-32.