



3/28/21 Sermon Notes

“Spiritual Growth 101”

Mark 4:1-32

Pastor Dan DeRoche

How do you grow spiritually?

Mark 4:1-32 (CSB) - ¹Again 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.”

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. 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 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.”

²¹He also said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket or under a bed? Isn’t it to be put on a lampstand? ²²For there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed, and nothing concealed that will not be brought to light. ²³If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen.” ²⁴And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear. By the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and more will be added to you. ²⁵For whoever has, more will be given to him, and whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.”

²⁶“The kingdom of God is like this,” he said. “A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷He sleeps and rises night and day; the seed sprouts and grows, although he doesn’t know how. ²⁸The soil produces a crop by itself—first the blade, then the head, and then the full grain on the head. ²⁹As soon as the crop is ready, he sends for the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

³⁰And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use to describe it? ³¹It’s like a mustard seed that, when sown upon the soil, is the smallest of all the seeds on the ground. ³²And when sown, it comes up and grows taller than all the garden plants, and produces large branches, so that the birds of the sky can nest in its shade.”

The Teaching (vv. 1-12)

Some key lessons:

1. There are a variety of responses to the seed
2. Spiritual Growth is responding to the work and person of Jesus
3. There is a connect between individual growth & kingdom growth
4. Like farming there is a human part and a God part

The Human Part (vv. 13-20)

Each soil represents a group of people:

- Satan takes it away (v. 15)
- It is received with great joy, but it is very short lived (vv.16-17)
- It is choked out (vv. 18-19)
- It lands on great soil (v. 20)

The God Part (vv. 21-32)

- The lamp is God Himself.
- Jesus Himself is saying I will not be hidden. I did not come to earth to be concealed.
- Jesus is teaching that the kingdom of God is a process.
- God builds His kingdom in our hearts by mysteriously taking obedience to His Word bathed in the Holy Spirit so that we grow in Him.

Spiritual growth is a messy process that requires a lot of grace. It involves our effort to tether our hearts to His by taking in His Word, and then trusting in His power to transform us and make us new.