

A Jesus Riddle Mark 4:1-25

Why a parable? Mark 4:1-2

- A parable without an explanation is a riddle for the foolish and an invitation for the wise.

Jesus and the riddle of the farmer spreading seeds. Mark 4:3-9

"Listen to this! Behold, the sower went out to sow..."

- This parable, left like this, would be a riddle to those who heard it.
- Jesus is asking all who follow him to come closer and look deeper into His ministry.

A behind-the-scenes look into the mission of Jesus and His followers. Mark 4:10-20

"To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God..."

Jesus highlights 4 realities that exist in the kingdom of God. There are, and there will be...

The Hard People

The Shallow People

The Crowded People

Jesus is telling you to be the READY people. Mark 4:20-25

- We must soften our hearts, make way for deep roots, and remove sinful distractions.

Digging Deeper: Want to nerd out on parables? Check this out.

"Because later Christians, such as Paul, do not develop story parables, they are distinctive to Jesus in the NT. Most scholars of all persuasions thus usually deem the gospels' parables authentic to Jesus, not the sort of sayings that some scholars believe later Christians would have invented for Him. By contrast, some more skeptical scholars have doubted that the *interpretations* of the parables offered by Jesus in the gospels were really uttered by Jesus. More recent scholarship has challenged such skepticism, however. Other Jewish parables frequently have interpretations, as Jewish scholarship on parables recognizes.

It is in fact parables that *lack* interpretation that appear more unusual in antiquity. Parables were like sermon illustrations, but they often made little sense without being connected to a sermon. Because Jesus offered the illustrations independently, interpreting the parables only privately to His disciples afterward (Mk. 4:10-12), they served as riddles to the crowds, inviting the hearers to consider Jesus' point."

NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible pg. 1693

LifeGroup Discussion:

Read Mark 4:10-20. Being honest, do you tend to struggle with being a hard person, a shallow person, or a crowded person?

Jesus often gave the interpretations of His parables to only His close followers. What does that teach us about following Jesus? What must we do when we approach the parables and teachings of Jesus?

Jesus is calling us to be good soil, so to speak. How can we practically soften our hearts, have deep roots, and remove sinful distractions from our lives?

Next Steps:

JOIN A LIFEGROUP: LifeGroups are ongoing small group communities that gather together to CONNECT in a smaller setting, GROW together in our faith, and REACH out together to our community. Take a next step by, contacting Connections + LifeGroups Pastor, Robert Carter, at rcarter@calvarylife.org or indicate "LifeGroups" on The Card (located in the seat rack in front of you). calvarylife.org/lifegroups

SIGN UP TO SERVE AT NEIGHBORGOOD: Help demonstrate God's love to our surrounding neighborhood on Saturday, May 5, from 8:00 am-noon. Volunteers are needed to help in the car clinic, health + salon center, farmers' market, bike shop, kid zone and more. Find out more about this day to bless our neighbors and sign up to get involved at calvarylife.org/good

GO TO MANCAMP: Come connect at the annual weekend experience for the men of Calvary Church at Palomar Mountain, May 18-20. Discover more or register online today at calvarylife.org/mancamp



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