



HOW'S YOUR SOIL?

Mark 4:1–20 | Pastor Caleb Kelly

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1. Hard Hearts Block the Word (Mark 4:1–4, 14–15)

Jesus begins the parable with seed falling along the path, which is immediately devoured by birds. This represents those whose hearts are hard and unyielding to God's Word.

Application Questions:

- Why does Jesus teach this lesson in the form of a parable?
- What is the point of the illustration of the birds in these verses?
- How can you identify hard spots in your heart where the Word bounces off?

2. Shallow Faith Fades Under Pressure (Mark 4:5–6, 16–17)

Seeds that fall on rocky soil spring up quickly but wither under the sun. This illustrates a shallow faith—enthusiastic at first, but lacking depth to endure trials or opposition.

Application Questions:

- Is the faith on display in these verses a false faith? Or something else?
- What in our world causes faith to collapse?
- How do you cultivate depth in your relationship with God so that trials don't shake you?

3. Crowded Lives Choke the Word (Mark 4:7, 18–19)

Some seeds fall among thorns and are choked by worldly cares, riches, or desires. Life distractions can prevent God's Word from taking root and bearing fruit.

Application Questions:

- Why are thorns able to choke the seed in these verses?
- What things choke the Word in our lives today?
- How can you reorder your priorities so the Word has preeminence in your life?

4. Good Soil Bears Fruit (Mark 4:8, 20)

When the seed lands on good soil, it grows deep roots and produces a harvest. This is a life that hears, accepts, and obeys the Word, resulting in multiplication and fruitfulness.

Application Questions:

- Why does seed take root in good soil?
- What does the soil metaphor tell us about the way seed eventually bears fruit?
- How can you cultivate good soil in your own life?