

The Heart and The Disciple

Mark 4:1-20

I. If you were to summarize what we have covered in the first three chapters of Gospel of Mark it would look something like this.

1. Proclaiming who Jesus is.
 - A. He is the Christ, Mark 1:1
 - B. Testimony of the Prophets, Mark 1:2,3
 - C. Testimony of John, Mark 1:7-9
 - D. Testimony of the Father, Mark 1:11
2. Demonstrating who Jesus is.
 - A. Overcame temptations, Mark 1:12,13
 - B. Taught with Authority, Mark 1:22
 - C. Healed the sick and demon possessed, Mark 1:32-34; 40-42; 2:1-13
 - D. Forgave sins, Mark 2:5
 - E. The Bridegroom, Mark 2:19
 - F. Lord of the Sabbath, Mark 2:28
3. The Response.
 - A. Some rejected Him, Mark 3:28-30
 - B. Some followed Him, Mark 3:35

II. As we begin chapter 4 Jesus explains why some will choose to follow Him while others won't. He does this in the parable of the Sower.

III. In this parable Jesus explains that not every soil is the same and since soils are different some will reject what is planted in it.

IV. For example, when we look around the world we find that not every plant will grow in the same environment. That's why we typically don't find Palm Trees in the Rocky Mountains. The environment is not right.

V. Likewise, in Jesus' parable, He demonstrates that not everyone will accept God's word, because the environment of their heart is not right for the seed that is being planted.

VI. Jesus explains, **How one responds to the word of God is determined by the condition of their heart.**

VII. As we have seen Jesus has been teaching the will of God, and from what we have seen not everyone obeyed. It is in this parable that Jesus offers an explanation as to why.

Trans: Lets consider the first heart

1. The hardened heart

A. **Mark 4:3,4, 15**

B. This heart is referred to as, “The Road Side Soil”

1. The road side soil has a heart without understanding, **Matt. 13:19**
2. This is a hard packed soil. One on which nothing really grows because it cannot be penetrated, **Luke 8:5**
3. In **Matt. 13:14,15** Jesus explains why the soil is this way.

D. A heart like this gives Satan opportunity, **Mark 4:15**

E. In the end this soul is lost, **Luke 8:12**

Appl: Some in the world today have this kind of heart. For whatever reason they have become callous to the truth. It's not that they can't understand, they just don't want to.

Bottom line **How one responds to the word of God is determined by the condition of their heart.**

This type of heart is one that will not believe nor be saved.

Trans: Let's consider the second heart

2. The weak heart

A. **Mark 4:5,6; 16,17**

B. This heart is referred to as, “The Rocky Soil”

C. The rocky soil has a heart of acceptance, but no endurance.

1. This soil has no real depth and it is easily blown away. Something can start to take root in this soil, but it won't last.
2. This heart starts out right, receiving the word with joy, but caves into the pressures of the world, (the heat of the sun)
3. It's a heart that cannot handle affliction or persecution and gives into temptation easily, **Luke 8:13**
4. They have no staying power, **Gal. 1:6,7**

D. As a result they will spring up immediately, but just as quickly they will wither, **Matt. 13:5,21**

Appl: Some in the world today have this kind of heart. They are looking for something new in their lives, but really don't want to do what's necessary for it to take hold.

The word never really gets rooted in their hearts. It is a superficial belief and only last as long as things are going smoothly. The first sign of trouble and they wither away

So we see **How one responds to the word of God is determined by the condition of their heart.**

This weak heart that is one that will end up right back where they started, lost again to the world.

Trans: Let's consider the third heart

3. The troubled heart

A. **Mark 4:7, 18-19**

B. This heart is referred to as, "The thorn infested soil."

C. The thorn infested soil has a heart of acceptance, but no commitment.

1. This soil has good depth, but it is crowded with other things. These other things cause a choking affect and that which is cared for most wins out. In this case, it is the things of the world.

2. This kind of heart starts out right, receiving the word and that word takes root, but there are other things in this heart, **Luke 8:7**

3. This heart worries about this world and the riches of it,
1 Tim. 6:9-10

4. This heart has a desire for the pleasures of this life all the while trying to keep heaven in sight, **James 1:21-24**

D. This heart is trying to serve two masters and that won't work,

1. **Matt. 6:24**

2. One will win out and in this case it is the thorns or the world.

3. Focus is put on the world so the thorns grow faster and choke out the seed, **Matt. 13:22**

4. This heart becomes unfruitful.

Appl: Some in the world today have this kind of heart. They really like the idea of heaven but right now the world is too alluring to them.

They find themselves in a constant battle and eventually whichever one they focus on more wins out. In this case it is the pleasures and deceitful riches of this world.

So we see **How one responds to the word of God is determined by the condition of their heart**

This heart like the ones before, will end up back in the world and lost, separated from God.

Trans: Let's now consider the fourth and final soil

4. The Receptive Heart

A. Mark 4:8,20

B. This heart is referred to as, "The Good soil"

C. The good soil has a heart which understands and fully accepts, being both committed and willing to endure hardships.

1. This soil has exceptional depth and proper care is taken to ensure it maintains a proper balance of nutrients. It is a soil that readily accepts the seed and then produces.

2. Unlike the first heart this one is willing to hear and accept what God's word has to say, **Acts 2:37-38**

3. This heart wants to produce fruit and so it goes forth into the world even in the face of persecution, **Acts 8:4-8,12**

C. A heart like this is one that will be ready to hear God's word and accept His teachings and then produce fruit

1. **Matt. 13:8**

2. Notice that not all good soil produces the same fruit either, some 100 fold, some 60, some 30, but all are producing.

Appl: Some in the world today have this kind of heart. They really want to do what is right before the Lord, so they seek out ways to please Him.

In doing this they produce fruit.

God's word takes root in their heart and then it produces a crop that is worth harvesting.

These are pleasing to God and will reap the reward of their labors, **2 Tim. 4:7,8**

So we see **How one responds to the word of God is determined by the condition of their heart**

Con: Of all four soils listed there was only one that is the right soil. This really supports what Jesus said in **Matt. 7:13,14** .

Of all the people we will confront in our lives with the gospel of Christ, it is unlikely that all will accept the message of Jesus.

How one responds to the word of God is determined by the condition of their heart