

## MESSAGE OUTLINE

### Come With Me

#### 6. Seed Parables

##### Mark 4:1–20 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup> Once again Jesus began teaching by the lakeshore. A very large crowd soon gathered around him, so he got into a boat. Then he sat in the boat while all the people remained on the shore. <sup>2</sup> He taught them by telling many stories in the form of parables, such as this one:

<sup>3</sup> “Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seed. <sup>4</sup> As he scattered it across his field, some of the seed fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate it. <sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seed sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. <sup>6</sup> But the plant soon wilted under the hot sun, and since it didn’t have deep roots, it died. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants so they produced no grain. <sup>8</sup> Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they sprouted, grew, and produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!” <sup>9</sup> Then he said, “Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.”

<sup>10</sup> Later, when Jesus was alone with the twelve disciples and with the others who were gathered around, they asked him what the parables meant.

<sup>11</sup> He replied, “You are permitted to understand the secret of the Kingdom of God. But I use parables for everything I say to outsiders, <sup>12</sup> so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled:

‘When they see what I do,  
they will learn nothing.  
When they hear what I say,  
they will not understand.  
Otherwise, they will turn to me  
and be forgiven.’”

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “If you can’t understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables? <sup>14</sup> The farmer plants seed by taking God’s word to others. <sup>15</sup> The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message, only to have Satan come at once and take it away. <sup>16</sup> The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> But since they don’t have deep roots, they don’t last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God’s word. <sup>18</sup> The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God’s word, <sup>19</sup> but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced. <sup>20</sup> And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!”

#### 1. The Work

*The farmer plants seed by taking God’s word to others.*

- My work, your work, God’s work.

After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God’s servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. <sup>6</sup> I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. <sup>7</sup> It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow.

<sup>8</sup> The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. <sup>9</sup> For we are both God’s workers. And you are God’s field. You are God’s building.

*1 Corinthians 3:5–9 (NLT)*

#### 2. The Soils

The seed that fell on the footpath... The seed on the rocky... The seed that fell among the thorns... And the seed that fell on good soil.

- Generous and seemingly random sowing on different soils.

For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. *2 Corinthians 9:10 (NLT)*

#### 3. Kingdom Secret

*those who hear and accept God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times*

- God is able... to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. *Ephesians 3:20 (NLT)*

Jesus also said, “The Kingdom of God is like a farmer who scatters seed on the ground. <sup>27</sup> Night and day, while he’s asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but he does not understand how it happens. <sup>28</sup> The earth produces the crops on its own. First a leaf blade pushes through, then the heads of wheat are formed, and finally the grain ripens. <sup>29</sup> And as soon as the grain is ready, the farmer comes and harvests it with a sickle, for the harvest time has come.” *Mark 4:26-29 (NLT)*

Jesus said, “How can I describe the Kingdom of God? What story should I use to illustrate it? <sup>31</sup> It is like a mustard seed planted in the ground. It is the smallest of all seeds, <sup>32</sup> but it becomes the largest of all garden plants; it grows long branches, and birds can make nests in its shade.”

*Mark 4:30-32 (NLT)*

- **Establishing and nurturing a relationship with God through Jesus.**

God, thank you for showing yourself to me. Jesus, I turn to you, admit I need you, and ask you to enter my heart by faith. By your Spirit, restore my heart with your forgiveness; help me to hear your voice and know your love. Gather me with others to worship and serve you; to nurture our faith and shine your light in the world. Thank you for calling me your child.

Amen. *For next week:* Read and journal on Mark 4:35-41. Follow the format of Observation, Reflection and Prayer as outlined on the *Come With Me* card and using your Mark journal. Download the Filament App for Mark as you study the passage in your time alone with God each day.

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

As needed, refer to the Order of Worship and Resources at [solanabeach.church](http://solanabeach.church) for sermon video, message outline, and small group questions print version.

### REFLECT TOGETHER ON SUNDAY'S MESSAGE

- Review the main points from the sermon outline.
- Share with one another as a whole group or in smaller groups, using these prompts only as suggestion:
  - How did the message relate to your life and faith this week?
  - Have there been any shifts, new perspectives, or curiosities in your own faith as you have reflected?
  - What connections and themes have you noticed from week to week?

**CONNECT WITH GOD** (Select one of the below practices or choose the practice from the previous week.)

- **The Cairn Prayer Practice**  
Named after a way finding tool on a hard to discern path, the Cairn Prayer and its four simple questions help us follow Jesus wholeheartedly and gain clarity of focus in our faith walk. In this practice we invite intimacy with God and pay attention to what actions God is calling for. In prayer or your journal, reflect on the following questions, allowing time to thoughtfully cultivate awareness of your whole self - mind, heart and body and attentively listen for the Holy Spirit's inspiration. Let this practice be a dialogue between your true self and God.
  - What are you grateful for and why? (Let this be your prayer of gratitude)
  - What do you want? Is there a deeper longing under the initial desire? (Offer your honest hopes, desires and longings to God's care and transformative work)
  - What do you like about God? (Tell God in a prayer of adoration)
  - How can you love today? (Ask for the courage, strength and wisdom to love well)
- **Practicing The Holy Pause (Ignatian Practice of "Statio"):**  
Statio is a monastic practice of making space between activities. It is the discipline of stopping one thing before beginning another...when we do this, we become conscious of our patterns, rhythms, bodies, and emotions before moving onto the next thing. The practice allows us to be attentive to the God who is present with us.
  - Spend a few minutes in this practice of "statio." Stop whatever you were doing or thinking and practice letting it go through a series of deep breaths. As you inhale and exhale, let go of any thoughts or worry about what's next or what just happened. Be attentive to your body's sensations.
  - When you are ready, notice what you are feeling in the pause. Allow for the present. Welcome all of it.

- Say a simple prayer of gratitude for the holy pause of this moment. Gratitude for the gift of the present. Commit to "holy pauses" throughout the next week.

**CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE** (As a reminder: this is the Bible passage for the message on February 18<sup>th</sup>)

- **Read:** Mark 4:35-41
- **Use the "Come with Me" card**, along with your Mark Bible Journal to engage with the Scripture passage for the coming week.
  - **Observe:** Dig into the scripture through doodling, highlighting, note-taking. Pay attention to words or phrases that seem important or raise questions for you.
  - **Meditate:** Slow down. Read Mark 4:35-41 again and engage your imagination and senses to connect to the passage. Reflect on your experience in your journal.
  - **Pray:** What prayer of praise, gratitude, or confession arises from your heart and mind as you meditate on this passage?
- **Reflect together (in pairs):** Spend time in intentional conversation about your reflections in Mark 4:35-41.
  - In what ways do you connect to the story? Do you relate to the anxiousness and fear of the disciples?
  - What waves of anxiety or fear have crashed into your life and how did you experience Jesus with you in it? Take some time to remember.

**DIG DEEPER** (Select the best questions or customize the questions for your group.)

- Where are Jesus and the disciples going in verse 35? Explore the phrase 'the other side' by reading ahead to Mark 5:1-8.
- What other story from the Bible involves similar themes and circumstances?
- How is Jesus behaving and responding to the storm?
- Why do you think the disciples wake Jesus up?
- How do the disciples respond to Jesus' authority over the storm?
- What did the disciples learn about Jesus?

### NEXT STEPS

- Read through Mark 4 by February 18<sup>th</sup>. Observe. Meditate. Pray.

### PRAYER

In pairs, pray for and with one another.

Pray with honesty and compassion: What storms are you facing in your own life right now? Or in the lives of your loved ones? How is God inviting you to trust him amid rough waters?

Pray with Gratitude: How have you experienced God's faithfulness through stormy waters?

Pray with hope: For the faithful presence of God and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.