

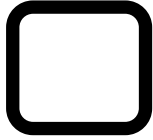
## GroupWork

Bible Study Discussion Starters

*Life application materials for use in Life Groups, home devotions, and other small groups*

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1. Go "around the horn" sharing **the highs and the lows** in your personal walk with Jesus. Have your "prayer warrior" for the evening/day take notes for prayer now or at the end of your time together.
  
2. **Reread Mark 4:1-20** to refresh your minds and hearts with the message from the Word we heard on February 27 or 28. Share your quick, initial thoughts on Jesus' parable and on his message for "appropriate listening" to his words.
  
4. **Ponder the four types of soil in the parable**--the four approaches to hearing the Word of God.
  - Share, as you are comfortable, different times in your life when you were struggling spiritually with "hearing" God's Word so that your faith was unproductive and the blessings of God seemed "distant".
  - How can we "cultivate" quality time in the Word (good seed-to-soil contact) so that more often than not we are "good soil"? Refer to Colossians 3:15-17 and Psalm 1:1-3.3.
  
5. **Read all of Isaiah 55**, zeroing in on verses 10-13. This chapter speaks of the New Testament Church, the "gathering of the nations". What beautiful promise and encouragement are ours, personally and as a church, as we do the work of gospel preaching and living?
  
6. **Close with prayer** that wraps together the group's highs and lows. Pray for the healthy hearing of the Word of God in our personal lives, in our congregation, and among Christians gathered together around the world.



# NoteSheet

Sermon Outline

Take notes during the sermon to help you remember the main points.

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## THE TEACHER: TAKE CARE IN HOW YOU LISTEN

*The Parable of the Sower and the Seed*

Mark 4:1-20

### TRUTH #1 – A good teacher seeks to touch the hearts and minds of every learner.

- Jesus seeks to reveal T\_\_\_\_\_ about ourselves...
- ... with E\_\_\_\_\_ and L\_\_\_\_\_...
- ... speaking to our hearts of F\_\_\_\_\_

### TRUTH #2 – Jesus used parables as teaching tools and memory hooks.

- They are puzzles...pictures...riddles--earthly “K\_\_\_\_\_” guiding to spiritual T\_\_\_\_\_
- Memory hooks for the J\_\_\_\_\_
- The lessons come in the P\_\_\_\_\_

### TRUTH #3 – Old-time farming is a “key” to this parable.

- The sowing of the S\_\_\_\_\_ was a skill with “issues”
- Sowing seed was a M\_\_\_\_\_ H\_\_\_\_\_ for every person

### TRUTH #4 – Typically, a parable has one, main point for the learner to “catch and carry.”

- This parable is all about L\_\_\_\_\_ appropriately to the Word of God.

### TRUTH #5 – Remember the “Good Teacher? Always seeking to touch the heart and mind of every hearer?”

- Where in the F\_\_\_\_\_ are we sitting, standing, living today?
  - The H\_\_\_\_\_ Ground?
  - The S\_\_\_\_\_?
  - The T\_\_\_\_\_?
  - The G\_\_\_\_\_ S\_\_\_\_\_?

### CONCLUSION Where is the comfort in this parable?

### Next Steps

- **Read** all of **Isaiah 55**, focusing in on verses 10-13. This chapter speaks of the New Testament Church—the “gathering of the nations”. What beautiful promise and encouragement are ours in verses 10-13 for the gospel sharing that we do personally and as a congregation?
- **Ponder** the four types of soil--the four approaches to hearing the Word of God. How can we “cultivate” quality time in the Word (good seed-to-soil contact) so that more often than not we are “good soil”? Cf. Colossians 3:15-17 and Psalm 1:1-3.