

How important is preaching the Word? Why?

How important are other Christian work in comparison?

Q8. "From little things big things grow". What is the parable of the mustard seed saying?

Q9. Did Jesus accommodate his message to his hearer capability? Mark 4:33-34

Did he change the message?

Did he tell them in stages as they were ready for it?

What would they probably have done if He had told them earlier plainly that He as the Messiah? Would that have affected His ministry?

Q10. What lessons do we learn for today from this wise ministry of Jesus?

*Studies in Mark's Gospel*

## ***The Best News Ever***

*A Series in the Gospel of Mark*

# **7. Open Hearts To The Word**

Mark 4:1-34

*Openness to the Gospel varies greatly. It varies between people and it can vary over time. Sadly, both passive and active opposition to God and His ways is now natural to the fallen human race. It is only by the prompting of God's grace that we can open our hearts to God in active repentance and faith (Ephesians 2:4-10).*

*The background to today's passage is that opposition to Jesus had been growing. The Scribes and Pharisees had been in conflict with Jesus on five separate occasions (Mark 2:1-3:6) and were now saying that he was possessed by a higher demon (Mark 3:22). At this time even Jesus' own family thought He was crazy (3:20-21). While the crowds following Jesus were getting bigger (Mark 3:7-10 and 4:1), they were a very mixed and diverse group. Jesus was able to progressively explain much more to his regular disciples.*

*In Mark 4:1-34 Jesus explains His teaching and discipling strategy.*

Q1. From the beginning many people flocked to hear Jesus (see Mark 1:28, 32-33, 37-39, 45; 2:1-2,13), but what indications are there that the crowds now were becoming massive and possibly even dangerous at this stage from Mark 3:7-10, 20-21; 4:1).

Q2. Mark reports that Jesus used a special teaching approach when talking to the crowds and a different approach when speaking to the disciples. See Mark 4:2, 10-11, 33-34

How did he speak to the crowd?

How did he speak to the disciples?

Rocky ground

Why do you think he taught differently to them both? Why was he more direct in His teaching to the disciples?

Thorns

Good soil

Q3. Mark records 4 parables of Jesus in Mark chapter 4. What topic are all of them about?

Q5. Jesus seems to have been reticent to share his Messianic secret with large groups of people but is more open with his disciples.

What do you think therefore is the topic of this section Mark and Jesus is addressing?

Why would Jesus have this distinction? See Mark 1:23-15, 33, 43-45; 3:11-12; 4:10-11, 33-34

Q4. In the Parable of the Sower Jesus told in Mark 4:3-8 and interpreted to the disciples in Mark 4:14-20:

Q6. It is possible to hear but not really hear or listen so as to understand. What is meant by these verses?

Who is the Sower?

Mark 4:9

What is the seed?

Mark 4:11-12

What do the 4 types of soils represent collectively?

Mark 4:21-25

What do the four specific surfaces/soils represent?

Q7. How critically important is it for a farmer to get the seed in the ground? See Mark 26-29

Path