

FOLLOWING THE PATH OF JESUS

A Harmony Of the Gospels

A Daily Devotional Study Guide - Book 2



Week 16

“Choked By Riches”

Study: Matthew 13:7, 22, Mark 4:7, 18-19, Luke 8:7, 14

Reading: I Timothy 6:6-12, II Kings 5:15-27

Memory: 1 John 1:3

One of the reasons that we don't have a garden is because of the work it takes to keep the weeds out. It wouldn't be that difficult if we didn't go anywhere or do anything in the summer, but we love to take advantage of the warm weather and do as much as we can. Between camps, pastoral visitors, family visitors and day trips, we simply don't have time to take care of a garden. If we could plant and harvest without worrying about weeds, that would be great, but we have learned from experience that the weeds often choke out the things that we plant, causing our plants not to produce fruit.

Today, we are going to read how Jesus talked about weeds choking out seeds of grain.

What Does the Bible Say?

The third type of soil that Jesus addressed was the thorny soil. Jesus described how some seed fell onto ground that had not been properly tilled up or weeded. The seed started to take root, but the weeds that were around it quickly grew up, starving the young plant of its proper nutrients. Though this plant might have continued to live, it didn't produce any fruit because the ground around it prohibited it from becoming what it was meant to be (Mt 13:7, Mk 4:7, Lk 8:7).

Jesus explained that this soil was like the hearts of those who heard the word of God and allowed it to take root in their lives. The thorns and weeds represented the riches of this life and the cares of this world. Though the seed started to grow and the form of a plant grew, it was useless because it was not producing fruit. The cares of this life were not clearly defined because the cares of this life could be different for every person. They are the physical, mental and emotional things of this world around us that take attention away from what is truly important. This could be work, sports, houses, relationships or a variety of other things that pull attention away from God.

Also described by Jesus was the “deceitfulness of riches.” Jesus

purposely described riches this way because of the great pull that riches have on all men. Unlike other temptations, the desire for riches is something that almost everyone can be tempted with. This is because we all have to deal with money, and in general, it always seems that we could use more of it. This desire for more is natural since we need money to survive, but this desire can draw our attention away from God and eternal riches, causing the Word of God to be choked out (Mt 13:22, Mk 4:18-19, Lk 8:14).

As a side note, there is some debate among theologians as to the full meaning of this parable. There are three general interpretations. The first is that the hard and rocky soil illustrated the hearts of unbelievers (some even think that only the hard soil illustrates unbelievers). The second is that the first three soils all describe unbelievers and only the fourth soil describes believers. The third is that the rocky and weedy soils were people who did believe, but they came to the point where they stopped believing and stopped following the ways of God.

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize how powerful the enticements of this world are in the lives of all men? Though this passage may be speaking of unbelievers not allowing the Word of God to produce the fruit of salvation, it is a great challenge to you as a believer as well. Scripture warns us in many different places about the great danger of riches and how easy it is to seek after them instead of seeking after God. This does not mean that riches are wrong, Scripture records that there were several great men of God who were wealthy, but warns that the desire for wealth can often overtake your desire for God. If God chooses to bless you with much, that is great and you have to learn to be content with it. If God blesses you with little, that is also great and you need to learn to be content with that.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Thank God for providing you with exactly what you need to live.
- * Ask God to help you be content with what He has given you.

Thought for the day

Mark 4

Where had the first two seeds fallen (vs 3-6)?

Where did the third seed fall (vs 7)?

What grew up together (vs 7)?

Why was the seed not able to survive (vs 7)?

How is the seed that fell among thorns described (vs 18)?

What three things choke out this plant (vs 19)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What happened to this plant (vs 19)?

What is the difference between the first two seeds and the third seed?

****The first never started to grow. The second withered. There is no mention in the third one about it dying, just the fact that it did not produce fruit. It is unclear if the third represents the believer that simply didn't produce or if it is describing how the person was not a true believer as was evidenced by the lack of fruit.*

How can you be tempted to be choked out by the cares of this world?

How can you be tempted to be choked out by the deceitfulness of riches?

What do you think Jesus meant by a “desire for other things” (vs 19)?

What are desires that tempt you to put your spiritual life aside?

Why do you think being a fruitful believer is so important?

Describe how your life is producing fruit for the cause of Christ. If it is not, why not?

“The Good Soil”

Study: Matthew 13:8, 23, Mark 4:8, 20, Luke 8:8, 15

Reading: James 1:19-27, I John 3:1-13

Memory: 1 John 1:3

I understand this parable in a much better way as an adult than I did as a child. Not because I am much more mature, but because I lived in farm country for many years after I was first married. When I was a child, I used to think that the big blue silos was where the milk was stored. I thought that hay fields were just vacant lots. I had many other misconceptions about farming, but after watching farming operations year after year (and being instructed by my wife who grew up on a farm), I have learned a little more and the parable of the soils makes much more sense to me. I have seen farmers picking rocks on a yearly basis. I have seen fields that were not properly cultivated, causing the crops to be choked out, and I have seen fields produce abundantly.

Today, we are going to read about the powerful results of the Word of God in the hearts of those who are ready to receive it.

What Does the Bible Say?

The last type of soil that Jesus talked about was the good soil. He didn't go into in-depth detail about this soil, but it is assumed that this soil had been properly plowed, had the rocks removed and had the weeds pulled. It was ready to receive the seed and when the seed was sown, it took root and produced abundant fruit. There are two very interesting observations about the amount of fruit that was produced by the good soil. First, the average yield was about 8 fold for every one seed that was planted. To produce thirty fold would have been an incredible harvest. To produce 60 and 100 fold would have been virtually unheard of and would only happen by some supernatural power. The second observation was the different amount of grain that the seeds produced. The seeds all fell into the same soil, but the seeds produced different amounts. The difference was not in the soil, but in the seed (Mt 13:8, Mk 4:8, Lk 8:8).

The good soil represented those who heard the Word of God and let it take root in their lives. Their hearts had been softened by the Holy Spirit and the rocks and weeds were removed. They choose not to just

hear the Word, but to obey it. This faithful and patient obedience is what caused it to bear fruit. Luke emphasized the idea of patiently bearing fruit, which seems to be in contrast to those who just performed outward acts, but withered away (the rocky and thorny soil). The amount of fruit being different indicated that God uses people in different ways. All Christians bear fruit, but some bear much more than others. In this parable, the bearing of fruit was not based on a type of soil being better, but was based on the work of the seed. This emphasized how God is the One who causes fruit to be produced and it is the responsibility of the believer to keep his heart clear of rocks and weeds. Believers can't compare themselves with others because God works in different ways in the hearts and lives of different people. The abundance of fruit that was produced also reveals that the seed was no natural seed. It was powerful seed, power that can only come through the Holy Spirit (Mt 13:23, Mk 4:20, Lk 8:15).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Is the soil of your heart ready to receive the Word of God? If you are a believer, it was originally softened and tilled by the Holy Spirit so that the Word of truth would be implanted in your heart, but over time, that soil can change. Farmers have to till the ground every year before their seed is planted. They also have to pick rocks almost every time they till up the ground for replanting because rocks continually appear. Once the seed is sown, they have to cultivate the ground and spray for weeds to allow the seed to take root and produce. God's Word is powerful, but you have been given the responsibility of keeping your heart soft and pliable, open to the Word of God. Take time today to make sure your heart is still the good soil that it needs to be for God to produce abundant fruit through it.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for producing fruit in your life.*
- * *Ask God to help you live with a softened heart to His Word.*
- * *Praise God because He has the power to produce abundant fruit.*

Thought for the day

Mark 4

Where did the fourth seed fall (vs 8)?

What did it produce (vs 8)?

How much of a harvest was produced (vs 8)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Who did Jesus say the good ground was compared to (vs 20)?

Why is it important to not just hear the Word but also accept it (vs 20)?

What will the seed in good ground produce (vs 20)?

What was the seed compared to (vs 15)?

How can you make sure you have a soft heart for receiving the Word of God?

Why do you think that Jesus mentioned that the seed produced different amounts of fruit (vs 20)?

What three amounts of produce did Jesus use?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Why do you think He used these amounts?

How does this reveal the danger of comparing yourself and your results with that of other believers?

****There is nothing wrong with seeing the results that a godly life produces and wanting that for your own life, but you must be careful not to expect the same amount of fruit that God gives others. For instance, some missionaries serve God faithfully all of their lives and have little physical fruit to show for it, while others can point to thousands of people who have come to Christ.*

“Hidden Meaning”

Study: Matthew 13:10-18, Mark 4:10-13, Luke 8:9-10

Reading: ----

Memory: 1 John 1:3

I do not know any foreign languages, but sometimes I wish I did. Having hosted exchange students and having traveled many place around the world, I realize how easy it is for someone to hide what they are saying or thinking from me. There were times when I have heard people talk in a foreign language and they were all laughing, but I had no idea what they were saying. What is even worse is when you are in a different country and people are talking and laughing and looking at you, and you don't know if they are laughing at you or at something else.

Today, we are going to read how Jesus spoke in a different language, but it wasn't a physical language. The language that Jesus used was that of parables. He often hid the real meaning so that His followers could deepen their understanding of the truth without causing more anger among His listeners who didn't believe.

What Does the Bible Say?

After Jesus had given the parable of the soils and before He gave an explanation, He took time to do a little teaching in between. The explanation of the parable did not immediately follow the parable, but was given later on when Jesus was alone with His disciples. The disciples didn't understand what Jesus was saying when the parable was first given and they really wanted to know the meaning.

One of the first questions they wanted answered was why Jesus chose to speak in parables which could not easily be understood by the hearers. Jesus responded by describing how He gave the parables to help the believers understand the truth in a greater way, and they were also given in a way that the truth would be shielded from those who did not believe. Jesus quoted Isaiah 6:9-10 which prophesied how many people would hear Jesus, but not understand what Jesus was saying. It wasn't that Jesus didn't want them to hear and believe, but that He knew they wouldn't believe what they had heard. They didn't believe because their hearts were hard and the more they heard the truth, the harder their hearts would

become. On the other hand, the followers of Christ were given the great privilege of having the mysteries of God revealed to them in a way that they could understand and have their faith deepened. The softer their hearts were to the things of God, the more they could be entrusted with the deeper understanding of God (Mt 13:10-15, Mk 4:10-12, Lk 8:9-10).

Jesus told the disciples that they were greatly blessed by having the opportunity to hear and see what they were experiencing. Prophets through the ages had longed for the opportunity to see the Word of God being fulfilled as it was through Jesus, and the disciples were privileged to be experiencing it themselves. Jesus wanted them to think through the pictures that He was presenting in the parables, and He wanted to help them grow in their understanding of the kingdom of God by realizing the meaning of the parables (Mt 13:15-18, Mk 4:13).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Is your relationship with God getting deeper and deeper as time goes on? Are you understanding more and more of the truth of the Bible or do you only know as much now as you did many years ago? One of the great tragedies among believers is that many choose to stop growing. They gain a general knowledge of Bible stories but never look deeper into Scripture. This knowledge only comes through study and sacrifice. It doesn't come through short "Our Daily Bread" devotionals alone. Don't get me wrong, "Our Daily Bread" is a great publication and a great start for a spiritual life, but it is only a start. If you take the time to study the Word of God and decipher the great truths that are hidden, you will find more and more depth. Take time to evaluate the way you study your Bible and ask yourself if there is room for you to go deeper.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for giving you the ability to understand His Word.*
- * *Ask God to help show you how you can dig deeper into His Word.*
- * *Praise God because He is deeper than you could ever go.*

Thought for the day

Matthew 13

What did the disciples ask Jesus (vs 10)?

Why do you think they wanted to know this?

What did Jesus tell the disciples they had the privilege of knowing (vs 11)?

Why do you think they were given this privilege and others were not?

What statement did Jesus make in verse 12?

What do you think he meant by this statement?

Why did Jesus say He spoke in parables (vs 13)?

****Jesus presented the information that people could hear and grow from, but He also desired that they seek after the truth. He wanted to make them work a little for it, knowing they would get so much more out of it if they took time to think through all that He was saying.*

What did Jesus quote (vs 14-15)?

What was the context of the passage Jesus quoted?

****Basically, Jesus was stating that those who really wanted to hear would take time to understand, but those who didn't really want to hear what He was saying wouldn't be able to understand it.*

What did Jesus declare about the disciples (vs 16)?

What did many of the prophets desire (vs 17)?

What do you think Jesus meant by this?

Are you a person who doesn't just hear but seeks to understand? Explain your answer?

What are ways that you can go deeper in your understanding of God?

“God Produces Fruit”

Study: Mark 4:26-29

Reading: I Corinthians 3:1-23

Memory: 1 John 1:3

All of the farming illustrations that Jesus used reminds me of the many years I lived in Wisconsin. There, the spring time was a very active time of year. Tractors were everywhere as the farmers were preparing the ground and getting ready to sow their crops. Though most farmers were busy in late spring and early summer, once the seeds were in the ground, the field work greatly decreased. Amazingly, that which was once just ground started producing little rows of green blades as the plants began to grow. Little by little, day by day, the plants grew bigger until one day they were ready to be harvested. The farmers then hit another busy season as they worked to get all their crops harvested before winter.

Today, we are going to see how the kingdom of God is just like the crops that are still grown today. We will read about the miraculous work of God to produce physical fruit and how He miraculously works to produce spiritual fruit.

What Does the Bible Say?

The parable found in Mark 4:26-29 is unique because it is only recorded in the book of Mark. It seems to piggy back on the parable of the soils and further explain how the production of spiritual fruit is a miraculous work of God. Jesus compared the kingdom of God to seed that is scattered on the ground. Once the seed is scattered, the man goes about his other daily work while the seed grows into a plant. The phrase, “sleeps and rises, night and day” (ESV) indicated the passing of time. While time passed, this man watched the seed grow step by step into a plant and watched the plant produce fruit. Jesus emphasized that the earth did this by “itself” which relays how the work of the seed of truth was a miraculous one that could not fully be explained by men. The farmer might have watered the seed and could have weeded around the plant, but ultimately he had nothing to do with making the seed grow into a plant. His part was to simply plant the seed and then reap the

harvest when the fruit was ripe. This parable emphasized the fact that men didn’t save men, but it was God who miraculously worked in hearts and lives and brought them into the kingdom of God. It was the farmer’s responsibility to plant and harvest, just like it is our responsibility to sow the seed of the Gospel and help harvest the fruit that God has grown.

This passage was probably in the mind of Paul when He wrote I Corinthians 3. The church at Corinth was arguing over who was more important and distinct groups in the church had identified themselves as followers of certain men rather than followers of Jesus. Paul reminded them that each of the apostles which they claimed to follow only had a small part in the spiritual life which God had given them. Different believers planted the seed, watered, weeded and harvested. Yet, it was God who was the one who produced the fruit. Paul emphasized that salvation was not a result of man’s work, but the supernatural working of God.

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you get discouraged when you share your faith and don’t see others trust Christ? Do you try to force your faith on others and try to pick unripe fruit? Have you given up sharing Jesus Christ because you are discouraged with the lack of fruit? The lesson that Jesus gave, followed by the teaching of Paul on this subject, should be a great challenge and encouragement to all believers. It helps remind you that it is your responsibility to plant the seed and to reap the harvest that God has prepared, but that you have very little to do with the fruit being produced. Salvation doesn’t come by saying the right words, or loving in the right way. Yes, it is important to know how to share your faith and how to love people to Jesus, but it can be easy to place too great of an emphasis on human methods. Jesus described how the farmer waited night and day, while God was miraculously growing the plant. You need to be patient as well and let God produce the fruit. Don’t get discouraged when fruit producing is slow. Don’t give up on planting and watering the seed of the truth, but trust that God is doing as He said He would and that He is working in hearts and lives.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Thank God for the spiritual fruit He is producing in your life.
- * Ask God to help you trust Him to produce fruit.

What did Jesus compare the kingdom of God to (vs 26)?

What do you think the “kingdom of God” is a reference to?

****Jesus often used this phrase and it referred to heaven, but not only heaven but the way God operates and works here on this earth. He does not build his kingdom the way that earthly rulers build theirs, but His way is much different.*

What does the farmer do to cause the seed to grow (vs 27)?

What doesn't he know (vs 27)?

****Yes, a farmer would do some weeding at times and possibly water his crops as well. Jesus was not giving a science lesson, but pointing out that the farmer had nothing to do with the seed growing and couldn't really explain how it grew.*

Why do you think Jesus said the earth produced by “itself” (vs 28)?

What did the plant eventually produce (vs 28)?

What process took place (vs 28)?

****The emphasis is on the fact that little by little, day by day, the plant grew and eventually produced fruit in a process that lasted months.*

What happened once the fruit was ready (vs 29)?

What had come (vs 29)?

Why do you think Jesus did not give a meaning to this parable?

What do you think this parable means?

****Obviously the emphasis is on the fact that the process of producing fruit took time and the farmer could do very little to change or alter the process. In other Scripture, it is mentioned how farmers had to be patient and wait for the crops to go through their natural growth process.*

“The Wheat & The Tares”

Study: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Reading: Matthew 25:1-30

Memory: 1 John 1:3

Several years ago, I was invited along with my wife's family over for dinner at the house of an elderly lady in our area. She served us some type of fruit jell-o that was covered with what appeared to be whip cream. Since this was a common dessert in this area, none of us thought much about taking some of it when it was passed around. It was interesting to see the different looks on the faces of those who started to eat this jell-o as we soon realized that it was not what we were expecting. Instead of whip cream, it was sour cream. Apparently, that was an old fashioned way of making this jell-o salad, but most of us didn't appreciate the taste.

Today, we are going to see how it is sometimes hard to tell the difference between things that look alike. We will see how Jesus used this illustration to reveal that we will not always be able to tell the difference between true believers and those who are just along for the ride.

What Does the Bible Say?

It is not clear if Jesus spoke many of the farming parables in a row, or if the writers of the Gospel put them in this order while they were writing. Writers didn't always stick strictly to chronological order, but sometimes wrote in a theme order. Whatever the exact case, we read today about another parable given by Jesus about a farmer sowing seed. The parable pictured a farmer going out into his field to sow some seed. After the field had been sown, the enemy of the man came and sowed several seeds of weeds among the wheat without being detected. The Greek word for weed is just a generic term that could refer to a variety of weeds, but most likely they were weeds that looked similar to wheat while in the growing stage (vs 24-25).

When the wheat started to grow, so did the weeds. As the plants grew, the servants of the farmer knew that something was wrong and went and told the farmer that there were several weeds growing in the

field. They didn't understand how this could happen because they knew that only the good seed had been planted. Sure, fields would grow some weeds, but for this field to have so many weeds was very strange. The farmer knew right away that it was his enemy that had done this in an attempt to destroy his crops. The servants asked the farmer if he wanted them to go and pull all the weeds from the field (vs 26-28).

Being a wise man, the farmer told his servants not to pull the weeds, for in doing so, they might also pull up several stalks of wheat because they might not always be able to tell the difference at the beginning stages of growth.. Once it was time for the harvest, there would be a distinct difference between the weeds and the wheat and those doing the harvest would be able to harvest them separately. The farmer planned to have the weeds harvested and burned and then would have the wheat harvested and taken to his barn (vs 29-30).

How Does this Apply to Me?

The explanation given by Jesus made the meaning of this parable very clear. The wheat represented those who were true believers and the weeds represented those who were mixed in among the believers by the enemy. God does not want us to put our time and energy into attempting to discern who is a believer and who is not. He will do that in the day of final judgment. Physical church service will not be 100% full of believers in most cases, and it is very difficult to know who is a believer and who is following for other purposes. It is God's job to sort out the believers from the unbelievers and we as men should not consume our mind trying to judge the spiritual condition of others. The real lesson of the parable is directed towards those who play a part in religion, but are not true followers. Sometimes, the people doing this think they are followers because they are deceived by the enemy into believing something that is not really true. They are often convinced that their good works or church participation is enough to get them to heaven. Some think the prayer they prayed will be enough, but they lack a true understanding of salvation that is clearly presented in Scripture.

Thought for the day

What did Jesus compare the kingdom of God to (vs 24)?

What did his enemy do (vs 25)?

What happened when the seeds started sprouting (vs 26)?

What did the servants not understand (vs 27)?

What did the master know (vs 28)?

What did the master not want done (vs 29)?

What did the master instruct the servants to let happen (vs 30)?

When would the distinction be made (vs 30)?

What would happen to the weeds (vs 30)?

What would happen to the wheat (vs 30)?

What did the disciples want to know (vs 36)?

Who was the sower of the seed (vs 37)?

What was the field (vs 38)?

What was the difference between the wheat and the weeds (vs 38)?

Who is the enemy (vs 39)?

Who were the servants (vs 39)?

What would happen at the end of the age (vs 40)?

What will Jesus do (vs 41)?

What will happen to the unbelievers (vs 42)?

What will happen to the believers (vs 43)?

“Little Is Much”

Study: Matthew 13:31-35, Mark 4:30-34
Reading: Psalm 78:1-72
Memory: 1 John 1:3

My wife and I used to love to find clearance deals and there was one time that she found a great deal on a bed spread for our bedroom. The bed spread was about \$25 which was a good deal for a king size set. Little did I realize that the \$25 bed spread would cost us over \$200. How did the amount multiply? The colors of the new bedspread didn’t match the curtains, color of the room and the decor of the room. Instead of returning the bed spread and waiting to find one that matched, we ended up changing the whole room to match the bed spread. (I will admit that at first I wasn’t thrilled with the idea, but once it was finished I really liked the look of our bedroom.)

Today, we are going to read how something that starts out very little can turn into something that is very big. Jesus illustrated this with parables, wanting His followers to understand the great power they have by simply serving Him in little ways.

What Does the Bible Say?

We will look at one last parable about seeds before we move on to other parables that were given by Jesus. Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to a grain of mustard seed. The mustard seed was one of the smallest seeds that was planted in those days. The mustard seed had become synonymous with something that was very small. It was used in proverbs to relay something that was extremely small in size, kind of like we would say “the size of a pin head” today. Jesus described how this seed was tiny, but when planted would begin to grow into a very large plant. Mustard plants in Israel could grow up to be 15 ft tall, large enough for birds to build nests in (Mt 13:31-32, Mk 4:30-32).

Though Jesus did not give a direct meaning to this parable, He is definitely describing something that starts out very little and grows very large. The general understanding of this is that the kingdom of God started out very tiny, but overtime, would grow very large. Some commentators describe the birds as meaning the Gentiles who will find

salvation in the kingdom. Others think the birds represent the unbelievers who will find shelter among the true believers. Since we cannot know, it might be best just to understand the birds as an illustration to describe how large of a bush the little seed had grown into.

Another parable related to the same idea was given by Jesus in which He compared the kingdom of heaven to leaven. In those days, when bread was made, a small portion of the dough was set aside and allowed to ferment. This portion was then added to the next batch of dough and the leaven that was added would cause the dough to rise. Again, Jesus was picturing something that was very small that would have a great effect on the results (Mt 13:33).

Both Matthew and Mark described how Jesus spoke a great deal to the people in parables, though He privately explained the meaning to His disciples. One of the reasons that He did this was to be a fulfillment of the prophecy given in Psalm 78:2 which described how the Messiah would constantly teach in parables (Mt 13:34-35, Mk 4:33-34).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you sometimes think that what you have to offer for the kingdom of God is too little and won’t amount to much? Do you view your role as small and insignificant? You need to realize how God is most glorified when He takes things that are small and uses them to make things that are large. Take, for instance, the feeding of the 5,000. What made this such a memorable occasion? If Jesus started with food for 1,000 the miracle wouldn’t have been that great and might not have even been recorded for us. But, Jesus took something very little and produced abundantly from it. This is what the parables today are attempting to teach you. You don’t have to do something “great” for God, you just have to be faithful in all the little things that God has called you to do. He can cause the seed to grow and produce abundantly. That little act of kindness, the little words of affirmation, the little amount you may have to give in the offering can all be used in a great way by God.

Thought for the day

Mark 4

Why do you think Jesus started this parable stating that He was going to be using a parable (vs 30)?

What did Jesus say the kingdom of heaven was like (vs 31)?

How was this seed described (vs 31)?

****Many people will say the Bible is not true because there are many seeds smaller than the mustard seeds. Jesus was not stating a scientific fact, but emphasizing how small the seed was compared to all of the other seeds that were used for planting in those days.*

What happens to a mustard seed when it starts to grow (vs 32)?

Why do you think Jesus talked about birds sitting on the branches (vs 32)?

What did Mark say about Jesus speaking in parables (vs 33)?

Why do you think Jesus spoke in so many parables (vs 34)?

What did Jesus take time to do privately (vs 34)?

Matthew 13

What did Jesus compare the kingdom of heaven to (vs 33)?

What point was Jesus making with this illustration?

How is this related to the parable of the mustard seed?

Why is it vital to realize that the power of God can use something very small to create something great?

Who did Jesus speak the parables to (vs 34)?

Why did Matthew say Jesus spoke in parables (vs 35)?

Why do you think He chose to use parables rather than direct teaching?

Memory Verses

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.