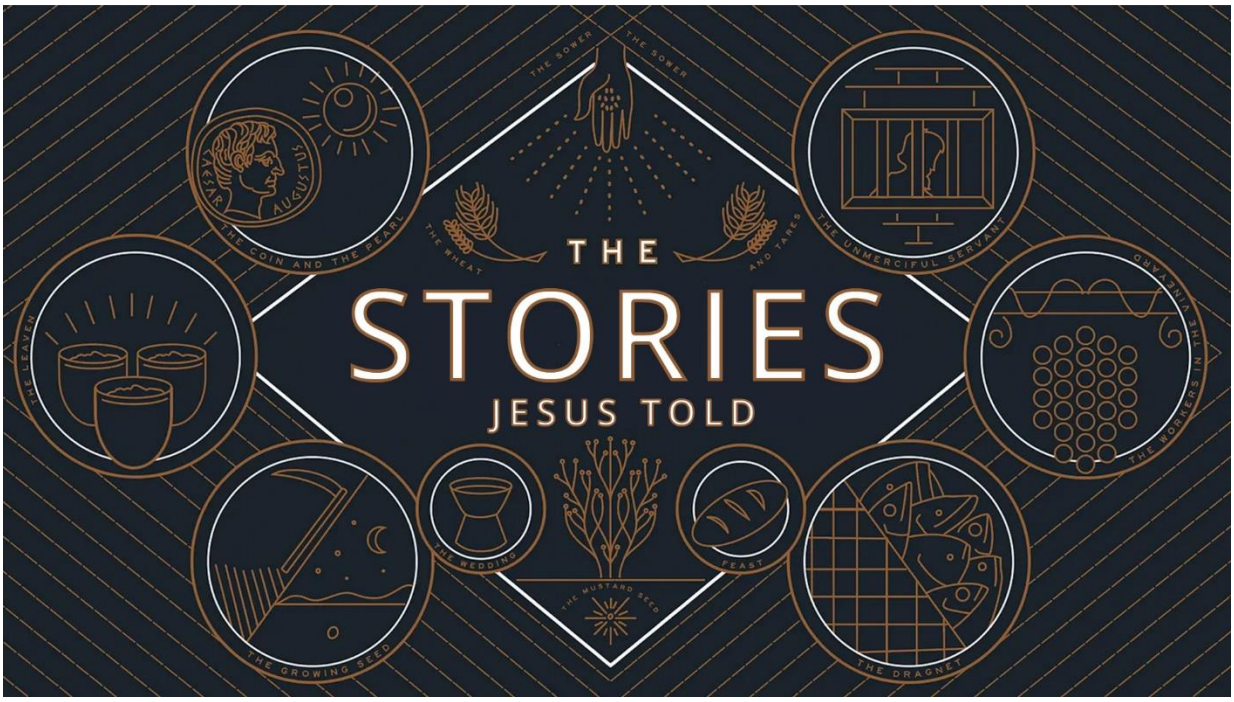

The Stories Jesus Told

The Story of the 4 Soils

Mark 4:4-20

Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. **2** He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: **3** "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. **4** As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. **5** Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. **6** But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7** Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. **8** Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times."

9 Then Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

10 When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him
asked him about the parables. 11 He told them, “The secret of the
kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the
outside everything is said in parables 12 so that,

“‘they may be ever seeing but never perceiving,
and ever hearing but never understanding;
otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!’”
13 Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable?
How then will you understand any parable? 14 The farmer sows
the word. 15 Some people are like seed along the path, where the
word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes
away the word that was sown in them. 16 Others, like seed sown
on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with
joy. 17 But since they have no root, they last only a short time.
When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they
quickly fall away. 18 Still others, like seed sown among thorns,
hear the word; 19 but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of
wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the
word, making it unfruitful. 20 Others, like seed sown on good soil,
hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some
sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

1. Why Jesus used stories

10 When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him
asked him about the parables. 11 He told them, “The secret of the
kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the
outside everything is said in parables 12 so that,

“‘they may be ever seeing but never perceiving,
and ever hearing but never understanding;
otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!’”

Luke 8:18
18 “So pay attention to how you hear. To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given. But for those who are not listening, even what they think they understand will be taken away from them.”

2. **This story is all about a farmer who sows the seed of God’s Word**

3 “Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times.”

3. **Like seed falling on different soils, God’s Word is sown in different kinds of human hearts**

4. **The good heart receives the Word and bears’ fruit**

20 Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

Matthew 13:23

23 But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Luke 8:15
15 But the *seed* in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.

5. How to have a heart that is good soil

A. Guard your heart

Proverbs 4
Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

B. Humble yourself before God

1Peter 5
…"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time

C. Listen with a bias towards obedience

Deuteronomy 6:3
Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, promised you.

Matthew 7:24-25

24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

D. Have a perspective that embraces the reality of trials and troubles

James 1:2-4

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, **3** because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. **4** Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Matthew 6:24-33

24 “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.**25** “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? **26** Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? **27** Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?**28** “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. **29** Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. **30** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? **31** So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we

wear?’ **32** For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. **33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

E. Seek to grow in bearing fruit

John 15:5-8
5 I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. **7** If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **8** My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and *so* prove to be My disciples.