

# Sermon Discussion Questions

"RESPONDING TO THE KINGDOM"

## Discuss

This parable appears in three of the four gospels (Matthew 13:1-23, the passage we are considering here in Mark, and Luke 8:1-15). The disciples clearly found the story hard to understand since they asked Jesus for an explanation when they were later alone with him. (See v. 10) We may feel the same way, even after reading Jesus' explanation! There is a lot to explore and comprehend in this passage.

- 1) Let's first consider the passage from the perspective of evangelism and sharing the gospel. Jesus is attracting huge crowds but also facing a lot of opposition.
  - How could this parable and its explanation have encouraged and consoled his disciples, and how does it do this for us today?
  - What is our responsibility in sharing the gospel? See also 1 Corinthians 2:1-10 as you consider this question.
- 2) Just as there was a warning in last week's passage about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, there is a sober message in the middle of this week's passage. Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9 and 10, describing people who see but don't perceive and who hear but don't understand.
  - What are some of the reasons people rejected Jesus when he was on the earth?
  - Why do people reject him today?
  - What has enabled those of us who do believe in him to accept and love him? (See v. 11 and Ephesians 2:1-5)
- 3) In a 2016 article posted on the Gospel Coalition website, Joseph Rhea describes the "weeds problem" of his generation, the "Millennials."\* He explores his generation's tendency to imbibe (with eagerness) spirituality from almost any source and to shop for wisdom through social media and Wikipedia.
  - All people in every generation have "weeds" in their hearts that can prevent God's Word from taking root and thriving. Identify some of the ideas and beliefs of your generation or our particular culture (American, Southern) that make it difficult for God's Word to flourish in your heart. How do you get rid of those weeds?

\*Joseph Rhea, "My Generation's Weeds Problem," March 24, 2016, [thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org).



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

DATE: November 5, 2017

SPEAKER: Joe/Jared

SERIES: The Gospel of Mark

PASSAGE: Mark 4:1-20

## Pray

Holy God, Three-in-One, we praise you for the perfection and life-giving power of your Word.

We confess that we often allow "weeds" of various kinds to grow in our hearts, weeds that can choke your Word and make it unfruitful in our lives.

We give you great thanks that you have revealed to us the mystery of your gospel. Thank you for turning our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh.

We pray that you will give us ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts that grow more full and rich through constant time spent listening to and studying your Word.

**PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS**  
Channels of Love

**PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS**  
Kim and Michael Essenburg  
serving with Okinawa Christian  
School International in Japan