**BCM Bible Study – Sept. 8/9, 2021**

**Mark 3:7-4:34**

**Getting Started:** In this part of Mark we will begin to experience an uptick in Jesus’ use of parables, and so many of Jesus’ parables have an agricultural and rural feel to them. With this in mind, here are a couple related warm up questions:

Warm up question #1 - **Who is the best storyteller you know and what makes them great at telling stories?** Warm up question #2 - **On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being “I’m very urban” and 10 being “I’m at home down on the farm”) how immediately do you relate to Jesus’ more homespun agricultural stories?**

**Some Recurring Recurring Patterns!**

As part of last week’s study we examined some repeated points of emphasis about what Jesus’ disciples saw and experienced as they followed him. Here are themes in last week’s passages that continue:

1. Miracles - physical healings and spiritual deliverance from demons (Mark 3:10-11)
2. Continuing to deal with the press of crowds. (Mark 3:7-9, 3:20)
3. Jesus still finds ways to have moments of solitude (Mark 3:7, 3:13).
4. Opposition continues from Pharisees, teachers of the law, and scribes (Mark 3:22), and now opposition from his family is added (Mark 3:21)

He also continues to have teaching and preaching at the center of his ministry, but we begin to see a couple consistent tools emerge in his teaching toolbelt: spiritual multiplication and parables.

**Teaching tools: Spiritual multiplication**

**Who are some people in your life that have “passed on” to you the message of Jesus and lived out an authentic faith in front of you? Do you see yourself as one who is ready to provide the same kind of encouragement in the lives of others? If not, where do you need to grow or what roadblocks do you need to remove in order to have this kind of spiritual impact in the lives of others?**

**If you were given this job description, what would be your follow up questions about the job? How different would you say is the job description of these first disciples and the job description of followers of Jesus today? What is the significant about the fact that the first responsibility Mark mentions is “that they might be with him”?**

**Teaching tools: Parables**

**Mark 4:1-20.**

**At times when you have been less receptive to God’s word, which of the three unfruitful soils would most typify the reasons why your heart resisted what God wanted to do in you with the word?**

- **The path – hardened ground where constant activity prevents reflection and depth, so Satan easily and quickly snatches seed away**

- **Rocky ground – there is no room for roots, so discouragement easily defeats them “when trouble or persecution comes”**

- **Thorny ground – where “worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things” choke out the possibilities of fruitfulness**

**Do you consider yourself a good listener or is that an area of struggle? If you do consider yourself a good listener, does it come naturally or does it take constant attention and work? If you don’t consider yourself a good listener, what are some of the roadblocks that disrupt the process of listening for you? Do you think listening to God requires the same skill set as listening to people – why or why not?**

Challenge for this week – Take a Scripture verse from tonight (or another verse that has gotten your attention this week) and meditate on it throughout each day this week. As you do that, keep praying that God would help you to hear it well and apply it well.