**The Gospel of Mark Sermon #3**

Theme of Mark:

Jesus: Messiah and Son of God: suffering servant and savior of mankind.

Theme verse: Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

What is our superhero Jesus doing? He is healing many, he is working miracles and he is teaching in parables. And he is doing it immediately (*euthys*)!

I. Mark 4:1-20 Parable of the Soils (a better name that Parable of the Sower)

Parables both conceal and reveal. (Mark 4:11)

Jesus used every-day examples.

Today he might use a football example, or a video game or pop culture. For them? Farming!

What is the seed? It is the Word of God (Luke 8:11)

What are the soils? They are our individual hearts on which the seed falls.

1. The hard path. (v. 4, 15) This is the path along which people walk as they work the field. Narrow. Possibly paved with stones.

Hard heart. Never even give it a chance. You’re here. You’re not this soil.

But if you are this soil, then you need to do some plowing!!!

2. Rocky soil. (v. 5-6, 16-17) Shallow heart. No root. No depth. Fair weather Christian. Trouble comes, fall away.

They became a Christian because it was exciting, or because they liked the relationships, or because it gave them a good feeling. Gave a sense of purpose.

But then they lost a job and moved for a “better job” or a family member fell into crisis, or they had a problem with one of the members, or….

Jer 17:7-8 Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.

So, what do you do to fix this? Send down roots.

Begin to trust in God rather than church, fun, good relationships,…

Start a genuine prayer life.

Get real with someone about yourself.

Make a decision to devote yourself to God first.

Take part in our #Jesus lessons this whole year.

3. Thorny soil. (v. 7, 18-19) It did not die, but it did not produce any fruit. Mixed heart. Not a “bad” heart. Not a heart that does not love God, but a heart that has mixed loyalties.

Like the Santiago’s house!

This heart probably actually makes it to heaven, but does not experience the blessing God wants for them in this life. (Parable of the Weeds Matt 13:24-30)

When I plant a garden, I do not simply turn the weeds into the soil. I pull them out. Why?

You cannot just break off the dandelions. You need to go down to the root.

You don’t trim the vine, work around the edges.

Q: What is growing in your garden? What is the weed you need to pull?

Is it deceitfulness, lust, greed, laziness, alcohol, anger, gambling, greed, selfish ambition.

These may not be the “obvious” sins. It may be (v.18)

The worries of this life

The deceitfulness of wealth

The desire for things (the storage industry)

Is yours a divided heart? Are you whole-hearted? Who can you think of who is truly whole-hearted for God?

Q: Do you want to be fruitful? What might be choking you spiritually?

4. Good soil. Result? A lot of fruit. Full life. Productive life. Life with meaning.

John 15:16 I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.

What is the good soil?

a. It is turned over and soft

b. It puts down deep roots in God

c. It pulls out the weeds of this world.

II. Mark 4:30-34 Parable of the Mustard Seed.

v. 34 When he was with his disciples… So that is what I am doing here.

Q: What is the Kingdom of God like?

It is a place where things happen! They are not static! They grow.

HOPE Dance Academy is like a Mustard Seed.

CSUB campus ministry is like a Mustard Seed.

Joe Parker and I last Spring at BC

The Cortez Bible group, if you will accept God’s vision is a mustard seed.

What is your life like? Is it showing evidence of the kingdom? Is it dynamic? Is there growth?

III. Mark 4:35-41 Jesus calms the storm.

A huge storm. Boat nearly swamped. What is Jesus doing? Sleeping. Don’t you care?

Q: Does he care? Of course he does!!!!! Caring does not = worrying.

Q: What does this tell you about Jesus? He has great trust in God.

Leading this small church, all kinds of stuff happens. Eve was sharing with Jan yesterday…

Jesus says, “Trust in God, trust also in me….”

v. 40 A great question: Why are you so afraid? Do you have faith or not?

4:41 They were terrified. Who is this guy?

Why such a reaction? Had Jesus not healed, turned water to wine, etc… To us, these are all the same, but when Jesus calmed the storm….

Jesus has power over nature. To an agrarian society this is a blow-away.

So many of the “gods” were gods of nature. Jesus calmed a storm!!!!

Do you get it? Are there any “storms” in your life right now? Have you had some sleepless nights?

If you are like Jesus, you can sleep like a baby. Why? Because you know that it is not up to you. You are not in control.

Again: Jesus said, “Trust in God, trust also in me…”

Heb 13:5 “Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you. So we say with confidence, The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”