

Series: The Kingdom Is Here
Passage: Mark 4:1-20
Speaker: Pastor Jon

THE LIFE CHALLENGE

CONNECT

What's your experience with gardening? Do you have a green thumb? Why or why not?

What kind of bedtime stories did you love when you were little?



IDENTITY

Why a Garden Parable?

1. We are growing **or** dying.
2. We need tending.
3. We are meant to produce.

Re-read Jonathan's reasons (on the left). Do you agree or disagree that **soil and seed and garden** are a good comparison as a parable for us as humans? Why? How does this help you?

Pastor Jon talked about how the garden story is our story. Read **Genesis 3:17-19**.

Jon said "*The curse is we no longer default to good soil. Growing will always be hard*". What do you think this means for our spiritual life? Do you agree or disagree (and why)?

Are you finding spiritual growth hard or easy in this season?

Heart Soil Types

Hard
Rocky/Shallow
Weedy
Good

THE EXAMEN

We all want to be the good soil. But when we examine the soil of our hearts, on any given day, it may resemble one of the other types described in the parable. When you're struggling, which soil type best describes your difficulty? What action or practice could you take to work against this?

PRACTICE

If soil and harvest are miracles, what do you think would be a daily reminder you could try this week that might ground you in this reality (and His presence)?

If you have time, try reading **John 15:1-8** as Lectio Divina, asking Jesus to highlight a word or phrase He is speaking to you. If you feel comfortable, share what you are getting with the group.

Lectio Divina

One person read the passage through out loud slowly two or three times. Then wait quietly. Share your impressions.

PRAY TOGETHER

We want to take time to listen to and pray for each other. If you are willing, please *briefly* share a need **or** praise item that your group could pray for. **Then pray!**