

ONE

STORY

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

WEEK 42

Parable of the Sower

BEFORE THE SESSION:

- Pray for each of your group members by name
- Look over the questions on the right and choose the ones that are most appropriate for your small group. If you're really feeling motivated, you might even think of a few on your own.
- Think through how you might prompt your group a little if they have difficulty getting started in discussion.
- Take a look at the accountability question below. Lead members to gather one on one or in same sex clusters to discuss it over coffee this week.

THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA

God desires for us to have a healthy, balanced spiritual life.

ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTION

Make a list of 3 things that are choking your spiritual growth. Share them with your accountability partner. How can you free your life from these worries?

TO PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK:

Read Matthew 17-18; Mark 9; Luke 10, 12-15; John 7-10

AS YOU READ...

...Think about what God's plan is for your life.

CONNECT

(10 min.)

Choose one or both of the following questions to begin your time together as a group.

1. Who has the "green thumb" in your family? How good are you at growing things?
2. Who or what in your life nurtures your spiritual growth?

EXPLORE

(40 min.)

Say something like, "Today we will be looking at the Parable of the Sower" Then guide your group through these questions.

3. If you were in worship this week, what statement or experience stood out to you? What stood out during last week's reading?

(Leader: Take some time to discuss any questions that may have arisen as your members read through this week's assigned reading.)

4. Read Matthew 13:3-9. What types of soil does Jesus mention? What happens to the seed in each kind of soil?
5. Read 18-23. What does Jesus' explanation of the parable reveal about the seed? The various soils? The sower? The fruit?
6. What are some reasons why some hear but never understand? Why do so many people misunderstand the gospel?
7. Define "the good soil". What does that soil look like? What is the goal we need to be pursuing in our spiritual life?
8. Assess the soil in your spiritual life right now. Is it rich and receptive, too worried about life to be spiritual right now, or somewhere in between?
9. What steps can you take to improve the soil of your spiritual life?

TRANSFORM

(10 min.)

Wrap up your time by recalling a few things from your meeting that stood out to you. Then, ask the following question and pray together.

10. Is there a particular "thorn of worry" you would like your small group to pray with you about?

This Week's Study Notes:

Scripture Notes

Matthew 13:3

Jesus told this parable to show the results of a healthy, balanced spiritual life. Some show this balance while others do not.

Matthew 13:9

Hearing God's Word and then acting on it indicates that your soil (your relationship with Christ) is rich, receptive, and fertile.

Matthew 13:19

The seed is the message about the kingdom. Some are so hardened that the seed of the Word never even penetrates. It is, instead, snatched away by Satan. The person who hears but does not understand merely hears the message; there is no understanding of what is heard. To understand is to grasp the meaning of the message and then make it your own.

Matthew 13:22

Still others allow the wrong concerns (specifically worries and wealth) to squeeze out their interest in Jesus and His way. The weeds do not kill the plant (in contrast to the seeds sown on hard ground or on rocky soil, which do not survive). But they do not allow it to bring forth fruit.

Leader Tips

AS YOU READ THIS WEEK...

- Think about and pray for each member of your small group.
- Think through the following questions:
 1. Whom does God bring to mind as I read these verses? Why?
 2. What needs to change in my own life as a result of what I'm reading?
 3. Whom do I need to tell about these verses?

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY WE RECOMMEND...

- Bible Commentary: Bible.org
- Bible Commentary: DesiringGod.org
- Pronouncing Biblical Words: Netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm

* Scripture Notes adapted from and used by permission of Serendipity House Publishing, 1 LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, Tennessee

