

Moving On Up!

Lesson for Sunday, February 1, 2026

INTRODUCTION:

⇒ This is the second lesson in our series on what it means to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Last week, we looked at the four calls that Jesus issued. Can you remember what they were? *Use the space below to make some notes...*

⇒ How do we move from “follow me” through the more advanced stages of our Christian growth? How do we avoid getting stuck in one area? Jesus gave us a familiar parable that describes the potential sticking points that keep us from moving on up in our spiritual growth. We find that parable in Mark 4.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. Seed Sown Along the _____ (vs. 4)
 - a. Seed sown along a hardened is hard, uncultivated, and not receptive to outside seed.
 - b. In Mark 4:15, we are told the condition of the person represented by this soil.
 - c. In this metaphor, the sticking point that keeps people from answering the first call is that they have an _____ heart.
 - i. Do you have someone in your life that you are concerned for their soul and yet they never seem interested?
 - ii. Was there a time in your life when you were like this before you came to Christ?
 - d. The solution to this sticking point is to _____ the hardened ground.
 - i. Read Isaiah 28:23-24. Four times in verse 23 we are told to listen up!
 - ii. How do we cultivate the “soil” of our friends with hardened hearts?
 - e. When we are evangelizing, we must cultivate _____ with lost people.
2. Seed Sown on _____ Ground (vs. 5-6)
 - a. If you are a Christian, you have answered the first call of Jesus. But many Christians never answer Jesus’s other calls. They get stuck as baby Christians who desperately needs to grow. What keeps people from moving on up in their walk with the Lord? Jesus begins to tell us in Mark 4:16-17.
 - b. People are eager to answer the call and come to Jesus (16)! But a decision to follow Christ is not the last step – it is the first step in a new way of life! Notice what Jesus says the new Christian must do and why they must do it (both seen in vs. 17).
 - i. The new Christian must be committed to be a _____ Christian, developing spiritual roots in their life that will anchor them moving forward.
 - ii. Why? Because affliction and persecution will come! Difficult times will _____ undeveloped Christians.
 - c. Consider: How do we grow spiritual roots? What are the areas we need to know that will anchor us in the difficult days?

3. Seed Sown Among _____ (vs. 7)
- a. When Jesus explains this seed in verses 18-19, He identifies three sticking points:
 - i. _____ – “cares of this world”
 - ii. _____ – “the deceitfulness of riches”
 - iii. _____ – “the lusts of other things”
 - b. How do we keep these things from choking out our spiritual growth? It takes humility that will look into one’s life and answer some difficult questions. Consider:
 - i. We must be willing to discuss and discern how these areas impact our lives. What do we worry about? How are we influenced by the wealth and wants of the world?
 - ii. We must be willing to destroy the thorns in our lives that choke out our fruitfulness.
4. Seed Sown on _____ Soil (vs. 8)
- a. When...
 - i. We are saved (“come and see”)...
 - ii. And we are developing spiritual roots to help anchor our lives in Christ and His Word (“follow Me”)...
 - iii. We are prepared to serve the Lord Jesus in meaningful ways (“I will make you fishers of men”)...
 - iv. And will ultimately begin to see the Holy Spirit produce spiritual fruit (character, conduct, converts) in their lives (“bear fruit”).
 - b. There is nothing like the fruit bearing Christian life! This is God’s will and plan for your life! What is keeping you from it?

APPLICATION/DISCUSSION:

- ⇒ After two weeks, where would you put yourself on the spiritual continuum of discipleship?
- ⇒ After today’s lesson, what would you identify is keeping you from being a fruit bearing Christian? What changes do you need to make?
- ⇒ Focusing on point 2 of the Bible study: What are you doing (or what should we be doing) to develop deeper spiritual roots that will anchor our lives?
- ⇒ Focusing on point 3 of the Bible study section: What are things you worry about? How do you overcome them? How are you tempted to chase riches and feed your wants?
- ⇒ What would you say is the #1 obstacle that is keeping you from being a fruit bearing Christian? (We will answer this question next week!)