

Big Crowd? Big Deal!

Mark 4:1-20

Ice Breaker: Has there ever been a point when you were tempted to altogether bail on following Jesus? Or perhaps to bail on following Jesus wholeheartedly? What were the circumstances?

Big Idea: Jesus isn't impressed with big crowds, big conferences, or big churches. He knows that the passion of the moment and the excitement of the movement will eventually wane, and His question that remains is: *"Who's going to follow Me when the euphoria has worn off?"*

Digging Deeper:

- 1) Read Mark 4:1-20. What's the context and setting for this teaching? (v1)
- 2) Do you think that Jesus was strategic in waiting for this kind of "crowd" moment to teach this parable? Why? What would you have been thinking if you were in the crowd?
- 3) Re-read Mark 4:15-20. Is there one of these first three soils that you're most in danger of becoming? Why? What's one thing you can do to guard your heart from becoming like this kind of soil?
- 4) How do you think this parable prepared Jesus' disciples for preaching the gospel and leading the church? How should this parable inform the way we interact with people?
- 5) Pastor Joshua made the comment: "We can't ultimately dictate how people are going to respond to Jesus over the long haul. And it's not our job to. Our job is simply to keep sowing the seed of God's Word." What's the greater temptation for you: thinking that it's up to you to get people across the line of faith (and then keep them there) – or abdicating your responsibility to share Christ with others? Why?
- 6) What would it look like for you to be at peace simply with sharing Christ with people without feeling the burden of how they respond (or don't respond)?
- 7) Spend some time praying for each other that you would become like the fourth soil – and that you would be at peace simply with sharing the good news of Jesus with people – without feeling the burden of they respond (or don't respond).