

Weekly Study Guide

The week of October 5, 2014

Daily Readings

Monday	Psalm 25	Tuesday	Matthew 1 & 2	Wednesday	Matthew 13:1-9; 34-35
Thursday	Matthew 13:10-17	Friday	Matthew 13:18-23	Saturday	Luke 11:9-10

My notes on this week's readings...

Next Week in Worship

Next week's message: *Mixed into the World*

Next week's readings: Matthew 13:34-30

This week we look deeply into Jesus' parables of the weeds in the field and the yeast being worked into the dough. In this "mixed up" world, what do these parables tell us about how the Kingdom of God is at work?

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Group Discussion

Connect

Imagine this! Jesus used parables, or stories, to help us catch a glimpse of the reality of his kingdom at work in and among us now! Stories can help us see things in a different way. Has a story told to you, or that you read, ever helped you understand something about God's kingdom in a new way? Share that insight with the group!

Learn

In Matthew 12, Jesus is dealing with people who have already decided not to hear his words or see the miracles he is performing as signs from God. At the end of Jesus' parables he often says, "They who have ears, let them hear."

- What needs to be happening in someone's life to 'hear' the truth of Jesus' words?
- What helps create that kind of receptive heart?

Read Matthew 13:10-17. Why do you think Jesus is communicating this to his disciples?

- What does he hope that they glean from this message?

Read Matthew 13:1-9 and 18-23. In this parable Jesus is explaining to his followers that some things keep faith from growing well in our lives.

- How do the things represented by the different soils create a challenge to people in their faith lives today?

The path, the rocky places, the thorns.

The good soil represents the hearts that receive and respond to the word with their lives! The fact that Jesus tells the disciples they have "ears that hear" when they needed the parable explained (in 18-23) clearly shows us that it is not just understanding that creates growth, but the willingness to engage even when we don't.

In our world of predators, rocky places, and thorns, what does it tell us that the seed is cast in every place? Read Luke 11:9-10. What does this passage tell us about what gives us ears to hear?

Apply

Most people have lived through times in their lives where they can identify with each of these soils. There may be many around you who you can see are in a rocky place or in a thorny place. Create a prayer list of people who need to know Jesus and keep them in your prayer journal.

Pray

Pray for God to soften the hearts of the people on your prayer list!