



- Share a memory of a time when you've grown (or tried to grow) something. Maybe you've planted seeds before, or replanted a small plant. What challenges did you encounter? What was fulfilling about it?
- This is a short parable. **Re-read Mark 4:3-8 as a group.** Since this is a well-known parable, it might be helpful to try reading from a translation/version of the Bible that's different from what your group usually uses as a way to hear it "fresh."
- We identified three types of "spiritual ground" based on what Jesus told in the parable. (**Mark 4:14-20**) Have each person in the group share which of the grounds are they most resonating with right now, and why.
 - **Impenetrable Path:** hardened ground that feels like God's message can't sink in. Often experienced by those who are holding on to bitterness, resentment or patterns of sin.
 - **Rocky Terrain:** shallow ground that works for a while, but then isn't sustainable. Often experienced by those who have endured hardship, pain or trials.
 - **Crowded Ground:** thorny ground where the message gets overcome by other distractions. Often experienced by those distracted by less-important things that our world deems the most important.
- As a group, take time to focus on those who have identified "**Impenetrable Path**" and dialogue, share ideas and pray for what next steps they can take as they try to "aerate" their ground.
- As a group, take time to focus on those who have identified "**Rocky Terrain**" and dialogue, share ideas and pray for what verse they can meditate on. Help them come up with a short, easily-remembered phrase that they can infuse into their "ground" throughout the day as they encounter the rocks.
- As a group, take time to focus on those who have identified "**Crowded Ground**" and dialogue, share ideas and pray for how they might invest in something eternal as a way to counteract the focus on other things.
- We talked about the generosity of the Farmer (God)...how He continues to give us His message, even when we aren't always receptive. And, that when we are, the result is an abundant "harvest" that He grows in our lives. Close by sharing encouragement with one another about this. How have you seen this in your life? Do you have a specific word of encouragement toward someone in your group? If so, share that with them.