

A. Examining the texts.

1. Read Mark 1:1-9. Why do you think Jesus says what he does in verse 9? What do you think he means?
2. Read Mark 1:10-12. What makes this part of the text difficult to understand and how does it speak to the purpose of teaching in parables?
3. Read Isaiah 6:8-13. What does this passage have to say about the effects of Isaiah's ministry and how is it in some way similar to that of Christ?
4. Read Mark 4:13-20. What does this explanation of the parable reveal about how people respond to the "sowing of the Kingdom?"

B. Meditation & application

5. "Parables both reveal and conceal." Discuss this statement?
6. Why do you think Jesus says what it does in verse 13? Why is this parable a key parable?
7. What goals does this parable give God's people & what hindrances does the parable put forward as hindering a harvest?
8. How would this teaching have equipped the disciples for their future ministry of sowing seed?

Dear Heavenly Father. We thank you for the coming of God's kingdom in the person of Christ. Help us to have hearts that are good soil and are open to the seed of the Kingdom. Help us to use our ears and hearts to listen to your word and make us fruitful disciples- Amen.