



Mark 4:1-20 PP

Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil.

It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. PP
 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times."
 Then Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."



Path - Hard heartedness PP

Stony soil - Half heartedness

Thorny soil - Cares, Worries, Desire for other things

Good soil – A harvest of fruitfulness

What does it mean to be fruitful? PP

1. To be healthy and to flourish. To produce the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)
2. To multiply. To help others to also know Jesus and see the same spiritual fruit grow in their lives. (Matthew 28:19)

Jesus wants both of these things in your life.

God wants us to grow fruit in all 3 dimensions of the Christian Life: PP

Up – in closeness with Him, in purity and holiness, in Christ like character

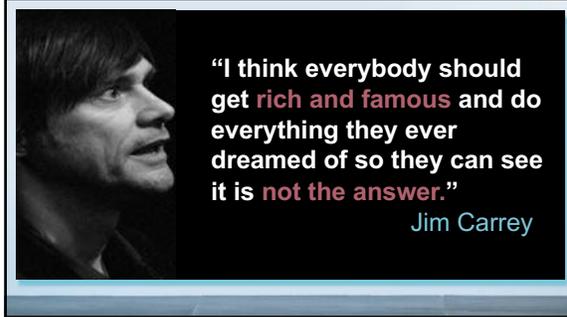
In – in fellowship with each other, in patience and kindness, in hospitality and service

Out – in passion for those who do not yet know Him, in courage and awareness, in willingness to tell people about Jesus

Stones and Thorns – the main danger for American Christians PP

Stony Soil: It is respectable to be a Christian in the Midwest. We can interact with church as just another thing we do without really pursuing a deep walk with God.

Thorny Soil: We are very busy, with many cares and worries, and material wealth holds out the promise of security and comfort.



PP

To become fruitful, we need to set predictable patterns of behavior that help us to live differently.

The Inward Dimension – building predictable patterns with other Christians: PP

Setting times in the week when we:

- Eat **food** and have **fun** with others
- Read the **Word** and **worship** with others
- Have times of **Prayer** with others

Food and Fun, Word and Worship, Prayer

The Outward Dimension – building predictable patterns with People of Peace: PP

- Set times in the week when you can invite people to join you for a meal or just to hang out.
- Make sure that these are manageable and sustainable.
- Do this together with other Christians

Up, In and Out work together... PP

- Regular patterns of time with God will mean you have an authentic story to share.
- Regular patterns with other Christians will mean you have support and accountability.
- Regular patterns with People of Peace mean you will have opportunities to share Jesus with others.



What predictable patterns is God calling you to put into your weekly schedule so that you can be fruitful in your own life, and in the lives of others?