

**OPEN**

Have you ever wondered what happened to members who you've seen and then all of sudden you don't see them anymore? What might be reasons for their disappearance?

**MATTHEW 13:1-9**

13 On that day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea. <sup>2</sup> Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat down, while the whole crowd stood on the shore.

<sup>3</sup> Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "Consider the sower who went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> As he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. <sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on rocky ground where it didn't have much soil, and it grew up quickly since the soil wasn't deep. <sup>6</sup> But when the sun came up, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it. <sup>8</sup> Still other seed fell on good ground and produced fruit: some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty times what was sown. <sup>9</sup> Let anyone who has ears<sup>[a]</sup> listen."

**DISCOVER (Matthew 13:18-23)**

Parables take earthly examples to teach lessons about God's kingdom. First, always seek to identify what's what in the analogy Jesus uses.

What does the seed represent?

What do the birds stand for?

What is the rocky soil conveying?

What do the thorns help us recognize?

What seems to be the good soil, why is it good?

Are there more things in the world which support the "seed" or are "opposed" to it?

**DEEPEN**

Parables have something to teach us about the Kingdom of Heaven

What is it about the "Word" which leads it to always be under attack in this world?

How can you connect what is happening in this discipleship group with helping the seed to have a solid root?

**DELIVER**

As we engage the Living Word, there is always an opportunity for us to move forward with an application from the reading.

What might be some things you could do to aid the listener, as they are new to the faith or feel still immature in their faith and knowledge of Christ?

We have learned about a number of threats to the Word being active in our lives, what one most threatens you?

**PRAY**

Write the name of someone who you are praying the Word would bear saving faith and fruit in their lives. Just write the first name. The facilitator will close with a prayer naming all these folks. Feel free to write down all the names so you can continue praying for these folks. Also feel free to share any other prayer needs with the group.

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*“Lord, in your mercy ... hear our pray.”*

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