



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

## Community Group Material:

*Bible Reading: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23*

*The Sower: Having A Receptive Heart*

Ask one person to pray at the beginning of your meeting.

### Check-in

Check in with each other about how everyone is doing.

**Bible Reading:** Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

### Sermon Summary:

One of Jesus' favourite ways of communicating with people was through parables. These short, relevant stories drew his audience in, elicited an evaluation & demanded a response. The parable of the sower speaks of 4 soils (hearts) that a seed was sown into. 3 of the 4 didn't receive the seed well, & eventually it died. But one soil was free from obstacles & due to that, abundant fruit emerged. Should we think our hearts are one of these for all time? No! At any given time, our heart can be in any one of these 4 conditions. The main point of this parable is our receptivity to God's Word. If we are not receiving God's Word well we should evaluate our current condition & ask God to show us what might be causing us to be hardened, shallow or preoccupied. If our heart's condition is freed up, we can be assured that when God's Word lands in us, we will bring forth abundant fruit that's aligned with God.

### Discussion:

1. If you've read this parable before, did you think that you were one of the four soils for all time? If so, which one were you? And how did that make you feel about others?

2. Knowing now that this parable is about our receptivity towards God's Word, have you found that your receptivity changes over time? What things cause you to be less receptive to God's word, & what things cause you to be more receptive?
3. Why do you think Jesus tells all those who were listening to him speak, "*Let anyone who has ears listen*"? We all have ears, so what was he implying in saying this?
4. Who is the sower in this parable? Were there more sowers later? What about today?
5. Read Matt. 13:19, Mk. 4:14 & Lk. 8:11. What is the seed sown? Which ways have you found to be best for you to receive the seed?
6. What things have you found that harden your heart towards God's Word?
7. What things preoccupy you so that you have less appetite for God?
8. What have you found to be useful to continually having a receptive heart to God?

**End with Prayer.**

- Pray for "*ears to hear*" what God wants us to hear as we listen to his Word preached.
- Pray for one another's concerns.