

WEEK 3: A STORY ABOUT YOUR HEART AND HEARING FROM GOD

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

PREPARE

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MAIN POINT

The disciples wanted to know why Jesus spoke in parables because not everyone understood what Jesus was saying. Jesus connected Himself to one of Israel's most famous prophets who preached and the people "heard but did not understand, saw but did not perceive." Jesus gave parables so those who knew Him would understand Him more and those who did not would have the kingdom covered from them. Wait, what!? This is different from the simple but untrue statement that parables are "earthly stories with heavenly meaning." Jesus used parables to make it clear who was His, and who belongs to Him is the one who hears and receives because that person "will be given more." How we hear reveals our heart, so "take care how you listen."

LEAN IN BREAK THE ICE

Have you ever tried gardening? Would you consider yourself a good gardener or a poor gardener? Why?

LOOK DOWN LOOK AT GOD'S WORD

Read Luke 8:4-18

4 As a large crowd was gathering, and people were coming to Jesus from every town, he said in a parable, 5 "A sower went out to sow his seed. As he sowed, some seed fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the sky devoured it. 6 Other seed fell on the rock; when it grew up, it withered away, since it lacked moisture. 7 Other seed fell among thorns; the thorns grew up with it and choked it. 8 Still other seed fell on good ground; when it grew up, it produced fruit: a hundred

times what was sown." As he said this, he called out, "Let anyone who has ears to hear listen."

9 Then his disciples asked him, "What does this parable mean?" 10 So he said, "The secrets of the kingdom of God have been given for you to know, but to the rest it is in parables, so that looking they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.

11 "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. 12 The seed along the path are those who have heard and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13 And the seed on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy. Having no root, these believe for a while and fall away in a time of testing. 14 As for the seed that fell among thorns, these are the ones who, when they have heard, go on their way and are choked with worries, riches, and pleasures of life, and produce no mature fruit. 15 But the seed in the good ground- these are the ones who, having heard the word with an honest and good heart, hold on to it and by enduring, produce fruit.

16 "No one, after lighting a lamp, covers it with a basket or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lamp stand so that those who come in may see its light. 17 For nothing is concealed that won't be revealed, and nothing hidden that won't be made known and brought to light. 18 Therefore take care how you listen. For whoever has, more will be given to him; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken away from him."

What do you learn about the message and responses to God's Word from the four kinds of soil in the passage?

LOOK OUT
IDENTIFY THE
RELEVANCE IF
GOD'S WORD IN
THE WORLD

What do you think makes people so unwilling to hear what Jesus has to say?

What does it practically look like for someone to hear God's Word and live it out, like those in the good soil?

LOOK IN
APPLY GOD'S
WORD
TO YOUR LIFE

In the message, Eric talked about how "holding on to His Word, shows you are hearing His Word." Talk about how you've experienced or been challenged by this in your life.