



DISCIPLE GROUP CURRICULUM GUIDE

Matthew Season 4: Old to New
Episode 6: Parable of the Sower
May 14 & May 17, 2026
Pastor Joby Martin

Discussion Questions

Leaders: Please use the questions in the curriculum to facilitate discussion of the sermon and the Scriptures. **But there's no need to answer every question.** The goal is to get your group members talking more than you and to get them going deeper.

- **Read Matthew 13:1-23. What stood out to you this week in the sermon, in the Scriptures and what God revealed to you about Himself?**
- **What are the reasons Jesus used parables?** (*Parables = to lay aside. Jesus would use a common experience to point to a spiritual/eternal reality. He used parables to reveal to the faithful the mysteries of God, to confound the "wise," expose hard hearts, humble the proud and invite faith.*)
- **Discover:** Discuss the four soils.
Deepen: Which soils have you been, and which soil are you right now? Where do you need to pray: "Lord, soften my heart"?
- **Discover:** Why do you think Jesus focuses more on the condition of the soil than on the skill of the Sower? (*The condition of the soil, not the delivery of the seed, makes the difference. Matthew 13:18–23. Jesus is showing that the Word of God is true, good and powerful, but the condition of the hearer's heart is what matters.*)
Deepen: Pastor Joby prepares and delivers a sermon each week. You have a part to play in receiving it. How do YOU get ready for church? (*Prayer, confession, expectation, reading ahead, removing distractions?*)
- **Discover:** Read Matthew 13:13-16. Discuss the meaning of these verses and the seeming contradiction of "lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them." (*Jesus is saying, blessed are the poor in spirit; the proud in spirit can't hear or see. The point is faith and belief. Without FAITH it's impossible to please God.*)
Deepen: What is the difference between coming to Scripture mainly to "figure God out" and coming to Scripture to trust and obey Him? (*God is not a problem to be solved with total understanding. He is the Lord to be trusted, loved, and obeyed. Understanding often follows faith, not the other way around.*)
- **Discover:** In Matthew 13:23, what is the difference between producing spiritual fruit and trying to manufacture religious behavior? (*Spiritual fruit comes from abiding in Christ and being changed by the Holy Spirit. Religious behavior can be outward performance without real heart change. See John 15:4–5.*)
Deepen: Read Galatians 5:22-23. Take turns right now sharing where you see fruit in the life of people in your group.
- **Why is baptism an act of obedience rather than a way to earn salvation?** (*We are saved by grace through faith, not by works. Baptism does not save us, but it is one of the first public steps of obedience*

for someone who has trusted Christ. It points backward to Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and forward to the believer's new life under His lordship. See Ephesians 2:8–9; Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:41; Romans 6:3–1.)

- **Have you been baptized? What moved you to baptism or what is keeping you from baptism?**

Action Step: 1. Pray for Jesus to show you a “thorn” competing for your affection and take one practical step to surrender it so the Word can bear more fruit in your life. 2. Prepare your heart intentionally before church next week. Spend 10–15 minutes and pray, *“Lord, show me the condition of my heart. Break up anything hard, remove anything shallow, pull out anything that is choking Your Word, and make me good soil that receives, obeys, and bears fruit.”*