

Screenshots of Jesus

A companion study to the podcasts of Amber Albee Swenson on the
life of Christ through the lens of Mark

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Lesson Six: Discussion Questions

Jesus changed his teaching tactic. Instead of speaking plainly, he began speaking in parables. The word of God stays the same, but our approaches to spreading it, and teaching it can change.

1. Jesus gave four scenarios for when the Word comes to a person. Scenario 1: Satan can snatch the Word before it even gets a chance to take root. If we know this, how can we offensively maneuver to decrease his chances of accomplishing this?

(If you have a garden and the animals continually help themselves, what can you do to protect the garden?)

It's one thing to be unaware that an enemy exists. It's another thing to know the enemy is out there and bent on doing as much harm as possible. You don't live the same when you know the enemy is near.

Read 1 Peter 5:8.

2. How can we live "alert and of sober mind?"

The second scenario is that a person receives the Word with joy, but when trouble and hardship come, they abandon God. They wonder how God can let it happen.

3. Read these passages. How do they prepare believers for trouble, so they don't lose their faith when it comes?

John 16:33 -

2 Corinthians 1:8-11 -

Hebrews 3:13

2 Timothy 1:15-16

"Still
other
seed
feel on
good
soil. It
came
up,
grew
and
prod-
uced a
crop."
Mark
4:8.

4. It can be hard to remember that we don't struggle aimlessly. Everything in our life, even if it is a kick from Satan, will be used somehow, some way. Think of a time in your life that hardship put you in a place among other people you would have never known otherwise.

5. The third scenario is that we let worries, wealth and desires for things choke out our love of God. It isn't that we deliberately fall away. Other things just get in the way. What are some things that easily creep into our life that keep us from the kingdom of God?

6. It's good to remember we all have the same 24 hours in every day. How can you prioritize in such a way that you make sure to keep God in his rightful place? Who will keep you on track?

7. The fourth scenario is walking with God, growing your faith and actively working in the kingdom of God. This is a lifestyle. What are the daily choices that lead us to this scenario?

8. What are the greatest obstacles that keep you from the fourth scenario?

9. Let's go back to the gardening metaphor. What does a gardener do in order to ensure the greatest yield?

10. Read Hebrews 10:24-25. How can we water and fertilize our faith? How can we protect against rodents and rot, individually and collectively?

Big idea: Each of us must tend to our faith in order that we don't fall away, and in order to produce the greatest crop.

Action Step: Make a plan to daily spend time in the Word. Make time to pray daily. Set a timer and pray for two minutes at first. Walk and pray. Journal your prayers. Get involved with other Christians who spur you to love and good deeds.

Prayer: Dear Lord, help us to tend our faith well. Teach us to put boundaries in place that keep temptations out. Feed us with your Word. Water us with your love. Help us to produce the greatest amount of fruit possible for your kingdom, and to help others to do the same. Help us, Jesus! In your name we pray. Amen.