



3 Enemies Of Influence

*Group Hosts/Leaders - Make sure to save a few minutes to ask the last question, especially if this is your last group meeting this Spring.

😊 Ice breaker

- Have you been successful in growing plants? If so, what is your secret?
- Who are the biggest influencers in your life?

📖 Read Mark 4:1-20

1 Once again Jesus began teaching by the lakeshore. A very large crowd soon gathered around him, so he got into a boat. Then he sat in the boat while all the people remained on the shore. 2 He taught them by telling many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: 3 “Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seed. 4 As he scattered it across his field, some of the seed fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate it. 5 Other seed fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seed sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. 6 But the plant soon wilted under the hot sun, and since it didn’t have deep roots, it died. 7 Other seed fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants so they produced no grain. 8 Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they sprouted, grew, and produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!” 9 Then he said, “Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.” 10 Later, when Jesus was alone with the twelve disciples and with the others who were gathered around, they asked him what the parables meant. 11 He replied, “You are permitted to understand the secret^[a] of the Kingdom of God. But I use parables for everything I say to outsiders, 12 so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled: ‘When they see what I do, they will learn nothing. When they hear what I say, they will not understand. Otherwise, they will turn to me and be forgiven.’

13 Then Jesus said to them, "If you can't understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables? 14 The farmer plants seed by taking God's word to others. 15 The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message, only to have Satan come at once and take it away. 16 The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. 17 But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word. 18 The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God's word, 19 but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced. 20 And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"



Questions To Consider

- What kind of growth occurred in each soil type?
- Which of these best describes how you have responded to God's word in your life?
 - a) seed snatched (v. 4)
 - b) seedling scorched (vs. 5-6)
 - c) stalk suffocated (v. 7)
 - d) sustained growth (v. 8)
- Pastor Andy mentioned that the soil is like the condition of your heart. What kind of soil allows a seed to sustain growth?
- What is more likely to cause you to be unfruitful -- doubt, difficulty, or distraction? How does God want this to change for you, and what steps will you take to that end?
- What if you knew Jesus was going to return in one year? How would you live differently now?
- **How has being a part of this group influenced or helped your life? (*Leaders/Hosts, please share any significant responses with your Coach.)**



Prayer

Share prayer requests and pray:

Father we thank you for planting seeds of faith in us and for bearing fruit through us! Show us how to be ready to be an influence on others. Help us to evaluate where we are now and to make the changes that will make us more fruitful. Help us to take in your words of life regularly so we can keep growing spiritually. And show us when and how to jump on opportunities to influence others toward Jesus at every opportunity. In Jesus' name, Amen.

LINKS

- **Message Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ze-FECdViQ8>
- **Art of Influence series:** <https://echo.church/artofinfluence/>
- **Activate:** echo.church/activate
- **Give:** echo.church/give