

MATTHEW 13

Startup: Talk about any experiences you've had with farming or gardening—and focus on what you may have learned about the best planting methods.

SEEING WHAT'S THERE

1. Review the parable of the sower and the soils in verses 3-9. In what ways is this parable a warning to us? In what ways is it an encouragement?
2. In verse 9, what kind of "ears" is Jesus talking about?
3. What does verse 11 imply about the choices God makes?
4. What does the last verse in this chapter imply about the power and the will of God?
5. EYE FOR DETAIL—From what you recall seeing in this chapter, try answering the following question without looking at your Bible: In His explanation of the parable of the sower and the soils, what did Jesus say the thorns stood for? (See verse 22.)
6. Look closely at verses 34-35. What kinds of things were "hidden" for all of history until Jesus began His teaching ministry?

CAPTURE THE ESSENCE

7. If this chapter was the only Scripture portion you had, what biblical definition would you give for the term kingdom of heaven?

8. From what you see in verses 10-13, is it accurate to say that Jesus was hiding the truth from some people?

9. Look at the last half of verse 15. What lessons could be drawn from this verse about what it means to truly know God?

10. From what you see in this chapter, what is a parable, and what is its purpose?

FOR LIFE TODAY

11. Jesus encouraged us in Matt 7:7 to ask and to seek and to knock. With this confidence in mind, look together at verses 44-46 in this chapter, and think carefully about what Jesus is teaching us there. Then express this passage in the form of a model prayer that any Christian could use—or a prayer that specifically fits your life right now.

12. Look at what Jesus said to His disciples in verse 11. Has the Lord also given to you what was given to the disciples?

13. How could you paraphrase the last half of verse 15 and make it into a prayer for yourself?

14. In line with what Jesus says in verse 23, describe as fully as possible what it takes for us to be "good soil"?

15. Notice how the parable of the weeds in verses 24-30 is explained later by Jesus in verses 36-43. From what you see here, is it right for us to try to seek out and destroy the "weeds" in the church today?

16. Look at verses 44-46. Have you ever felt like either of these two men?

FOR GOING DEEPER

Notice the use of the word fulfilled in verses 14 and 35. This is an important and frequently used word in Matthew's gospel. Review together the principle of fulfillment which Jesus expressed in 5:17, then discuss together the following passages where the words full or fulfilled are used: 1:21-23; 2:14-15; 3:13-15; 4:13-16; 8:16-17; 12:15-21; 21:1-5, and 26:54-56.