

**Sermon outline notes      Mark 4: 1-34**  
**The Seed of Change**

**Introduction**

The bible is an optimistic book—it recognises the imperfections of the present, but looks forward to a better world yet to be. Time, according to the Bible, is a straight line divided into two great epochs. The first epoch has a beginning called in the Book of Genesis the first day, and it has an ending called by the Old Testament prophets the last day. The time in between the first and the last day is called ‘the present evil age’. The second epoch, when God’s rule is acknowledged universally, is called ‘the age to come’ or ‘the Kingdom of God’.

- 1) But how will the Kingdom come? The answer is found in Mark 4:11 in the metaphor of the seed. The seed is the word and the word is the agent of change.
- 2) The parable of the growing seed vv 26-29.
  - (i) There is something mysterious about how the Kingdom grows.
  - (ii) The Kingdom of God has three phases:-
    - (a) The phase of planting—Jesus teaching.
    - (b) The final phase of reaping—Jesus second coming.
    - (c) The inbetween phase of growth—that’s where we are!
- 3) The parable of the mustard seed vv 30-32.
  - (i) The Kingdom is apparently insignificant in its earlier stages, yet it is going to be prolific in its long term effect.
- 4) The parable of the sower vv 1-20.
  - (i) There is something discriminating about the seed; growth is non-uniform, it has the effect of dividing the human race.
  - (ii) Parables as used by Jesus are an ingenious sifting technique—they separate the idle curious from the seriously interested.
  - (iii) The thing that all the bad soils had in common was that no lasting change took place. The Kingdom is something new—it must produce change—it must produce a crop.

**Points To Ponder**

- 1) Fellowship groups had an opportunity to study Mark 4:1-34 last week. Was anything said in the sermon with which you would disagree? Why?
- 2) In preparation for next Sunday please study Mark 6: 30-52.
  - (a) Note the personal concern Jesus shared for his disciples in vv30-31.  
“There are some people who actually feel guilty every time they sit down; they cannot relax; there is always something they must do while they have a moment.” What would you say to a person in this position?
  - (b) What is the point of the story of the feeding of the five thousand in vv 32-44. What is Jesus teaching his disciples here?
  - (c) Walking on the water! Why does Mark record this incident? What is Jesus teaching his disciples through it? This is an incident full of Old Testament allusions. Check Psalm 77 : 19; Exodus 33:22; Isaiah 41:10,13.