

# Listen

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, if you could turn your Bibles now to Mark chapter 4. We're just dipping into Mark right now as we start Christianity explored, which is looking, which goes through Mark's Gospel.
- It's worth us getting more familiar with it. And this morning we're looking at the parable of the sower in Mark chapter 4. So we're gonna read Mark chapter 4 verses 1 to 25.
- Again, he began to teach beside the sea, and a very large crowd gathered about him so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea. And the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land, and he was teaching them many things in parables.
- And in his teaching he said to them, listen, a sower went out to sow, and as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Other seed fell on the ground, rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up since it had no depths of soil.
- And when the sun rose it was scorched, and since it had no root it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. It yielded no grain. And other seed fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding 30 fold and 60 fold and 100 fold.
- [ 1 : 1 7 ] And he said, he who has ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. And he said to them, to you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, so that they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.
- And he said to them, do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? The sower sows the word, and these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.
- And these are the ones sown on the rocky ground, the ones who when they hear the word immediately receive it with joy, and they have no root in themselves but endure for a while. And when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.
- And others are the ones sown among the thorns, they are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desire for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.
- But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, 30 fold and 60 fold and 100 fold. And he said to them, is the lamp brought in to be put under a basket or under a bed and not on a stand?
- [ 2 : 4 2 ] For nothing is hidden except we made manifest, nor is anything secret except to come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. And he said to them, pay attention to what you hear.

With the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has, will be taken away.

Amen, may God bless his word to us. Well, this morning, as I said, we're looking at this portion of Mark's Gospel, and one of Jesus' most well-known parables, this parable of the Sower.

Parables are just short stories drawn from the experiences of a first century person, often agricultural stories like the first parable. And Jesus uses them to convey important truth about the kingdom of God and about who he is.

And the parable of the Sower, you'll see, is all about listening. Now, you can see that just from the repeated language of listen and hear throughout it. In verse 3, the parable begins with Jesus' call, listen.

[ 3 : 51 ] The parable ends again with that command, he who has ears to hear, let him hear. And it comes back again in verses 23 and 24. Pay attention to what you have here.

If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. As Jesus speaks to the crowd, as Jesus then speaks to his disciples, as he speaks to us this morning, his great desire is that we would listen to him, and that we would grow in listening to him more and more.

So even as we begin, will you humbly commit yourselves to listening as he speaks to us from his word? And we're going to dive in and we're going to look very simply at what this passage has to teach to us by asking three simple questions.

First, how do people listen? Second, why is listening so important? And third, how can I become a better listener? First, how do people listen?

The parable of the Sower tells us how people listen, because it's a description of the different ways people respond, listen and respond to God's word. When Jesus first told this parable, it was autobiographical.

[ 4 : 59 ] In verse one, we're told that a large crowd gathers around him so big he has to get into the boat in order to teach them. Jesus is the ultimate sower. He is the one who goes out and spreads the seed of the gospel, the gospel about himself, about the salvation, the rescue he has come to bring.

He is sowing the seed as he speaks, and it is good news. It's vital news. We saw that last week. It's good news that brings life. But even as Jesus spoke, he knew that not everyone would listen.

That's why in verse three, he says, listen. He's looking out at this crowd, and he knows that there's all different kinds of hearts. And he knows that some people, for some people that word is going in, and for some people it's just passing them by, and other people it's taking root and it is transforming their lives.

Jesus, as Jesus tells this parable, he's seeing it playing out before him as he sows the seed. But it's not just a parable about Jesus' life and his ministry.

It also describes the world that we see, the world throughout history and how people have responded to Jesus and to his word throughout history and even today.

[ 6 : 11 ] You see, as the sower throws out the seed on different types of soil, so God's word goes out as God's people speak his word. Whether people read God's word or whether they hear it read and hear it spoken.

This parable also describes how people respond to God's word throughout history. And you'll notice that the parable tells us, Jesus tells the parable in verses three to eight, and then he explains it in verses 14 to 20.

We're going to just base the beginning of our time on that explanation, on the different soils, and look at how people respond to God's word. The first seed is lands on the path, and that's really symbolizing hard hearts.

If you read through Mark's Gospel or through any of the Gospels, you'll see that for some people who heard Jesus' word, it seems like they were totally impervious to it. Nothing went in. Now the scribes and the Pharisees are good examples. We'll come back to them when we get to verses 10 to 12.

But they often saw Jesus' miracles. They often had front-row seats to hear his teaching, and yet they still didn't believe. You could say they had all the proof they needed.

[ 7 : 22 ] They had the best evangelistic message, the best presentation of good news possible, and yet nothing. It was like pebbles bouncing off a tarmac road. Nothing was going in.

And you might know people like that. You try to talk to them about Jesus. You try to speak about the difference Jesus has made in your life. You open up the Bible with them.

Maybe that's you. Maybe you realize even as you sit here, actually God's word has just been bouncing off, and it's not been going in. It's not been going into your heart.

There's a sense in which you hear these people hear, but they remain unchanged. God's word doesn't go in. And not only that, not only is there a hard...

What Jesus says at the heart of this is a hard heart. A heart that is closed, that doesn't want to listen to God's word. And not only is there a hard heart, Jesus says the devil is out to keep it that way.

[ 8 : 26 ] He's described as a bird. He goes and picks off the grain from the path. Now I think in Lewis, if grain was to land on the road or something, it would only take a few seconds before the wind blew it away.

Palestine clearly didn't have such winds. The grain would be there for a little bit longer, but even so, birds would come by and pick up that grain and snatch it away. And Jesus says, actually that's the same as the devil's tactic.

He is out to give... to stop there being any chance of God's word penetrating people's hearts. And to snatch it away the moment people have heard it.

To distract them, thinking about, I don't know, what they read in the news earlier that morning. To distract them, maybe even as they're looking at their phone, reading a Bible on their phone and a notification comes out.

To distract them from listening to him, to take away what they have heard. Even as the truth, you think it's going to begin to penetrate. The devil seeks to snatch it away.

[ 9 : 29 ] We'll come back to that more on that in a second. The second soil is the seed that lands on rocky places. And that represents shallow hearts in verses 16 and 17.

Jesus says, these are the ones who hear the word. They immediately receive it with joy, but they have no root in themselves. They endure for a while, then tribulation, so suffering or persecution arises, and immediately they fall away.

And the seed on this rocky ground, or even the thorny soil that comes next, are perhaps the most tragic because they do hear. They do hear for a while, but then they fall away.

And it's a story many of us have seen firsthand. A person hears the good news about Jesus and they respond with joy, and they respond with excitement. And they respond saying, I want Jesus to be my savior.

And they tell their testimony. They want other people to hear about Jesus. Maybe they're the first. Maybe they put some of us to shame in their eagerness to tell people about Jesus. Their testimonies are encouraging.

[ 10 : 31 ] They're hungry to read the Bible, to grow, to have fellowship with other believers. But then they fall away. Either it's suffering coming into their life, or whether they just gradually began to drift and become more and more attracted to something else, other things, other than Christ, and their love for Him grows cold.

And they drift away, and we've all seen that again and again. And it's heartbreaking. As Jesus says, some people may fall away due to suffering or persecution like this soil.

It's the result of being in a world broken by sin. That's why there is suffering in this world. But suffering is also revealing. And it reveals when someone has only made an emotional response to Jesus.

Ultimately, for the person with shallow roots, suffering will drive them away from God. The person who truly has deep roots in God, well, suffering will come along.

But actually, that suffering will drive them towards Christ, not away. As we see, we need to have deep roots as we come along to the seed in the thorny soil.

[ 11 : 43 ] You might say, this is the soil that represents the divided heart. In other cases, people not only fall away because of suffering, but also because their heart is divided. Jesus says, the deceitfulness of the world, and the, sorry, the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches enter in and choke the word.

That's quite a stark language, isn't it? They chokes the word. One minute is there, the next minute is choked out. The life is gone, it's snuffed out. There are many things in this world that promise life.

There are many things in this world that promise fulfillment and happiness and satisfaction. That they promise that actually they will give you your greatest desire.

But Jesus said that it's deceitful. They promise fulfillment, actually they just leave you thirsty. They just leave you hungry. They just leave you aching. They just leave you wanting more.

They never actually satisfy. Jesus mentions the deceitfulness of riches. It's not just money, though. Money can. Money gives a lot, it really does. It allows you to have lots of things, but it will never satisfy.

[ 12 : 51 ] Neither can the idols of family or sex or community or success or anything else. We might fix our gaze on anything else that might seem to glitter and that attract our attention more than Jesus.

It might glitter as bright as the crown jewels on a summer day, but ultimately it'll just be like ash in the mouth. It won't satisfy, it will just leave us thirsty. It will be like, it will be left just like trying to grab smoke.

Or we're just trying to chase a rainbow. It will never get there. It will never satisfy. The final soil is the good soil, which represents the fruitful heart.

The worst thing is that the first three soils ultimately are shown to be bad soil. They might look good for a time, but ultimately they're bad soil.

There isn't fruit. There isn't growth. There is death and not life, but not so with the good soil. In contrast, it represents a fruitful heart. What sets the good soil apart though is not that the person listened.

[ 13 : 56 ] All the soils, in all the soils the person listened. What sets the good soil apart is that they listened and kept listening. Nothing snatched the word away.

Nothing distracted. Nothing detracted. The good soil listened and listened and listened. And as God's word goes in, the person grows. They grow in maturity in their knowledge of God, in their knowledge of themselves.

And as they grow, spiritual fruit is born. God's word not only flows into them, but it flows out of them. In their lives, in their words, in their hopes, in their dreams, in their actions and decisions.

There's so much more, and we will say more about this good soil as well. There's so much more we could say about all the soils, but I just want to give a few implications before we move on. And some implications in two areas. For us as sows and for us as soils.

First as sows, Jesus, as Jesus's people go out, scattering the word like he does. Speaking of Jesus, he wants us to have right expectations. First of all, he doesn't want us to be discouraged.

[ 15 : 02 ] When we go out and speak about Jesus, some people will reject God's word. Some people will initially seem to burst with new life, but then they will fall away.

And that can be crushing, and that can be immensely discouraging. But actually there's an element in which Jesus gives us this to us, so that we're not surprised. And actually, we can remember that happened to Jesus, and that's not our fault.

We're commanded to simply scatter. Do you notice that? The sower scatters on every type of soil. The sower doesn't make up their mind which kind of soil they think is going to give a good response.

They just scatter. It almost seems like really bad business economy. They just scatter everywhere. Oh, you know, there's some hard soil. We're going to scatter there anyway.

We don't know what people's hearts are like. Only God does. We're simply commanded to scatter. And yes, some people will listen, and some people won't, and some people will seem to listen, and then they won't.

[ 16 : 06 ] But we're called to scatter. We're so called to spread the word because it's God's word that does God's work. But we're also not, we're told to have right expectations about how the world will land.

But that doesn't mean that means not being discouraged, but it also means not being doom and gloom. It can be easy to think, well, every person I talk to about Jesus is going to reject it. No one is going to respond. There is no good soil out there.

Jesus encourages us that there is. There is soil that bears fruit, 30-fold, 60-fold, 100-fold. The amount of fruit that is born in that good soil completely, I don't want to say cancels out, but it completely overwhelms all of the soil where there is no fruit.

The amount that God can do through the fruit of a few people's lives. God doesn't out to just get numbers, if I could put it that way. He wants all people to come to Him. Don't let me be wrong.

But God can bear tremendous fruit also through a few people's lives. We should expect to encounter good soil. We should pray to encounter good soil as we scatter the seed.

[ 17 : 17 ] But there's implications not just for us as sows, but also for us as soils. Jesus wants us to listen. He isn't just talking about soils out there. He's talking about us.

He's asking the question, what kind of soil are you? What kind of soil am I? I'm going back to that first soil, the hard heart.

One thing we see is that listening is spiritual warfare. I mentioned that the devil is out to snatch the seed away. As Jesus says, the bird snatches away the seed. The devil tries to stop people listening to Jesus.

Just let that sink in a moment for a moment. Even now while you're listening, the devil is trying to snatch away the seed. Even now as you're trying to concentrate, even now as you're trying to think about what does God's word mean for me, the devil is out to stop that happening.

As you open your Bible at home, as you try to read a verse for the day or whatever it is, the devil is out to stop that happening. Listening is a spiritual battle. We can get discouraged.

[ 18 : 21 ] We can think, I struggle to read my Bible each morning. Well, you know what? In some ways we can expect that. It's a spiritual battle. It's not going to be easy. God's word is the primary way in which God saves people, brings them to Christ, and the way in which he grows them.

So of course that is where Satan is going to attack. We can expect there to be opposition. And so we should go in with our eyes open and we should go in prayerfully, asking God to clear away the distractions, asking us to help us concentrate.

The more to be forewarned is to be forearmed. As we know Satan's tactics, we can go in knowing listening is a spiritual battle, knowing that he'll try to distract us.

He'll be trying to make us focus on other things. And prayerfully asking him, God to help us to listen, so that we can hear him, his voice, and have life.

Also, whether as we think about ourselves as soils, hearing about people falling away can make us nervous. Judas, one of Jesus' disciples, you'll know that he is maybe a prime example.

[ 19 : 33 ] He heard so much. He was with Jesus so much. He looked like a follower. He was one of the twelve, but then he fell away. And there's a sense in which the parables should give us a healthy fear of falling away.

Now I want to clarify what I mean. The Bible assures us that those who belong to Christ will never fall away. In John 10, 27, Jesus says, My sheep hear my voice. They hear his voice. They're not going to stop hearing his voice.

They know the voice of their shepherd. He says, My sheep hear my voice. They know them. I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

That assurance is for all of us who are trusting in Christ. But the passages like Hebrews 3 that we read earlier are there to warn us to not stop listening.

To not assume that, oh, I listened to Jesus once. I can just go through the rest of my life not listening to him. They're to warn us that actually they warn us to keep listening.

[ 20 : 37 ] To warn us that if we want to be good soil, we need to keep listening. The bottom line is that we need to not just listen once but keep listening. The big lesson, I think in some ways it's encouraging, the big lesson isn't match yourself to a soil.

Jesus' intention is that we would listen. He isn't just asking, what soil are you? He's asking, what soil do you want to be? Do you want to keep listening? Or why is listening so important?

You'll notice this is our second point now. We've looked at how people listen. Now why is listening so important? You'll notice that the parable of the soil is sower and its explanation is sandwiched around a little bit of teaching in verses 10 to 13.

And sometimes we're tempted to skip things like that. We want to go straight from the parable to the explanation. But there's a reason that Jesus teaches there. There's a reason that Mark includes Jesus' teaching there.

And that's because it tells us why we need to keep listening. You'll see that while we're told lots of people heard the parable, that when we get to verse 10, Jesus is alone, except for a small group of people including his disciples who are listening to him.

[ 21 : 51 ] And that means that most people didn't hear the explanation to the parable. For most people, it was simply a story about a farmer scattering seed and nothing more.

Now let me just read Jesus' words again in verse 11. When his disciples come to him asking about the why he is speaking in parables, he says this, To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything is in parables.

So that they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven. And he said to them, do you not understand this parable?

How then will you understand all parables? Jesus speaks in parables because parables have a dual purpose. They serve to reveal and they serve to conceal.

Now we get the reveal bit quite intuitively. These stories easily kind of capture our imagination. The parable of the sower is, it reveals deep, and in some ways quite amazing truths in a simple, intuitive way.

[ 22 : 56 ] Jesus makes these teachings about the kingdom of God accessible, and in a way that is memorable by using parables. However, parables also conceal.

Remember, we like the disciples have the explanation for the parable. That's why we can understand what it's saying. But those people who didn't come to Jesus for the explanation, they never understood what it meant.

And then it was just an agricultural story. It never revealed the kingdom of God. It just concealed it. And we might think, why on earth would Jesus do that? And the answer is in that quotation that Jesus gives in verse 12.

It's a quotation from Isaiah 6, from when Isaiah is commissioned to be a prophet. And if you read Isaiah 6, you'll see that it's a strange call, because from the start, Isaiah tells people, God tells Isaiah to speak to the people, but then he tells him that no one's going to listen to him.

And that actually, as he speaks, the Israel who is hard-hearted are just going to grow more and more hard-hearted. And Jesus spoke in parables because like Isaiah, he knew that a lot of people listening to him had hard hearts.

[ 24 : 08 ] He knew that a lot of people had already made their minds up, not to listen to Jesus. People like the scribes and Pharisees had already decided, uh-uh, I don't want anything to do with what he is saying.

They'd closed their ears, they'd closed their eyes, they were impervious, they'd hardened their hearts to him. And so Jesus' words would only be a funny story about a farmer scattering seed.

And for them, it would only harden their hearts more. It wouldn't reveal. And in that way, the parables actually become judgment on the people who are listening, who have hardened their hearts.

For those who listen, they reveal the kingdom of God and they give life. For those who harden their hearts to Jesus, the parables conceal. And they become judgment on those who refuse to listen by hardened them further still.

If Jesus had people with hard hearts listening to him, I think we can be fairly sure that there are someone, there is someone or some people here today who are listening online who have hardened their hearts to Jesus.

[ 25 : 22 ] Can I say please listen? Jesus offers a sobering warning in these verses that if you keep hardening your heart, then he may eventually conceal the truth from you.

If you keep pushing away God's truth, he might say enough. If you keep pushing away him and the kingdom of God, he might say, okay, you've pushed it away and that's enough.

And verse 12 will be true. So that indeed seeing they may not perceive, hearing they may not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.

Do not think that you can keep hardening your heart to the voice of Jesus and presume upon his grace. Because the day may come when he responds to your hardness of heart by concealing the truth forever.

And there is nothing more terrifying than that. But if you have heard that, then keep listening because Jesus gives this warning to call people to listen, to call people back to himself.

[ 26 : 33 ] He wants you to listen and to have life. We shouldn't be surprised when people harden their hearts to Jesus because that's the natural direction all of our hearts go. By nature we all harden our hearts and block our ears to God.

That's what sin is. Sin in our lives and in our hearts. It's about us closing our ears to God's voice and rejecting him with hard hearts. What we should be surprised about is that there's any good soil in this parable.

That there's anyone who listens to God and bears fruit. It would be tempting to say that this world is divided into those who listen and those who don't. It would be tempting to go through this parable and say, actually this is a parable that tells we need to listen.

This is stuff that we should do. Don't be a person who doesn't listen. Do be a person who does listen. And that is true. The parable is urging us to listen.

But this world isn't divided into those who have achieved something by being good enough to listen and those who have fallen short by not listening. In reality this world is divided into those who are deaf to God's voice and to those who were deaf to God's voice but have had their ears opened by Christ.

[ 27 : 52 ] Jesus came so that we might have life. Jesus came to a world that was all deaf to a world that couldn't respond to his voice. Without Jesus coming there would be one type of person in this world.

Everyone would be deaf. Everyone would have their minds and hearts closed to him. There would be one type of soil and it would be hard. But Jesus came to soften the ground, to plow the hard ground, to open deaf ears, to open blind eyes so that we might listen to him, so that we might receive life.

That's why he didn't just come to teach. If he just came to teach, then it would have just been bouncing off hard hearts. The teaching wouldn't have gone in. That's why he had to come to die.

He had to come to die to take the punishment for our sin, to set us free from a life of deafness to God's voice so that the power of the devil that keeps people from hearing God would be broken.

So that we might hear the life-giving voice of our Savior. That same voice that spoke stars and spanned planets into space. That same voice that created you and I in God's image.

[ 28 : 58 ] Jesus died so that we might once more hear that voice of life so that we might hear and have life. So that we might live a new life hearing the voice of God.

A life of fullness where we can drink deeply from his words. A life of direction as he guides us through life. A life of meaning, a life of purpose.

As he shows us, as we speak to him and he speaks to us in his words and as our words intermingle, we grow in relationship with the God that we are created to know. Listening is important because we were made to listen and we were made to have life.

That is why Jesus has spoken to us so that we might have life. So just briefly as we close, how can we become better listeners? That's our third point. In verses 21 to 25, Jesus gives two illustrations to encourage us to listen and help us be better listeners.



Now the first illustration is a lamp. It encourages us to be expectant listeners. Verse 21, Jesus says, Now it's easy to confuse this parable with Jesus' teaching on the Sermon of the Mount where he says, But here he's not talking about us as the light.

[ 30 : 38 ] Here he's talking about the truth as the light. And he's encouraging us that parables aren't there. God's word isn't there to keep people in the dark. Jesus' intention isn't that we stay in the dark and we never understand that the veil is always over and we don't understand what God is saying.

His intention is that the truth is on a stand, that it's like a lamp, that it shines into our hearts. Jesus' intention is always that the light of his truth would shine into soft hearts.

And so when we choose to listen, we can be confident that God's truth doesn't remain veiled. Jesus wants us to understand. He wants to plant it in our hearts. He wants to make us grow.

That's why he ends verse 23 by saying, That's not just a command, it's a promise. God is speaking. He wants us to listen.

If we listen, we're not just going to hear silence. God promises to speak in his word. We can therefore be expectant listeners. One of the core doctrines we hold is that the scripture is clear.

[ 31 : 49 ] Now that doesn't mean everything is equally easy to understand. But what it does mean is that everything that is sufficient for salvation and for life, God has made clear in his word.

That doesn't mean that we don't always have to work hard to understand some things in God's word, but God's scripture is magnificently clear. And God, as Jesus has not only died so that we might have our ears and stop to listen to him, he also gives his Holy Spirit into the hearts of his people, so that we can understand his word, so that his word makes sense to us, so that we can hear the voice of our God.

God has revealed his truth like a light in the stand, so let's listen. It encourages us to be actively. Second, illustration is about measures and it encourages us to be active, hungry listeners.

You're probably wondering why I didn't fill stop at verse 20, and it's partly because this is one of my favorite verses in Mark's Gospel I wanted to get to it. Jesus says, pay attention to what you hear. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you.

For to the one who has, more will be given, and to the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This illustration encourages us to be active listeners.

[ 33 : 08 ] That language of measures can be a bit confusing, but measure is simply a container for some sort of measuring of a grain or a liquid. We might use teaspoons or tablespoons or cups.

They had similar things in Jesus' day. What Jesus is saying is essentially, with the measure you use, that's what you'll get. You could put it this way, the bigger bucket of water you bring to the well, the more water you're going to get.

That's true with God's Word. You could come to a well with a teaspoon, and it would take you a very, very long time to get even enough water to brush your teeth.

What Jesus says is the same with listening to him. Listening to God's Word is like collecting water from a well. The bigger bucket we use, the more water you'll get. Jesus isn't talking about how many verses in the Bible we read.

You get double points for reading four chapters of the Bible in the morning, or if you listen to a super long sermon that's maybe going over time, then that's extra holiness points or whatever. Rather, Jesus is talking about our attitude.

[ 34 : 14 ] He's talking about how serious we are of listening. Too often, actually, we're guilty of bringing a teaspoon to God's Word. We come to read our Bibles, and maybe we open the Bible in the morning, we're tired, we read the chapter, we say a prayer, and then we go through the rest of our day, and none of it has really gone in.

We don't really remember what we've heard. We certainly can't reflect on it, and we've all done it. But it shouldn't really surprise us then that we don't feel the warmth of what we shouldn't feel.

We don't feel the fire of God's Word in our hearts. We might feel a brief warmth as we read a promise of God's love or something. But we shouldn't be surprised if we don't feel changed by it.

The same could be said for Sundays. It's so easy to arrive, our heads full of busyness, to feel distracted while we're there, to be on our phone while we're in church, to go out and just get on with our day.

We so often bring teaspoons to God's Word. And this is a verse that encourages us to bring buckets. Verse 25 in some ways is a sobering warning.

[ 35 : 25 ] It says, actually, if we keep bringing teaspoons, then let's not expect that we'll even get a teaspoon full. God is not going to let us live on a starvation diet.

And sometimes he'll remind us of how dry and thirsty we are without him. We need to stop being teaspooned people. Wonderfully, instead, we need to be people who come to God's Word with a bucket.

Who come listening actively and hungrily and expectantly. God wants us to be big bucket listeners. You might say he wants to be water tanker listeners. Because God's Word has endless riches.

As you come to God's Word, there will be unending depths. You'll never get, it'll never run dry. There'll never be a point where you think there is no point reading more. There will always be more to learn.

So let's be big bucket listeners. Let's write reflections as we learn. Let's take notes. Let's talk about what we hear and about what we read. Let's memorize scripture. Let's pray as we come to God's Word.

[ 36 : 28 ] Let's pray that God will help us to listen. Let's chew over. Let's try to concentrate on God's Word and pray that it will land deeply.

Let's be big bucket listeners. Someone promises us, says, the less there's the one who meditates on the law of God day and night. Christian, are you feeling spiritually dry?

Are you feeling cold to God? Are you feeling joyless? Or bring a big bucket to God's Word. Because he promises to fill up whatever you bring to overflowing.

Do you see that there? With the measure you use, with the measure you use, it will be measured to you and still more will be added. God's Word will never run dry.

There is more to explore, more to marvel at, more to rejoice in, more to help you as you weep. God's Word is an endless supply, so bring your biggest buckets to him. God has spoken in his Son Jesus Christ.

[ 37 : 30 ] He continues to speak in his Word. So let's listen with hearts renewed by his Spirit. Let's pray now.