



Life Group Study Notes

The Path: “Lean In”

Dr. Rice Brooks – June 4, 2017

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- What can you gain from simply hearing something, without action?
- What in your life has caused you to immediately turn and move in another direction, or immediately change your mind or perspective simply from hearing it?
- When it comes to life, what area do you tend to “lean in” to the most?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Mark 4:1-20 ESV *“Again and 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! Behold, 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 rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth 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, and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.’ 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 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 awhile; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. And others are the ones sown among*

thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires 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, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and hundredfold.”

Hard Ground

1. These are those who hear the word but dismiss it right away. Satan takes the word away immediately.
 - Ephesians 4:17-24 ESV” *Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ! --- assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”*
 - The wrong thinking of unbelievers is ignorance due to their hardness of heart. If you think like they think, you will act like they act.
 - We can learn Christ the correct way and still live in a sinful manner.
 - We are to renew our minds. Change the “oil” in our brains; old thoughts will not work.

Rocky Ground

1. These are those who immediately receive it with joy, but have no roots. They only accept it shallowly.
 - They immediately fall away...they believed it when they heard it, but when life and circumstances get too difficult, they let it go.
 - They receive a momentary sense of peace, but quit fighting and the current of our culture takes them where it wants them to go.
 - Rocks are un-surrendered rights; they are the hidden areas that people do not know about. We are to live in light, bring everything into the light.

Thorny Ground

1. These are those who hear the word and take it to heart, but allow worldly concerns to choke it out.
 - Proverbs 4:20-23 ESV “*My son, be attentive to my words: incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”*
 - All too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares of this life, the lure of wealth, the desire for nice things, competition, etc.
 - Therefore, no crop is produced. One must have wisdom, if one doesn’t have it they lose everything else.

Good Ground

1. These are those who hear the word and truly receive it spiritually, causing it to bear fruit.
 - Luke 8:15 ESV *“As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.”*
 - Being good soil is a matter of choice. Do everything to get the word within you and bear fruit with patience.
 - Proverbs 3:5,6 ESV *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”*

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.

- The enemy is really after the word because it is the unstoppable force. Satan’s goal is to keep you from hearing the word, but once you hear it, that is when spiritual warfare begins. What truths have you taken from the word that has brought on immediate spiritual warfare in your life?
- Has there been a point in your life when you have let Satan take the word away from you? When was it, what were the immediate consequences of the theft?
- The Lord wants us to incline our ears to his sayings and be attentive to his words. Describe a time when you did just this and it worked for your immediate benefit.

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- If you are currently battling spiritual warfare in an area of your life, ask God to present the word that is appropriate to your situation. Use the word to cast Satan from the situation.
- Ask God to help you to patiently bear fruit in your life, and to make your soil good, even when being a Christian seems to be the harder route in life. Ask for recognition that it is not the pressure around us that matters...but the pressure that is inside of us.
- Ask God to help you to “lean in” when it comes to the guidance of your life. We are all going to lean to something when it comes to life. Why not make sure you are leaning in the right direction? Lean in and listen, hear, and understand.