**100 Days with Jesus**

**Study No. 8 Mark 4:2-9, 14-20**

**Introduction**

It does not look it but this reading is another big battle story. Here, however, the energy is not so much naked evil as shallow complacency, spiritual indifference and the often triviality of busy lives.

Jesus had the amazing knack of wandering around thinking about what he saw and then pulling illustrations or stories out of it all. His Galilean world was a place of villages and fields, but not the sort of pretty and prosperous countryside that we all love so much. His villages were filled with poverty; his fields were dry and stony. Farming then was part of a desperate struggle to survive; it is in this world that many of his parables were born.

Jesus wants to get across to the people that something new is happening, something is growing. It is the Kingdom. The growing is of God, but it is not simple and straightforward: there are reverses and failures, but the growing is happening. So he pulls out four, ‘see that field over there,’ type stories or parables:

* The Parable of the Sower (Mk. 4: 2)
* The Parable of the Growing Seed (Mk 4: 26)
* The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mk 4: 30)
* The Parable of the Wheat and Weeds (Mt 13: 24)

**Questions**

Read Mark 4:2-9

1. From your own experience is it easy or difficult to live the Christian life and share the Christian faith?
2. According to this parable was it easy or difficult to grow crops in Israel where Jesus was brought up? What are we supposed to learn from this?
3. As a church how do we cope with the disappointment of events that don’t go as well as we had hoped, people don’t attend services we have invited them to, or even people stop attending Church?
4. 4:4 – What might the birds represent in your life?
5. 4:5 – How can we develop deeper soil in your life?
6. 4:7 – What might the thorns represent in your life?

Read Mark 4v14-20

1. 4:8 – Can you think of someone in your church who has grown significantly over the past couple of years?

**Key question to finish: Who is God and how do we respond?**

**Prayer**

Lord Jesus

Let the seed of Good News

Sink deep into my heart.

Let the seed of the Kingdom

Stir me to scatter seeds

To my friends and family

Lord Jesus

Help me to grow

Closer to you

And stronger for you

Amen.