



## Book of Faith Bible Study Mark 4:2-3

*Jesus began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: "Listen! A sower went out to sow..."*

I was talking with a parishioner who was a screen writer and who had just finished an important movie in Puerto Rico. He said to me, "Pastor, everything begins with a story." Jesus understood this. Jesus taught by telling stories. The parables are stories that capture life as it is and give us meaning and direction. The stories told by and about Jesus in the Bible, and all other biblical stories, connect with us in such a way that sparks and seals in us the good news of salvation. We need to gather around these stories and let them capture our imagination.

Do you want to hear the power of these stories? *Listen. A farmer went out to sow his seed.* A seven-word sentence provokes in us many memories: Sunday mornings spent in church with family and friends, retreats and summer camp Bible studies, confirmation classes, outreach programs to the neighborhood. When we learn from Jesus and his parables, we are compelled to tell the story, connecting this story with the millions of stories around us that are waiting to find direction and meaning. You see, we need to tell and show and be part of the story again and again.

Everything begins with a story. Our story, Jesus' story, is our beginning, our middle and our end. How can we tell the story these days when the internet, movies, and video games have surpassed the telephone, books, and baseball? Moreover, the way seeds are sown and planted today is different. We have trucks and machines to help us. Yet we have *the* story — the story of Jesus, who taught in parables, and gathered around him many who, listening, saw their lives changed and loved in unexpected ways. The means have changed but the telling is the same. We sow the seed in the ground. We pray and wait. We trust the One who

As you consider opening Scripture individually or with others, you may wish to consider these general questions:

*How does the Bible feed your daily life?*

*How does the Bible feed the life of this community?*

*How are we renewed, empowered, and enlivened by the Word?*

*What stands in the way of our opening the Bible and joining the conversation?*



makes the seed grow. So let us get back to basics and use the means around us to do what we must do: *A farmer went out to sow his seed.* Listen; tell; do. Thanks be to God.

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### Questions on Mark 4:2-3

- *What stories have power in our lives?*
- *What memories do you have of Jesus' parable of the sower of the seed? What other parables stir up memories and capture your imaginations?*
- *How do our stories connect to the biblical story?*

In addition to questions found in the studies, here are general questions that can be used for each of the texts:

*What is God saying to us through this passage?*

*What does this passage tell us about God?*

*How does this passage speak to us as individuals and to us as a community?*

*What does this passage teach us about our neighbors and our world?*