

to provide what we need and bring us happiness? How does trusting God's provision free us from the anxiety of this world? Have you experienced a time when you were challenged to trust God through an act of generosity to others? How did that work for you?

#### 4. Fertile Soil

*23 The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"*

*- Matthew 13:23 NLT*

*6 This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God's wonderful grace. - Colossians 1:6 NLT*

*38 So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields." - Matthew 9:38 NLT*

Jesus concludes with the hope that there are those who fall on good soil, in an environment conducive to growth and vibrancy. When Jesus saw people coming to Him, He said to pray the Lord of the harvest would send workers. In the parable Jesus expected God's message to multiply the harvest by up to 100 times.

*If our vision is to multiply the number of believers at New Life, what do you think would be most needed to create an environment where everyone will flourish as they grow together in their faith?*

#### **WRAP-UP**

*God has been faithful to see His people flourish in each age and we believe He's not done yet! Even more amazing, He wants to partner with us to cultivate the seeds of His kingdom here on the Central Coast and beyond. We are excited to see what He might do.*

#### **MEMORY VERSE**

*7 It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. 9 For we are both God's workers. And you are God's field. You are God's building. - 1 Corinthians 3:7-9 NLT*

*Challenge- Pray and ask God about the role you might play in the Flourish Campaign at New Life.*

## Cultivating Kingdom Seeds

Flourish Week 2

### INTRODUCTION

This Sunday Pastor David shared the vision for the future plans at New Life Church. We want to partner with God as He cultivates the seeds of the kingdom on the New Life Campus. We hope to create an environment where the people of God will thrive. In this week's study, we are applying the principles of the parable of the farmer to the collective body of Christ, the church, as we consider how we can sow seeds that will flourish.

#### **Ice Breaker**

*Do you grow a garden? Do you prefer to plant from seeds or from small plants?*

#### **Key Passage**

*Matthew 13:3-8 NLT - 3 He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: "Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. 4 As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. 5 Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. 6 But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died. 7 Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. 8 Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"*

### STUDY QUESTIONS

#### **1. Stolen Seeds**

The cultivation of Kingdom seeds begins with the Word of God, the Good News, being shared. Each week in various ways the Word of God is shared on our church campus. When Jesus told the parable of the farmer he followed up with an explanation to his disciples. We see in

our key verse that the first seeds fell on a path and were stolen by the birds.

*19 The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts.*  
- Matthew 13:19 NLT

*What did the footpath represent? What are some of the opportunities we have to grow in our understanding of God's Word at New Life? The evil one snatched away the message of God from those who didn't understand it. What are some of the methods Satan might use to undermine God's message in those who are new to the faith? What are some things that we as a body of believers can do to prevent this from happening to those who are still weak in their faith? Where are you most likely to encounter new believers at New Life?*

*22 When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.*  
- 1 Corinthians 9:22 NLT

All of us have room to grow in our understanding of God's Word. If we don't take advantage of opportunities to grow, we are more vulnerable to the schemes of the enemy to undermine the truth of God's Word. And all of us have a responsibility to support those who are new to the faith as they struggle to understand the meaning of the message of God's Kingdom.

## 2. Shallow Rocky Soil

*20 The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. 21 But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word.*  
- Matthew 13:20-21 NLT

The seed on rocky soil represents those who don't have deep roots. Deep roots are needed to keep us firm when we encounter the storms of life.

*What are some of the ways that you have deepened your connection to God and to His Body at New Life? What support have you had when you have faced problems with the potential to shake your faith?*

*11 So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing. - 1 Thessalonians 5:11 NLT*

Together we are called to encourage and build one another up. In addition to the support of friends and fellow believers, New Life Church's Community Center is home to our Care Department which employs a staff of professionally licensed Christian counselors. We also offer numerous support groups which provide hope and encouragement from others going through similar trials as well as wisdom from those who've been through it before.

## 3. Thorns

*22 The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced.*  
- Matthew 13:22 NLT

The last of the unproductive soils is choked by thorns. These are the things that compete with God for our hearts. Jesus includes two, the worries of this life and the lure of wealth. When referring to this life the verse can also be translated as "anxiety of the world". That is paired with the lure of wealth because they tend to go hand in hand.

*28 Trust in your money and down you go! But the godly flourish like leaves in spring.*  
- Proverbs 11:28 NLT

*10 Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness!*  
- Ecclesiastes 5:10 NLT

*17 Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.*  
- 1 Timothy 6:17 NLT

*We have come to believe that our welfare is tied to our bank balance. What do the verses above tell us results from trusting in money to*