**Mark 4-6**

The Parable of the Sower

**4**Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water’s edge. **2**He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: **3**“Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. **4**As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. **5**Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. **6**But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7**Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. **8**Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times.”

**9**Then Jesus said, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.” **10**When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. **11**He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables **12**so that, “‘they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!’”

**13**Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? **14**The farmer sows the word. **15**Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. **16**Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. **17**But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. **18**Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; **19**but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. **20**Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

A Lamp on a Stand

**21**He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? **22**For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. **23**If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.”

**24**“Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you - and even more. **25**Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

The Parable of the Growing Seed

**26**He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. **27**Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. **28**All by itself the soil produces grain - first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. **29**As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

**30**Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? **31**It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. **32**Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”

**33**With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. **34**He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

Jesus Calms the Storm

**35**That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” **36**Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. **37**A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. **38**Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

**39**He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. **40**He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” **41**They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Jesus Restores a Demon-Possessed Man

**5**They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. **2**When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. **3**This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. **4**For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. **5**Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. **6**When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. **7**He shouted at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God’s name don’t torture me!” **8**For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this man, you impure spirit!” **9**Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” “My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.” **10**And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

**11**A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. **12**The demons begged Jesus, “Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.” **13**He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

**14**Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. **15**When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. **16**Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man - and told about the pigs as well. **17**Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

**18**As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. **19**Jesus did not let him, but said, “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” **20**So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman

**21**When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. **22**Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. **23**He pleaded earnestly with him, “My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.” **24**So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. **25**And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. **26**She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. **27**When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, **28**because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” **29**Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

**30**At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?” **31**“You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’ ”

**32**But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. **33**Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. **34**He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

**35**While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?” **36**Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

**37**He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. **38**When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. **39**He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.” **40**But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child’s father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. **41**He took her by the hand and said to her, *“Talitha koum!”* (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). **42**Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. **43**He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

A Prophet Without Honor

**6**Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. **2**When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? **3**Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph,[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+4-6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24411e)] Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

**4**Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” **5**He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. **6**He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. **7**Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.

**8**These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff - no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. **9**Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. **10**Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. **11**And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”

**12**They went out and preached that people should repent. **13**They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

John the Baptist Beheaded

**14**King Herod heard about this, for Jesus’ name had become well known. Some were saying, “John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him.”

**15**Others said, “He is Elijah.” And still others claimed, “He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago.” **16**But when Herod heard this, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!”

**17**For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, whom he had married. **18**For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” **19**So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, **20**because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.

**21**Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. **22**When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

The king said to the girl, “Ask me for anything you want, and I’ll give it to you.” **23**And he promised her with an oath, “Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom.”

**24**She went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask for?”

“The head of John the Baptist,” she answered.

**25**At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: “I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”

**26**The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. **27**So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John’s head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, **28**and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. **29**On hearing of this, John’s disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

**30**The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. **31**Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

**32**So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. **33**But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. **34**When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

**35**By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late. **36**Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”

**37**But he answered, “You give them something to eat.”

They said to him, “That would take more than half a year’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?”

**38**“How many loaves do you have?” he asked. “Go and see.” When they found out, they said, “Five - and two fish.”

**39**Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. **40**So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. **41**Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. **42**They all ate and were satisfied, **43**and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. **44**The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

Jesus Walks on the Water

**45**Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. **46**After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

**47**Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. **48**He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, **49**but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, **50**because they all saw him and were terrified.

Immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” **51**Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, **52**for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

**53**When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. **54**As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. **55**They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. **56**And wherever he went - into villages, towns or countryside - they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.