

# Having ears to hear

## discussion guide

based on **Mark 4.1-20** (linked to talk from 13/9/20)  
which can be accessed at [www.stjamesbythepark.org/onlinechurch](http://www.stjamesbythepark.org/onlinechurch)

*This was the first part of our series on Listening to God.*

Intro: have you much experience / success / failure in growing fruit or veg – or wheat?!

### **Read Mark 4.1-20**

Apart from verses 10-13 (which we will come back to in a few weeks), this is a pretty straight-forward parable.

Share examples of when you / others have been like seed along the path – where the message about Jesus was taken away as soon as it was sown.

Share examples of when you / others have been like seed on the rocky soil – the plants have quickly wilted when trouble or persecution came.

Share examples of when you / others have been like seed among thorns – where the 'worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word making it unfruitful.'

Share examples of when you / others have been like seed on good soil – producing a crop.

When Jesus is teaching publicly, he concludes the parable saying "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear" (v9). This is a challenge for us to consider how receptive we each are to the message about Jesus as individuals.

A very similar phrase is used in each of the letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3: "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev 2.7, 11, 17, 29; 3.6, 13, 22). This is a challenge for us to consider how receptive we are to what Jesus wants to say to us as a church community.

**Watch Dan's introductory video to our LISTEN season** (at [www.stjamesbythepark.org/LISTEN](http://www.stjamesbythepark.org/LISTEN))

Some people are very comfortable with the idea of God speaking to us today; others are nervous or alienated by it. Dan said that he's nervous, daunted and excited about this season for us as a church. What 2 or 3 words would you use to describe how you feel about it?

What questions do you have about this listen season? (If group leaders don't know the answer to the questions, feel free to feed them back to Dan.)

Pray for friends / family who are like the seed on the path / rocky soil / among thorns.

Pray that we would increasingly be good soil, having ears to hear – and to put into practice - what Jesus says to us this term.