



October 17th, 2012

Reflection Questions Mark 4:21-41

1. Jesus uses parables for a variety of reasons. One of these reasons is that they work on a person very gradually, slowly but surely shedding light on the truth. What has taken you a long time to learn? Which are you more likely to remember, a truth learned quickly, or one learned gradually?
2. Jesus makes the statement, "Pay attention to what you hear" (v.24). The apostle Paul offers a related principle, "Faith comes from hearing" (Rom 10:17). Clearly, what we hear has serious implications, perhaps more so than what we experience with our other senses. Think about your day today. What have you heard? What can you learn about your life through what you've heard today?
3. Sleep is not a topic we often discuss in church. But the parable of the soil (vv.26-29) reminds us that God is at work even when we're not, i.e., even when we're asleep. What sort of anxieties cause you to lose sleep? Consider reading this parable when you face these kinds of anxieties.
4. Being faithful to God can sometimes feel overwhelming. We can feel like we're never doing enough for God. But Jesus tells us that mustard seeds, not mustard trees, are the ingredients of the Kingdom of God. Simple, everyday acts of faithfulness are the normal Christian life. What are some mustard seeds you've sown this week, perhaps without even realizing it?
5. Jesus rebukes His disciples when they awaken Him out of fear of the storm. Jesus is not ignorant of the storm. Even in the midst of turmoil, His trust in the Father is so complete that He can sleep. What storms are you in the midst of in your life? Is it difficult to trust that God really cares (v.38)? What confidence can be found in the fact that Jesus has power over even the forces of nature?
6. "Have you still no faith" (v.40)? This is an uncomfortable, perhaps even guilt-inducing question. But faith is never focused on the bearer of faith, but on the person in whom our faith is placed. Jesus' question is intended to point his disciples to a fuller understanding of Him. What have you learned about Jesus recently, and how has it affected your faith in Him?