Welcome to Hope Sabbath School—an in-depth interactive study of the Word of God. We are continuing a series of studies on The Gospel of Mark. Today’s topic: PARABLES.

1. The centrality and purpose of the parables of Jesus
   a) Mark 4:33-34 How significant were parables in the teaching ministry of Jesus?
   b) What can we learn from the fact that Mark records 8 parables of Jesus (2 are unique), Matthew records 23 parables (11 are unique), and Luke records 24 parables (18 are unique)?
   c) Mark 4:10-12 Why did Jesus use parables when sharing truth with His hearers?

2. The parable of the Sower
   b) What is the significance of the fact that this parable of Jesus is mentioned in all 3 Synoptic Gospels?
   c) Mark 4:13-20 What important lessons can we learn from the interpretation of the parable by Jesus?
   d) Share the story of an individual in the Gospels or the Book of Acts whose heart was transformed by God into good soil.
   e) What promises or stories in God’s Word assure us that He is able to transform our hearts? Ezekiel 36:26-27, Luke 19:8-10, Acts 9:1-6, etc.
   f) Share a time when your heart wasn’t good soil. How did God transform your heart into good soil?

3. The parable of the lamp
   a) Mark 4:21-23 What important lesson can we learn from this parable of Jesus?
   b) What light is Jesus referring to here? (John 8:12, Matthew 5:14)
   c) How does this parable relate to the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount? Matthew 5:14-16

4. The parable of the measuring basket
   a) Mark 4:24 How does a generous measure reflect the character of our Creator and Redeemer? (See also Leviticus 19:13, 15-36)
   b) Share a time when someone gave you a generous measure. How did that make you feel?
   c) What key lesson is Jesus wanting us to learn from the parable of the measuring basket?
   d) Explain the startling comment of Jesus recorded in Mark 4:25.

5. The parables of the seeds
   a) Mark 4:26-29 What important lessons can we learn from the parable of the growing seeds, only recorded in Mark’s Gospel record?
   b) Mark 4:30-32 How does the parable of the mustard seed differ from the parable of the growing seeds?
   c) Where have you witnessed amazing growth in the kingdom of God?