



A NEW HARVEST, MARK 4:14-20

A New Harvest

- I have been thinking a lot about a song by Casting Crowns called “Make Room” with the line, “Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?”
- The Bible describes the human heart as the center of a person's inner self, and the source of their thoughts, emotions, and decisions
 - It's the control center that governs a person's life, and everything they do flows from it
 - **Jeremiah 17:9 NIV**, The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?
 - **Proverbs 4:23 NIV**, Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

A New Harvest

- “Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?”
 - Hear what the song is asking
 - In spite of our deceitful, sinful heart that is bent on rebellion toward God, will you make room for God to write His story in your life?
 - **Jeremiah 29:10-13 NIV**, 10 This is what the Lord says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

A New Harvest

- Peter and Andrew, James, and John were very successful at their fishing business
 - **Matthew 4:18-20 NIV**, 18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 19 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” 20 At once they left their nets and followed him.
 - **Matthew 18:21-22 NIV**, 21 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, 22 and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

A New Harvest

- Hear Jesus saying to them, “Make room in your life, heart for God to write His story in it?”
 - Immediately Jesus began writing a new story, God’s story in their lives
 - Jesus started growing a new harvest, a new life they had no idea was available to them
 - Jesus is asking each of us today the same question, “Is there room in your heart for God to write His story, to grow a different harvest in your life?”

A New Harvest

- so, what will Jesus be getting?
 - Jesus compared our hearts to soil so there would be portions of it that are hard packed
 - Places where rocks would rule
 - Places where thorns are reaching out to snag them
- Jesus knows their hearts and will be working in their heart soils to produce good soil that will grow God's harvest in their lives

Scripture

- **Mark 4:14-20 NIV**, 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.”

Jesus is asking you this morning to trust your hard-packed, rock infested, thorn stabbing heart soil into His hands

- All of us struggle at times with hard-packed, rock infested, thorn stabbing soil
 - Whether it is things we bring forward from the past but keeping hidden
 - Or failures of today
 - Or fears or anxieties of tomorrow
 - Or being found imperfect
 - **Proverbs 14:10 NIV**, Each heart knows its own bitterness
 - This is what this sinful life desires to do and will succeed in your life unless our heart is protected by God's Salvation, God's Word and the Holy Spirit

Jesus is asking you this morning to trust your hard-packed, rock infested, thorn stabbing heart soil into His hands

- God knew what he is getting from Peter, Andrew, James, John, and us
 - He knew their heart soil and ours
 - **Luke 15:14-15 NCV**, 14 The Pharisees, who loved money, were listening to all these things and made fun of Jesus. 15 He said to them, “You make yourselves look good in front of people, but God knows what is really in your hearts. What is important to people is hateful in God’s sight.”

Jesus is asking you this morning to trust your hard-packed, rock infested, thorn stabbing heart soil into His hands

- God knows what he is getting from Peter, Andrew, James, John, and us
 - He knows their hardened paths of hatred for non-Jews and partial Jews
 - He knows the rocks of judgement for the weak and frail as sinners
 - He knows the thorns of the desire for power and prestige

Jesus is asking you this morning to trust your hard-packed, rock infested, thorn stabbing heart soil into His hands

- God knows what he is getting from Peter, Andrew, James, John, and us
 - But He also knows what story He desire to write in their lives
 - **Matthew 1:16-18 NIV**, 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter (*rock, pebble*), and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Jesus begins writing God's story in their lives by plowing their hard-packed soil, pitching their rocks to the side, and pulling out their thorns for burning

- They began by following Jesus and watching how Jesus lived and O the places He took them, the experiences they witnessed
 - They learned of Jesus while they learned from Jesus
 - **Matthew 11:25 NIV**, Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
 - **John 6:66-68 NIV**, 66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. 67 “You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

Jesus begins writing God's story in their lives by plowing their hard-packed soil, pitching their rocks to the side, and pulling out their thorns for burning

- Just as Jesus was born in humble surroundings, He doesn't take them to the religious leaders or to the places of power and influence first
 - He took them to the lost and needy, humble
 - Those outside of the disciple's comfort zone
 - Jesus cast out demons, ministered in Samaritan and Gentile areas, touched and healed lepers and those broken without becoming unclean, forgave adulterers, ate with tax collectors and sinners and silenced His critics

Jesus begins writing God's story in their lives by plowing their hard-packed soil, pitching their rocks to the side, and pulling out their thorns for burning

- They heard Jesus speak about God the Father personally
 - **John 10:30 NIV**, "I and the Father are one."
- They saw Jesus' heart soil and desired it for their lives
 - **Luke 11:1 NIV**, "Lord, teach us to pray (*as you do*)"
 - **John 2:5 NKJV**, His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."
 - **Ephesians 5:1-2 ESV**, 1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in (*God's type of*) love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Jesus begins writing God's story in their lives by plowing their hard-packed soil, pitching their rocks to the side, and pulling out their thorns for burning

- Even when their life didn't make sense
 - **Matthew 16:21-23 NIV**, 21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.
 - 22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"
 - 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

God also desires to write His story in your life

- I'm sure there were times where the disciples thought,
 - "I'm not sure about this"
 - "I haven't got a clue what Jesus is talking about"
 - "Wait this is not what I have been taught or assumed in life"
 - "I wonder if I should just go back to my old life"
 - "I'm not sure I am up to all of this"
- The resurrection of Jesus changed all of this

God also desires to write His story in your life

- Each step, each decision Jesus leads us to requires a decision
 - Will I become the person Jesus sees in me, step by step?
 - Will I allow Him to soften my hard heart, discard the old habits, burn the sin that so easily entangles me?
 - Will I allow Him to rewrite my story?

God also desires to write His story in your life

- Each step, each decision Jesus leads us to requires a decision
 - Will I allow the truth of God's Word as my truth?
 - Will I set aside my fears and pride and simply say, "Yes, Lord"
 - You say I'm more than a conqueror so I will begin looking for the conqueror in me
 - You say I am loved then I will accept and see myself in your love for me
 - You say you will present me before your Heavenly Father faultless with great joy then I will begin looking for my Father's accepting face

God also desires to write His story in your life

- I am who you say I am
 - Not me, my past, not anyone or anything in this world
 - I am yours
- Simon did not become the Peter we respect and emulate overnight
 - But He did become the rock that Jesus saw in him
 - All because he made room in his heart for God to write His story for him

A New Harvest

- “Randy, what fruit or harvest is Jesus planning for my life?”
 - **Galatians 5:22-23 NIV**, 22 But the fruit (*harvest*) of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance (*patience*), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.
 - **Mark 4:20 NIV**, “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.”
 - Tell me how much better would your life be with these fruits active in your life?
- **Revelation 2:7 ESV**, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”



A NEW HARVEST, MARK 4:14-20