



**February 21 & 22**

**NETWORKS ARE HOW A NET WORKS**

**(CONNECTION AND PROTECTION IN THE BODY OF CHRIST)**

**1. CONNECT GROUPS HELP KEEP US AND OTHERS ON TRACK IN OUR WALK WITH GOD**

**2. JEEP RIDE - planned, saved money, enjoyed view, but heading in wrong direction**

- **QUOTE:** "Our greatest fear should not be of failure, but of succeeding at things in life that don't really matter." **Francis Chan**
- **PARABLE OF THE SOWER** - illustrates this point

**Matthew 13:1** That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. **2** Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. **New International Version**

- **PEOPLE ARE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT JESUS BUT THAT'S NOT ENOUGH** – He wants to teach them how to have not only a good start but a good finish.
- **BEGINNING OF PARABLE** – sower sows, some falls on path, some on rocky, some on thorny & some good ground.

**Matthew 13:18** – Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: **19** When anyone hears the message about the kingdom **and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart.** This is the seed sown along the path. **20** The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. **21** 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.** **22** The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but **the worries of**

**this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. 23** But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, **yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.** *New International Version*

- **POSTER ILLUSTRATION** – a small percentage of people who are enthusiastic about Jesus actually end up bearing much fruit.
  - **DO YOU WANT TO BE FRUITFUL?** Do you want to be 30, 60 or 100%?
  - **BE INTENTIONAL** - I think most of us would answer, “I want it all!” Ok, then you will have to realize that just going along comfortably with your life will probably not get you results. You will have to be intentional and get around people who inspire you to follow God all the way!
3. **NETWORKS ARE HOW A NET WORKS** – The body of Christ is a network that becomes a net for all of us.
4. **PACT** – These are some of the things we & others experience when we get connected with each other.
- **PRAYER**
  - **ACCOUNTABILITY**
  - **COMMUNITY**
  - **TEACHING**
5. **THE EARLY CHURCH** – were ordinary people who were busy with other things when they were surprised by Jesus’ purpose for them.
- **THEY THRIVED WHEN JESUS WAS AT THEIR SIDE**
  - **THEY NEEDED A NET WHEN HE LEFT** – they gathered in groups for a PACT

**Acts 2:40** And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “**Be saved from this perverse generation.**” **41** Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day **about three thousand souls were added to them.** **42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. *New King James Version*

- Some say, “I have friends already who meet those needs.” I want to say to you that Jesus has called us to see the big picture & to multiply so we can grow others into strong fruit-bearing followers of Christ.

**6. YOU – do you relate to any of these stages?**

- **You are busy ‘fishing’ and doing your own thing. You haven’t been surprised yet by the call of Jesus on your life?**
- **You are part of the crowd who is impressed with Jesus, but aren’t aware of the pitfalls that can make you unfruitful. You don’t think you need a connection with the body of Christ.**
- **Are you slipping through the gaps in life getting caught up in troubles, persecution, cares of this life or deceitfulness of riches?**
- **Are you like the early church, connected to the body of Christ, praying, keeping each other accountable, connecting & teaching one another?**