Message Reflection Questions

PARABLE: A FRUITFUL PEOPLE

As preached on Sunday, November 8th

Read: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

1. As the scene opens in chapter 13, we find Jesus teaching beside a lake. Why was he doing so from a boat? Do you think this was a standard practice among rabbis?

2. Verse 3 tells us that Jesus taught using "parables". How would you define a parable? Why do you think Jesus chose this method of teaching?

3. In vv.3-9 Jesus shares what has been entitled The Parable of the Sower. Try to imagine that you are hearing that story for the very first time. At its most basic, literal level, what does it teach?

4. Jesus explains his parable in vv.18-23. Is the parable primarily about the farmer and his seeds or is it about different kinds of soil? Explain.

5. In Mark's version of this story, Jesus' disciples and the others who are listening ask Jesus why he uses parables when he teaches. Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9-10 in response. What does he mean?

6. It seems almost as if Jesus is saying that his parabolic teaching is designed to keep those who are "outside" outside. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

7. Do you think this parable is about whether or not someone will receive salvation? Or, is it about bearing spiritual fruit as we participate in the Kingdom of God in the here and now? Explain.