

The Sower and the Seeds

Parable People

Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23

Through the parables we encounter in the gospels, Jesus wants to us to learn more about the kingdom of God and our place in the world. Through this first parable we encounter in this new series, we meet a sower, seemingly slinging seeds in all directions. Consider the various types of ground and conditions in which the seeds fall as you read the passage.

Assuming God is the sower, why would He take such a haphazard approach to spreading his word?

Consider the words of the psalmist as you discuss this question: *where can I go from your presence and where can I flee from your spirit?* (Psalm 139).

God's efforts to sow seeds in our lives reflects his desire for us to know Jesus, in hopes that He might bear fruit in our lives and in the world through us. Rather than a lesson on how to develop healthy soil in our lives, this parable should remind us that we will never represent just one type of soil – but that we will constantly ebb and flow among them. Consider what each of these soils represent, and try to pinpoint which one you resemble most closely today. And in looking back, how have you seen God meet you in the circumstance of each type of soil?

Path – the seed that falls on the path immediately falls away, representing a calloused heart with no receptivity. The path can represent a life jaded toward God and marked by despair.

Rocky – the seed that falls on the rocky soil is unable to take root due to shallow and superficial conditions. We experience this when inconveniences in our lives shift our attention away from God and we'd rather run away.

Thorny – the seed that falls on thorny ground is eventually choked out, falling prey to the cares of this age and the lure of wealth. The type of heart represented here is deeply divided, falling prey to the allure of the world while claiming to be faithful to God.

Good soil – the seed that falls on good soil is nurtured, producing beauty for the world to see. When we are eager to have the word live deep in our soul, the hope of Christ is reflected to those around us, and God shines through us.

We will always feel the effects of sin and temptation trying to close in on us from all directions. The good news is that Christ sees us in all of this and still longs to be with us! As you enter this week, consider the miracle that God has created a way to our hearts, through the embodied life of Jesus Christ. **As He continues to scatter seeds recklessly, how can you position yourself to pay more attention to God as we begin a new season?**