

The Sower

STORIES OF THE KINGDOM: THE PARABLES OF JESUS [MATTHEW, PART 5] · MATTHEW 13:3-9, 18-23 · AUGUST 15, 2021 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

SERMON OUTLINE:

"Then he told them many things in parables, saying: 'A farmer went out to sow his seed. . .'"
(Matthew 13:3)

The Seed

"The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you" (13:11)

"The message of the kingdom. . .sown in his heart" (13:19)

The Soils

Basic contrast: good soil and bad soil

Types of bad soil:

- Soil along the path
- Rocky soil
- Thorny soil

The nature of good soil

Three Perspectives on the Sower

God the Father (Jeremiah 31:27-28; Hosea 2:23; Isaiah 55:10-11)

Jesus the Son (Matthew 7:24-29; 9:35-38; 11:1; 13:1-3)

Disciples of Jesus (Matthew 10:1-5; 28:18-20)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What has been your favorite outdoor activity this summer so far?
2. This week we continue our series, "Stories of the Kingdom," by looking at the parable of the sower and soils in Matthew 13:3-9 and the follow-up explanation in 13:18-23. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through His Word. Then, whether you're on your own or with others, read 13:3-9 aloud.
3. Describe in your own words what occurs in the parable as described in 13:3-9. What stands out to you most about the parable?
4. Amid an extended teaching on His use of parables, Jesus explains the parable of the sower and soils in 13:18-23. Now read that passage aloud.
5. Based on what you read here, how would you describe the seed Jesus is referencing here?
6. Drawing upon both portions of Matthew 13, the original telling of the parable and its explanation, how would you summarize the nature or situation of each of the soils:
 - Soil along the path (13:4, 19)
 - Rocky soil (13:5-6, 20-21)
 - Thorny soil (13:7, 22)
 - Good soil (13:8, 23)
7. How would you describe the "soil" of your life at present in relation to the "seed" of the message of God's kingdom?
8. What do you think it means when Jesus says: "He who has ears, let him hear" (13:9)?
9. Would you describe your own ears as open or closed to hearing what Jesus has to say to you? How might you grow in openness to hearing Jesus's words this week?
10. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study? If you're on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

DIG DEEPER:

This week dig deeper into Jesus' parable of the sower and the soils in one or more of the following ways:

- Journal about this parable, expressing your thoughts about it, what God is teaching you through it, as well as your prayers to God about it.
- Draw, paint, or ink the story of the sower as a way of reflecting on what Jesus is saying and praying about your own response to the Lord.
- Try to retell Jesus' parable and its meaning to someone you know this week, discussing with them what it means for our lives.
- Watch the Bible Project's video, "The Parables of Jesus":
bibleproject.com/explore/video/how-to-read-the-bible-the-parables-of-jesus/