

Unit 27, Session 2: Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15

Christ Connection:

Preschool: Not everyone who hears about Jesus believes in Him. Some people don't understand Jesus or they think they are happy without Him. People who hear the gospel—the good news about Jesus—and believe in Him will be blessed.

Kids: Not everyone believes the truth about Jesus. Some don't understand it, some believe in Jesus for selfish reasons, and some only want part of Jesus because they love other things more. But those who hear the gospel and understand who Jesus is will become like Jesus and share His good news with others.

Adult Connection Point: As Jesus' people, we are a privileged people. We are not only called to be bold messengers of the kingdom of God, but we are also recipients of grace through our being brought into the kingdom. When asked why He taught in parables, Jesus gave His disciples the following reason: "The secrets of the kingdom of God have been given for you to know, but to the rest it is in parables, so that looking they may not see, and hearing they may not understand" (Luke 8:10; cf. Isa. 6:9). Where God's revelation functions as mercy to some, it can function as a form of judgment to others. It is by God's grace that we are the ones of the "good ground" who hear God's word, hold on to it, and endure by bearing fruit (Luke 8:15).

Since the church is a sign and instrument of the kingdom of God, constituted and commissioned by Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:1-10), we should bear in mind that we are those who have entered the kingdom by grace as are those who hear the good news preached from our lips and in turn respond in faith and repentance. We cannot ensure that someone with whom we share the gospel is of the "good ground" rather than the other three types of soils in Jesus' parable (see Luke 8:4-8, 11-15), but we nonetheless seek to scatter the seed that is the word of God (8:11). Through spreading the good news and doing good works (1 Pet. 2:11-17), we show the world the reality of God's kingdom. Our common life together in worship and in the world is a testimony to our faith in the gospel. And God can use our preaching of the good news and doing good works to place our family members, friends, and neighbors amongst the good ground. Consider the Voice quote below in light of this discussion.

Voices from the Church:

"The church is the public face of the gospel."

—Michael Bird, *Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 705.

Family Devotion:

Materials: seeds

Gather your family outside. Clear a small patch of land for your seed. Hand a seed packet or some seeds to each child and allow them to plant the seed. Demonstrate covering the seed with soil then water. During the week, check on the progress of the seed making sure it is watered.

Re-tell the Bible story of the parable of the sower. Consider acting out each of the different seeds.

Ask: "What happened to each of the four seeds in Jesus' story?"

Review the four types of seeds. Some were eaten by birds and did not grow. Some fell on rocky soil and sprouted early but died. Others were choked by thorns. Some survived and grew because of the good soil.

Ask: "What is Jesus trying to teach from this parable?"

Remind your kids how Jesus used parables to help us understand God's kingdom. In this particular parable, Jesus is showing the different ways people heard the truth about Jesus. Only the person who hears and accept God's truth will find it growing in their lives.

Pray, asking God to help your kids hear and understand God's truth so they can grow to be like Jesus and share this truth with others.