



Church of God Sunday School

PARABLES OF JESUS: THE SOWER

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

One day Jesus began to teach along the seaside. A great number of people had come to hear Him teach.

Jesus entered a ship and sat down, and the great multitude of people stood on the shore to hear what He had to say.

Jesus began to teach the people by telling parables (a simple story that shows a moral or spiritual lesson). Jesus often used parables to compare the things of God to the things of life that people were familiar with. Jesus began by saying, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." A sower is someone who plants seed, often by scattering it around.

As the sower scattered the seed, it fell on different kinds of ground. First, Jesus said that some of the seed fell by the wayside, or by the side of the road. This seed was quickly eaten by the birds.

Next, some seed fell on stony ground, a place where there was not much dirt. Seeds need dirt to take root, but there was very little dirt or moisture in the stony ground. These seeds quickly sprang up, but when the sun came up, they withered, or died, "because they had no root."

The third type of ground Jesus spoke of was filled with thorns. When the seed began to grow on this ground, the thorns grew faster and taller than the seed could grow. The thorns took up all the room and choked out the seed.

Jesus then told of the fourth kind of ground: good ground. Jesus said that when the seed fell on this ground, it "sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold." Jesus then said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The disciples asked Jesus why He spoke in parables, and Jesus answered, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Many people are blind to the "mysteries of the kingdom," but Jesus told His disci-

ples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."

Jesus explained what the parable meant. He told that the seed is the Word of God. The sower spreads the Word in the hearts of people. Examples of a sower could be the pastor, Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, and godly parents. The four types of ground tell us about the people who hear the Word of God.

The wayside ground represents people who hear the Word of God but do not receive it. Quickly, the enemy comes and snatches that seed away. Why does the devil snatch the seed so quickly? He knows if that seed stays there, it could cause that one to "believe and be saved."

The seed next fell on stony (or rocky) ground. This ground is like people who are joyful when they first hear the Word of God! But the Word does not take root in their lives. When afflictions and persecutions come, they are offended "and in time of temptation fall away."

The thorny ground is like people who hear the Word, but they allow the "cares and riches and pleasures of this life" to be more important than God and His Word. Soon the Word of God is completely choked out of their lives.

The last ground—the good ground—is likened to people who hear the Word, receive it, and allow it to take root in their lives. They don't allow the things of life to choke it out, and they will "bring forth fruit with patience."

We all are like one of these four types of ground. When the Word is read or taught or preached, will it be able to grow in your heart and life? What type of ground are you? If you don't have "good ground," or a heart that God's Word can take root in, Jesus wants to save you and change your heart.

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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*". . . hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit . . ."*  
—Mark 4:20  
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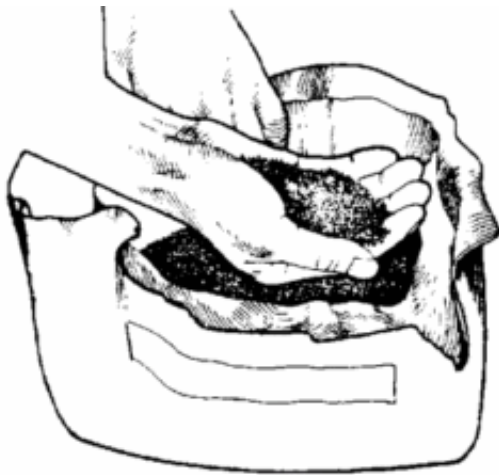
Four Kinds of Ground



Name
the
Four
Kinds
of
Ground



Draw a Line From the Parable Picture to the Spiritual Meaning



Seed



People's Hearts



Ground



**The Enemy
(Taking Away the Word)**



Bird



The Word of God



The Sower