

The Sower, the Soil and the Seed  
January 29/30, 2022  
The Parable of the Sower as Shared by Ken King

New International Version: Matthew 13: 1–9

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9 Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

Matthew 13:18-23

18 “Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: 19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. 20 The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21 But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. 22 The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. 23 But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

Prayer: Dear Lord we ask Your Holy Spirit to bless this message for each of us today. Amen.

I was very excited when the pastor called and asked me to share the message today. My response was “Oh absolutely.” Then he gave me the most exciting part of the conversation. “We are doing a series on the parables and you can pick your parable.” So I get to share my favorite parable. The parable of the sower.

Jesus used parables to help people understand three concepts: Faith, Responsibility and Hope. When we look at this parable we see all three concepts. If you take a look at the parable there’s actually three different perspectives: The sower, the soil and the seed.

**The first perspective is that of the sower.** Let us just image the job description: looking

for a person willing to spread seeds in a large area. Not responsible for where the seeds land, germination, growth, yield of the crop, or harvest. Just “Git’er done.”

Now we should know what the difference is between sowing seeds and planting seeds. As a gardener we plan the seeds. We take that little package of seeds, we dig a little trench, we put the seeds, in the trench, we cover them with a half - to an inch of soil, and we water it and wait for it to grow.

But if we are seeding a lawn we use a different technique. We go to Trilling or Menards, buy a bag of seed, take that bag of seed, reach in the bag and we whip the seed out spreading it in as broad of an area as we can.

So now we can relate to the responsibility of the sower as just sowing the seeds. Not to worry about where the seeds have fallen. Our concern as sowers of the message is not to worry where those seeds fall but that we spread them everywhere. And by the way, that bag of seeds we are given - we will never ever get to the bottom of it, because the bag is always full. Our job as sowers, is to get the seeds out there. The seeds Jesus is talking about of course is the message of Jesus - love, forgiveness, caring, sharing, and hope.

**The second perspective of the parable is the soil.** Now Jesus notes three types of places where the seeds lands: 1) the rocky ground, 2) an area where there were already thorns, and 3) last but not least the good soil. In each case we realize the quality of the soil.

You see that message of message of Jesus - love, forgiveness, caring, sharing, and hope - needs a place to grow. In all of the examples, the seed sprouted, but only survived and multiplied in the good soil. Now Jesus explains the environment and the results of each of the soil types.

And we can compare it to our lives:

1) **THE SOIL ON THE PATH:** we hear the message of Jesus, but we fall on hard times

and forget or maybe even blame God for our situation and our faith is gone.

2) THE SOIL WITH WEEDS. Maybe we grew up or live in an unhealthy, non-supportive environment. The seed sprouted but was choked out, the weeds of the world taking all of the nutrients out and choked the growth of the good seed.

3) THE GOOD SOIL: the message grew and yielded 30/60/100 times. Have you ever planted a single seed of corn or a green bean, or a tomato, and when you harvested it was amazed had how many seed that one seed you planted yielded. Think about the parable where the good seed in the good soil yields 30/60/100 times. If you doubt that, take a look at a head of grain or an ear of corn. All of those seeds, from just one seed that was sown.

What makes fertile soil? Compost and Manure. That might be the tough times in our lives. The challenges that we have been given or any other troubles we have had in our life's faith journey. The good soil has all of the nutrients and support we need to grow and multiply. Our love and concern for others and God. Strong faith to get us through troubling times.

I was fortunate to have my faith journey start in good soil. My parents and family were supportive, having daily devotions, regular prayer, and reading the Bible. Yet as this seed started to grow, even in the good soil, the weeds started growing up, too. There were many challenges and trials as I grew up into adulthood and even today. You see weeds flourish in good soil too. But the soil needs to continue providing the nutrients to grow strong enough to overcome the weeds.

What kind of soil are you? Is your faith like that on the rocky ground, maybe just we need more help, or are you the soil that is already surrounded by the weeds of the world and it is trying to choke your faith out? OR Are you the fertile soil that someone needs to grow and mature their own faith in?

Have you helped someone to mature in the faith and allow them to grow, bloom, and be fruitful? So before you start waving your hands, I would like to remind you that even good soil can have challenges and weeds. But in spite of that, good soil can give you great results, because it encourages and nurtures the seed to be strong and yield 30/60/100 times.

So the question I have for you. What kind of soil are you? First have you received the Message - the good seed of Jesus? Are you letting it grow? If someone is having a test of faith are you there to help and give hope?

**And the last perspective of the parable: The seed.** The seed is the message of Jesus - love, forgiveness, caring, sharing, and hope. Oh realizing the power and hope of that message.

Have you ever driven along a highway, and seen a tree growing out of a rock or rocky ledge? How could that seed possibly survive? Someone didn't plant it there. It must have been an act of God. The wind must have dropped a seed there. Yet, God must have provided enough soil, nutrients, and water, to not only sprout the seed, but to enable it to survive and grow. Somehow, that seed found its way to a small crack in that rock formation. God probably got it there with a little wind. There must have been a little soil there. The rains came, the sun warmed the seed, and then it sprouted, and grew.

Despite all of the adversity of the surroundings, it grew. Now it wasn't as tall as the trees on the top of the rock that have better soil, but it still had matured and developed seeds that the wind will scatter. And as it grows it will produce seeds, maybe not as fast and at the same level as the seed that fell on the good soil, but GOD did not give up on that seed either. As a matter of fact, after a strong wind storm, I have seen trees down and broken on what appeared to be good soil, but the tree grown out of the side of the rock formation was still there.

No matter how many challenges you have in your life, GOD will be there to give you what you need. The message of Jesus, Responsibility, Faith and Hope.

So I leave you with this:

Are you willing to be a good sower? Spreading the message God's love, caring concern, encouragement, forgiveness, hope, and scripture.

What kind of soil are you? Are you good soil, can you help someone grow in the faith.

And last, we all are seeds, with God's help and guidance we can multiply 30/60/100 fold.

LET'S PRAY: Dear God, we would like to take the challenge of being your sowers. We thank you for another day to live the life you have given us, with all of the opportunities, freedoms, challenges and concerns facing us. Give us the strength and will to preserve and grow. This we pray in Jesus' Name. AMEN.