



January 24, 2021
The Parable of the Sower
Matthew 13:1-23
Prepared by Jeana Jones

In the past couple of weeks, we have seen Jesus do miracles like heal a paralyzed man and walk on water. We learned that Jesus can do these things because He is God. We saw how some people believed in Him and how some had doubts. We all have doubts about God at times in our lives. Or maybe, if we're honest, we should say we all have doubts about God every day!

This is why it is so important to keep talking to God and keep listening to His Word, the Bible. Last week, I gave you a couple of tools to help you do that. I gave you some **Daily Prayer Cards** to help you know what to pray. I also gave you some **ABC Scripture Memory Verse Cards**. Have you begun to use those yet? If not, be sure to click on those links from last week and take advantage of those tools.

Speaking of tools...What is the purpose of a tool? A tool is something that helps make a job easier, right? Spring is not too far away. In the spring, I like to use my garden tools to get the soil in my garden ready to plant seeds. I might use a tool like a hoe or a rake to help get the soil ready. It's important that the soil is broken up, smooth, free of rocks, thorns, and weeds so that the seeds I plant have good soil to grow in.

The same thing is true about God's Word trying to grow in our hearts. God's Word is like the seed. Our hearts are like the soil. In order for the seed of God's Word to grow, the soil of our hearts must be in good shape--broken up, smooth, and without other things to get in the way. Just like I use tools in my garden to get the soil ready, you can use tools, like the ones I mentioned above, to get your hearts ready for God's Word to grow in you.

Jesus often used a teaching tool, called a parable, to make it easier for people understand more about Him and His kingdom of heaven. A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Take a look at this video of the Parable of the Sower (also called the Parable of the Farmer and the Seeds):

https://youtu.be/IZEO_Ls2ERs

For younger children who have shorter attention spans and are not yet able to read or write, simply print the **Parable of the Sower Coloring Page**. Have them repeat the following poem prayer after you, as you point to each picture on the page. Then allow them to color the page.

Birds - Shoo birds! God, help me to understand Your Word. (*Wave hands in the air as if shooing away birds.*)

Rocks - Rocks, get out of my way! God, help me spend time with You today! (*Pretend to lift heavy rocks and throw them out of the way.*)

Thorns - Ouch! Those thorns are sharp. God, get the worries out of my heart! (*Pretend to poke your finger and then place your hands over your heart.*)

Good Soil - Good soil to help me grow! God, You and me—LET'S GO!! (*Run around the room.*)

In Jesus' name. Amen.

For older children who are able to read and write, go through the discussion and activities below.

In the video, there were four kinds of soil:

- 1) **The soil along the path.** This soil was so hard that the seeds just lay on top of the soil. This made it easy for the birds to come and eat up the seed.

Read Matthew 13:19 This verse says that some people don't understand the Word of God when they hear it. This is like the seed on the path. The soil is so hard that the seed can't get in. Then birds come and eat it up. The devil is like the birds. He snatches the seed away from people who don't understand it.

How to break up and smooth out this soil:

- If you don't understand a Bible story, ask an adult to help you understand it.
- Read the story from a Children's Bible that is easier to understand.
- Pray that God would help you understand His Word.

Activity:

Print the **Parable of the Sower Coloring Page**. In the first picture, on the top, with the birds, **write** "Help me understand." Then **color** the picture with the birds.

- 2) **The soil that is full of rocks.** This soil is loose and soft enough for the seeds to be planted, but it is full of rocks. Because there are so many rocks in this soil, the roots of the plant can't go deep and get enough water. So, when the sun comes out the plants wither and die.

Read Matthew 13:20-21 The rocks in this soil are like the things in this world that get in the way of our relationship with God. Rocks don't allow our roots to go down deep or our relationship with God to grow. Without a deep relationship with God, it can be easy to stop believing in God when bad things happen to us or when people make fun of us for believing in God or going to Church.

How to get rid of the rocks and help your roots go deep:

- Set limits on the number of and amount of time you spend doing other activities to make sure you have enough time to spend learning about God's love for you.
- Spend time doing activities that help your roots go deep like reading Bible stories, going to Church, doing your Sunday School lesson, praying to God, serving others.
- Avoid spending time on wrong activities or with people who make you do wrong things.
- Pray that God will help you get rid of the rocks in your life.

Activity:

On the **Parable of the Sower Coloring Page**, write "Get the rocks out!" on the 2nd picture with the rocks and dying plants. Then, **color** the picture.

- 3) **The soil that is taken over by thorns.** The plants in this soil get choked out because the thorns and weeds take them over.

Read Matthew 13:22 The thorns and weeds are like the worries in our life and all the worldly things we chase after like having a lot of money or nice things, or being popular, or being the best at everything. When we spend all our time and energy worrying about and fighting for those things, it can be hard to breathe.

How to keep the thorns from taking over:

- Pray, pray, pray! Pray instead of worrying. Pray that God will help you trust Him to provide everything you need. Pray that God will help you spend your time and energy on things that help you grow up taller than the thorns and weeds—closer to Him.

Activity:

On the **Parable of the Sower Coloring Page**, write "Don't worry! Pray!" on the 3rd picture with the thorns. Then, **color** the picture.

- 4) **The good soil.** The good soil is a rich soil, ready to receive the seed of God's Word and let it grow.

Read Matthew 13:23 A heart with good soil is ready to receive God's Word. It understands what God's Word says. It's a heart full of love for God and for other people. It's a heart ready to do the things God wants you to do.

How to let your heart be good soil:

Basically, good soil is all the things we already talked about. It's broken up, smooth, and free of rocks and thorns. To keep it that way:

-Listen to God's Word often and seek to understand it.

-Try to get rid of the rocks in your life that keep you from growing in your relationship with God. Watch how you spend your time and who you spend it with.

-Don't let the thorns of worry and chasing after worldly rewards choke out God's truth.

Pray, Pray, Pray!

-Love God and love people.

Activity:

On the **Parable of the Sower Coloring Page**, write "Let's Go, God!" on the 4th picture with the good soil and healthy plants. Then, **color** the picture.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Make my heart good soil that is ready to receive Your Word. Help me to understand what You are saying to me. Help me get rid of the rocks in my life that get in the way of my relationship with You. Help me remember to pray and trust in You, instead of worrying. Help me to love You and love people. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The following additional activities are linked with this lesson:

Parable of the Sower Word Search

Parable of the Sower Crossword