

# Parable: The Sower and Seed

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

## Engage

Read the parable of the Sower and the Seed [you can find it in Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-20, and Luke 8:4-14]. Jesus uses the analogy of a farmer hand sowing seed, which he spreads widely, to teach about responses to the gospel.

- When Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah, he is acknowledging that people will sometimes hear his word physically (with their ears) but not necessarily hear meaningfully.
- Identify the four types of soil in this parable and what each represents with regard to a person's response to God's word.
- What does the wide distribution of the seed tell us about the nature of God?
- In how many of the soils does something grow? Among the soils where something grows, what differentiates the growth that happens in the good soil from the others?

## Apply

- Consider the following observation from theologian Klyne Snodgrass about what it looks like to be someone whose response is like the good soil in Jesus' parable:  
*To be a disciple of the kingdom means hearing and remaining focused on the message of the kingdom in such a way that one is defined by it. The key to spiritual formation is the willingness to listen, the practice of the discipline of listening, and responding appropriately to the received word.*
- Give an example of when you have seen this type of response in another person.
- As you reflect on the types of soil, which one would best describe the current season of your spiritual life?
- What will you do in response to where you are at right now?

## Next Steps

If the seed falls on the path:

- (not a Jesus-follower) Start asking questions about what you see and hear related to God. Take a next step at OCC to learn more about faith.
- (long-time Jesus-follower) Find someone to mentor. Teach them and help them to learn what it means to bear fruit. Or, switch up your regular spiritual practices to breathe new life into your relationship with God and others.

If the seed falls on rocky soil:

- Get into community with other Jesus-followers, whether a Life Group or another friend. Invite them to hold you accountable and encourage you in your commitments.

If the seed falls on thorny plants:

- Consider your priorities. Look at your calendar and schedule time with God. Examine your to-do list daily so that it better reflects what you want or need to do to grow your faith more deeply.

If the seed falls on good soil:

- Faithfully continue to be connected to the vine and bear fruit.

## Pray

Lord Jesus, give us ears to hear; hearts ready to respond in obedience; mouths and lives ready and fit to share the Good News; and skill to nurture those who respond to your word so that together we may be able to follow you. Amen.

This resource is available [occweb.org/sermons](http://occweb.org/sermons). Send questions to [mike@occweb.org](mailto:mike@occweb.org)