

Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:1-9

The Parable of the Sower is found in all three of the synoptic gospels (Mark 4:1–9; Matthew 13:1–9; Luke 8:4–8). The parable, which describes Jesus’ promise of abundant harvest, is followed by an allegory that expresses the concerns of the first century Church.

How to Use this Parent Page

With your child, begin by looking together at the illustration below and listening as your child recalls—and in a sense *relives*—the experience of today’s lesson. Invite your child to respond to the drawing. You might say, for example:

- I wonder what you can tell me about this picture?
- I wonder what this picture has to do with today’s story?

Just listen. This is *not* a time to quiz children on what they may or may not recall about the lesson, but to be quietly present as they share their own experience. This will be different for each child—one may retell much of the presentation, another recall a single moment that had meaning, and yet another talk about his or her own creative response. Again, your role is not to correct or supplement what your child tells

you, but simply to *listen* in a supportive way. You are supporting the formation of young—sometimes very young—theologians.

Then, if you wish, you can read with (or to) your child the condensed version of today’s lesson offered below.

Whether you read the presentation or simply listen as your child shares what was received in today’s presentation, ask the Wondering questions printed in the left column. Remember, there are many right answers! Be open to what the parables can mean to you and your child. God will teach you new meanings every day. Parables cannot ever be all used up. Conclude by sitting quietly for a moment and then saying “Amen.”

The Presentation

There was once someone who did such amazing things and said such wonderful things that people followed him. As they followed him, they heard him speaking about a kingdom. The kingdom was not like the one they lived in. It was not like one that anyone had ever visited. It was not like any kingdom anyone had even heard about. So they had to ask him, “What is the kingdom of heaven like?”

One day when they asked him that, he said, “The kingdom of heaven is like when a sower, someone who plants seeds, goes out to sow seeds.

“As the sower sowed seeds some of the seed fell on the path. Then the birds of the air came and ate the seeds.



“Some of the seed also fell among the stones. When the seeds tried to put their little roots down among the stones they could not push their way into the ground. When the sun came out it scorched the seeds and they died.

Wondering

- **I wonder** who the sower could really be?
- **I wonder** what the harvest was?
- **I wonder** if the sower was surprised at the harvest?

“Some of the seed also fell among the thorns. When the seeds tried to push their little roots down among the thorns, they could push them part way in, but the thorns choked them, and they died.

“But, when the sower sowed the seed in the good earth the seeds pushed their little roots down into the good earth. They could go all the way in. They grew and grew. When they were all grown up they were ripe for the harvest. Then they were cut off, and gathered up. The harvest was thirty, sixty, and one hundred bushels.”

Godly Play Parables

In every Parent Page, we offer information about Godly Play to help you understand both its methodology and purpose. Today’s Godly Play presentation, the Parable of the Sower, is one of a series of Godly Play lessons on the parables of Jesus.

Why tell parables? Parables question our everyday view of life. They wake us up to

see in life what we have not seen before. Parables question the status quo, the order imposed by tradition, power, or class. They disturb.

This is why Jesus’ parables often got him into trouble, and why Christians ever since have sometimes redefined parables in ways that comfort rather than challenge us.