

The Sower, the Seed and the Soils

Mark 4:1-25

Today's study focuses on the Parable of the Sower. While the story is commonly known by this title, its emphasis is actually on the different types of soil rather than the sower. The seed also plays a crucial role. Together, these three elements—the sower, the seed, and the soil—each offer important lessons for us to learn.

Discussion points

Read Mark 4:1-9 & 14-20.

- a) According to Jesus: What does the seed represent? Mark 4:14
Would you consider our actions/inactions as being potential seeds?
Do you agree that actions speak louder than words? (see 1 Peter 3:1-2).
- b) According to Jesus: Who does the sower represent? Mark 4:14
Who else would be consider to be sower in light of 1 Peter 3:1-2
- c) Discuss what each of the four types of soil represents. (Hint: Consider each soil as symbolic of the different possible responses to specific aspects of God's word, rather than to every part of it.)
 - i) Footpath response: Mark 4:3-4;15
 - ii) Rocky soil response: Mark 4:5-6, 16-17
 - iii) Thorny spoil response: Mark 4:7,18-19
 - iv) Fertile soil response: Mark 4:8-9,20
- d) Read Mark 4:21-25 & Matthew 13: 10-17 (Note: Matthew's version of the parable of the sower is presented in Matthew 13:1-23)
What are the blessings that accrue to those that hear and obey? What are the costs? Discuss these in light of Jesus's comments in the above passages.
- e) How would you change your response going forward?