



THE GOSPEL OF
MATTHEW



The Parable of the Sower: The Hard Soil

Matthew 13:3–4, 18–19



Matthew 13:1–4

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.”



Matthew 13:5–9

⁵ “Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, ⁶ but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear.”



Matthew 13:18–21

¹⁸ “Hear then the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.”



Matthew 13:22–23

²² “As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.
²³ As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”



“Cove of the Sower” | natural amphitheater
5,000–7,000 can hear



“Cove of the Sower” | audible distance



1. The parable: the seed and the soils (13:3–4)

³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.”



2. The interpretation: truth and your heart (13:18–19)

¹⁸ “Hear then the parable of the sower: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.”

Build-Up in Parables

Craig Blomberg

Parable	Build-Up & Contrast
talents	two good servants; <i>the last is wicked</i>
good Samaritan	priest and Levite pass by; <i>the Samaritan stops</i>
banquet	initial guests decline; <i>the poor replace them</i>
sower	three soils are fruitless; <i>only the final soil is fruitful</i>

The failure to “understand”

13:13	“nor do they understand ”
13:14	“You will indeed hear but never understand ”
13:15	“lest they... understand with their heart”
13:19	“hears... and does not understand it”



2 Timothy 3:7

...always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.



2 Timothy 3:5

...having the appearance of godliness,
but denying its power.



Lessons from the Hard Soil

1. A hard heart is the most dangerous spiritual condition.
A soft heart is the healthiest spiritual condition.
Is your heart soft to the Lord?



Psalm 51:10

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.



Lessons from the Hard Soil

2. The world will be allergic to the full truth.
Don't be surprised or discouraged.
Keep walking in faith, hope, and love.



John 17:14–15

¹⁴ “I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”



Lessons from the Hard Soil

3. The problem is not with the seed but the soil. God's word is good, true, and life-giving. The problem is the human heart.



Psalm 19:7–9

- 7 The law of the LORD is perfect...
the testimony of the LORD is sure...
- 8 the precepts of the LORD are right...
the commandment of the LORD is pure...
- 9 the fear of the LORD is clean...
the rules of the LORD are true...



Lessons from the Hard Soil

4. The evil one is always active.
He's deceptive and aggressive.
He must be resisted daily.



1 Peter 5:8–9

⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him...



Lessons from the Hard Soil

5. Only God can replace a heart calcified in sin.
Only the Spirit can do a heart transplant.
So we pray like lives depend on it.



Ezekiel 36:26–27

²⁶ “And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.”



Lessons from the Hard Soil

6. In evangelism, we're not responsible for the soil, the weather, or the harvest. We're responsible for the sowing. Are we sowing?



Ecclesiastes 11:4, 6

- 4 He who observes the wind will not sow,
and he who regards the clouds will not reap.
- 6 In the morning sow your seed,
and at evening withhold not your hand,
for you do not know which will prosper, this or that,
or whether both alike will be good.



Lessons from the Hard Soil

7. The gospel is spreading through the world.
Sowers are sowing. Seed is landing.
The kingdom is advancing.
And the harvest is coming.



John 1:5

The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.



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