

Take Root, Sprout, Grow

By Julie Filby

We prepare our hearts to hear God's message, just like we prepare soil to successfully grow plants, flowers, or grass. Illustrate the parable of the sower in the Gospel of Matthew by planting grass seed in four different pots that represent the varying conditions Jesus described in this farming parable.

For

Young Family

Season

Spring

Needed

Bible (or refer to last page for text), four small flower pots or paper cups, grass seed (or choose a quick growing flower or plant variety), rocks, weeds



Prepare in Advance

- Prepare four separate flower pots or cups with soil: (1) hard packed, (2) rocky, (3) with weeds, and (4) quality potting soil.
- Label and number each pot or cup.
- Purchase grass seed.
- Review Matthew 13:1-9.

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

Dear God, open our ears and hearts to hear and understand your word. Amen.

2. Line up the prepared containers to refer to as the Scripture is read.
3. Designate someone to read Matthew 13:1-9 aloud, the parable of the sower. If there is a child (children) comfortable reading from the Bible, give them the honors.
4. When finished, take turns planting grass seed in each of the containers, explaining that the sower, or farmer, is Jesus and the seeds are God's message. Jesus sows the seeds in different places, to different people, who react in different ways:
 - **Hard, packed soil:** The seeds couldn't break through the soil, so the birds quickly ate them. When hearts are too hard to hear the word of God, it's easily stolen away.
 - **Rocky soil:** These seeds grew quickly, but there wasn't enough soil for roots so they dried up and withered away. Just like when people hear the word of God, but it doesn't take root: they give up on God when things get tough.
 - **Soil with weeds (thorns):** The plants tried to grow but the weeds got in the way. These folks hear the word of God, however then are lured away by money, sin, and other worldly distractions.
 - **Quality potting soil (fertile soil):** These plants grew well. These are people who hear the word of God, understand it, and share it—their faith takes root, sprouts and grows.

5. Clarify that this isn't a story about four different kinds of people: it's about all of us sometimes. Discuss: What kind of soil you are today: hard, rocky, thorny or high quality? A combination? What kind do you want to be?
6. Check on the seeds every day to see which pot(s) take root, sprout and grow.
7. Finish by saying this prayer:

Lord, thank you for teaching us with stories we can understand. Help us receive your word into fertile soil so it can bear fruit in our lives. Amen.



The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13:1-9

On that day, Jesus went out of the house and sat down by the sea. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood along the shore.

And he spoke to them at length in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up.

Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep, and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots.

Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it.

But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.

Whoever has ears ought to hear.”

