

# Understanding Jesus' Parables



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## PART 2

### Parable of the Four Soils

(Matt. 13:3-9; 18-23; Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:4-18)



**Mark 4:3-9 (NIV)** "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. <sup>4</sup> As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. <sup>5</sup> Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. <sup>6</sup> But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. <sup>8</sup> Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times." <sup>9</sup> Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

**Mark 4:10-20 (NIV)** "When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. <sup>11</sup> He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables <sup>12</sup> so that, ""they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!"" <sup>13</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? <sup>14</sup> The farmer sows the word. <sup>15</sup> Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. <sup>16</sup> Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. <sup>18</sup> Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; <sup>19</sup> but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. <sup>20</sup> Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop-- thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown."

#### I. UNDERSTANDING THE PARABLE

##### A. CONTEXT

1. Main subject: the Kingdom of God (Mark 4:11)
2. The sower/farmer: Jesus (Matt. 13:37)
3. The seed: the word (Gr. logos), the teachings of Jesus about the kingdom of God (Mark 4:1, 11)
4. The soils: the hearers of Jesus' preaching of the word (Mark 4:9)

##### B. THE SEED THAT FELL ALONG THE PATH (4:3-4)

1. The result: birds came and ate it up

2. How do these people respond to Jesus' teaching (Mark 4:15)?

**C. THE SEED THAT FELL ON ROCKY SOIL (4:5-6)**

1. The result: the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root
2. How do these people respond to Jesus' teaching (Mark 4:16-17)?

**D. THE SEED THAT FELL ON THORNY SOIL (MARK 4:7)**

1. The result: thorns grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain
2. How do these people respond to Jesus' teaching (Mark 4:18-19)?

**E. THE SEED THAT FELL ON GOOD SOIL (MARK 4:8)**

1. The result: the seed grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times
2. How do these people respond to Jesus' teaching (Mark 4:20)?

**II. CONCLUSIONS: WHAT IS THE MAIN POINT OF THIS PARABLE?**

**III. APPLICATION: HOW CAN THIS PARABLE AFFECT MY LIFE?**