**According to Scripture Alone**

Based on [Luke 8:4-15](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Lk8.4-15)

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Today’s scripture is about Preachers, God’s Word, and Hearers. It is a Parable Jesus tells, often called “the Parable of the Sower” but it could also be called the Parable of the Seed or the Parable of the Soil. The Sower has a relatively minor role, he sows. The central teaching of the parable is four outcomes of the seed, as it meets four different types of soil.

First, the preacher. The central preacher is Jesus, and this parable is likely foremost about his preaching and how it is to be received. One of the purposes of this parable is to vindicate the preacher from any fault in planting God’s Word. Preachers, and that includes you all in the world, preachers are not responsible for the effectiveness of God’s Word. The only way a sower can fail to grow a certain crop is if he sows the wrong seed, or if he fails to sow at all. So too, the only way a preacher can fail to make disciples for Christ, is if he teaches human doctrines rather than God’s word, or if he fails to teach at all.

So Jesus, in explaining how parables work gives this summary statement, “**He who has ears to hear, let him hear**.” Jesus acknowledges that he has been preaching, and that there are some who will hear what he is preaching and some who will not. The fact that some to do not believe him does not discredit who he is.

Next the seed. The seed is God’s word. It is not only the Good News of Jesus Christ, but any and every word that comes from the mouth of God. God’s Word is what he teaches in the Scripures, from the greatest teaching to the least. The bible teaches that God created the earth in six literal days. That knowledge does not save you, but it is God’s Word that is to be received by faith.

There are different classifications of God’s Word, but it is all the same seed, the teaching of the Scriptures. It is the Scriptures alone that give us an authoritative word from God, whether it be “God so loved the world that he gave his only son” or whether it be “male and female he created them,” or whether it be “Nimrod was a mighty hunter”. All Scripture comes from God and will be believed by those who have ears to hear. And the Word of God if it is not heard, it is not because it is a bad seed, but because of the Soil.

God says, “”For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” God’s word never fails, so what does? The soil.

Finally, the soil. In this parable, the soil makes all the difference in whether a seed lasts, sprouts, grows, or produces fruit. I do not think we can say that the soil is different types of people. All Christians are sometimes along the path, sometimes rocky, sometimes among thorns, and sometimes good soil. Scripture encourages us often to put off the things of the flesh and put on the new self in Christ; to set your mind on the things that are above, not on things that are on earth; to seek first the kingdom of God; to take heed lest we fall.

It is a great error to think that a person is one type of soil forever. Rather we are to crucify the flesh and put on the new self daily, lest our ears grow deaf to God’s word. It is true that one can believe in Christ and yet doubt other words he speaks. For our salvation, we out to be ready to receive every word that comes from the mouth of God, lest Satan come and snatch it from us, or trials and temptations come and we cannot endure, or lest the cares of the world steal our affection from Christ.

The first is the soil along the path. When the seed landed on it, it was trampled underfoot and the birds devoured it. Jesus says, these are those who have heard, but the devil comes and snatches the word from their hearts. This is when God’s word is desecrated or blasphemed. Jesus says elsewhere, “Do not cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.” Do not treat God’s word as though it is a common thing. When the Scriptures are treated as any other book, that can be criticized, corrected, even scoffed at…when God’s Word is treated as a common thing it will not stay in the heart long enough to sprout. It will be doubted, that is trampled upon, until satan comes and removes it completely. He prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. Paul praises the Thessalonians saying, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers” (1 Thessalonians 2:13). If the word is not at work in the heart, it will quickly be snatched away.

As for the rocky soil, this is when the seed of the word actually penetrates the heart a bit and sprouts, but it is still a tender shoot when temptations and trials come. Scripture promises, “God will not let you be tempted beyond your ability.” and when you are tempted, “he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” (1 Cor 10:13)

Scripture also says, “Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good (1 Peter 2:2-3). The rocky soil is the soil that stunts the growth of faith.

As for the soil that is infested with thorns, this is when a person who has heard the word and believes what it says, also hears the world and believes what it says. The world says, you need to first work and make a living before you can take time to pray and hear God’s Word; The word says, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you.”

Jesus says, “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money” (Luke 16:13). Yet there are no few Christians who confess Christ openly and yet seem to believe they can serve both God and money. It is a damnable lie.

No Christian ever went among the weeds thinking, “I can’t handle this, I will lose my faith and end up worshipping the world instead of God.” Instead it is always, “I can do both. I can court the world and show her a good time, while at the same time be faithful to Christ.” When this doesn’t work, because the world will not tolerate obedience to Christ, the Christian thinks, “I can please the world in what I do; and I can please Christ in the sanctuary of my heart.” If this continues without repentance and a renunciation of the world, the final result is a choking and death of faith. “I am able to please the world in what I do; but I don’t know what benefit there is to worshipping Christ even in my heart. I’ll serve the world while I’m alive, and I’ll serve God when I’m dead.”

As for the good soil, this is when a person hears God’s Word and receives it for what it is, the word of God and treat is as though it is the most certain knowledge and precious treasure in the world. How many people, if they were told the winning lottery numbers wouldn’t go out and immediately buy a ticket and daily remind themselves of the reward that will come to them on the day the winner is revealed? The only person who would not, is the person who did not believe they were the winning numbers.

We have been given the oracles of God, the prophetic word, the Scriptures which alone are a beacon of certainty and a fount of knowledge in an otherwise unpredictable world. The Good Soil believes in their heart the Word of God, and it produces fruit for them both in this life and for eternal life. The person who has the ticket to eternal life has no anxiety to build a fortune here or that suffering, or pleasure.

In this parable we know that God’s Word serves it’s purposes, it’s purpose is to sprout thrive in good soil. God suffers his word to be trampled on and snached away..just as his Son suffered and was arrested; God allowed his planted Word to suffer a dearth of moisture and the scorching sun, Just as he sent his own Son to thirst on the cross and suffer the agony of His wrath against sin for our sake; God allowed the seed of his Word to be choked in the world, just as he let his son be betrayed and sold for thirty pieces of silver. But he also permitted his Word to suffer all this so that it would find purchase in Good soil and produce fruit, Just as His own Son Jesus Christ is the firstfruits of the resurrection to eternal life, which is fulfilled in your hearing. You, who have ears to hear, hear the word of the Lord.