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## The Parable of the Sower

*Luke 8:4-15*

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### Background

To a world defined by conflict and conquest between kings and kingdoms, Jesus declared, "The kingdom of *God* has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" How do we receive this word? And how might the Kingdom of God manifest here and now, among us and in our midst? And what does this have to do with the Season of Lent? Join us this First Sunday of Lent as we launch our new sermon series, "The Way of the Kingdom"!

### Sermon Text: *Luke 8:4-15 (NIV)*

*<sup>4</sup> While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: <sup>5</sup> "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. <sup>6</sup> Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. <sup>8</sup> Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."*

*When he said this, he called out, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."*

*<sup>9</sup> His disciples asked him what this parable meant. <sup>10</sup> He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that,*

*“though seeing, they may not see;*

*though hearing, they may not understand.’<sup>[a]</sup>*

*<sup>11</sup> “This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. <sup>12</sup> Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. <sup>13</sup> Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. <sup>14</sup> The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. <sup>15</sup> But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.*

## **Discussion Questions**

### **1. Preparation**

- What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

### **2. Sunday Questions:**

1. Lent is the Christian practice of spending 40 days before Easter, repenting from sin and recommitting to following Jesus. This echoes the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness before beginning His public ministry. Jesus emerged from the wilderness in victory over Satan, in power, knowing He was God’s beloved Son. He had arrived on the stage of public ministry... a new king had come and with Him a new kingdom. Jesus proclaimed “God’s Kingdom has come.” What does God’s Kingdom mean to you?

2. “The word *parable* (*parabole*) comes from two Greek words that mean ‘to place or throw beside.’ [...] Teaching by parables means placing two things next to each other in order to learn more about them through contrast and comparison.” Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God, its King, and its way with parables. His parables were culturally relevant, easily remembered, drawing from the context of ordinary life, logical, and more meaningful as time passed. Which aspects of the parable resonate most with you?

3. We see in Jesus' choice to preach and teach through parables is because of His *willingness to meet us where we are, accommodating us, and being gracious to us*. Jesus is willing to meet you where you are and help you take the step forward *that you could actually take*. Can we learn to follow Jesus' way of teaching so we can spread His words among our friends?

4. "The Parable of the Sower" is an example where (It's mostly about ) Jesus (willingness to meet us where we are, and to) showers us with words not intended to *exclude* us but to *entice* us to draw closer to Him. We can pray for the Holy Spirit to work within our hearts to make them into soil ready for the seed of Jesus' words.

-If our hearts are hardened, we can ask Jesus the Sower to become Jesus the Tiller – and He will do it.

-If our hearts are rocky, we can ask Jesus the Sower to become Jesus the Digger, Jesus the Fertilizer – and He will do it.

-If our hearts are thorny and choked by weeds of worry and worldliness, we can ask Jesus the Sower to become Jesus the Weeder, Jesus the Gardener – and He will do it.

In what ways did you experience Jesus opening his words for you?

5. Jesus the Sower is also Jesus the Cross Bearer; Jesus the Sower is also Jesus the Sin Atoner; Jesus the Sower is also Jesus the Intercessor; Jesus the Sower is also Jesus the Savior. How does this parable teach us about this King, the Kingdom, and the way of the Kingdom?