

Chapter 1 : The Sower, the Seed, and the Spirit

The 5th book in the Sower's Seeds series: "Sower's Seeds of Encouragement: Stories of Hope, Humor and Healing" won an Honor in the Anthology Category at the Storytelling World Awards. "Storytelling World" is a fully-refereed journal under the sponsorship of East Tennessee State University's Storytelling Master's Degree Program.

I should add that I have been deeply involved in some of those thingsâ€”including the bus ministry when my brother Alan and I started a bus route for a church in Oxford, Mississippi in the summer of 1978. Be a student of the trends. Learn from what others are doing. Without the Word, our churches may grow but they will not produce fruit that lasts. This is the central teaching of the parable. Remember that there is nothing wrong with the seed. The same seed that the birds eat is the same seed that produces a good crop. Most of them had spent decades sharing the gospel in Africa. I heard about one man who in his early years did evangelism among one particular tribal group and saw hundreds if not thousands come to Christ. Then he was transferred to a primarily Muslim area of Nigeria where he labored for years with only a handful of converts. Had he suddenly become ineffective? The answer is no. He still preached the same Good News but the field was much harder because of the hold the Muslim religion had on its followers. Good ministry is like that. A man may see huge results in one church and then struggle for years in another church. One tribe is open to the gospel; another is resistant. One city welcomes missionaries; another opposes them. And so it goes around the world. Today in China the door is open in many ways. Yet opposition seems to be on the increase. China is not just one thing. Past success may be a good indicator but it is not a guarantee. Our job is sow the seed but as we sow, we need to be realistic and not starry-eyed dreamers. Some seed will fall on the hard path, some on the stony ground, some on thorny soil, and some will fall on good soil. Good ministry of the Word produces differing results. That happens in every church and in every ministry. Often when we enter a new ministry, there is a sudden growth spurt. I remember being told in seminary that when a pastor goes to a new church, there is generally a quick rise in attendance followed by a plateau followed by a period of much slower growth. This makes sense because a new pastor brings new excitement, a fresh perspective, new ideas and an infusion of energy. So the first few months of a new ministry normally produce a bump in attendance. I remember my first pastorate right out of seminary. I went to a small neighborhood church in suburban Los Angeles. There were perhaps 40 people there when I arrived. Within a few weeks we had doubled to 80 people. Not long after that we hit We were the talk of the town-â€”at least in my own mind. But then we hit a plateau. No one told me about that. Things were very level. The plateau seemed to go on forever. And I discovered that some people that seemed so excited at the beginning drifted away. I remember that during my candidating visit, I had already decided not to take the church. But that changed when a young couple drove me around the area, pointing out this highlight and that special place and what a good location the church had and what a fine place this was to live. They were so persuasive that I changed my mind and decided to accept the call to the church. Shortly after I came, they left the church. I never was able to figure it out. They were there and then they were gone. Remember, it sprang up quickly. Nothing better than that. But that seed sprang up quickly because it had no deep roots. When the sun beat down, the young plants withered and died. So let us take the warning to heart. If you have early success in your ministry, enjoy it but do not put too much stock in it. Wise farmers know that there is always a long period between planting and harvesting. Think of it this way. Three of the four soils responded positively at first. But only one produced lasting fruit. Three of the four soils failed to produce good fruit. No, but sometimes it can seem that way. Some churches are hard to pastor, others are easier. Some missionaries see amazing results. Others struggle for years with little to show for their efforts. Good soil can be hard to find. The flip side is that when you find it, it can produce amazing results. And some people will be thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred-fold in what they produce for the Kingdom. God can do a lot with a little. A few seeds sown in good soil can ultimately revolutionize a church, a town, a school, a family, a neighborhood, or when God wills it so, an entire region. This truth cuts both ways. As the seed is sown in many places, it will find its place in many hearts. You simply cannot tell in advance how people will respond over the long haul. And sometimes the unlikeliest people will become mature believers. We have to give the

Word time to do its own work. Eventually the Word reveals the true condition of every heart. He carried it in a pouch slung around his neck and threw handfuls in every direction. He knows that a certain amount of the seed will fall on the beaten path where it cannot take root. So it is in his own best interests to sow his seed as widely as possible. The same is true in the ministry. The best way to reach more people is to sow the seed of the Word in as many ways possible, using every avenue open to you, reaching out to every age and every interest group you can find. I meet pastors all the time who work hard, stay busy all week long, and have their hands in a thousand things at once. No one can do it all. When you find good soil, cultivate it. Though he spoke to the masses, and though he had time for individuals, he gave the majority of his time to training the twelve. He found them, he called them, he trained them, and he allowed them to come alongside and be with him up close and personal. He poured himself into that small band of men knowing that after his departure they would become the leaders of the movement he had started. If you fall into the trap of trying to please them all, your ministry is bound to fail or you will end up frustrated and ineffective. That takes time and patience and prayer and wisdom from on high. Plus it helps if you listen to your wife and to a circle of trusted advisors. He preached to the masses. He ministered to individuals. He poured himself into a small group of key followers. He called an even smaller group to be his apostles. After he returned to heaven, they became the foundation for the church he was building Ephesians 2: Every pastor needs to do the same thing. Find a group of key men and women and pour yourself into them. Meet them early in the morning. Call them late at night. Send them a weekly email. Bring them into your confidence. Let them see your heart.

Chapter 2 : Bible Sowers – Bible Sowers

Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.

First we want to notice the sower READ vs. The sower here is just a plain, simple farmer. His training was probably limited to the traditional knowledge of the farmers of that day. He employed no special methods, but he just broadcasted seed throughout the field. He had no special equipment that we know of, just a bag full of seed. In this parable the emphasis is not on the sower, other than he simply does his job. The results of the increase were not dependant on the sower. By analogy, the sower in our text is not unlike a plain country preacher. He has no special training, other than a good solid teaching ministry in a Baptist Church. He has no special manmade helps; no bag of tricks; just a Bible full of Gospel seed. He employs no humanistic methods or devices of men, he just broadcasts the seed. He is just a plain, honest, sincere sower of the Gospel seed. That is what is needed today. How unlike this plain country preacher is the modernistic preacher of our time. Their emphasis is on sower and his ability to sow cunningly and skillfully. Their dependence on the sower, and on his skill, and on his tactics to get results. No, beloved, the sower that our Lord portrays here is just a plain, sincere man of God doing the work he was called to do. This ought to be a great encouragement and incentive to us. The disciples of Jesus were just plain men; mostly unlearned fishermen. This beloved, was the best training that a sower could ever have! I believe that the church is still the best place to be trained for the ministry. This is the New Testament way, or at least this is the way that the Apostle Paul taught in Ephesians 4, and other places. But the great encouragement about all this is, the results of sowing are not dependant on the abilities and methodologies and the persuasiveness of the sower, but only on his obedience and willingness to do his job. The seed in our parable was the Word of God, or that is, the Gospel of Jesus. The seed is the only true Gospel of the grace of God, which is how that Christ died for our sins, was buried in a tomb, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. All who will truly believe in the Person and work of Jesus on the cross for their sins, shall be saved. The sower in our text only sowed one kind of seed, which was the good seed of wheat. There are other kinds of seeds beloved, that might even grow in bad soil. These are the seeds of tares and other useless and even harmful weeds. Some of them grow up to even look like wheat, so that one can scarcely tell the wheat from the tares. We are taught this in the parable of the wheat and the tares in Matthew. But there is only one kind of seed that will produce wheat, and that is wheat seed. And every good and faithful sower will only sow that good seed, because he only wants that good wheat in the time of harvest. The sower wants to see the fields full, but he wants them full of good and valuable wheat! Now beloved, in the spiritual realm there are many varieties of tare seeds weeds that unfaithful sowers are sowing in the world of religion. There is the seed of baptism and church membership for salvation. There is the seed of pray your way through. There is the seed of reformation and turning over a new fig leaf. There is the seed of doing the best you can and you will go to heaven. Well, the list of bad seed goes on, but these seeds cannot produce spiritual wheat! Beloved, the sowers that sow bad seed are not concerned with they quality of the crop, but rather the fullness of the field. Their pride and glory is seeing the fields full, regardless of what kind of tares and weeds are growing in the fields. To help them sow their bad seed, they have developed many unscriptural methods and tactics. There is the new tactic of religious entertainment and church programs. You name it, and they use it to fill up their fields with tares. I heard where one church even used naked women to promote their church. Well, I suppose they believe that the end justifies the means. May God help us if we ever resort to such foolishness and ungodliness to fill our church! Beloved, when men depart from the plain teachings of the Bible, it is hard to tell what they might do in the name of religion, even in the name of Jesus! Beloved, there is only one true and good seed. There are many other kinds of seeds, but only one good seed that springs up into everlasting life. There is only one kind of seed that can bring forth a new creature in Christ Jesus, and that is the only true Gospel of the grace of God. Thirdly we want to notice the soil READ verses Up until this point in the farming process, all things are equal. Assuming that the sowers are sowing the good

seed, they are doing a good job. They are doing what they are called to do, no more and no less. This is where we at Calvary Baptist Church want to be in our spiritual farming. But when we come to the soil, we find there is a difference in the soil types. There are wayside soils, stony ground soils, thorny ground soils, and then there are good soils. The first three types are all one in the same in nature. The end result is the same for all three. They are all bad and unproductive. Spiritually, these soils all represent the unregenerate, depraved hearts of all men, yet in this parable we see that human depravity shows itself in different ways, as each of these soils respond differently to the Gospel seed. Most men are of the wayside soil variety. These refuse to even allow the Gospel seed the least place in their hearts and minds. They will not so much as hear what you have to say. A few are like the stony ground, which receive the Word and suddenly are on-fire for the Lord for a very short while, but in no time it seems they burn out like a shooting star and disappear into the night, and blow away like chaff in the wind. Some are like the thorny ground. They at least make it to the baptistry and join the church. Some of these even go along for the ride for several years, most likely because they think there is some monetary and material gain in it for them. And then of course there are the good ground hearers. They have an honest and good heart, Jesus said. They received the Gospel in sincerity and truth. Not only this, but they hear the Word and keep it! They hide it in their hearts where it is preserved, and they obey it. But what is more, they bring forth fruit with patience. Fourthly and finally we want to notice the Spirit. What goes unstated in our text in Luke 8, is the Holy Spirit that makes the difference in the good ground hearers. They receive the Word with an honest and good heart. They bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. Thank the Lord for this kind of soil! As we already have said, the sower is the same. The seed is the same. Only the ground is different. The question is Why? Was it because that some soil was created better in the first place? Was it because of something that the sower did to the soil to make it better? Not in this case. We try to break up that old hard and rocky and thorny ground with the Word of God. We turn that soil to allow the roots of the good Gospel seed to penetrate deep into the earth. We add the nutrients of love and benevolence, and goodness and kindness. We water with the water of the Word. But beloved, after that we have done all this. After we have done all that is Scripturally within our power and authority to do; we must go back to the house and wait for God to give the increase! Please notice 1 Corinthians 3: Yes beloved, who is this preacher or that preacher. One plowed, another sowed, another watered, another cultivated, and so on. But all these things notwithstanding, it was God who gives the increase!!! Yes beloved, it is the Holy Spirit Who makes the soil good. There would be none who would or could receive the Gospel and bring forth spiritual fruit unto life everlasting.

Chapter 3 : Sowing seeds for God's Kingdom

Jesus' parable teaches us to be sowers full of hope for the harvest! My focus is to help equip the local churches within the international community with the seeding of God's Word. I am always encouraged to witness countless lives transformed from locally sown seeds.

You and I can tell how many seeds there are in an apple, but only God can tell how many apples there are in a seed. Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness, Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve; Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves; Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves, We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. Specifically, I want to focus on the Seed. You see, when we surrender ourselves to being a follower of Christ, we are also called to become Sowers of the Word of God. First, we are called to plant seeds of encouragement. We are living in a pretty discouraging time. People need to hear more than a single word of encouragement. We need to be sowers of encouragement. We are called to plant seeds of encouragement in the lives of everyone we touch, our children, grand children, coworkers, neighbors, the people in the seats next to you, in front of you and behind you. Mom looked out the window and saw her daughter in the newly planted flower garden. Her daughter was strategically placing artificial flowers around the flower garden. Mom came out and asked the girl what she was doing. The New Testament does not demand that we understand Christ. We do not have to understand Easter to experience Easter. This one who inspires magnificent visions also ministers amid shattered dreams. This one known as the Prince of Peace does not shy away from chaos and conflict. This one who offers salvation identifies with people confounded by feelings of lostness. This one who offers unmatched encouragement knows better than any other the depths of discouragement. Do you grasp the meaning? If you did not sense the joy of Easter morning, if you have not felt Christ rise, if you cannot shout hallelujah, that does not mean that you must drop your head and take off toward Emmaus or some other place to give up. The presence of Christ among us does not depend upon the quality of our understanding of Christ or even upon the nature of our reception of his presence. Christ appears in the midst of people not even looking for him. Second, we are called to plant seeds of hope. Hope feeds our soul and gives wings to our faith. Hope keeps us going. Hope is like a flashlight in the dark. The movie *Desperaux* is about a mouse who would rather read books than eat them like all the other mice. Tiny and graced with oversized ears, *Desperaux* was born too big for his little world. Refusing to live his life cowering like a mouse, he befriends a Princess named Pea and learns to read stories of knights, dragons and fair maidens. Banished from Mouseworld for being more than mouse, *Desperaux* is rescued by another outcast, *Roscuro*, who also wants to hear the tales. After Princess Pea is kidnapped, *Desperaux* discovers he is the only one who can rescue her, and that even the tiniest mouse can find the courage of a knight in shining armor. In one scene the Narrator says: Almost like it was written for you? *Desperaux* loved it all, every bit of it, the truth, the justice, the bravery, the sword fighting. William Barclay in his commentary on Romans wrote: The Christian hope is not hope in the human spirit, in human goodness, in human endurance, in human achievement; the Christian hope is hope in the power of God. By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. Third, we are called to plant seeds of faith. As Sowers, we are called to plant seeds. We are simply called to plant seeds. We are called to plant seeds of faith. The movie stars Renee Zellweger who plays Lucy, a high-powered executive consultant in love with her upscale Miami lifestyle who is sent to a middle of nowhere town in Minnesota to oversee the restructuring of a blue collar manufacturing plant. In this scene *Blanche* has given Lucy a present. You looked like you had the weight of the world on your shoulders. And so am I. You and I are called to be Sowers of the seeds of Faith. We may never know how those seeds grow or if they ever do grow. Or in whom they grow. We can sow seeds of faith, hope and encouragement. Conclusion William Barclay tells this story related by a friend of his. In the church where he worshiped there was a lonely old man, old Thomas. Old Thomas had outlived all his friends and hardly anyone knew him.

When Thomas died, this friend had the feeling that there would be no one to go to the funeral so he decided to go, so there might be someone to follow the old man to his last resting-place. There was no one else, and it was a miserable wet day. The funeral reached the cemetery, and at the gate there was a soldier waiting. An officer, but on his raincoat there was badges of rank. He came to the grave side for the ceremony. And when it was over, he stepped forward before the open grave and swept his hand to a salute that might have been given to a king. Years ago Thomas was my Sunday School teacher; I was a wild lad and a sore trial to him. He never knew what he did for me, but I owe everything I am or will be to old Thomas, and today I had to come to salute him at the end. We have to leave the rest to God. Our job is to sow seeds of encouragement, hope and faith. Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling By: Fields are white and harvests waiting, Who will bear the sheaves away? If you cannot speak like angels, If you cannot preach like Paul, You can tell the love of Jesus; You can say he died for all. Take the task he gives you gladly; Let his work your pleasure be. Send me, send me! Galilean 1st Published in: William Barclay, The Letter to the Romans 2. For prayer or more information, contact Pastor Kenneth Taglauer by email:

Chapter 4 : Pressure Canning Tutorial | Courage Sowers

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I keep thinking about India about the people there that we get to minister to and serve. They live in unsafe places with dirty water, disease bearing bugs, lack of food, and lack of the comfort we get to feel when we sit on the couch reading a good book with a fire in our fireplace, a full belly, and a pillow under our heads. Can I save any of them from discomfort, no. Can I heal their wounds or clean up the entire city, no. So what is the point of all of this? Why would I leave comfort and safety to step into a world of discomfort, heart break and misfortune like nothing I have ever experienced? Why is my heart becoming so burdened by these people? Why should I even care? I slowly become conscious that I have been ready to become undone and get out of the bubble wrap shell that has encapsulated my little safe comfortable life. I want a new perspective on life for myself and for them. Instead it is about learning what God knows is really important and sharing that truth with others so they can live free no matter what their circumstances are. I feel like I am on the verge of coming upon a miracle of some sort. I am standing upon a precipice of newness and excitement and at the same time I amâ€¦. Is this a time to sit still and wait? Fortunately it is a different type of waiting. The kind that is active â€” a serving kind of waiting. Visualize a waitress in a restaurant, taking orders, serving up requests, constantly moving and doing what is asked of her all with a smile and an acceptance of the position they choose to be in. Literally, waiting on the Lord. During the process of waiting on the Lord I feel like he is undoing some things in my perspective and undoing some things in my life. I want him to undo me, and to remake me. I ask him to highlight what I idolize instead of Him so I can cast it aside to put Him first. I have been asked what if I get sick over there, what if I die, what if I see something that just breaks my heart, why would I even want to see that? I am not really all that content anyways, there is always something that I am seeking, unsatisfied with or hurting about or needs fixing. So if I get out of my box, wait and serve, become undone and redone then maybe I get to have an adventurously content life. I also know one day I will have to stand before God and give an account for every word and deed. I want him to say well done good and faithful servant. I want to build my treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy and the thief cannot come in. I want to be able to lead others to that kingdom as well. To let them know although their current suffering is real so is God and he is bigger than their current situation. What we are all going through is only momentary when we consider it from an Eternal standpoint. Besides who wants to live in an insipid bubble when adventure is calling?

Chapter 5 : Fr. Brian Cavanaugh books by Paulist Press

sowers seeds of encouragement fifth planting download sowers seeds of encouragement pdfpdf sower's seeds of encouragement: fifth planting [pdf the sower and the seeds | download ebook pdf/epubthe parable of the sower and the seed - biblewisesower's seeds of.

The seed is the Word of God. Write "1 Peter" on small slips of paper for the students to take home and memorize. Pray that we treat and think about everyone just the same. Click on orange circle to hear tune. Large Activity see below. Jesus told them a parable or a story with a spiritual lesson. Jesus told them that a sower or farmer went out into the field and sowed seed. So a man would go out into his field with a sack over his shoulder and, putting a little of the seed in his hand, would spread the seed on the ground. But there was a small problem: Not all of the seed went where it was supposed to go which was in the good, rich soil. When the sower spread his seed out on the ground, some of the seed fell by the wayside where it was walked on and the birds came and ate it. Some of the seed fell on top of the rocks where there was just a little bit of dirt. The seed grew very quickly, but because there was not enough moisture or water, the seed withered and died. Some of the seed fell in the thorns and bushes. The thorns grew quickly and choked out the good seed. But there was good seed that fell on the good ground. It grew up and produced fruit one hundred times over what the sower had planted! This was the good ground, the place where the sower or farmer wanted his seed to grow. Jesus told the people, "He that has ears, let him hear. Jesus meant that the people should listen to the story, but His disciples were confused. They asked Him, "What does this parable mean? He said that, when He spoke in parables, that His disciples would know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but other people would not understand what he was talking about except telling the people stories. The seed that fell by the wayside were the people who heard the Word, but then the devil came and took the Word out of their hearts, so that the people did not believe and were not saved. The seed that was on the rock were the ones that heard the Word of God, received the Word with joy and enthusiasm, but they did not have any roots and when temptations came, they fell away. The seed that fell among the thorns were those who heard the Word of God, and went out into the world, but were choked out by the cares, riches and pleasures of life, and did not produce any perfect fruit. But, Jesus said, that the seed that fell on the good ground or on the good and honest heart, heard the word, kept it, and, with patience, produced much fruit. Jesus taught the people by parables, by miracles, by command, and by many other ways. He even teaches us today every time we read the Bible! We need to read the Bible every day. We can read it in the morning, or when we come home from school, or before we go to bed or all of those times. We only need to make sure that we are reading! God will be pleased. Hand out small lunch sack. Draw dark lines on small sack see picture. Write "Parable of the Sower" and "Luke 8: Cut on lines of sack. Tape top to make handle. Hand out 2" x 6" light brown strip. This is the wayside. Write "Wayside" on the light brown strip. Draw little seeds on the wayside. Hand out 5" x 5" dark brown square. This is the bird. Draw and cut out a small circle for the head , an oval for the body , feathers, and legs Assemble bird. Hand out 3" x 5" dark brown rectangle. This is the rock. Round edges of rectangle. Write "Rock" on the rock. Hand out light green scrap. Glue pale grass on top of rock. This is the withered seed. Hand out 3" x 5" light brown paper. Draw zig-zagged line on the top of the folded paper. Cut zig-zag out, but do not cut the folds on each end. This is what keeps the thorns together. Fold like a triangle and secure with tape. Write "Thorns" on the inside bottom of the thorns. This is the good soil. Cut a small wiggle at the top of the dark brown paper to resemble a furrow. Hand out 2" x 3" dark green paper. This is the good seed that produced much fruit. Fold dark green paper in half. Cut dark green paper like grass. Glue to top of good soil. Write "Good Soil" on dark brown paper. Hand out 2" x 2" dark green paper. Cut into a circle. This is the good seed. Apply Bible sticker to the bottom of the green seed. Write "The seed is the" on the green seed.

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Now that their rejection has been officially recorded, Jesus began to teach the people with parables. We shall have to learn why this different style of teaching was now used by Jesus, as well as how such parables should be studied. This is a large subject, as you could probably guess some seminaries have courses on the parables , but we shall work with the basic principles to follow. Reading the Text On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them. This is he who received seed by the wayside. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Verse 53 of the chapter makes it clear that these seven parables were delivered on one and the same occasion by Jesus. Accordingly, they develop a unified theme. In view of this He chose to use parables to begin to uncover the faith of true disciples, and to demonstrate judgment on those who refused to see and hear.. In verses a we find they when the multitudes gathered around Him, He spoke to them in parables. In verses , after the first parable, Jesus explained to His disciples why He spoke in parables to the people. In verses 34 and 35, after the parables, Matthew explained why Jesus spoke in parables. Then in verse 53 we have the summation of the discourse. So why does Jesus turn now to use parables? He had used some parables in His teaching so far, but now it becomes the supreme method used. The disciples noticed the changed and asked the reason. To answer it we have to note the circumstances of the chapter. But first, what exactly is a parable? The Greek word literally means a throwing or placing things along side of each other, for the purpose of comparison. The technical definition of a parable is that it is an extended simile. An old definition says a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning--some familiar thing of life on earth is placed alongside of some mystery of heaven, that our understanding of the one may help us understand the other. Jesus drew from the common life of the people to explain some principle or teaching about the kingdom of heaven. In following this method a point of similarity is communicated, as well as a disparity between this life and the life in the kingdom. If Jesus were here teaching with parables today, they would all be different because the culture is different. So to understand parables the student of the Bible has to get into the ancient culture a good deal. A good reference work, or a book on the culture, or on customs and manners would be most helpful. The purpose of using a parable is revelation by illustration. Parables are designed to communicate truth in every day terms. But the text says that they also conceal the truth from those who refuse to believe. So how do we explain these things? There is one common view that has trouble with the idea that Jesus did something so that people could not understand the truth. After all, He came to reveal the truth. And so they emphasize that the parable was a clear attempt by Jesus to reach those who did not believe or understand. To them, parables are aids to understanding truth, not hindrances. They lacked what the disciples possessed, the possession of which created within them the capacity for receiving the mysteries of the kingdom. So what was it that the disciples possessed and the others did not? It was their faith in Christ. The disciples had received Jesus as the Messiah, and because of their faith in Him as their King they were able to receive and understand the mysteries of the kingdom. They may not have understood everything Jesus did, but they trusted Him as their King. The people up to this point had by and large rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and so he could not give to them the mysteries of the kingdom " they would not have understood. They were unable to see, or enter into the kingdom. And because they did not receive Christ, they were in danger of losing all that they did possess, their religious heritage and preparation. So, as the argument continues, with these people who were incapable of grasping the secrets of the kingdom, Jesus adopted a new approach. He would give them pictures to draw them to the kingdom. So in a sense the parable would provide an even wider door for people to enter if they had any faith at all. Using parables, then, reveals the patience and pity of the Lord on a deeper level. They had rejected Him out of hand, and He tried to reach them a different way, through parables. Even for a while Jesus had to use parables for His disciples, and explain them to them, for

they had not quite developed in their faith and understanding of the message of the kingdom. That is one view of parables. But there are two difficulties with it. First, it does not do justice to what the text says, especially the citation from Isaiah; and second, if people failed to believe when Jesus said things plainly, it would be hard to see how they would suddenly understand when He spoke in parables. And this view does justice to the text. Jesus delivered this discourse to the crowds, not the disciples, but He explained things to the disciples. Matthew records two rationales for parables, one for outsiders and one for disciples. Jesus explains the parable to the disciples because revelation is given to some and not to others. They usually refer to eschatological events. What is being revealed to the disciples is not the person of Jesus or the nature of God, but the coming of the kingdom into history in advance of its glorious manifestation Ladd, *Presence*, pp. It was commonly known that God was going to bring in His glorious kingdom by supernatural manifestations and judgments. But the mystery of the kingdom is what no one was expecting, that the kingdom which is ultimately to come in great power has already begun to enter the world in advance in a hidden form to work secretly within people. All of the parables deal with this present form of the kingdom, which Jesus explained to the disciples, but did not explain to the crowds expecting some dramatic deliverance. Even the parables that are teaching some ethical truth have to be understood in the light of the present form of the kingdom. Matthew is showing that what is taking place on the one hand is the fulfillment of prophecy and the decreed will of God, and on the other hand a gross rebellion of unbelief and spiritual ignorance by the crowds. The responsibility for their unbelief is their own entirely, because mortals always do as they choose. And the fact that God foreknew they would do this does not in any way diminish their culpability. So the use of parables fits into the midst of this issue. It would be too easy to say that the only reason Jesus used parables was to conceal the truth, for parables are a means of communication. If that were His sole desire, all He had to do was stop teaching entirely. But He came with a mission to call people into the kingdom. So using parables is a way of teaching the truth or preaching about the kingdom without casting His pearls before swine. The parables will harden those who are already hardened against Him, and enlighten His disciples about the kingdom. Parables challenge the hearers in matters of the faith. The parables do not contain esoteric truths that only the initiated or enlightened could understand--they seem pretty clear. No, the parables present the claims of the present form of the kingdom in such a way that only those who trust Jesus will understand the new direction in the plan of God. After all, He was announcing a different form of the kingdom than they had expected. The parables challenge the hearers to respond with faith. The parable of the sower would require the hearers to see the truth that the kingdom is slowly progressing, and if that be so, to determine what kind of soil they were. Jesus does not explain why the kingdom is not now coming in power and glory, only that there are certain characteristics of the kingdom that need to be accepted. There are several things to keep in mind when reading and interpreting a parable. Preference should be given for the simplicity of interpretation. To discover the intent of the parable the simple, straightforward meaning is most likely to be the correct one. There is a tendency to study these parables in order to find hidden meanings that have never been seen before. There is no doubt that this can be done, for anything Jesus said would have eternal truth behind it and in it. But these were meant to illustrate truth, to reveal truth to the multitudes. A meaning that no one ever would have gotten is out of the question. One should restrict the application of these pictures to the limits set out by Christ in the narrative. A parable is designed to focus on one aspect of the kingdom, in one period of the development of the kingdom. To press every detail of the story into service for all the incidentals about the kingdom is going to far. One should have a consistent use of the figures employed, both within the context and the general use of Scripture, except where specifically otherwise stated. Figures that Jesus used in the parables are used consistently. They all work together to capture the reader and draw him into the story as a participant. There will be a primary point and often secondary points made in a parable. To say a parable is a simple allegory that only makes one point does not do justice to the literary type. Jesus on occasion made more than one point out of parables. But having said that, it is not always easy to determine in a proverb what is a point being made and what is merely part of the story structure. Not all the parables in the Bible work the same way. There is diversity in the parables, and so each one has to be studied as a literary unit in its context. Parables are designed to call the listener into participation, to identify with someone or something in the story. They divide the audience into

the believer and the self-righteous unbeliever.

Chapter 7 : The Parable Of The Sower And The Seed (Matthew) | blog.quintoapp.com

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Please read Matthew I know most teaching covers soil types heart conditions. I found it very interesting that the first line is so simple, yet so profound. As we reflect, some of the seed that fell on good ground by the sower that went out was received; it produced a fruitful harvest. We also know that some did not. I say to you, sow seed, and trust God to the rest. We are not called to be seed holders or soil analyst-just seed sowers. Scatter seed in the fields God has given you without fear of it being rejected or shriveled up; you will see a beautiful harvest. Only then can other farmers leave the field with the seed that they now have to sow in another field. God is in the business of changing hearts, or tilling soil in this analogy. He brings the Son in to cause the seed to grow. What if the sowers had not sown the seed? The divine purpose of the seed would not have reached those with ears to hear, eyes to see, and the hearts to understand that would go forth and repeat the life cycle of the sower sowing seed. We are sowers and the fields are full of people hungry for seeds to be sown. I challenge each one of us to sow seed, trusting God to the rest. Remember that it is God that makes good soil by changing hearts, and then He causes His seed to grow. Dear God, Forgive me for keeping your seed in the pack. I have judged and inspected the fields out of fear and held back your precious word. Help me to obey and joyfully sow seeds as you have given it me. I pray for wisdom and your anointing that I will not allow fear to hinder a harvest for you. You have given the seed to the sower and the promise that your word will not return to you without accomplishing what it will. Thank you Lord for giving me the seed sown in me so that I can share your life giving word. I was widowed one year ago on May I live in Canton, Georgia with my daughter who is almost 16 and my twelve-year-old son. God called me years ago to write a book on addictions which I am in the process of doing as we speak. My desire is to draw people closer to God through His word and by reflecting His goodness in my life. I am living by faith each day He gives me.

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