

Glen Park Gospel Church  
**Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes**

Rev Chris Trinham

Stories Jesus Told

No 2

## The Seeds and the Field.

Scripture Reading: Luke 8:4-15

The first study, 'Some Rules for interpreting the Stories Jesus Told' introduced what some people call the parable of the sower, but it is really about the field in which the seed fell, and the four specific areas of this field into which the seeds fell. The field represents the four possible heart conditions of the hearer of the gospel of the Kingdom, and the response that each would probably produce.

**First, note the hearers.** Notice that the Parable was told to the disciples and some of the women who tended their needs and other followers v1-3, while they were watching the gathering crowds v3. He also told it in the hearing of the people Matthew 13:1 & Mark 4:1. knowing that they would enjoy the entertainment. Jesus was preparing the disciples to understand the responses to their future preaching.

**Second, consider the four responses.**

1. The path, the birds eating, trampling, no response.
2. Stony, shallow soil, no root, withering in the sun. Short lived.
3. Thorny, choking weeds of cares and riches. Poor stunted growth results in a poor scarce harvest.
4. Well prepared soil pays dividends. Jesus used a different preposition to describe each sowing, which are only hinted in English translations:

1. *Para* as in our 'parallel'. Alongside, near to, by. A path is an hostile environment for a seed. Another image is 'casting pearls before swine.' Not

only is it a useless activity, the exposed seed encourages the birds to other parts of the field to ravage them also.

2. *Epi* as in our 'epicentre', a point in a local area. On, towards, near, about. 'Rock' which is singular, may have been a large rock around which the farmer had ploughed. Wuest translates it, 'ground full of rocks where it did not have much earth'.

3. *En meso* is 'into the middle' of thorns, plural. A patch of thorns. No farmer would deliberately do this.

These three events were the undesired but inevitable result of seed scattering in the manner of farmers in that day. His aim was to:

4. *Eis* is 'to - as far as and to the extent of' the good soil. This was his goal, and he reached it.

It was this soil and this soil alone which gave him his harvest. Having achieved this goal, the farmer's work was only half done. The ground would not produce if they did not hear the word and retain it in perseverance. This calls for the farmers continued care until the harvest is fully garnered in. 1 Corinthians 2:14

**The Work of the Farmer/Disciple**, then, is in three stages:

1. He must properly prepare his soil. Good soil is translated from a word meaning 'profitable, generous, beneficent'. It is soil capable of producing a crop, soil that is cleared, mulched and tilled. There is much work to be done before the good seed is sown.

First a field must be chosen as not all soils are suitable. Position and disposition are important. The Spirit of the Lord will guide you to your field Acts 16:6-10.

Then the hearts of men must be made receptive:

*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.* 1 Corinthians 2:14.

Therefore there must be a work of the Spirit of God on men's hearts convincing of sin, righteousness and judgment. See John 16:7-11. This enlightening is supernatural, the work of the Spirit of God. Fallowing the field will kill the thorns of worries, stones of doubts must be removed, but it is the preparatory work of the Holy Spirit that is crucial because Satan has closed their eyes:

*In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the*

*glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* 2 Corinthians 4:4.

And this spiritual blindfold must be removed by the Spirit of God. In this we are labourers together with God, we doing our part, He doing His.

2. He must sow carefully his seeds. This ground is people with two qualities of heart v15:

Honest (a better translation than NIV's 'noble'). Such a person will give a true evaluation to the gospel message rather than resorting sarcastically to their hang-ups and prejudices. Good as opposed to evil, good in character. Such are able to assess sin compared to righteousness and evaluate the moral shortfall.

This is the result of the enlightening work of the Holy Spirit.

3. He must carefully tend his crop.

The seed sown must be sown v15:

One hears as well as listens. To hear is to take in, not simply sit amused through the entertainment.

Keep, or more fully, 'get possession of and hold it fast.'

Patience is to 'abide under' which usually refers to bearing up under trials. Here the trials are doubt, contrary philosophies and messages and the wiles of the evil one.

4. He must diligently gather his harvest. Rain and locusts are a threat. We must learn how to garner the harvest home before the task is done.

Bible quotations in this study are from the NIV, unless otherwise acknowledged.

# Welcome

## Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

These notes may be reproduced in part or in full when distributed without cost, if the words 'Used by Permission, Glen Park Gospel Church.' is included