

## Some Get It, Some Don't, and Some Don't Last

Luke 8:4-15 (ESV)

And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable, <sup>5</sup> "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. <sup>6</sup> And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. <sup>7</sup> And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. <sup>8</sup> And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold." As he said these things, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." <sup>9</sup> And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, <sup>10</sup> he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'" <sup>11</sup> Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. <sup>12</sup> The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. <sup>13</sup> And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away. <sup>14</sup> And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. <sup>15</sup> As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

### 1. The hard soil. (Luke 8:5; Luke 8:11-12)

The cause:

- The enemy is constantly at work.
- Painful life experiences.
- Rejection of the light you have. (Luke 8:18)

When I respond to the light I have, I get more.  
When I don't, I get less.

Zechariah 7:11-13 (ESV)

*But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears that they might not hear. <sup>12</sup> They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the Lord of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the Lord of hosts. <sup>13</sup> "As I called, and they would not hear, so they called, and I would not hear," says the Lord of hosts,*

### 2. The shallow soil. (Luke 8:6; Luke 8:13)

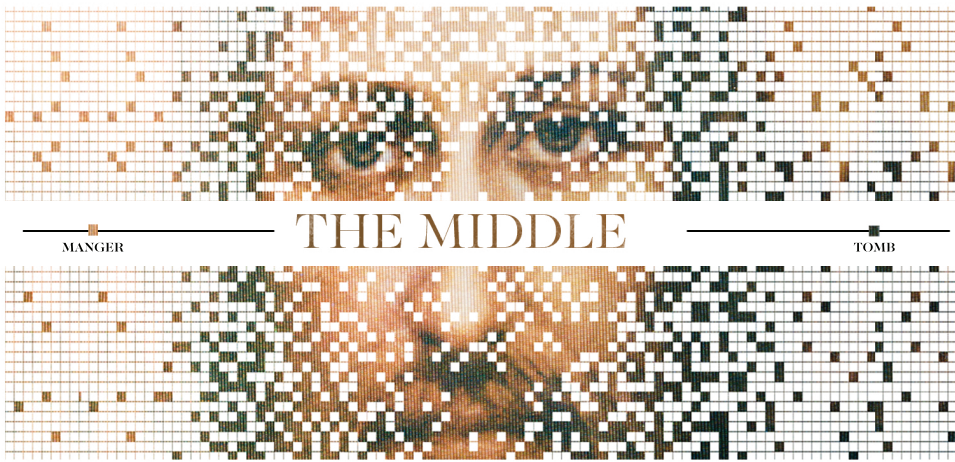
- Not all faith is saving faith. (John 7:37)
- Many are excited about salvation but have never fallen in love with the Savior.
- Shallow soil is always revealed by trials. I John 2:18-19; James 1:2-4)
- A fast start doesn't guarantee a good finish.

### 3. The crowded soil. (Luke 8:7; Luke 8:14)

- A crowded heart is a heart that attempts to pursue pleasure, wealth and satisfaction along with their pursuit of Christ.
- The crowded soil has an interest toward God but priorities that are greater than God. (Matthew 6:24)
- You can be associated with Christ and not belong to Christ. (Colossians 3:4)
- No fruit means no faith. (Matthew 7:20)

### 4. The good soil. (Luke 8:8; Luke 8:15)

- The good soil is open to the will of God and the word of God!
- The good soil produces fruit. (John 15:5)



## PARABLE OF THE SOWER

### LUKE 8:4-8, 11-15

### #NVSTORYSHARE

#### CONNECT THE STORY

What happened in our last story? What key principles or truths did we discover through the story of Peter's confession? Can someone retell the story?

#### TELL THE STORY

Tell the story: as best as you can, do not stop and teach, try not to make points (Commentary), just tell the story.

#### REBUILD THE STORY

As a group: chronologically rebuild the story from memory. Ask questions if necessary. Like – "What happened first?", "What happened next?", "Did we leave out anything?" Finally, have participants look at their Bibles and see if anything was added or left out of the story as they go through it one more time.

#### ASK QUESTIONS

- **Where do you see yourself in this story?**
- **What do we learn about Jesus/God in this story?**
- **What do we learn about man in this story?**
- **What is Jesus teaching you personally through this story?**
- **What application/adjustment do you need to make in your life due to the truth discovered in this story?**

#### ADULTS

- Mention the four places where the seed fell and what they represent?
- The Path - Give some practical examples of how Satan can steal the word from our heart? What does this actually mean?
- The Rock - How can we get rooted in Christ? (Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 2:6-8)
- Among the Thorns - What are some of the thorns that we face in the world today? How do they hinder us from bearing fruit for Christ?
- Good ground - The Bible here talks about bearing fruit with patience. Why do we need patience to bear fruit? Can you give some examples of fruit bearing?

#### COLLEGE

- What does this story tell us about evangelism and our responsibility?
- Should we give up on trying to share the Gospel on hard soil?
- Is there someone in your life that you know God is asking you to share the Gospel with?

#### STUDENT

- Which of the four soils represents you?
- What would it look like for you to be a sower?
- How can you start sowing more seeds?
- Who do you need to start sowing with?

#### CHILDREN

- Older Child – How can we help those whose faith has not taken root?
- Older Child - Which seeds in the story are most like your life? Why?
- Younger Child – What does the Bible say happens when the Word of God grows in us?
- Younger Child – How can we help people who don't have the Word of God growing in them?

#### KINDERGARTEN/PRESCHOOL

- How many types of soil did Jesus talk about?
- To whom did Jesus explain the meaning of the story?
- What did Jesus say the seeds represented?
- What did Jesus say the soils represented? (Kindergarten)
- Jesus told stories to tell people about God. Who will you tell stories (the Good News) about God to this week?

# THE MIDDLE

MY  
TIME  
WITH  
GOD

## MONDAY

### READ MATTHEW 13:1-17.

Why did Jesus speak in parables? A parable is a story with a deeper spiritual meaning. By using parables, Jesus was not only able to communicate spiritual truth, He was also able to weed out those whose hearts were truly receptive to that truth. Look closely at verses 1 and 2. Why would Jesus choose this parable at this moment to these people? Because of the size of the crowd, there were many different kinds of hearts represented. Jesus wanted all His hearers to know that His truth wouldn't grow deeply in everyone's hearts. It would fall in all kinds of places, but those who were ready to truly hear it would respond. In what ways do you see people hearing the words of Jesus, but not really listening to them? Too many people suffer from selective hearing. They either hear only what they want to hear or they refuse to understand what they do hear. Far worse are those who hear and understand but do not act on what they hear. Thus, Jesus said to His disciples, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the Kingdom of God," (v.10) to make clear that God must open our eyes in order for us to fully understand spiritual truth (see 2 Corinthians 4:4-6).

## TUESDAY

### RE-READ MATTHEW 13:1-17.

What do we learn about the sower? What do we learn about the seed? Is the parable about the sower, the seeds, or the soil? Why? What were the predominant characteristics of each kind of soil? In an agricultural society, everyone would have understood what happened when a sower went out into a field to sow his seed. At least one path ran through most fields, and much of the terrain in Israel was rocky under a thin layer of topsoil. Dropping seeds along such paths was futile. Many fields had thorn bushes along the perimeters. Seeds falling there had no chance to grow and survive until harvest time. Others, however, did fall on fertile soil and produced 100 times what was sown.

## WEDNESDAY

### READ MATTHEW 13:18-23.

Based on Jesus's interpretation, what character traits would be representative of each kind of soil? Which of the soils produce similar results? What do these results portray? Which soil is unique and how so? In His parable, Jesus described four types of soil, with soil representing people who hear the Gospel. The first three refer to people who are not saved but who have varying responses to the seed of the Word of God. Then, Jesus contrasted those types of people with people whose hearts are good ground. The same good seed fell on all four types of soil, but only this last example refers to a person who has been born again.

# THE MIDDLE

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## THURSDAY

### RE-READ MATTHEW 13:18-23.

Do you know people represented by each of these soils? What kind of "soil" best represents you now? Five years ago? When we share our faith with others, we are the farmer spreading the seed. What help do you get from this parable about sharing your faith? According to verse 15, what are the characteristics of a person who has been born again? First, the person hears the Word of God with an honest and good heart. The second characteristic of people whose hearts are good soil is that they hold on to Christ's teaching. Finally, Jesus said the seed in the good soil would bear fruit with endurance. True believers make a faith commitment that endures to the end. Their lives are spiritually productive and they consistently live in obedience to Jesus Christ and His Word.

## FRIDAY

### RE-READ MATTHEW 13:1-17.

Is receptivity an active or passive thing? What active ways can we till the soil of our hearts to make us ready to receive the Word of God? Before worship? Before our group? Before our personal time with God? Why is it not enough to just hear the Word of God? What does putting it into practice reveal about our commitment to Him?

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

"This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the Word of God." Luke 8:11