

## PARABLE OF THE SOIL

MARK 4:1-20

Have you ever planted seeds in some soil? The soil had to be just right, didn't it? Jesus told a story about several types of soil. In Mark chapter 4 in the Bible we find that great crowds surrounded Jesus as he walked along the shore of the lake. So he got into a boat and talked to the people from there. He told them this story.

A farmer went out to his field to sow grain. Some of the seed fell on the hard ground of a path that ran along beside the edge of the field. The birds flew down and ate that seed. Some of the seed fell on stony places where there was not enough earth on top of the rocks to make strong roots. So in a few days the little plants died. And some of the seed fell where briars and weeds were growing. The seed began to grow, but the weeds were tall and thick and shut out the sunshine and used up the rain. So those little plants were choked out and died. But the rest of the seed fell on good ground...ground that was ploughed, and raked and ready to receive the seed. The rain watered it and the sun shone down upon it. It soon grew. After a few months there was a great harvest of grain.

When Jesus was alone with His disciples, they asked Him to explain this story to them. He told them the seed meant His Word. The kinds of soil were like kinds of hearts. Some of His Words were heard by people with hard hearts... people who refused to believe Him. Satan comes and takes God's words away from them. He makes them think of other things just as the birds ate the seed that fell on the hard pathway. Other people to whom Jesus speaks try for awhile to obey him, but it is only for a little while. As soon as they have troubles, or are laughed at by others, they turn their hearts away from Jesus. This is like the seed that fell on the stony ground. At first it grows quickly, but in a few days it dies.

Other people hear Jesus preach and are glad. But afterward they begin to care more about their home, their money, and their pleasures than they do about the things of God. This is like the seed that fell among the weeds and the weeds grew up and choked it. The Word of God is soon choked out of their hearts. But then there are some people who listen carefully to everything Jesus says. They remember it and try every day to obey whatever Jesus tells them to do. They are like the good soil where the seeds grew well and there was a crop of 100 times as much seed as the farmer had planted.

Which kind of heart do you have? I hope it's the good kind...the kind that listens and obeys the words of Jesus. Love Jesus with all your heart and trust Him for everything in your life. Obey His Word. Be sure to read today's Bible Story in Mark chapter 4 verses 1 to 20.