

## THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Mark 4:2-9

### Prepare to hear the Word:

- This is a parable and may have more than one meaning to those who hear it.
- Jesus used 'real' situations to teach his listeners.
- In the time of Jesus farmers scattered their seeds in the shallow soil and then ploughed the seeds in, weeds and all.
- Planting of seeds was done in the Autumn, unlike farmers in Victoria.
- Find the Sea of Galilee on a map and talk about how the people used the surrounding land.

### You will need:

- A Sower, a few birds and a thorn bush (Available in 2D Images)
- Bone felt base and brown felt road
- A few rocks and a thin strip of brown felt: 2cm x 15cm (for good soil)
- A handful of seeds eg wheat.

*When children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story, place the gold box/bag, containing the materials you will need, carefully beside you.*

*Spread the road out on the felt base in front of you. Place the Sower on one side of the road.*  
**One day Jesus told a story about a man who went out to sow some seeds**

*Scatter a few seeds with your hand on the road.*  
**Some of the seeds fell along the side of the road.**

*Place the birds on the road.*  
**Birds came and ate the seeds up straight away.**

*Place the rocks further down the road to the side.*  
**Some of the seeds fell on rocks.**

*Raise your hand to show the seeds growing and say:*  
**As soon as they started to grow, the hot sun dried them up and they quickly died.**

*Place the thorn bushes further down the road to the side.*  
**Some of the seeds fell into thorn bushes.**

*Raise your hand to show the seeds growing then wring your hands to show the strangling action, and say:*  
**When those seeds started to grow, the thorn bushes strangled them so they couldn't grow any fruit.**

*Place the strip of brown felt further down the road to the side scatter some seeds and say:*  
**But most of the seeds fell on good earth.**

*Place the trees on top of the brown felt.*

**The seeds in the good earth grew. They grew tall and strong with lots of fruit and produced thirty or sixty or even a hundred times as much as was scattered.**

*And Jesus told those who were listening:*

**“If you have ears, pay attention.”**

## **The Gospel of the Lord**

**Response: Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **I Wonder**

- I wonder why the seeds on the side of the road were eaten by the birds?
- I wonder why the seeds that fell on the rocks were dried up by the sun?
- I wonder why the seeds that fell on the thorn bushes were strangled by them?
- I wonder why the seeds in the good earth grew strong and tall?
- I wonder why Jesus told this story?

## **The Parable of the Sower**

**Mark 4:2-9**

Jesus used stories to teach them many things, and this is part of what he taught:

Now listen! A farmer went out to scatter seed in a field. While the farmer was scattering the seed, some of it fell along the road and was eaten by birds. Other seeds fell on thin, rocky ground and quickly started growing because the soil wasn't very deep. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched and dried up, because they did not have enough roots. Some other seeds fell where thorn bushes grew up and choked out the plants. So they did not produce any grain. But a few seeds did fall on good ground where the plants grew and produced thirty or sixty or even a hundred times as much as was scattered.

Then Jesus said, "If you have ears, pay attention."

### **Prepare to hear the Word: Teacher**

- Jesus told this parable to the “large crowd” while he was on a boat on the Sea of Galilee (Mk 4:1-2) For Mark, beside the sea, was a congenial setting.
- The twist in this parable was in the tail – the sheer abundance of the yield. Even good soil in Palestine, after an exceptionally good season, could not be expected to yield much more than a tenfold harvest.
- Jesus’ audience in this setting, was the dispossessed, the day-labourers, the tenant farmers, the struggling land-holders, the women. To these people a hundred-fold harvest would have paid off their debts and enabled them to break free permanently from oppression. It would have been unbelievably good, a gift of the creating God.
- The consistent action of Jesus to date in Mark had been to address the situation of oppression and injustice that Jesus’ listeners faced.

*Together in Galilee John McKinnon 2005*