



One day as Jesus sat by the Sea of Galilee, many people gathered around to hear him preach. Soon the crowd became very large. Jesus wanted everyone to be able to hear him, so he got into a boat. As he sat in the boat, he told the crowd on the shore a parable—a story that would teach a special truth. Jesus said, “A farmer went out to plant his seed. As he scattered the seed on the ground, it fell in different places.

Some of the seed fell on the hard path, and birds came and ate it up.

“Some seed fell on rocky places, where the soil was thin. The seed grew very quickly, but the roots of the young plants were not able to grow deep into the ground. When the hot sun came up, it dried up the plants.

“Other seed fell among thorns. The thorns grew very strong and choked the plants.

“Still other seed fell on good soil. It grew into strong plants that produced a huge crop.”

Later Jesus told his disciples the meaning of the parable. He said, “The seed is the Word of God. Some people hear the Word of God, but they don’t believe it. Then the devil comes and takes the Word of God out of their hearts, just as the birds took away the seed that fell on the hard path.

“Then there are people whose hearts are filled with joy when they hear God’s Word. They believe God’s Word at first. But when they have troubles because they believe in God, they turn away from him. Just like the plants that grew in thin, rocky soil, the faith of these people dies when troubles come.

“The plants that were choked out by thorns are like the faith of people who believe God’s Word but care too much about the things of this world. They let riches and worries get in the way of God’s Word. Then their faith dies, and these people fall away from God.

“But there are some people whose hearts are like the good soil. They hear God’s Word and believe it. They grow strong in God’s Word just as the plants grew strong in the good soil. Such people show their faith in God by serving him in their lives.”