

➤ **Read Luke 8:4–15.**

➤ **Read Luke 8:4–8.**

1. What do you notice about how the farmer sows his seed?

2. What four types of soil does the seed fall on? (vv. 5–8)

3. The farmer broadcasts the seed widely over a variety of soils. In spite of this indiscriminate sowing, what does he reap? (vv. 5–8)

➤ **Read Luke 8:9–10.**

4. Read Matthew 13:11–17 which expands on Luke 8:10. (📖\* Mt. 13:34–35; Mk. 4:33–34)  
What does this passage say about why Jesus speaks to the people in parables?

Jesus often spoke in parables, which required the listener to contemplate the meaning. “The word parable means ‘to cast along-side.’ A parable is a story that teaches something new by putting the truth alongside something familiar. The people knew about seeds and soil, so the Parable of the Sower interested them.”<sup>1</sup>

What warning is there in this passage?

What encouragement is there in this passage?

5. The illustration of the farmer sowing would be very familiar to the crowd present, yet even Jesus' disciples have trouble understanding its meaning. Mark 4:10 says that the "twelve and others around him" ask what the parable means. Those close to Jesus are earnestly seeking to know more; they are searching for answers as they slowly grow in understanding and faith. How does this encourage you in your own walk of faith? (You may want to consider Jer. 29:13; Mt. 7:7-8)

► **Read Luke 8:11-15.**

6. "The seed is the word of God" (v. 11). How is seed a good illustration of the word of God? (📖 1 Cor. 3:6-7; Heb. 4:12a)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What is true about spiritual seed (the word of God) that is different from plain old earthly seed? (1 Pet. 1:23-25)

What does this mean for those of us who are born of this imperishable seed? (1 Pet. 1:3-5)

8. What does the soil in general represent? (vv. 12-15)

9. Fill in the chart below.

Soil	Meaning of the soils	What might this look like in real life?
v. 5 Path	v. 12	
v. 6 Rocky	v. 13	
v. 7 Thorny	v. 14	
v. 8 Good	v. 15	

10. Why does the seed not have any hope of growing in the first three soils?

11. Consider the good soil. How do you think it became good soil? (v. 15, Eph. 2:1-5)

How can an outside observer tell which soil is good?

12. Now that you understand the parable a little more, who do you think the farmer or sower could represent? (There is more than one answer here.) (📖 Mt. 13:37; 1 Cor. 3:5-9)

13. What parts of this passage are encouraging as you consider sharing the word of God with people in your life?

### *Parable*

“A parable starts off as a **picture** that is familiar to the listeners. But as you carefully consider the picture, it becomes a **mirror** in which you see yourself, and many people do not like to see themselves. This explains why some of our Lord’s listeners became angry when they heard His parables, and even tried to kill Him. But if we see ourselves as needy sinners and ask for help, then the mirror becomes a **window** through which we see God and His grace. To understand a parable and benefit from it demands honesty and humility on our part, and many of our Lord’s hearers lacked both.”<sup>2</sup>

14. This parable is primarily about spreading the gospel and people’s response to it. It encourages us to sow broadly and trust the harvest to God. But it can also serve as a caution to us to consider how we react to hearing the word. Pray, take stock, and allow the word to be a picture, a mirror, and - most importantly - a window into God’s extravagant grace.

\*📖 For further study

<sup>1</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe. *An Exposition on the New Testament Comprising the Entire “BE” Series: The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton: SP Publications, Inc., 1989), 201.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.