



Growing Together in Christ



PEACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

**Sermon by Pastor Avhashoni Matamela at Peace Lutheran Church, Danville, CA,
on Sunday, July 12, 2026**

- **Grace and Peace to you from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**
- *Sermon Text:*
The sermon text this Sunday, the 7th Sunday after Pentecost, is taken from the Gospel of Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23.
- *Central Message: Let us keep sowing.*
- *Textual Background on Parables.*

When we read the three gospels known as the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) all these gospels portray Jesus who loved to use parables in his preaching. Jesus loved to use this teaching method knowing that his audiences will understand him better by something they are familiar with. Most of Jesus' parables are related to agriculture, and people by then do understand how agriculture works.

For example, in the very same chapter we read today, there are many parables and all are related to agriculture.

The Parable of the Weeds among the Wheat, Parable of the Mustard Seed, Parable of the Yeast, Parable of the Pearl, Parable of the Net, and the Parable of the Sower. This chapter is the parables chapter, and all these parables hold a great spiritual truth.

- *The text itself, Matthew 13, 1-9, 18-23 – Interpretation*
Today's pericope contains the Parable of the Sower, where Jesus shares a story about a farmer scattering seeds, which land on four types of soil or ground. While the seed which is the Word of God is the same, the results differ based on the condition of the ground it lands on.

Firstly, the Hard Soil or Ground: The first kind of soil is the hardest kind of soil where it is trodden upon. The seed does not settle well, and the bird comes and takes it away. This represents individuals who hear the message but immediately have it snatched away because they do not understand or accept it. Here the word has no effect because it never penetrates and is quickly taken away.

Secondly, the Rocky Ground or Soil. This second kind of soil is where there is a thin layer of soil, and it does not allow for deep roots. So, the seed grows very fast, but when difficulties come in the shape of the sun, it withers or dries and dies. And it proves itself to be unfruitful. This seed sprouts quickly but dries up under the sun because it lacks deep roots. This represents people who receive the message with instant joy but fall away as soon as trouble or persecution arises. Jesus was also encouraging and warning his disciples and followers, that they will encounter difficulties while spreading the gospel and should keep sowing.

Thirdly, the Thorny Soil or Ground: This is the kind of soil which is in the midst of lots of thorns, a lot of competition, so that it is ultimately dominated by the thorns, choked up by the thorns. This symbolizes those people who hear the word but allow the worries of life and wealth to suffocate their faith. The thorny ground describes someone who receives the word but whose heart is full of riches, pleasures, and lusts, the things of this world take their time and attention away from the Word and ends up having no time for it.

Lastly, the Good Soil: Only the last kind of soil or ground which is a good soil, a seed gets implanted that it could blossom and flourish to amazing fruitfulness. This seed takes root and produces a plentiful harvest. This describes believers who hear the word, truly understand it and live lives that produce spiritual fruit. Their faith takes root and grows, producing a large harvest (yielding thirty, sixty, or a hundred times that was sown). This good seed portrays the one who hears, understands, and receives the Word, and then allows the Word to accomplish its result on his/her life. Here good hearers do three things. They listen, keep what they hear in their minds and hearts, and act upon it. They translate what they have heard into practice and action.

- *Application/Contextualization*

These four kinds of soil are meant to teach us the four kinds of hearers in this world. That is why this parable is a parable about hearing. Interestingly, we ourselves do fall or belong to one of those four kinds of soil. We are not excluded. In this parable, Jesus is saying we as the church are in a position of a farmer who keeps sowing. Knowing the types of soil he is sowing and that they are different. Every farmer knows that some of the seed he/she sows will be lost, it cannot all grow.



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