

THE PARABLE OF THE FARMER

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Jesus' disciples asked Him what the parable meant. He said, "The seed is God's word. The places in the story where the seed fell are people who hear God's words. The path in the parable is like people who hear God's words, but the devil comes and takes the words away so the people do not obey God. The rocks are people who hear God's words and are happy. But they only believe God for a little, and then stop. The thorny place is like people who hear God's words but start thinking about stuff on earth instead of about God. But the good soil is the people who hear God's words and obey them."

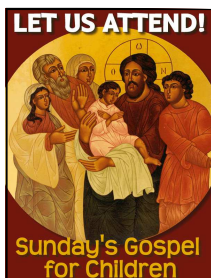
·THE SOWER OF GOOD SEEDS·



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Did you ever plant a seed like the farmer in the parable? Did it grow?
2. The farmer planted seeds on four kinds of soil. What happened to the seeds on the path? On the rocks? The weeds? The good soil?
3. What do the seeds in the story stand for?
4. You hear God's words at Church and at home. What kind of "soil" are you? Do you hear and obey God's words?



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Pre-12



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Materials:

- * birdseed
- * 3 paper/plastic cups
- * soil with lots of rocks
- * soil with weeds
- * "good" quality soil, such as potting soil
- * a marigold seed

Procedure:

1. After reading the gospel story to your child, take time to review the discussion questions following the story.
2. Prior to this lesson, prepare 3 cups of soil: the first cup should contain soil with lots of rocks, the second cup should contain soil with lots of weeds, the third cup should contain a quality potting soil.
3. Remind your child that the seed is like God's word. Give your child a bowl or baggie of birdseed and take it outside. Allow your child to toss it out for the birds. Discuss what happens to the seed as the birds come to eat it. The seed is taken away, just like the path in the story, which stands for the people who hear God's word but allow the Devil to take away God's word in their hearts.
4. Show your child the three containers of soil: the rocky soil, the weed-filled soil, and the potting soil. Give your child the marigold seed and ask your child which cup would be the best one to use to plant their seed so that it grows into a strong, healthy plant.
5. Discuss why the rocky soil and weed-filled soil would be poor choices for planting their seed. In the rocky soil, the plant may sprout and start out growing well, but it will eventually suffer because the soil will not provide what the plant needs to become a beautiful flower. These rocks are like the people who believe God's word, but soon forget. In the weed filled soil, the plant may sprout, but the weeds will quickly take over and the little delicate plant won't have room to grow. These weeds are like the people who hear God's word, but allow the things of the world to be more important.
6. Help your child plant their marigold seed in the potting soil. Discuss how this potting soil stands for those people who hear God's word and obey Him. With patience and care, this seed will grow into a beautiful flower.
7. Over the days and weeks to follow, care for the little plant with your child. Remind your child that in order to allow this plant to grow into a beautiful flower, you must water and care for it. This is just like our life with God. Ask your child what we must do to allow God's word to grow in our hearts - (go to church, pray, do nice things for others, listen to God's word, etc.)

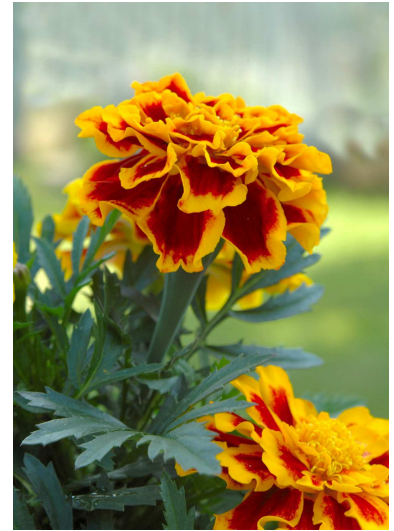
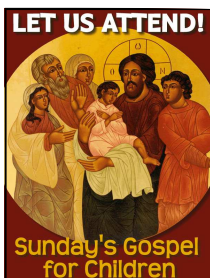


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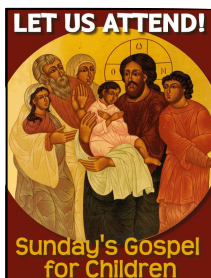
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THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

The Lord spoke this parable, "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundredfold." And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, Jesus said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for other they are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.

"And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but

as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.

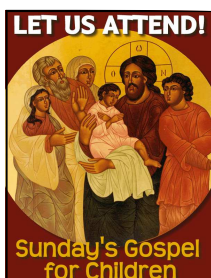
"And for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience." As Jesus said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."



Image courtesy of sxc.hu

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What kinds of soil did the seeds that the farmer sowed land on?
2. What is the seed in this parable?
3. What did the kinds of soil represent?
4. What kind of soil are you? What kind of soil would you like to be?
5. What can you do to make your heart honest and good so that it can bring fruit?



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Characters: Narrator, Jesus

Narrator: The Lord spoke this parable,

Jesus: A sower went out to sow his seed;
and as he sowed, some fell along
the path, and was trodden under
foot, and the birds of the air de-
voured it.

And some fell on the rock; and as it
grew up, it withered away, because
it had no moisture.

And some fell among thorns; and
the thorns grew with it and choked
it.

And some fell into good soil and
grew, and yielded a hundredfold.

Narrator: And when his disciples asked him
what this parable meant, Jesus said,

Jesus: To you it has been given to know
the secrets of the kingdom of God;
but for others they are in parables,
so that seeing they may not see,
and hearing they may not under-
stand.

Now the parable is this: The seed is
the word of God. The ones along
the path are those who have heard;
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that they may not believe and be
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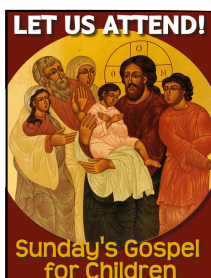
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Narrator: As Jesus said this, he called out,

Jesus: He who has ears to hear, let him
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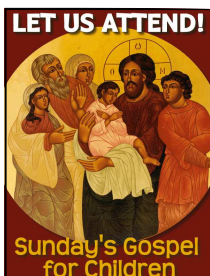
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“And for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience.” As Jesus said this, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What is the seed in this parable?
2. Listen carefully to the song, *Only Begotten Son*, which we sing during the second antiphon of the Divine Liturgy: what do we sing about the only begotten son in the first phrase of this song?
3. Is the seed in this parable a phrase, a commandment, a book, or a person?
4. If your mom hugs you, what would her action of hugging say to you? What, then, does it mean to hear her hug?
5. If you yell at your parents: “Why don’t you hear me?” What would you mean by “hear me?”
6. If the seed or word of God in this parable were the person Jesus Christ, what would it mean to hear him? How could we hear Jesus like the seed that fell on good soil?



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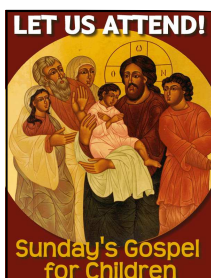


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4. What would it mean to hold Jesus fast in our hearts? How could we do that?
5. What can we do to create honest and good hearts in ourselves so that Jesus can dwell in them?



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