

The Parable of The Sower
The Gracious Gifts of Exposure, Hearing,
Understanding and Faith
and
The Paths To Eternal Life or Eternal Death

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God's Sovereign Decree
from Eternity
[Mt 25:34](#) [Eph 1:4](#) [Rev 13:8](#) [Rev 17:8](#) [Rom 9:11](#)
([1 Tim 5:21](#))

Exposure to the
Gospel?
Yes
[Rom 10:14](#)

Hears the Gospel?
That is, does the person,
at some level,
comprehend the Gospel?

Yes
Scripture uses "hear" not
only to mean physical
hearing, but also to
mean absorbing enough
information to make a
decision. This is a gift of
God. Hearers are thus
responsible to
understand, believe and
obey, not disobey, God.
[Mt 13:16](#), [Jn 3:16](#), [Jam 2:19](#), [Mt 7:22-23](#)

Understands (συνίημι) the
Gospel?

A key concept here is
"understand". Gk συνίημι
has origin from armies
coming together to battle.
Christian truth often seems
contradictory until "put
together" - understood. This
is a work of the Holy Spirit,
but not, itself, regeneration.

Not Applicable
Just as a small child may
trust its mother without
understanding, so God gives
some people trust (faith)
prior to understanding.
[Judges 13:7](#), [Ps 22:9](#), [Lk 1:41,44](#), [Mk 10:14](#)

Believes the Gospel?

A key concept here is "faith"
(Gk πίστις, noun form) or
"believe" (Gk πιστεύω, verb
form). This is the same
concept in either noun or
verb form. "Believe" is not
synonymous with "Elect" in
Scripture. Scripture
recognizes different kinds of
belief; not all of them are
saving faith.

Yes
These have true, living,
saving faith as evidenced by
increasing sanctification and
good works.
[Jn 3:16](#), [Eph 2:8-10](#)

Rooted in Christ, the Vine?
[Jn 15:1-17](#)

This is a relationship with the full
Trinity.
[Gal 5:22-25](#), [1Jn 2:23](#)

Yes
Only in union with Christ can the
believer bear fruit of the Spirit.
[Jn 15:4-5](#), [Gal 5:22-24](#)

Parable of the Sower
[Mt 13:1-23](#), [Mk 4:3-20](#), [Lk 8:4-15](#)

Good Soil
Hears, understands, believes, bears
Fruit of the Spirit, holds fast to the
Word, perseveres, has changed, honest,
good heart.
[Mt 13:8,23](#), [Lk 8:8,15](#), [Mk 4:8,20](#), [Jn 3:16](#), [Jn 15:1-10](#), [Ro 7:4](#), [Eph 2:8-10](#),
[Ez 11:19](#)



The final
destination of
all those in
Christ is to
spend eternity
with God in
Heaven.
[Rev 21:3-7](#),
[Rev 22:1-2](#)

Elect
Unregenerate & Enlightened
Unregenerate & Ignorant

No
Some will never be
physically exposed to
the gospel - they are
yet without excuse.
[Rom 1:20](#), [2:1,15](#)

No
"In one ear and out the
other." Does not absorb
any information.
[Mt 13:13-15](#)

No
The Word is not retained
long enough for
understanding, the Word is
not understood, the devil
snatches the Word away,
and other failure modes.
[Mk 4:15](#), [Mt 13:19](#)

Yes
Some believe, but their belief
does not reach deep into the
heart.
[Jn 6:66](#), [Jam 2:26](#)

No
Such people may or may not
believe in God, may believe
in a false "gospel", etc. They
think the Gospel is not true.
[Jn 3:18](#), [Mk 16:16](#), [2Thess 2:12](#)

No
Such a one has some level of belief and
even partakes of spiritual blessings. But
these do not abide (remain) in Christ.
[Jn 15:4, 6](#), [1Jn 2:19](#), [Heb 10:26-31](#), [2Pet 2:22](#)

No
Some choose to disbelieve in spite of
knowledge and understanding, often
preferring their idols to Christ.
[Mt 19:16-22](#)

Rocky Soil
Hears, believes, but has no root (vine),
does not persevere.
[Mt 13:5-6,20-21](#), [Mk 4:5-6,16-17](#), [Lk 8:6,13](#), [Ps 78:34-37](#), [Ez 33:31-32](#), [Mt 7:21-27](#), [Jn 6:70](#), [Jn 15:5-6](#), [1Jn 2:19](#),
[Job 27:8-10](#), [Heb 10:38](#)

Thorny Soil
Hears, but idolatry (cares, riches &
pleasures of world wrongly valued)
causes unfruitfulness.
[Mt 13:7,22](#), [Mk 4:7,18-19](#), [Lk 8:7,14](#),
[Mk 10:23-27](#), [Lk 12:15](#), [1Tim 6:9-10](#),
[2Pet 2:14-15](#), [1Jn 2:15-17](#), [Ex 20:3,17](#),
[1Jn 2:19](#), [Job 27:8-10](#), [Heb 10:38](#)

Ac 5:1-10

Note: It is clear in [Lk 8:13](#) that those
who are Rocky Soil believe for awhile.
But Thorny Soil either rejects the
gospel right away ([Mt 19:16-22](#)) or
else believes the gospel for a time, then
falls away ([Ac 5:1-10](#)), both from
idolatry.

Maybe?
Like demons, some believe
God exists and perhaps even
believe the Gospel is true, but
hate God and are repelled by
Christ.
[Job 1:6](#), [Jam 2:19](#), [Mt 28:11-15](#)

No
No relationship to Christ.
[Jn 3:18](#)

No
No relationship to Christ.
[Jn 3:18](#)

Hard Soil (Path)
Hears, but does not understand or
believe. Word snatched away from
heart.
[Mt 13:4,19](#), [Is 6:9-10](#), [Mk 4:4,15](#), [Lk 8:5,12](#), [Jn 12:39-40](#), [Rom 11:8](#)

Not Addressed
Those never exposed to the Gospel are
not addressed by this parable.

The final
destination of
all who are
not in Christ
is eternity in
Hell and the
Lake of Fire.
[Rev 21:8](#), [Mk 9:43,47-48](#),
[Rev 20:14-15](#),
[Jude 5-7](#)



IMPORTANT NOTE:
The Parable of the Sower and this commentary are with respect to *final results*. Some will initially reject the Gospel, live as hypocrites, etc., before repenting and believing in Jesus Christ. Others, as shown above, have some spirituality for a time, but will have never had a part in Christ.
[Ez 18:21-24](#), [Mk 15:31-32](#) & [Lk 23:39-43](#)

N.B.: All of these people, from those who have never been physically exposed to the Gospel to the most enlightened and learned, are in the visible church along with elect believers! While attendance at church may give exposure to the Gospel, church attendance, membership or activity, however useful, are simply not part of of justification.

This does not mean that the various true branches of the visible church are useless! They afford an opportunity to hear the Gospel and are a source of great grace to believers. God commands worship assemblies and delegates His authority to church elders. [Heb 10:24:25](#), [Mt 18:15-20](#), [1Tim 5:17](#)

It must be understood that many in the visible church are not what they outwardly appear. Also, many who are in the visible church will come to understanding and saving faith after a time of hypocrisy, delusion, etc.

Q: Do good works save?
A: NO!!
God commands good works. But, the Bible often speaks of works (good and bad) because they are *evidence* of what is in the heart and of one's relationship to, or against, Christ.
Also, just as electricity in a light bulb *must* produce both heat and light by fundamental natural law, so true saving faith *must* produce *both* justification *and* good works.
[Eph 2:8-10](#), [Rom 8:9](#), [Gal 5:22](#)

Q: Hey dummy! Why did you reverse the order here? The Gospels start with the path and end with the good soil.
A: Because Heaven is higher than Hell and I did not want my lines to cross.

Note on [Heb 10:29](#) - "justified" does not appear in this passage. Justification follows election and cannot be undone! But, just as a freshly cut branch is still green, it may take time for the final state to be manifest.