

### SOWING THE SEED

*The story:* "He [Jesus] spoke many things to them in parables, saying: 'Behold, a sower went out to sow ...'"<sup>1</sup>

*The lesson:* In this parable of 'The Sower', Jesus used a farmer's work as an illustration. From earliest times the cycle of nature has always started in anticipation of a good yield. Here's one of the best-known sayings from the Bible about farming life that is often given as good advice - "Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."<sup>2</sup>

### THE WAYSIDE

*The story:* "And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them."<sup>3</sup>

*The lesson:* This seed never takes root. "Those by the wayside are the ones who hear: then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."<sup>4</sup> First we have to listen, then understand and believe the message for it to take root in our lives. Jesus said "blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"<sup>5</sup>



### ROCKY GROUND

*The story:* "Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth ... when the sun was up, they were scorched."<sup>6</sup>

*The lesson:* This seed's root has no depth.



"The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy ... and in time of temptation fall away."<sup>7</sup> Following Jesus is not easy and the effect of God's word has to be real or it will not last.

### THORNS & WEEDS

*The story:* "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them."<sup>8</sup>

*The lesson:* Weeds spread and take over. "Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who ... are choked with cares, riches and pleasures of life."<sup>9</sup> Problems and worldly ambitions keep us away from God. "What profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"<sup>10</sup>



### GOOD SOIL

*The story:* "But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold."<sup>11</sup>

*The lesson:* Jesus looks for a good response to his 'Good News'. "These are the ones sown on good ground, who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred."<sup>12</sup> "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."<sup>13</sup>

### SO WHERE AM I?

One thing is certain. *We are all in this story somewhere.* Let's be sure we produce a very good crop. Here's the 'Good News' that Jesus wants us to respond to:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life ... He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God"<sup>14</sup>

### ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

A good yield is what farming is all about and Jesus often used farming life to illustrate His teaching. In the parable of 'The Sower' He explains that the seed is the word of God and the extent to which we respond is illustrated by what sort of crop it produces.

Now you know what the 'Good News' message from God is, the challenge is - how will *you* respond? What type of "ground" are *you*?

If you are ready to hear the word of God, Jesus invites you to come to Him, and He says "Whoever comes to me I will never drive away."<sup>15</sup>

Let the word of God find a firm place in your heart and the result is inevitable - a good yield!

References in this leaflet are from the Bible:

- 1 Matthew chapter 13 verse 3
- 2 Galatians chapter 6 verse 7
- 3 Matt chapter 13 verse 4.
- 4 Luke chapter 8 verse 12
- 5 Luke chapter 11 verse 28
- 6 Matthew chapter 13 verses 5, 6
- 7 Luke chapter 8 verse 13
- 8 Matthew chapter 13 verse 7.
- 9 Luke chapter 8 verse 14
- 10 Matthew chapter 16 verse 26
- 11 Luke chapter 8 verse 8
- 12 Mark chapter 4 verse 20
- 13 John chapter 3 verse 36
- 14 John chapter 3 verses 16,18
- 15 John chapter 6 verse 37 (NIV)

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# A GOOD YIELD

