



## [Matthew 13:3-9](#)

(3) Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. (4) And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. (5) Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. (6) But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. (7) And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. (8) But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. (9) He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

*New King James Version*

The seed is the Word of [God](#), and its hitting the ground is not the end of the story. A variety of things can happen that will affect the growth of that seed. Some might fall on stone, others might be buried too deep. Rain may come and wash away some of it. Birds may devour others. But because life is in the seed, something will happen.

In the last century, archeologists found wheat and cotton seeds in some of the burial chambers that they excavated. Those seeds—which were probably anywhere from 2,000-4,000 years old—grew when put into the right soil. The spirit of life was still in them, even though they had lain dormant for thousands of years.

This is dramatic confirmation that, if a seed is sown, it will do something when it lands in the right kind of soil. [Jesus](#) shows in this parable that the environment affects the seed's growth. When we make the proper application—people are the ground, and our environment and what we do after receiving the seed—the word of truth, containing the doctrines—is what affects its growth. In this analogy, growth represents sanctification, which is the formation of God's image in us by living His way of life empowered by His Spirit. What we do with the seed is "work[ing] out [our] salvation with fear and trembling" ([Philippians 2:12](#)). It is the equivalent of rain, sunshine, weeding, fertilizing, so that the potential for fruit is the greatest. Sanctification is worked out through application, by living the doctrines and the truths of God.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Matthew 13:3-9 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

— John W. Ritenbaugh

**To learn more, see:**

**[Unity \(Part 5\): Ephesians 4 \(B\)](#)**

**Related Topics:**

[Agricultural Metaphors](#)

[Parable of the Sower and the Seed](#)

[Sanctification](#)

[Sanctification as Germination](#)

[Sanctification as Growth](#)

[Seed](#)

[Seed as Metaphor](#)

[Seed as Metaphor of God's Word](#)

Commentary copyright © 1992-2017 [Church of the Great God](#)  
New King James Version copyright © 1982 by [Thomas Nelson, Inc.](#)