



*Written by
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The Parable of “The Sower”

Scripture: Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

Dramatic Category: “Fractured Parable”

What is a “Fractured Parable”?

A “Fractured Parable” is a contemporary, humorous re-telling of one of the parables of Jesus. The narrator, who may, or may not be involved in the action, tells the parable. As the parable is told, the mimes portray the action, occasionally using props and suggested costume pieces. The mimes generally wear black slacks, black turtleneck shirts or black and white striped shirts with black suspenders, and white gloves to accent their hand motions. They do not need to wear the traditional “white-face” of the mime genre. These “Fractured Parables” do not require any specific set.

Topic: Personal response to the Word of God

Performance Time: 5 minutes

Number of Players: 12 players (*men or women*)

Objective:

To contrast the "good soil" of a heart that receives the Gospel Seed and multiplies it, with soils (hearts) in which the Gospel Seed withers and dies.

Synopsis:

In the "Parable of the Sower," Jesus compares the Gospel message to a "Seed" that is planted in the "soil" of the human heart. He tells a story of four different kinds of soil, each one receiving the Seed of the Gospel. The first Seed responds with a lack of understanding; the second, with a fear of persecution; the third is preoccupied with the cares and pleasures of this world; but finally, the fourth Seed is fruitful, takes root, multiplies its witness, and brings others into the kingdom of God.

Cast:

Narrator: *Reads the parable from this script*
Mimes
The Farmer: *Holds the bucket and wears the straw hat*
The Seeds: *Seed along the path*
Seed in parched ground
Seed among the Thorns
Seed in good soil
The Pests: *2 Birds*
1 hot Sun
1 rays of the Sun
2 Thorns

Props:

A bucket
A straw hat
A dollar bill
Car keys
A Bible

Sound: A wireless mic for the narrator

Staging:

Line the four Seeds up behind the farmer in a single file line, **facing the audience:** first, the farmer; then the Seed that fell along the path; then the Seed that fell in the parched soil; then the Seed that fell in the Thorny soil; and finally, the Seed that fell in the good soil.

Line the "pests" up across the back of the stage with their **backs to the audience;** they will turn and join the action on their cue in the script. The stage configuration looks like this:

Birds Thorns Sun Rays

Good Soil

Thorny Soil

Parched Soil

Soil Along the Path

The Farmer

Narrator

NOTE:

This skit is a narrated mime; this technique requires that the action described by the narrator be acted out in **pantomime** by “mimes” who **perform simultaneously** while the story is being told. The attention of the audience is on both the narrator and the mime action. Block the action of the mimes so that they illustrate the events being described by the narrator. Facial expression and interaction between the narrator and the mimes is suggested to add comedy and energy to the performance. The characters respond to what the narrator says. The action is almost constant.

The Script:

NOTE: The narrator lines are in bold. *The mime directions are in italic.*

Narrator: *One day, Jesus began to teach a crowd of people who had gathered to hear Him. He spoke to them in a parable, saying:*

“A farmer when out to scatter some seed.

(The "Farmer" tips his hat to the audience and holds out his bucket proudly.)

As he was scattering the seed, some seed fell along the path,

(The Farmer reaches into his bucket and tosses a handful of imaginary seed to his right. As he tosses it, the Seed Along The Path jumps out to its right and sits, cross-legged, on the floor, smiling happily.)

and the birds came and ate it up.

(The “Pests” turn, become Birds, and flap their wings by flailing their arms widely, make a very sinister facial expression, and scream a high-pitched "Caaaaah, Caaaah,” as they approach the happy little Seed, who switches from a blissful smile to a very distressed grimace. The Birds start pecking at the Seed, then pick it up by grabbing one elbow and one extended knee each. They carry the Seed to the back of the stage. The little Seed stands up and becomes another “Pest” until the retelling of the parable. The “Pests” resume their "Pest" pose, with their backs to the audience.)

Some seed fell on rocky places,

(The Farmer reaches into his bucket and tosses a handful of imaginary seed to his left. As he tosses it, the Seed In Parched Soil jumps out to its left, squats down and begins to grow.)

where it did not have much soil.

It sprang up quickly because the soil was shallow,

(The Seed jumps up, extends its arms like leaves, but moves its feet around in search of deeper soil.)

but when the sun came out,

(The Sun and its Rays, turn from the back of the stage and approach the little plant. The Sun lifts its arms, making a circle with its face in the center. It makes a very sinister face at the plant. The Rays of the Sun stand directly behind the Sun and waves its arms like a snake on both sides of the Sun's circle, then the Sun makes hissing sounds like the scorching of a very hot iron.)

the plants were scorched and withered because they had no root.

(The scorched plant, fans itself in reaction to the heat, then finally passes out due to heat exhaustion.)

(The Sun and its Rays give each other a "high-five" in triumph, then turn to resume their "Pest" pose, leaving a dead plant in a heap on stage.)

Other seed fell on thorny soil,

(The Farmer reaches into his bucket and tosses a handful of imaginary seed to his right. As he tosses it, the Seed In Thorny Soil jumps out to its right and squats down. The Thorns turn from their rear stage pose, tiptoe stealthily up to unknowing little Seed as they hush each other, and squat down on either side of it.)

which grew up and choked the plants.

(The Thorns grow up alongside the little Seed, but as they approach a standing position, one wraps its arms around the Seed's waist, while the other wraps its hands around the Seed's neck. The Thorns begin to squeeze the little Seed until it chokes and passes out.)

(The Thorns wipe their hands on their clothes as though to say, "That was messy," then they resume their "Pest" pose, leaving a choked out plant in a heap on stage.)

Still other seed fell on good soil,

(The Farmer reaches into his bucket and tosses a handful of imaginary seed over his head, then walks to the back to join the "Pests" with his back to the audience, leaving the line of sight clear for the Seed In Good Soil. As the Farmer tosses the seed and steps aside, the Good Seed steps forward, squats down, glancing sympathetically at the parched Seed on its left and the choked Seed on its right.)

where it grew up

(The Good Seed grows up to a standing position.)

and yielded a crop--

(The Good Seed extends its arms, and throws out seeds all around its area on stage, smiling triumphantly.)

some one hundred, some sixty, some thirty times what was sown.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear"

(All the players turn toward the Narrator, cup their hand around an ear, and gaze expectantly at the Narrator.)

Listen to what "The Parable of the Sower" means:

(All the players resume their original opening positions. The Seed that became a “Pest” returns to the original Seed position. The Farmer tips his hat to the audience and holds out his bucket proudly.)

“When anyone hears the message about the kingdom

(The Farmer reaches into his bucket and tosses a handful of imaginary seed to his right. As he tosses it, the Seed Along The Path jumps out to its right and sits, cross-legged, on the floor, smiling happily.)

and does not understand it,

(The little Seed looks confused and scratches its head, looking around for someone to help.)

the evil one comes

(The “Pests” turn around, and once-again become Birds. The Birds turn, but this time they make little horns out of their fingers, pretending to be Devils. They make a very sinister facial expression, and snarl as they approach the confused little Seed, who switches from a puzzled look to a very distressed grimace.)

and snatches away what was sown in his heart.

(The Devils appear to whisper to the Seed, then pick it up in the same way they did before, by grabbing one elbow and one extended knee each. They carry the Seed to the back of the stage. The little Seed stands up and becomes another “Pest” for the remainder of the parable, as before. The “Pests” turn their backs to the audience.)

This is the seed sown along the path.

The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places

(The Farmer reaches into his bucket and tosses a handful of imaginary seed to his left. As he tosses it, the Seed In Parched Soil jumps out to its left, squats down and begins to grow.)

is the one who hears the word and at once receives it with joy.

(The Seed jumps up, extends its arms like leaves, but moves its feet around in search of deeper soil.)

But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time.

When trouble or persecution comes because of the word,

(The “Pests” turn from the back of the stage and approach the little plant, but this time they whisper to each other, point, and laugh at the little plant, clearly making fun of it.)

he quickly falls away.

(The little Seed looks self-conscious, bows its head and turns away, with its feeling hurt.)

The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns

(The Farmer reaches into his bucket and tosses a handful of imaginary seed to his right. As he tosses it, he Seed In Thorny Soil jumps out to its right and squats down. The “Pests” turn from their rear stage pose, and eagerly walk up to the growing Seed. One waves a dollar bill and the other dangles car keys like a carrot, trying to lure the Seed into grabbing them.)

**is the one who hears the word,
but the worries of this life
and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it,
making it unfruitful.**

(The Seed eagerly grabs the dollar and the keys, then looks guilty and sad.)

But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil

(The Farmer reaches into his bucket and tosses a handful of imaginary seed over his head, then walks to the back to join the “Pests” with his back to the audience, leaving the line of sight clear for the Seed In Good Soil. As the Farmer tosses the Seed and steps aside, the Good Seed steps forward, squats down, glancing sympathetically at the embarrassed Seed on its left and the guilty Seed on its right.)

is the one who hears the word and understands it.

(The “Pests” and the Farmer turn around and form a crowd around the Good Soil (without blocking the audience's view of Good Soil). The Seed opens a Bible and points to it, speaking in mime to the others and pointing at the verses. The others look very interested and lean in to read the Bible.)

He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

(All the players congratulate one another on a story well told as they exit the stage.)

The End