

# Reaching the Hurting and Lost

## Scatter the Seed • Message 2

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#### Prayer Points for Prayer Time

- **Pray that God would prepare and soften the hearts of the people you interact with.**
- **Pray for the courage and consistency to scatter seeds of Jesus in everyday life.**
- **Pray that Brookwood shows Christ's love through actions, words, and service.**

#### Scripture Reading:

*That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear.”*

**Matthew 13:1-9 (ESV)**

#### A. Introduction

Now, as we continue talking about reaching the hurting and lost, I want you to think about the fact that there are three types of churches. JD Greer, a pastor, actually speaks about this.

#### Three types of Churches:

**Cruise ship-** You get everything you need... it's all about you... it's got all the events, food, activities, and they serve you... Christianity is a mission, not a vacation...

So, if it's not a cruise ship to some people... then it's like a battleship...

**Battleship-** It does the fighting. The role of church members is to pay the pastors, who find the targets and fire the guns each week as they gather to watch. They see the programs, services, and ministries of the church as the primary instruments of mission.

**Aircraft carrier-** Launches others to do the mission and fight the battle. Let me remind you, Jesus never created a church and said, *Come and see...* he created a people to be the church and said, *Go and be.*

Show tree- Hardest to heat up... Reaching the Hurting and Lost... people get overwhelmed by this.

Today, I want to share a perspective that shows sharing your faith doesn't have to be difficult. In fact, what I want to share with you has taken the guilt, pressure, and burden out of sharing faith for me.

**1. Your job isn't to CONVERT anyone; it's to scatter seed.**

(Matthew 13:1-9. C/R: 1 Corinthians 3:6-7; Revelation 2:7a)

*That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down.*

**Matthew 13:1-2a (ESV)**

In Jesus' day, the teacher would sit, and the people would stand... we might have a little less sleeping if this still happened in churches today...

*"And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

**Matthew 13:4-8 (ESV)**

There are four types of soils mentioned. First, remember, Jesus is speaking to a predominantly agrarian culture. Most of them would have been farmers and very familiar with the imagery Jesus uses.

Gospel = Seed

Soil = Heart

**Hard path= Hard heart** (People who are closed off by pride or cynicism, these are people who are resistant, and aren't really interested in things of God.)

**Rocky ground= Shallow heart** (These are the folks who get excited about faith for a season, but after a while, they fall away.)

**Thorny ground= Divided heart** (These are folks who get excited about God, but the worries, pleasures, and riches of this world tend to eat away at them.)

**Good soil= Open Heart** (People who are receptive and hungry to know more.)

*“He who has ears, let him hear.”*

**Matthew 13:9 (ESV)**

Did you know that in Revelation, when Jesus gives letters to the seven churches, each letter ends with the same thing in Matthew 13:9?

*“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

**Revelation 2:7a (NIV)**

What struck me is that as I'm preaching, I don't know what everyone's hearts are like... I don't know where your heart is... some of you have hearts that are hard... some of you have shallow hearts... some have divided hearts... and some have open and receptive hearts...

Truth is, I've been every one of those at some point. But some of you today, and throughout this series, because your ears are open and your heart is open, God is going to grow and stir fresh faith in you in this season.

But some of us will miss it because we're playing on our phones or we aren't leaning in to what God has to say. We're allowing ourselves to be distracted. So, if I could encourage you: don't miss the words God wants to speak to you today and throughout this series.

Now, a farmer in that day would have a bag or pot of seeds, and they would scatter the seed... they didn't have machines, so they would throw seeds like this...**(you guys are in the splash zone today 😊)**

Here's the difference in that culture: farmers would scatter the seed before tilling the ground... so the farmer would have a field, and he wouldn't know what soil he was throwing the seed in... it was just his job to throw the seed out and wait and see...

Jesus is using this imagery to show that we can't see on the surface what type of hearts people have... and it's not our job to change people... it's just our job to sow seeds of grace... seeds of Jesus.

I thought it was interesting that Jesus closes with this... remember, he would be teaching the crowds of people.

But also let me encourage you... your job isn't to change or convert anyone... that's God's job... your job is just to be faithful to sow seed... you have no idea what's going on in the hearts of people...

*I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.*

**1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (ESV)**

I remember when I went on my first date with my wife. We were at a high school football game. At the game, she was talking to another guy... and after the date, I said to her, *Listen, I don't have time to play games. I want to know... are you in, or are you out?* Friends, this was the first date. She paused and said, *In.*

We put so much pressure on people, and we say things like, *If you don't get in the game, if you don't do something, people are going to hell without Jesus.* Then what happens is, it creates guilt and shame in Christians... and they get so overwhelmed that they don't do anything.

Your job is just to sow seed. And then let God do the work in people's hearts.

There was someone in our church whose co-worker, who isn't a Christian, got a bad medical diagnosis. He texted the coworker saying, *I'm praying for you, and I believe my God will heal.* The lady is not a Christian, but that text opened up conversations.

Someone else at the church was working with a client and invited her to church. She later emailed back saying she had been trying to find a church for over a year. She came one time, felt welcomed, and now feels like this is her home.

I met a guy at the pool last summer, and a Brookwood person came up to him three different times and said, *Hey, would you come to church?* He finally said, *I'll come to church if you quit inviting me.* ☺

I was literally talking to someone a few weeks ago in the Next Step room, and I asked him how he got here. He said, *I was at Starbucks with my head down, looking a little depressed, and someone from our church came over, talked to me, and invited me.* Scattering seed.

Baptism story---

I heard a story about a young person here who had an enemy... someone was making fun of them and bullying them. Instead of responding with anger, this person prayed for them and invited them to church.

Sowing seeds.

So often, we pick and choose who seems to be a good candidate for God to work in... but that isn't our job. We don't change people; God does! Our job is simply to sow seeds of grace, to sow seeds of Jesus to everyone, and let Him grow that in people's hearts.

## **2. Faith usually takes time to GROW.**

(Acts 1:8. C/R: Isaiah 55:11)

### **2 ways God changes people:**

**1.) Breakthrough** (Acts 9) (Saul on the Damascus Road)

**2.) Process** (Mark 8) (Multiple touches for some of us. This is freeing because some of you didn't have a single moment... it was a series of moments... some of you have been saved eight times... ☺)

It has just taken a while longer for things to take root.)

Now, we often think about sharing our faith... or evangelism in terms of breakthrough... but often it's a process... and I think we have to redefine success in evangelism.

You know what I find beautiful about this parable? Jesus mentions four soils... three are bad... that means 75% of those mentioned aren't going to take... 75%

But anyone who has done any planting knows... it's not always that easy to grow... there are things you can control, and other things that you can't.

You are going to plant a whole lot of seeds before you ever really see any fruit... and honestly, you might never... but let me encourage you with this...

The world makes everything about success... the Bible makes everything about faithfulness...

You will never be asked how successful you are... you will only be asked how faithful you are...

Honestly, for years, when someone accepted Christ... when I shared my faith... I took way too much credit... oh, I said this... oh, I did this... and if someone doesn't respond, I would take way too much blame...

Church, you can't change anyone... and God hasn't called you to be successful... just faithful.

Success is really about building our kingdom... faithful is about building His!  
Here's one way of looking at the soils...

### **Soil of the Heart:**

<b>(hard ground)</b>	<b>(shallow)</b>	<b>(thorns)</b>	<b>(good soil)</b>
-10   -9   -8   -7	-6   -5   -4	-3   -2   -1	salvation

Josh's story- Community of people that made difference.

We on stage do a bad job because we only tell stories of people who have surrendered their lives to Jesus. That can create the notion that everything else is a failure. But I want us to look at it a different way.

What if your job is just to move someone from a -8 to a -7. When people are moving in their faith journey, that is just as successful as someone surrendering their life to Jesus. Why?  
Because they are moving.

### **Soil of the Heart:**

<b>(hard ground)</b>	<b>(shallow)</b>	<b>(thorns)</b>	<b>(good soil)</b>
-10   -9   -8   -7	-6   -5   -4	-3   -2   -1	salvation

  

<b>actions</b>	<b>testimony</b>	<b>gospel..</b>
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Actions- Jesus ate with tax collectors while they were still sinners/ woman at the well.

Testimony- People can argue theology but can't argue the power of a transformed life.

Gospel- Share the story of Jesus. If someone says my soul is broken, I hope you find what you're looking for! I'll be praying... You need to share the good news of Jesus.

*“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

**Acts 1:8 (NIV)**

Some people confuse our spot in the courtroom... God has called you to be a witness, not a lawyer... your job is just to testify, not to make an airtight case...it's just to talk about what God has done.

I have seen this... Sara... she gave one of least compelling gospel presentations, but people responded because she wasn't trying to be a lawyer, she was a witness.

*"so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."*

**Isaiah 55:11 (NIV)**

Respond to God if he whispers... just be faithful, even if you have no idea.

We talk about four types of soil, but I actually think there are five... see, the fifth one is the one that never got any seed... it never heard the gospel... it never had the chance for the kingdom of God to breakthrough in its life... may we be the church who is faithful to share the gospel... to scatter seed... and then let God do what only he can.

Who is the person you are praying for? Don't give up, some of you have been sowing seeds for years.

Adam Smith, a friend of mine, wanted his dad to come to faith...he invited him to Easter... nothing... he prayed for him... nothing... he invited him to a Men's Conference thinking this is it... nothing... then one day, overwhelmed, he went on Father's Day, got his dad a Bible, and wrote a card. It said, *Dad, I don't want to go to Heaven without you...* and that was the catalyst that led him to accept Jesus.

I don't want to go to Heaven without you... just be faithful to sow seeds.

You never know how God will use it.

Who is your one...