

MESSAGE 1:

# THE SECRET OF THE SEED

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** Luke 8:4-11 (NASB)

<sup>4</sup> When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: <sup>5</sup> "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. <sup>6</sup> Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. <sup>8</sup> Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." <sup>9</sup> His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable meant. <sup>10</sup> And He said, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. <sup>11</sup> "Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God..."

**MESSAGE GOAL:** The goal of this message on *The Secret of the Seed* is to explain the importance of the truth that we first receive the gospel message in seed form, packed with all the potential of God's Word, and to show that the way we receive the Word can set the tone, for good or for ill, in our spiritual lives and growth in our walk with the Lord.

**INTRODUCTION:** The Indiana Jones series of films were very exciting because this adventurous and brave archeologist would spend time in search of valuable artifacts, many times going through great danger in order to find the great treasure he was searching for.

Jesus spoke of a treasure He called "the mysteries of the kingdom." He also said this is such an unusual treasure that should not allow anything to get in the way of our discovering it for ourselves. The word "kingdom" means rule. The biblical term used here refers to the doctrine of eschatology, which means "the last word" or "the last things," a reference to the Bible's teaching about the end-times.

More specifically in this passage, Jesus' reference to the kingdom points toward His millennial kingdom, His future reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. The Bible talks quite a bit about

when Jesus Christ will return and rule the entire earth from Jerusalem for this period of one thousand years. In the meantime, Jesus set forth during His earthly life several kingdom principles that apply to us as His followers today.

Jesus set forth these principles as a mystery, which in the Bible is not a brainteaser or something hard to figure out, but something that was not previously understood or revealed which has now been revealed or explained. These principles needed to be understood by Jesus' disciples in His day, and by us today if we are going to understand the uniqueness of this treasure that He called the kingdom.

Jesus often taught truth by means of a parable, a story that uses something familiar to the hearers to explain something that is not familiar to them. One of Jesus' most famous parables is that of the sower and the seed. It is riveting in its truth, and if you discover "the seed principle" it teaches, you will discover a secret that will transform your very existence.

This message is called *The Secret of the Seed* because Jesus wanted His disciples to know that success in the growth of the seed had nothing to do with the seed itself; the success of the seed had everything to do with where it landed.

Many times people will think, even if they don't say it out loud, "God's Word doesn't work. The Word is taught, but nothing's different in my life." Jesus wants us to know this parable so we understand that if nothing is different about us, it's not the problem of the seed. The issue is where the seed falls, which is why we have to check the ground it lands upon.

## SERMON POINTS:

### 1. THE SEED OF THE GOSPEL PROVIDES COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION:

We need transformation in all three parts of our being: body, soul, and spirit

- The soul is the self-life, your personhood, while your body is your physical life
- We were born with a live body, a damaged soul, and a dead spirit

our society's problem  
is not solely our *government's* problem.  
it is **the church's** problem.  
it is *our* problem.



- The soul of every human being is messed up and your body obeys your soul
- Sin is what distorts our soul because we were born in sin. In fact, we're born in iniquity.

**The gospel seed restores us in all three areas of our lives**

- The goal of spiritual transformation is for the spirit to enter into the soul and the soul to reinstruct the body
- When you were saved, you got the seed of the gospel planted in your spirit and you were born of the seed (1 Peter 1:23)
- If the body's going to act differently, it is because the soul is being influenced by a seed that's growing; if you're a believer, it is already there (James 1:21)

**2. THE WORD OF GOD IS NECESSARY FOR THE GROWTH PROCESS:**

Scripture is the tool that is needed to see transformation

- The Word of God is alive, just like a seed
- You don't see the tree, the fruit, or the plant, but it's in the seed
- The seed is alive, but it hasn't been planted in the right spot yet
- The Word has the power to fix up what is messed up in our lives (Hebrews 4:12)

**The seed of the Scripture will do its work if the soil is right**

- But if we are satisfied with a distorted soul, the Word can't take root in that soil
- Growth is not instant, but a process; the seed is not given to us as a completed process, but for the process of growth (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

**SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:**

**HUMAN FERTILIZATION AND GROWTH:**

When a female egg is fertilized, conception occurs. Life has now happened! However, if that fertilized egg doesn't "land" right—that is, if it doesn't become planted properly in the womb, the life in that egg cannot flourish even though the life is present. In much the same way, when you receive the Word of God, what you're getting is the Word in seed. Everything necessary for growth and full, healthy life is in the seed. But what happens too often is that we come to church and get the seed, but because the soil of our hearts is not conducive to growth, the seed that was just received is not free to express all that it was designed to become. The soil isn't cooperating with the nature of the seed, and the seed does not become what it was designed to become.

**THE SOWER/FARMER:**

If you were a farmer (or a sower) in Jesus' day, you would carry a large bag of seed on your back and reach in for handfuls as you walked along scattering the seeds in the furrows you had plowed. Those seeds that fell in the prepared soil would take root and grow. But other seeds would fall all over the place because the farmer scattered them with his hand.

Jesus uses this everyday farming process that all of His audience would've understood to tell us about the seed principle that is at work in His kingdom. In Jesus' parable, the seeds fell among different types of soil. Besides the good soil, some seeds also fell on thorny soil, wayside or roadside soil, and shallow soil. What Jesus wants His first disciples and us to know is that while the seed is the same, the place where it landed was very different. When the sower sows the seed, it is not the seed itself but the landing spot that determines whether there is a crop or not.

**HAVING EARS BUT NOT HEARING:**

In Luke 8:8, Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." There are churches in Africa that provide a wonderful illustration of this seemingly puzzling statement, which referred of course to the fact that people can hear something without letting it really sink in and getting the message.

In these churches, ushers walk up and down the aisles with long sticks while the preacher is preaching. When they see somebody nodding off, they jab that person in the ribs because they don't want anybody sleeping their way through the sermon and not listening. Those ushers are saying by their jabs, "You've got ears, but you're not listening. Wake up!"

**BACKGROUND BIBLICAL HISTORY AND CULTURE:**

**MYSTERY:**

The Bible's definition of a mystery is far different than its meaning in everyday language. We think of a mystery as a puzzle to be put together, a riddle to be solved or a knot to be untied. But a biblical mystery is none of these; instead, it is a truth that was previously hidden or not understood that God has now revealed and explained. Jesus called the truths of His kingdom a mystery because the full understanding of the kingdom had not been made known to God's people before Jesus came and explained it.

**our mission field is not merely across the sea.  
it is across the street.**





### **PARABLE:**

The word “parable” comes from a Greek term that means to place two things side by side for the purpose of comparison. The use of parables goes back to Old Testament times (see 2 Samuel 12:1-14; Isaiah 5:1-7), and they are also present in Jewish rabbinical writings. Jesus used parables extensively in His teaching, often to help His hearers understand a truth about His kingdom that had previously been hidden—a mystery. Thus, a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning—a story that takes something ordinary and familiar, to explain a concept that is unfamiliar.

### **SYNOPTIC GOSPELS:**

This term is used for the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke because they provide a synopsis, or summary, of Jesus’ earthly life and ministry. The Gospel of John is not included in this term because instead of taking his readers through Jesus’ earthly life, John chose seven specific “signs” by which to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Therefore, John does not include many of the words and deeds of Jesus that the other three Gospels include.

### **SERMON LINES:**

This message will help you introduce Jesus’ critically important parable of the sower and the seed, which contains vital principles concerning the way His kingdom operates on earth.

This message also focuses attention on our need to ensure that our hearts and lives are well prepared by the Holy Spirit to receive the life-giving seed of God’s Word—for it is the quality of the soil, not of the seed, that determines our spiritual growth or the lack thereof.

### **QUOTES BY DR. TONY EVANS:**

“If God’s Word is not working, you need to check the ground it landed on, because there is nothing wrong with the seed.”

“Hearing the Bible preached is like eating an appetizer. Once you hear the sermon, no matter how much you liked it or enjoyed it, all you got was the appetizer. The full meal comes when you take the Word you have heard and process it, digest it, and put it to use in your daily life.”

“There is nothing wrong with the seed because the seed is the Word of God and therefore the Word of God is perfect. The damage is in the soil.”

