

Short Talk

(SHT212)

**“What kind of “soil”
are you?”**

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SHORT TALK: “What kind of “soil” are you?”

- Aim of Short talk:** To challenge people about what kind of heart attitude they have to the good news about Jesus.
- Use of Short talk:** This is a short All Age talk picking out one issue from the Lectionary Gospel reading of the Sunday main service. The talk stands alone and assumes that the Gospel Bible reading may not yet have been read to the congregation. It could be used for example, for the whole congregation before the children go out to their age specific groups, leaving the adults with a full sermon later.
- Main themes:** Gospel, Heart, Attitudes
- Biblical references:** Matthew 13:1-9,18-23
- Lectionary:** Year A – The 5th Sunday after Trinity
- Props:** You need 4 seeds, a long piece of bramble, and 4 small plant pots with soil in them as follows:
- 1) The soil in this pot is compacted so that a seed cannot be easily pushed into it but will simply lie on the top of it.
 - 2) The soil in this pot is a thin layer covering some stones that fill up most of the pot.
 - 3) The soil in this pot fills it.
 - 4) The soil in this pot fills it.
- You also need to be able to project the pictures in Appendix 1.

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When Jesus taught the people all about God’s Kingdom, He expected them to respond to Him in different ways, depending on what their hearts were like.

Jesus made that clear one day by telling a story about a farmer going out and sowing seeds.

- As the farmer sowed the seeds, so they fell upon different types of soil.

Now the seed (*Pick up a seed and hold it up*) in Jesus’ story stood for the truth that God loves us and has made a way for us to come into His kingdom.

- The different soils in Jesus’ story stood for the different kinds of hearts within people.

As I tell you about those different hearts, I want you to ask yourself the question: “*What kind of heart do I have?*”

Now some of the seeds in Jesus’ story fell onto very hard soil. (*Lay seed on top of soil in pot 1*)

The seeds simply lay on top of the soil because the soil was so hard, and the birds came and took it.

- The kind of heart that this soil represents is someone who doesn't believe when they hear what Jesus says about God's love.
- This person may make fun of the name of Jesus.
- They may be rather cynical about the message of God's love.
- They may sneer when we try to share our faith with them and pull a face a bit like this one. (*Project Emoji Unbelief*)

Some of the seeds in Jesus' story fell upon some very shallow soil that was covering rocks. (*Gently push seed 2 into pot 2*)

- There is only a thin layer of soil in this pot because most of it is taken up with stones.
- Because the seeds were only in a thin layer of soil, when they started to grow up into plants, their roots couldn't go deep.
- When the sun came up, the plants withered and died.

The kind of heart that this soil represents is someone who shows interest in Jesus and starts to follow Him, but when trouble comes along because of their faith, they give up.

- This person doesn't want to suffer for their faith....
- They don't want to be called names at school, or be given a hard time at work, so when that starts to happen, they quickly give up following Jesus.
- Their face when they face trouble might look a bit like this one. (*Project Emoji Gives up*)

Some of the seeds in Jesus' story fell upon soil that was also growing something else in it. (*Gently push seed 3 into pot 3*)

- As the seeds grew into plants, so brambles grew up around them and choked them, so that they couldn't become fruitful. (*Pick up bramble and lay around the top of the pot*)

The kind of heart that this soil represents is someone who is a follower of Jesus, but who is also constantly distracted from following Him.

- They may be distracted by different sorts of worries,
- or they may be distracted by wanting more and more money or things.
- The problem with being constantly distracted is that they struggle to follow Jesus and bear good fruit.
- Their face when they are worried or distracted might look a bit like this one. (*Project Emoji Distracted*)

And lastly some of the seeds in Jesus' story fell upon good soil (*Gently push seed 4 into pot 4*)

- As the seeds grew, they produced a huge crop....they were really fruitful.

The kind of heart that this soil represents is someone who receives Jesus' message.

- They don't give up when the going gets tough.
- They don't allow themselves to get distracted from following Jesus,
- and so they are fruitful.

Their face might look a bit like this one. (*Project Emoji Receives*)

Now I wonder how you have answered my question: “*What kind of heart do you have?*”

- If you want a heart that is more able to receive Jesus’ message, why not ask Him to give that to you today?

Appendix 1 – Pictures

Unbelief



Gives up



Distracted



Receives

