

An rfour.org Children's Time Message

For more information visit rfour.org/childrenstime.html

Written for July 16, 2023

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year A

Scripture: [Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23](#) [**Summary:** *Parable of the Sower*]

Supplies Needed: Show the pictures on last page of this PDF file or bring a candy, cookie and fruit as props.

ASK (a.k.a. *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- Can you tell me what food this is? (Show piece of candy)
- How about this? Can you tell me what food this is? (Show chocolate chip cookie)
- OK, one more - what food is this? (Show apple)
- Even though all three of these foods are tasty, which one of these foods would you want to eat more of if you were getting ready for, say, an important sports game and wanted to be as healthy and ready as possible? (the apple - be prepared for other answers, though)
- That's right! You would want to eat the fruit because of the three foods, here, it is the one with the most nutrition and won't make you feel shaky 20 minutes after eating it.

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- I ask about types of foods and which ones are healthier because in today's scripture story, Jesus is also talking about food - but he's talking about food that helps plants grow or not grow.
- Now, when I say "plant food" – what I'm really talking about is types of soil that either help or do not help plants grow.
- And in the story that Jesus tells - which we usually call the "Parable of the Sower" - there are four types of plant food that are described and how the plants react to each type of those foods.
- But, what we find out in the story is that only one of those foods really helps the plants grow *well*.

- The other types of plant food in the story are like this piece of candy and the cookie – they might taste good, but they aren't the best food for us.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- One of the reasons Jesus tells this story about plant food is because he wants us to think about how we can better grow and nurture our trust in God.
- Just like certain types of soil make plants grow better, and just like some foods help us feel better during an athletic event, there are also certain activities we can do that help us better grow our trust in God.
- Some of those activities that help us grow our trust in God are prayer, reading and discussing Bible stories, and worshiping God together.
- The more we do these activities, the more our knowing and trusting of God will grow.
- And that's the good news for today. Let's pray.
- This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who teaches us...

...who teaches us...

...how to grow...

...how to grow...

...our trust in you.

...our trust in you.

Thank you and Amen

See next page for pictures

