

Luke 8:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

Analysis

Jesus explains the parable of the sower: 'The seed is the word of God.' This simple declaration establishes that parables concern God's word and its reception. The 'seed' (Greek 'sporos,' σπóρος) represents Scripture, gospel message, divine truth. Just as seed contains life potential requiring proper soil, God's word contains transformative power requiring receptive hearts. The parable isn't primarily about sowing technique but soil condition—how different hearts receive the same message produces vastly different results. Understanding this interpretive key unlocks the parable's meaning.

Historical Context

Farming parables resonated with first-century agrarian audiences. Palestinian farming involved broadcasting seed on various terrains—path, rocky ground, thorny areas, good soil—making the parable immediately understandable. Jesus' explicit interpretation (unusual—He typically let parables stand without explanation) shows the importance of this teaching. The four soils represent four responses to gospel preaching—rejection, superficial acceptance, worldly distraction, genuine faith producing fruit. This parable warns that not all hearing produces salvation; reception quality determines results.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does identifying the seed as 'the word of God' teach about Scripture's power and the importance of how we receive it?
2. How do the four soils illustrate different heart conditions and responses to the gospel message?

Interlinear Text

ἐστὶν	δὲ	αὕτη	ἡ	παραβολή·	Ὁ	σπόρος	ἐστὶν	ὁ
is	Now	this	G3588	the parable	G3588	The seed	is	G3588
G2076	G1161	G3778		G3850		G4703	G2076	
λόγος	τοῦ	θεοῦ						
the word	G3588	of God						
G3056		G2316						

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 13:19 (Word): When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

James 1:21 (Word): Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Isaiah 8:20 (Word): To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.