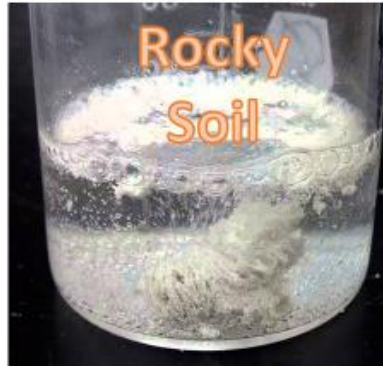


The Four Soils of the Parable of the Sower Illustrated

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As we consider the 4 soils represented in the Parable of the Sower, let's just pretend there are 4 containers which represent these 4 different soil types (the hearts and lives of people). All the containers are filled with baking soda but with varying amounts of other ingredients.



The **1st container** is filled with no water and a whole lot of baking soda and represents the **hard or wayside soil** (Matt. 13:19). With no water added to the baking soda there can be no reaction to the Gospel seed. This is the type of person that you try to talk to about Jesus and all they do is turn a deaf ear to you (Acts 7:51; Eph. 4:19). They don't want to hear about it. They want nothing to do with the Gospel seed. They may be polite, but their hearts are hardened. As a result, no fruit is generated in their lives proving they are without

regeneration. Of course, you never know when this type of person's heart may be softened and turn to repentance and faith in Christ (Matt. 13:15).

The **2nd container** is filled with 1/3 water + a little vinegar and a measured amount of baking soda. The reaction would result in some good fizz which represents the **rocky soil** (Matt. 13:20-21). This person seems to react positively to the Gospel seed and like the created fizz that results from combining water, vinegar, and baking soda there is a lot of fanfare about their alleged conversion to Christ. But because there's not much topsoil the seed dies out as quickly as it sprung up. This type of person is the one that will listen to what you have to say.



It's the person who seemingly has made a profession of faith in Christ and gets all excited about Jesus and will even come to church. But this is as much as you'll see from this person and eventually all their fizz is lost when they are persecuted for their association with Christ. As a result, they retreat back into their old ways of life bearing no signs of lasting and genuine fruit which can be used for the harvest (Heb. 10:39). This is because there was no genuine repentance in their life (no root). However, you never know when this type of person will express real repentance and faith in Christ and be saved (Rom. 1:16).



This **3rd container** is filled with 1/3 of vinegar (only vinegar and no water) along with a measured amount of baking soda. The result is that the vinegar will fizz up almost to the top of the jar and then die down which represents the **thorny or weedy soil** (Matt. 13:22). They too seem to react positively to the Gospel seed and make a profession of faith in Christ that seems very promising, but eventually their alleged and superficial attachment to Christ and Christianity is choked out for they are distracted by worldly

loves. Jesus is choked out of their lives and all their fizz and attachment to Him has gone out of their lives (John 6:66; 15:2). Again, this is because they never repented of their worldly sins and as a result they were not saved, and no genuine or lasting fruit was left for the harvest.

The **4th container** is filled with $\frac{1}{2}$ of vinegar (no water) and a goodly amount of baking soda. The results in the vinegar continually fizzing over the top of the jar and illustrates the **good soil** (Matt. 13:23). It pictures the individual who is truly saved and brings forth lasting fruit which is related to genuine repentance (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20). This is the productive soil which is the only soil type that produces genuine fruit. It



It pictures the individual who places real faith in Christ for his faith is authenticated by the lasting fruit that is generated in his life (James 2:14-26).