The Parable of the Sower

Does anyone here like stories? I love stories; I love happy ones, sad ones, long ones, short ones. Well, Jesus loved stories too and he used to tell a lot of them. Sometimes Jesus used to explain other things so that people might remember them.

Now children, have you noticed the lovely autumn colours and harvest festivals? Have you seen the farmers in the fields with their tractors? It reminds me of story Jesus told about a farmer sowing his seed.

Now, in Jesus day, they didn't have tractors to sow the seed; the farmers had to do it all themselves. They would walk up and down the fields wearing a big apron full of seed; and they would fling the seed this way and that so that it would be panted in the soil.

Now, as you can imagine, the seed didn't all go where the farmer wanted it to go.

Jesus told us how some of the seed went on to the roadside, and the birds saw the lovely seed and thought how tasty it would be and swooped down and ate up all the seed from the pathways. (Can you pretend you are the birds and come and peck up all the seeds?)

Then some of the seed fell on to the rocky ground, where there wasn't much earth. Can you see the rocky ground children? Well the seed tried to grow but it didn't have much space for good roots so it didn't grow very well at all and soon died off.

Some of the other seed fell into thorny weeds and the weeds grew faster than the seed and choked the good seed all up so it couldn't grow.

But some of the seed fell into the good soil that the farmer had prepared – can you see where the good soil is children? Well, this seed grew strong roots, and eventually grew into fine strong plants that pleased the farmer.

Now, Jesus wasn't just talking about seeds and farmers – he was talking about us.

The seeds are the important things people tell us – like being careful when you are crossing roads, and not playing with dangerous things or going off with strangers. And we are the soil that the seed of information is planted in.

Sometimes we don't listen very well and the seed can't get very far – like when it falls on the rocky ground – it's like the words fall on the hard roads and don't get inside our ears and we don't really hear the things we should or remember what people have told us. Sometimes we listen to the wrong words – maybe the things our friends tell us, or stuff on TV instead of what our parents tell us, and we let the weeds grow more than the good seed. And sometimes we forget too easily what people have said to us and it is like the birds coming and taking the seed away so we don't remember the important instructions that are for our safety and wellbeing.

But sometimes, we do listen carefully to the people who look after us, and with our hearts and minds open, it is like the good soil which the seed fell into and grew into strong and wonderful plants; and then we can learn to do the right thing and be better people if we can listen to the right words carefully.

We can see where the good seeds have grown well when we look out on the world around us. The wonderful strong trees and plants grow in good earth and grow up beautiful, just as God planned it.

So next time someone you trust tells you something important, think of the good earth and listen carefully. It will help you grow big and strong and just as beautiful as God planned you to be – just like the trees!