

RUSSELL SANDERS
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GOOD GROUND

The parable of the sower of the seed is found in the three synoptic gospels [Matthew, Mark, and Luke]. Only the seed that was sown upon good ground yielded its fruit. Although the seed sown on good ground produced fruit, not all the seeds were equally productive. They varied from just a little fruit to a bountiful harvest. [thirty-fold, sixty-fold, a hundred-fold.]

The sower is the word of God, Jesus. You and I are the seeds he sowed into the earth. We are the good ground based on his word as his followers.

The question here is this: how fruitful are you? Thirty-fold, sixty-fold, a hundred-fold? Maybe you are only ten-fold, twenty-fold, or forty-fold or ninety-fold producer. What exactly is the fruit that we should produce? What are the works that we should be doing?

One aspect of being fruitful is the fruit of the spirit, which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, etc. Another aspect of fruit is the works we perform because of the love we have for God from our salvation.

Works? Yes! Ephesians 2:8-9 says, ***“For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not [or by] works, lest any man should boast.”*** But people usually stop at verse nine. The very next verse gives a very important key to the context of verses 8 and 9.

Verse 10 says, ***“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto GOOD WORKS, WHICH [Father]God hath before ordained that we should walk in them [good works].”***

James 2:17 and 18b says, ***“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone... I will show thee my faith BY my works.”***

The works Jesus advocated were to give help or assistance to the poor, the needy, orphans, widows [elderly], and so forth. He even told the “rich young ruler” to sell everything he had and give it to the poor and then [you can] come follow me.

These works show love and compassion for people. Jesus demonstrated this compassion as a model for us.

Yes, we are to spread the gospel to the lost. However, when we show our love through good works, it opens the hearts of the poor, the needy, and the lost to actually receive the gospel. They respond to our demonstration of love. How fruitful am I being? How fruitful are you, my friend? Let us examine our works and pledge to do better. We are on good ground. Let us bear much fruit through our works.