

Sanctuary First

Theme Summary

“Guard the Good”

Aim

This service is centered around the parable of ‘The Sower’ We think this parable has a great deal to say about the whole issue of loss and change.

The Sower goes out sowing knowing that the seed he scatters may lie dormant and not produce fruit. Seeds may be lost. However he still sows generously, sowing over all kinds of soil, from stony paths to thorny hard ground. He sows generously for the sake of the seed that will bear fruit.

The parable may well reflect the different responses individuals make to the gospel. It may also be reflecting the varied response an individual might make over their life. The truth is that in all of our lives there are mixed soils. Some parts of our lives are hard and stony while other parts have the potential to become fruit bearing. One thing is for certain, all of us carry a certain amount of self doubt which often takes root in our hearts through loss and change. It is in the changing seasons of life that we often discover growth or a sense of failure.

In this service we invite everyone to guard and protect the good soil and seed in their lives. In a world where there is so much cynicism and fear, we ask that we might all allow God’s Word to take root in our hearts. We pray that we all might set up scarecrows around the good seed to protect its growth and save it from being stolen. We must guard against those ideas and actions that would rob us of our potential as people of God. Let us be the people who have fruitful lives. The plant pot with a scarecrow will be a lasting symbol of our intention to be fruitful people.

Item	Notes
VIDEO	Reflective Video – A Fragile Facade
	House lights remain out in order to feel the darkness- the silence. Lights come up on the two presenters.
PRESENTERS	<p>Presenter 1</p> <p>Tonight our theme is all about helping us to guard against negativity. It's about protecting ourselves against the silent brushes with evil. Good things are always in danger of turning bad Guard the Good</p> <p>Presenter 2</p> <p>Here is an interesting fact. Why is it that when you decide to do something good. Always, as if, well it seems, without exception, something, someone, some issue develops, to rob the goodness from the decision.</p> <p>Presenter 1</p> <p>Tonight we're going to be thinking about an amazing story that Jesus told about this very issue. Let's look at some scenario how God's words gets stolen out of our hearts.</p>
DANCE	THE SOWER DANCE Ask someone in your congregation to make a creative dance to this piece of music.
VIDEO	You See But You Can't See – Vincent Van Gogh
PRESENTERS	<p>Presenter 1</p> <p>What pain and sadness do we have that seems to always raise its head to steal our joy and confidence. Could we be ignoring a Vincent not taking time to listen to the words and the dreams of the sower?</p>

Item	Notes
PRAYER	<p>Leader: Sower God You sow seeds on our path On our Journey On our lives Dreams Hopes Ambitions Everything you sow is good</p> <p>All: Help Us Guard the Good Keep out the Doubt We will not allow the darkness to steal our light.</p> <p>Leader: Sower God You never give up sowing the seed Forgive us when we promise so much And deliver so little When we stand so tall one day And wither in the heat of the next day Make us fertile soil for your word</p> <p>All: Guard our hearts give us staying power Help us to follow without counting the cost</p> <p>Leader: Sower God Guard our hearts and minds Protect us from our fears Give us courage to hold on to your word Even when we face opposition Restore to us the joy of trusting your promises</p> <p>All: Help us “Guard the Good” Keep out Fear Remove the spirit of uncertainty from our souls</p> <p>Leader: Sower God Reap a harvest in our lives Let the fruit of your Spirit grow up Harvest peace Harvest joy Harvest love</p> <p>All: Help us “Guard the Harvest” Share the fruit As we grow in grace</p>

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PRESENTERS	<p>Presenter 1:</p> <p>Did you see that part of the dance where the seed grew up looked like it was doing well but it very quickly died – it had no real roots. If you want to hold your confidence you need to grow down in order to grow up.</p>
BUZZ GROUPS	<p>Talk together about situations that haven't lasted because they had no real roots. It could be a relationship or a business or even a good idea.</p> <p>When it comes to Christian faith are there areas in your spiritual life where you have become less enthusiastic?</p> <p>Are there areas where you need to put down better roots if you are going to sustain your faith?. (attending church more regularly, reading the bible more systematically, praying in a more structured way.)</p> <p>GOOD IDEAS AND GOOD LIVES TAKE TIME TO ROOT DON'T RUSH THEM DON'T FORCE THEM TO GROW BEFORE THEY ARE READY.</p>
PRESENTERS	<p>Presenter 2</p> <p>Look at the third scene of the dance its about the seed being choked by the cares of life. When faith is choked it often happens subversively.</p> <p>Quietly ever so quietly evil creeps up on us. Consumerism like a snake god has crept in around us choking the good seed. We don't notice it until deep down in our spirits we find we are separated from God and we find ourselves screaming to be heard to be rescued.</p> <p>Evil has even tries to subvert the creation. It's as though there is a silent scream running through the whole nature like a great fault line. It cries out to be redeemed. Remember the car and the destructive thoughts. Emptiness and loss change and fear need to be confronted materialism, consumerism, will not in the end fulfill our loneliness and alienation.</p>
VIDEO	The Silent Scream

Item	Notes
BUZZ GROUPS	<p>How to guard against the being seduced by materialism – Make a Scarecrow?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather together and make up a scare crow with materials given. Each person makes their own individual scarecrow. Talk in the group where you might place a scarecrow e.g. the situations or places you are tempted. A scarecrow could be an person or a group to which you make yourself accountable. 2. Nurture the good by feeding the seed God has planted in your heart 3. Start today – take a seed and plant it in a pot - call it something like <p>Goodness kindness self control love forgiveness. Now put the name of the label and on the other label write Guard the good- Feed the seed.</p>
PRAYER	<p>Leader: Sower God Set up Godly scarecrows in our lives Chase evil from our door Open our heart to your seed</p> <p>All: We will guard the good And feed the seed</p> <p>Leader: Sower God Break up the rough ground in min us Plant you seed deep in our hearts Take root and grow</p> <p>All: We will guard the good Feed the seed</p> <p>Leader: Sower God Water the seed and cause your face to shine on us Let you word grow up tall in our lives As reach to touch the Son</p> <p>All: We will guard the good Feed the seed</p>

Item	Notes
SONGS	Suggested worship songs for during the service Here I am wholly available Only Takes a Spark For the Fruits of all creation Open the doors of praise Come Ye thankful people