



On your marks

Here's an all-age worship approach to this piece. You'll need some packets of seeds and a tray of compost. You'll also need a copy of [The Gospels Unplugged](#) by Lucy Moore.

Get set

You could introduce the story by showing some packets of seeds and asking what would happen if you planted them in different places - demonstrate by planting some on the floor. Will you get any carrots? How about planting them in a computer? Or in someone's hair? Or by just leaving them in the packet?

Explain that you're going to need some help with a story to make it even more fun. You could either get the whole 'audience' to do all these actions, or teach one action to the people on the left, one to the group on the right and so on.

- Group 1 - you need to walk on the spot and you also need to peck like birds - take a hand and make it into a bird's head shape so that it can peck between fingers and thumb.
- Group 2 - you need to dance! Talk them through it - a simple rock 'n' roll wiggle of the hips on the 'dum dum dum dum' lines; then on 'threw down its roots' point down with both hands; on 'threw up its shoots' point up with both hands. 'On the rock' means clench both fists in front of you with attitude. And say that when you say 'Stone the crows', everyone should call out 'Yeah' in a deep gravelly voice.
- Group 3 simply need to strangle an imaginary person in front of them and make a throttled noise
- Group 4 - tell them they just need to practise some Bodybuilder poses and look as strong and healthy as possible.

Go!

Now perform the version of 'The Sower' from page 45 of *The Gospels Unplugged* by Lucy Moore, bringing in your acting groups in the appropriate verses to stand up and do their action. You can sing the Old Macdonald verses, and those where the tune is given, and speak the others with a lot of rhythm and energy, finishing on a flourish and riotous applause.

If you have actors available to do a short rehearsal beforehand, you could have them mime as:

- the sower
- the different types of creatures walking in the 'path' verse
- the birds pecking
- the rock 'n' roll dancers
- the seeds dying of thirst
- the thorn bushes



- the healthy plants at the end

You will probably want to read Jesus' original version from Matthew 13. Ask if anyone knows what this sort of story is called. What is a parable? It's a story with a hidden meaning - perhaps lots of different hidden meanings. Jesus told parables so that only people who really wanted to would find out what he was talking about. His parables can niggle away in our minds while we try to work out what they mean, which can be very uncomfortable!

You might ask the 'audience' to think about the hidden meanings of this parable and talk about it later: Is this really a story about a gardener who wasted a lot of seeds, or is it about something totally different?

- Are you in the parable somewhere?
- Is God in it?
- Is your school (church) in it?

Finish with a prayer:

Dear God, please help me to hear what you're saying to me in your secret ways.

You could also silently take some seeds and plant them in a tray of compost and leave it on a focal table.