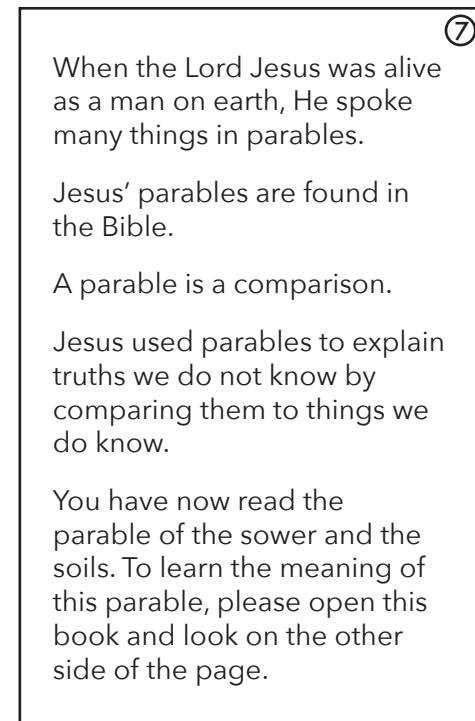
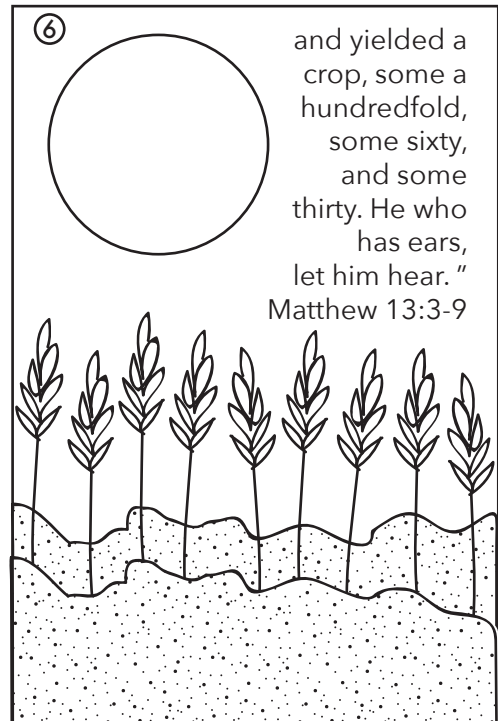
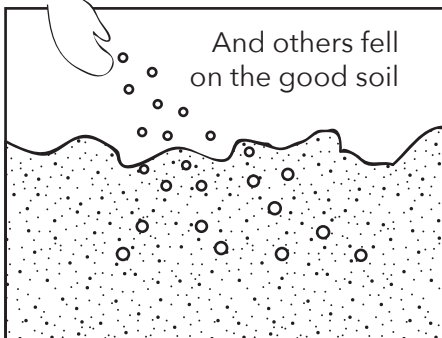
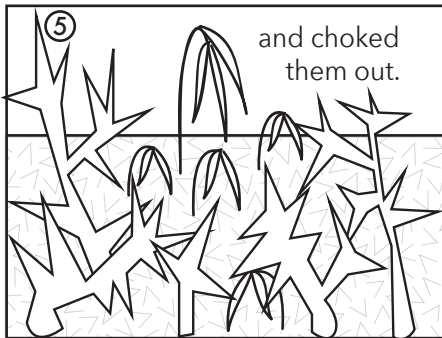
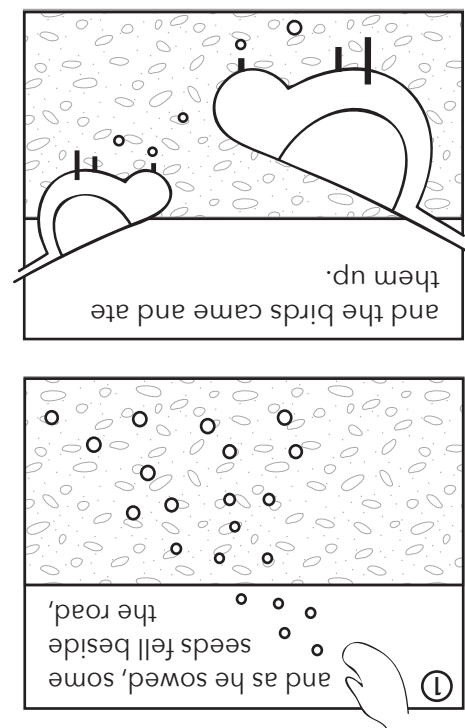
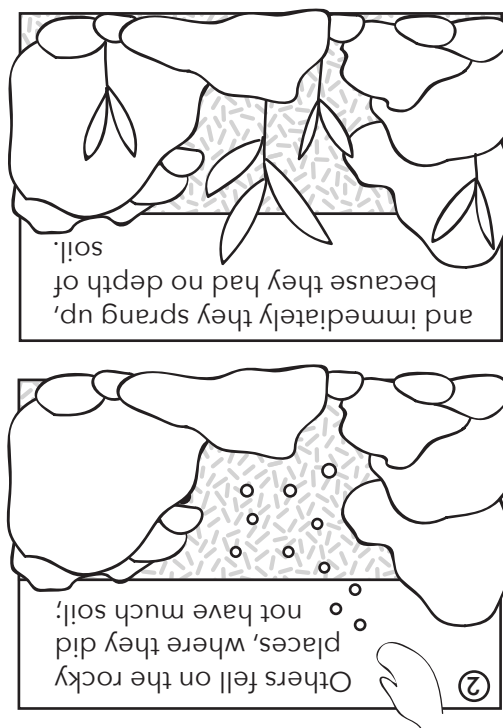
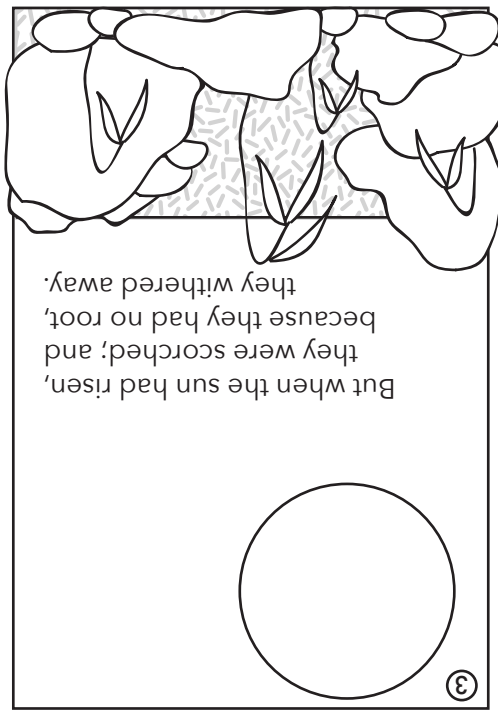
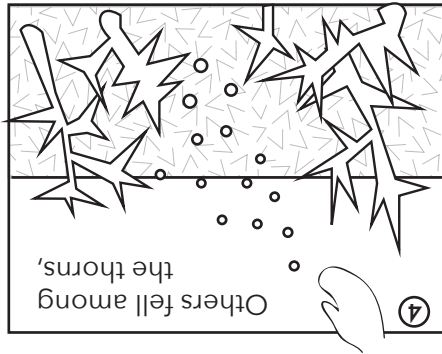
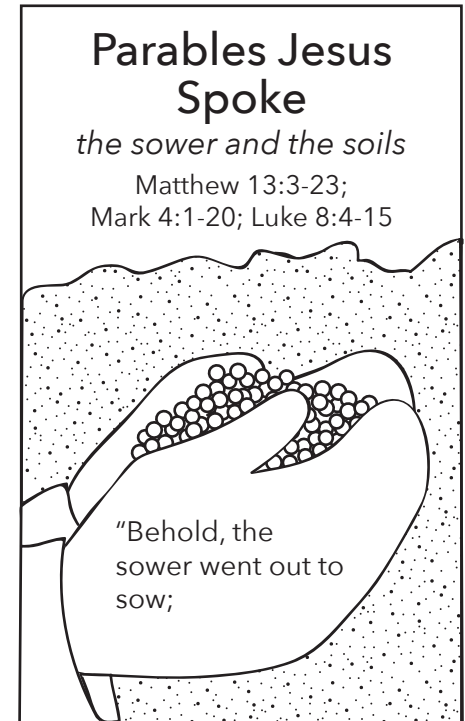
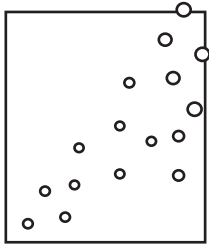


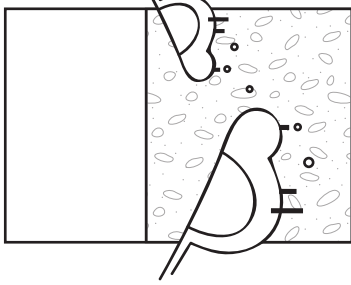


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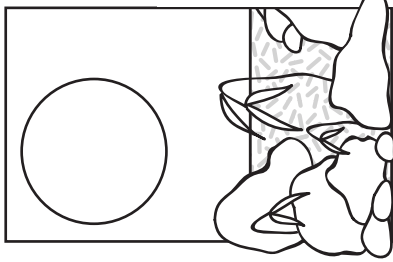


Jesus explained that the seed in the parable is the word of God.



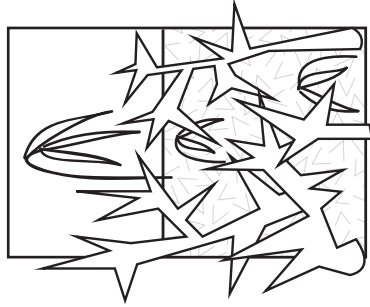
The seed sown beside the road, which the birds came and ate, are the people who hear the word of God and do not understand it.

The devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so they will not believe and be saved.

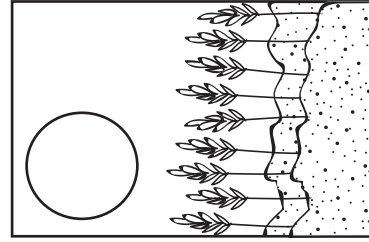


The seed sown on the rocky soil are the people who hear the word of God and receive it with joy. But they do not have a firm root.

They believe for a time, but when trouble (temptation, affliction or persecution because of the word) comes, they fall away.

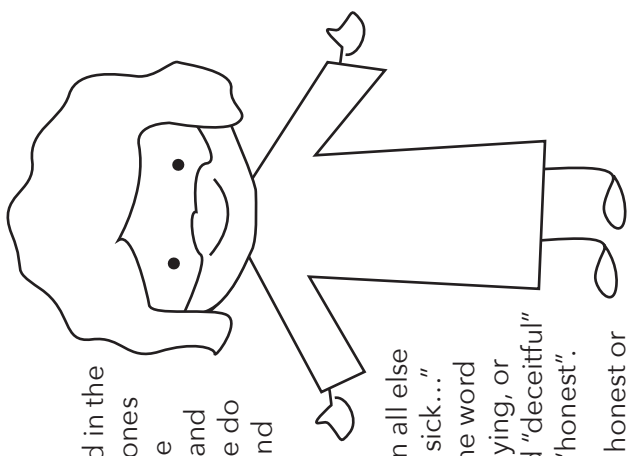


The seed on the thorny soil are the people who hear the word, but the worries and riches, and the pleasures of this life choke out the word, and these people become unfruitful.



"But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance" (Luke 8:15).

These people bear much fruit and remain faithful to God to the end.



Jesus said the seed in the good soil are the "ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart". But we do not have "honest and good" hearts. In fact, the Bible says, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick..." (Jeremiah 17:9). The word "deceitful" means lying, or untrustworthy. And "deceitful" is the opposite of "honest". Our hearts are not honest or good. Our hearts are full of sin (Matthew 15:19).

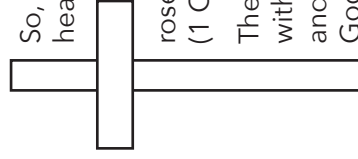
Sin is anything we do, or say, or think that goes against God and His rules. And our sins separate us from God (Isaiah 59:2).

So, what can we do? The Bible tells us to "purify" our hearts (James 4:8). To "purify" something means to make it clean. But we are not able to make our hearts clean (Jeremiah 13:23). As God's Word says, "Who can say, 'I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin'" (Proverbs 20:9)?

We cannot clean our hearts from sin, but here is the good news: God can (Jeremiah 31:33-34; Ezekiel 36:26-27)!

God can purify our hearts and give us honest and good hearts, so that we can be like the seed in the good soil—bearing fruit and remaining faithful to Him to the end.

God cleans our hearts by faith (Acts 15:9). Faith means believing.



So, what must we believe to have our sinful hearts cleansed by God? We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—that He died for our sins, that He was buried and that He rose again on the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

The Bible says, "...if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved..." (Romans 10:9).



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