

Explore the Theme — “Hit the Ground Kneeling”

Stephen Cottrell explores the parable of the sower as a way of “Seeing Leadership Differently”
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“... The sower is clearly incompetent, and any of Jesus’ first listeners, all of them peasant farmers who knew all there was to know about the careful and diligent sowing of seed ... would have been incensed that this idle and irresponsible fellow should have had such a copious crop.

Some fell on the path! What rubbish—any decent sower would not have been so wasteful with the seed!

Some fell among thorns! How ridiculous—any sensible sower would have carefully prepared the ground!

Some were snaffled up by birds! Inconceivable! Where was the scarecrow?

Jesus’ listeners would have snorted with laughter when he suggested that this bungling sower should be rewarded with such a mighty yield.

But Jesus is deliberately speaking of an abundance that is beyond our deserving.

Something that is not dependent on our wisdom or effort ... something beyond our imagining. We are not supposed to draw the lesson that we do not need to work. Sensible farmers still have to dig the earth, remove the weeds and water the soil. But beyond this, on the other side of our sensible and cautious expectations, lies a bigger vision ... that confounds logic ... that is much more than the sum of its parts ... that transcends the usual predictions.

Those of us working in the Church always need to be motivated and inspired by this vision, which is both beyond us and yet, at the same time, conceived in our midst. But I also think that this same profligate hugeness can benefit any organization. **Let us dream a vision that stretches beyond our usual horizons. Of course, we will not get there all at once. Of course, there will be a sense in which such a vision always remains beyond us. But let us not settle for a small vision, one that fails to inspire or terrify.”**

