

## SESSION TWO


# planted

Keen to grow an edible garden, I purchased a number of fruit trees for our backyard that suited our sub-tropical climate. My friend Google told me I needed to prepare the soil for each tree in spots where they had the best chance of thriving. For the citrus trees, I was instructed to make sure the ground didn't retain water and test the location before planting in it. So, I did test the hole and in testing it, found it wasn't suitable.

Others might have seen this as a prompt to reconsider the positioning of the plant... but not I! I ignored the advice, planted my poor lemon tree there and watched it die within the year. I did not take the attributes of soil and the preparation of the tree seriously.

In cross-cultural work, we ignore the context to our own peril. A faith grown under protected, nursery-like conditions, a faith that isn't prepared for the soil of another location, is unlikely to transplant well. Locations like Thailand have been largely resistant to the Gospel for many years with foreign-grown church styles failing to thrive. Global Interaction is seeking to empower communities of Ethnic Thai believers to develop their own distinctive way of following Jesus – in ways that can thrive in the Ethnic Thai context because they have grown out of it.

### Watch: Episode 2 – Where you are Planted

 [www.globalinteraction.org.au/GrowSow](http://www.globalinteraction.org.au/GrowSow)

#### Discuss:

- > A clear understanding of the differences between Buddha and Jesus was very important for Nan Tong. What distinction between the two led Nan Tong to choose Jesus?
- > What things did Nan Tong mention that he appreciated about his fellowship and why he wanted others to join them?
- > How is Nan Tong's faith community different from your own?

### Luke 8:4-15

Read through the parable of the soils and its explanation.

In these verses:

- > The farmer was sowing the seed of the Word of God into many different types of soil.
- > The four soils represent four responses to the Word.
- > Some people will be resistant; some will be open but their faith will wither under testing; others fail to mature in their faith due to distractions; and finally others will persevere and be incredibly fruitful.

#### Reflect:

- > What are the weeds (distractions) and rocks (obstacles) to the Gospel in the soil of our society? Which of these do you see in your own life and/or community?
- > What contrast between Jesus and the "gods" of our current context might be compelling to someone who is genuinely open to Jesus?
- > How does knowing that some soils will be resistant impact your witness?

#### Act:

- > Seek God for His direction on how we can better support one another in our faith community so that we can have a greater impact with those around us.
- > Ask God for the courage and wisdom to share His Word with one person this week in a way that is relevant to their lives. Share your experience with the group next week and learn from each other.

