

Luke

See Jesus

Right Listening

Luke 8:1-15, 18

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / May 23, 2021

I. Jesus Came to Proclaim the Good News of His Kingdom

Luke 8:1 “Soon afterward He went on through the cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God...”

Jesus didn't just come to *do* something. He came to *proclaim* something new, radical, and world-altering: that the kingdom of God was now among men.

II. People Tried to Redefine that Good News and the Kingdom in Their Own Way

Luke 8:4 “And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to Him...”

By this time in His ministry, huge crowds were following Him, so He began to use parables:

1. To separate the sincere seeker from the casual listener.
2. To separate those who were thirsty for eternal life from those who just wanted an earthy problem fixed fast.
3. To separate those who were longing for His righteous reign and rule from those who just wanted Him to crush the oppression of the Roman government, so that they could rule again.

III. Jesus Warns Us to Pay Attention to How We Hear His Words

Luke 8:8 “...As He said these things, He called out, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear.’”

Luke 8:18 “Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away.”

Jesus is saying that your heart affects your hearing and determines what you get or don't get from His Word.

Four heart conditions represented by these four different soils:

A. Your Hard Heart Will Simply Ignore or Reject His Word Altogether

Luke 8:5 “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it.”

Luke 8:12 “The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.”

It's possible to be in contact with the Word of God regularly and still not have it affect you personally because you have a hard heart that's been trampled and beaten down by your own desires and the lies of this world.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

B. Your Shallow Heart Will Rejoice at First... But Fall Away When Things Get Tough

Luke 8:13 "And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away."

Jesus is saying they had an emotional experience and thought they were entering Christ's Kingdom, but what they were really doing was trying to get Christ to enter their kingdom and fulfill their agenda.

Saving faith produces more than just frothy emotions. It produces an ability to persevere because it's based on who Jesus is and what He's done, not just how He made you feel when you first turned to Him.

C. Your Divided Heart Will Choke It Out as You Chase After Other Things

Luke 8:14 "And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life..."

This is soil that initially looks good, but actually has just been turned over so that it's still full of weeds that grow up with the seed and choke it out.

This heart initially receives the Word, but makes no space for it because it stays so preoccupied and distracted by the things of this world, that that seed is eventually overwhelmed and snuffed out.

Jesus points out the three things that can choke out the Word: cares, riches, and pleasures.

D. Your Open Heart Will Live Out His Word and Work It into Your Life

Luke 8:15 "As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience."

True believers hold God's Word fast, they bear fruit, and they know how to endure or persevere.

Jesus took on flesh and came into our world to be the living Word and to be that ultimate "seed" of life that would die for us, so that we could live forever.

John 12:23-24, 27-28 "...The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit...²⁷ Now is My soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify Your name..."