

## Rediscover Jesus, Part 21: “Parable of the Seed”

Luke 8:4-15

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*Jesus gives us God's truth graciously  
so hear the Word and hold it fast patiently.*

### I. Jesus calls out to the people to hear his words (vv.4-10)

#### **Luke 8:4-8 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable, <sup>5</sup> “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. <sup>6</sup> And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. <sup>7</sup> And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. <sup>8</sup> And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold.” As he said these things, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

- Though it seems that Jesus’ ministry is “successful”, Jesus responds to his growing fame with a parable.
- Jesus used parables as a story or saying to illustrate a spiritual truth by using comparison, hyperbole (exaggeration), and symbolism.
  - A guide to understanding Jesus’ parables:<sup>1</sup>
    - 1) Understand the cultural context of the parable.
    - 2) Consider the audience of the parable.
    - 3) Determine the teaching points of the parable (often linked to the number of main characters or elements).
    - 4) Check for repetition for the emphasis of the parable.
    - 5) Identify any established symbolisms that are used in the Bible.
    - 6) Note the conclusion of the parable (often the last person, deed or saying highlights the significance of the parable).

#### **Luke 8:9-10 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, <sup>10</sup> he said, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that ‘seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’”

#### **See Isaiah 6:9-10 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> And he said, “Go, and say to this people: “‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ <sup>10</sup> Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”

- Jesus explained that his purpose of teaching in parables is to both reveal truth (to those who seek him) and conceal truth (to those who reject his teaching).

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from David Seal, “Parable,” *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

## II. Jesus cautions his disciples to hold fast to his words (vv.11-15)

- Jesus explains the five symbols to describe how people's hearts respond to hearing God's Word: the seed, the path, the rock, the thorns and the good soil.

### Luke 8:11-12 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. <sup>12</sup> 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.

- **The path** symbolizes a hardened heart and an outright rejection of God's Word.

### Luke 8:13 (ESV)

<sup>13</sup> 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.

- **The rock** symbolizes a dried-up heart and a delayed rejection of God's Word.

### Luke 8:14 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup> 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, and their fruit does not mature.

- **The thorns** symbolize a choking heart and a confused rejection of God's Word.

### Luke 8:15 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> 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.

- **The good soil** symbolizes a good heart and full acceptance of God's Word.

## Life Application

1) Evaluate your current approach and interaction with God's Word.

2) Cultivate the habit of "expositional hearing" to the preaching of the Word.<sup>2</sup>

*Few starting points:*

- *Meditate on the sermon passage during your personal quiet time with God.*
- *Make use of helpful bible study resources (like the ones in our church library).*
  - *"The Message of the New Testament - Promises Kept"*
  - *"The Message of the Old Testament - Promises Made"*
- *Talk and pray with friends about the sermon after church.*
- *Listen to and act on the sermon throughout the week.*
- *Address any questions you have about the text.*
- *Continue to approach God's Word with humility and teachability.*

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Thabiti M. Anyabwile, *What is a Healthy Church Member?* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2008), 22-25.