

Sermon 44: The Parable of the Sower: Luke 8:4-15

Text: Luke 8:4-15 “And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience...”

Summary: The Parable of the Sower was meant to prepare the disciples for the various responses they would witness as they proclaimed the gospel of the Kingdom, and to strengthen their confidence in the power of the word and to divert them away from pragmatic compromises and discouragement.

Proposition: God wants us have confidence in the power of His word.

Introduction: Three Preliminary Questions:

- **What is scripture?**
 - **Scripture is God’s word, written and preserved for us today:**
2 Timothy 3:16 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God...πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος...
 - Every...
 - Written word...

- God...breathed...
- **Every word matters: Matthew 5:18** “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled...”
- **The word still stands with clarity, purity, and full authority:**
 - We read the phrase “Thus saith the LORD...” around 415 times in the Old Testament.
 - We read the phrase “It is written...” around 80 times we read the phrase.
 - The use of the perfect tense meaning; it has been written in the past and still stands in the present.
 - Scripture was given through human instruments yet bears the full authority of God: **2 Peter 1:12-21** “Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them...I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty...We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost...”
- **What distinct qualities do the scriptures possess?**
 - **2 Timothy 3:16-17** “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works...”
 - **Psalms 19:7-11** “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The

fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether...by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward...”

- **Authority:** The scriptures are God’s word, not simply man’s words.
 - **Purity:** The scriptures are without error in everything they describe and affirm.
 - **Clarity:** The problems we encounter when interpreting the scriptures are never on God’s side.
 - **Sufficiency:** The scriptures alone are enough to enable us to walk with God and faithfully fulfill our God-given duties.
- **How should we relate to scripture?** The following parable will answer this question.

Section 1: Five important details:

- **A farmer went and did his job: 8:5** “A sower went out to sow his seed...”
- **He sowed without deliberation or discrimination: 8:6** “And as he sowed, some fell...”
- **The seed fell on four different kinds of soil environments:**
 - **8:5** “Some fell by the wayside...”
 - **8:6** “Some fell upon a rock...”
 - **8:7** “Some fell among thorns...”
 - **8:8** “Other fell on good ground...”
- **In all four cases, the seeds had the same potential for life, but there were two ultimate outcomes:**
 - Some never grew into a plant that could produce fruit.
 - Some grew into a plant that could produce fruit.
- **The disciples did not understand the Parable: 8:9** “And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?”

Section 2: Interpreting the parable:

- **The parable was meant to establish a clear distinction between two groups of people: 8:10** “Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand...”

- He was teaching the disciples who wanted to learn with clarity.
- He taught the crowd who was disinterested in a veiled way.
- **Christ had a deliberate purpose in teaching this way:**
 - Not all truth in scripture is directed to people universally.
 - I cannot apply every text in scripture directly to myself.
 - This doesn't mean that there are portions of scripture that have no value to us, it simply means that not every scripture is applied directly to us.
- **Some Examples:** Biblical truths are generally made with some form of context defined qualification.
 - **The most obvious distinction is OT/NT distinction:**
 - **Of greater significance is the believer/unbeliever distinction:**
 - **Romans 8:1** “There is therefore **now** no condemnation to them which are **in Christ Jesus...**”
 - **2 Corinthians 5:17** “Therefore **if** any man be **in Christ**, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new...”
 - **Romans 8:28** “We know that all things work together for good **to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose...**”
- **His teaching was directed specifically to believers who carry the weight of a heavy duty:** Spread the word indiscriminately.

Section 3: Expanding the teaching to disciples:

- **The parable reveals what should be done:** Spread the word.
- **It reveals how it should be done:** Spread it indiscriminately.
- **It prepares them for the inevitable outcomes:**
 - Some will receive it and the lifegiving power of the word and it will transform them and cause their life to be fruitful.
 - Other will ultimately reject the word though not every form of rejection looks the same:
 - Some will be callused.
 - Some will initially appear receptive.
 - Some will be distracted by worldly cares.
- **It reminds them what has the potential to produce life:** Only the word of the Kingdom.
- **It reminds them where responsibility lies:**

- The disciple's responsibility is to spread the word faithfully and indiscriminately.
- The hearers are responsible to receive the word with humility.

Section 4: Applying the Parable:

- We must have a high practice of scripture.
- We must have a high confidence in the power of the gospel.
- We must deliberately focus our priorities when we interact with the lost.
- We must feel the weight of our responsibilities, not their responsibilities.
- We must be prepared for diverse responses.
- We should never allow disappointment to undermine our confidence in God's program or to tempt us to compromise for the sake of results.