

# The Parables of Jesus

in the Gospel of Luke (12)

Luke 8:4-18

## DISCUSS

Do you have a green thumb? Have you ever tried growing anything?

## DISCOVER

**Focus:** As we follow the Lord and minister to Him, we need to grow in life. For the growth in life we need to have a noble and good heart for the Lord to grow within us; a heart that is kept away from the worldly traffic, that has all rocks cleared away, and that does not have the thorns of anxiety, the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of life.

### I. Read Luke 8:4-18. Retell the parables.

**Luke 8:4** And while a great crowd was coming together and those from city to city were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable:

**Luke 8:5** The sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some seed fell beside the way, and it was trampled underfoot, and the birds of heaven devoured it.

**Luke 8:6** And other seed fell on the rock, and as it grew, it withered because it had no moisture.

**Luke 8:7** And other seed fell in the midst of the thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it off.

**Luke 8:8** And other seed fell into the good earth, and when it grew, it produced fruit a hundredfold. When He had said these things, He called out, He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

**Luke 8:9** And His disciples questioned Him as to what this parable might be.

**Luke 8:10** And He said, To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest they are in parables, in order that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.

**Luke 8:11** Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

**Luke 8:12** And those beside the way are those who heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they would not believe and be saved.

**Luke 8:13** And those on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; yet these have no root, who believe only for a while, and in time of trial they draw back.

**Luke 8:14** And that which fell into the thorns, these are those who heard and, going away, are utterly choked by anxieties and riches and pleasures of this life, and do not bring any fruit to maturity.

**Luke 8:15** But that which is in the good earth, these are those who in a noble and good heart hear the word and hold it fast and bear fruit with endurance.

**Luke 8:16** Now no one who has lit a lamp covers it with a vessel or puts it underneath a bed, but he puts it on a lampstand in order that those who come in may see the light.

**Luke 8:17** For nothing is hidden which shall not become manifest, nor concealed which shall not by all means be made known and come into the open.

**Luke 8:18** Take heed therefore how you hear, for whoever has, it shall be given to him, and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.

A. Why does the Lord speak in parables instead of in plain words?

B. What is the seed in Luke 8:5? What is significant about a seed?

C. What are the four kinds of soil the seed is sown into and what do they signify?

## DEEPER

## DIVE

### B. Read the following excerpt:

In Luke 8:11-15 we see four kinds of hearts into which the seed is sown. The first kind of heart is likened to the soil “beside the road” (v. 5).

A heart that is like the wayside, like the soil beside the road, is a hardened heart in which there is too much traffic of worldly business. If our heart is occupied with making a living, there will be too much traffic in our heart. The result will be that our heart will not be the proper soil for the growing of Christ, for it will be a heart hardened by worldly traffic.

A second kind of heart is likened to rocky ground (8:6, 13). This kind of ground has soil on the surface, but underneath it is full of rocks. It is not possible for Christ to grow in this kind of heart. A person with such a heart may receive Christ and be saved; however, it will be difficult for him to grow in life. Because of the rocks, it is difficult for Christ to grow in the heart signified by the rocky ground. Such a heart is shallow because deep within are

“rocks”—hidden sins, personal desires, self-seeking, and self-pity—which frustrate the seed from gaining root in the depths of the heart.

Luke 8:7 says, “And other seed fell in the midst of the thorns, and the thorns sprouted up with it and choked it.” Concerning this, verse 14 explains: “And that which fell into the thorns, these are those who heard, and they are choked by the ongoing anxieties and riches and pleasures of life, and do not bring any fruit to maturity.” Here we see clearly that the

“thorns” signify anxieties, riches (in particular, the deceitfulness of riches—Matt. 13:22), and the pleasures of life. These things choke the word and prevent it from growing in the heart and becoming fruitful.

The fourth kind of heart is that signified by the good earth: “And other seed fell into the good earth, and when it grew, it produced fruit a hundredfold” (v. 8). In verse 15 the Lord explains, “But that in the good earth, these are those who in a noble and good heart hear the word, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with endurance.” This good earth signifies the good heart, a heart that is not hardened by worldly traffic, that does not have hidden sins, and that is without the anxiety of the age, the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of life. Such a heart gives all the ground to receiving the word so that the word may grow, bear fruit, and produce even a hundredfold.

In dealing with our hearts, we also need to deal with the “thorns” of anxieties, the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of life. Some, after graduating from college, worry about getting married or about saving money to buy a house. Parents may worry about taking care of their children. These anxieties are related to the cares of this life. If our hearts are filled with anxieties, how can Christ grow in us? In order for Him to grow within us, our hearts need to be free from anxiety, the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of life.

### III. Memorize Luke 8:15 and recite it to one another:

*Luke 8:15* But that which is in the good earth, these are those who in a noble and good heart hear the word and hold it fast and bear fruit with endurance.

## DISCIPLE

A. Using Philippians 4:6-7, how can we deal with the thorns in our heart?

*Philippians 4:6* In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

*7* And the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

B. Spend 10 minutes this week to allow God's word to be more rooted in our heart.