

# Jesus Hollers “Hear!”

*Luke 8:4 - 8*

Nutshell: Jesus begins His emphasis on parables with a sort of Parable How-To. It’s also a Parable What-Is, revealing Jesus’ passion for us to hear.

I. Context: Jesus canvassing every little village.

II. Text

Luke 8:4 And a numerous crowd coming together- even the *ones* city by city [lit, according to city] coming to Him, He spoke through an analogy:

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

A. An outline of Luke to this point

I. About this Letter: So you’ll know about this Jesus, 1:1-4

II. Rejoice! The Messiah is born! A boyhood turning point, 1:5 – 2:52

III. John proclaims repentance for Christ’s coming, 3:1 – 20

IV. Messiah’s Entry Credentials: Baptism and Genealogy, 3:21–38

V. His Initiation: Fasting and Temptation, 4:1 - 13

VI. His Self-Introduction and Hometown Rejection, 4:14 - 30

VII. Jesus: the FIRST MAN with absolute authority **in** Scriptures, and **over** angels/demons, sickness, and nature, 4:31 - 5:11

VIII. Turning-Point Healings, 5:12 – 32

A. Repatriating a leper, 5:12 – 16, touching the unclean outcast to preview His taking of our exile into Himself

B. Forgiving sin, 5:17 – 26, thus declaring His Deity

C. Healing/ renewal of a man’s (Matthew’s) soul, 5:27 – 32

IX. New and Old Covenants:

A. NC = OC *replacement*, *patch-up*, 5:33–39. NC: Law in ♥.

B. 6:1-11, OC Sabbath *strict*, but intended as a *help*.

X. Picking the 12, 6:12-16; teaching / etc., incl. Tyrites, 6:17-19

XI. Jesus’ teaching manifesto: the **SERMON ON THE PLAIN**

A. The Sermon on the Plain gives the *earthy* evidence of the

*spiritual* traits in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt 5-7.  
Here, the poor are literal and the rich are their haters.  
But Christ's disciples are to love their haters.

- B. Christ's disciples are to give generously, living by pity
  - C. Only right teaching can produce right living, always convicting *self* first. Only building squarely, exclusively on Christ will survive the floodplains life is lived in.
- XII. Messiah & His Mission Portrayed in His Interactions**
- A. Forecast: A **Gentile** seeks Jesus for a healing, Lk 7:1-10
  - B. Forecast: Hope still held out to **Israel**: Nain widow, 11-17
  - C. Recheck: But is this ↑ the Messiah? Just a healer? 18-23
    - 1. John expected Christ to judge the world, per prophecy
    - 2. Luke uses John to explicitly introduce the Interim in Christ's work, between a 1st and a 2nd coming
    - 3. Jesus' healings forecast an era of extended mercy, especially to the Gentiles- the era we're in now, 24-30
  - D. The Jews rejected John and Jesus on opposite counts, but Wisdom claimed both John and Jesus as her own, 31-35
  - E. Love for Jesus is tied to forgiveness. The sinful woman had both; Simon the Pharisee lacked both, 36-50.
  - F. Many women followed and helped Jesus' ministry, 8:1-3

**Kid-speak:** Jesus had 12 Apostles who came with Him when He traveled around. The Apostles were *men*. Did Jesus have any *women* with Him? Yes, lots of them!

- B. 8:4, Last time, we saw Jesus plot a course, intending to reach every village on the map, big or small, 8:1
  - 1. It said that the Twelve and "many" women were "with" Him (not 24/7; they honored family duties)
  - 2. A sizeable entourage was in tow, attracting notice. This stirred excitement in towns He visited.
  - 3. It sounds like people from one village would follow Him to the next. Now, "a numerous crowd coming together- even the ones according to city coming to Him,"
    - a. "According to city" (or "city by *city*," most have "from every city") is the same phrase used in 8:1 describing Jesus' evangelism plan
    - b. Repeating the phrase here indicates success in Jesus' plan: "city by city" thronged to Him
    - c. Does that mean they'd really swallow His message,

though? His parable is intended to ‘weed’ them out.  
(pun with a serious edge)

**Kid-speak:** Lots and lots of people came to hear Jesus speak. But does that mean that they would all do what Jesus said to do? No. Will *we* do what He says?

- C. “He spoke through an analogy/ parable”
1. “Through” a parable is a 1-time occurrence. Usually it’s “in” a parable/parables, 10x, including v 10
  2. “Through” gives a good insight on parables (the usual translation of “analogy”). Jesus was saying one thing, but communicating it by means of (“through”) another. That is often the best way to communicate a point.
- D. Jesus was clear about one (the main?) spiritual purpose achieved for using parables, v 10-11
1. It wasn’t that the chosen comparison was misleading.
    - a. It’s that the precision of the comparison *cut straight to a listener’s spirit*.
    - b. Where the spirit was in darkness, the parable caused that darkness to be the ‘light’ in which the parable was received, Matt 6:23
  2. We’ll think more on that at v 10.
- E. “Analogy”
1. Gk., *parabalos*, lit., to cast alongside, 50x
  2. “Comparison,” or “analogy” are good translations. Young’s Literal has “simile,” while the LSV has “allegory.”
  3. “*Parabalos*,” 3x already in Luke: 4:23; 5:36; 6:39. Our passage is the beginning of a new emphasis on them.
    - a. We all use analogies/illustrations, probably more than we realize. “It’s like this...” (Also in miniature verbal reenactments. “I was, like... And he was, like...”)
    - b. ANALOGIES REST ON THE REALITY THAT GOD CREATED THE *NATURAL* WORLD TO CORRESPOND TO THE *IDEA* WORLD. The parallel lines on which they run is not accidental, nor merely imagined, nor forced.
    - c. Looking to Jesus’ explanation in v 9-11, this seems like the point at which parables become a common and extensive part of Jesus’ teaching/preaching.

**Kid-speak:** Jesus taught a lot of **Parables**. He would use something everybody knew about to explain how God works. A lot of them start with this: “The Kingdom of God is **like**...”

- F. Mk 4:34 and Matt 13:34 indicate that Jesus always included parables in His teaching
1. This is an overall characteristic of the **Gospels**
  - ☑ 2. The **Epistles** *don't continue an emphasis on analogies*. The Epistles are just straight-up “Here's how it is.”
  3. In a way, the **OT** is one big analogy. The Tabernacle is a big, continuing picture of sin, Christ, and redemption.
    - a. The prophets communicated on the basis of the REALITIES the Tabernacle pictured, BUT the reality of redemption itself had not yet been accomplished
    - b. While Jesus ministered, He *still* hadn't accomplished redemption! The Kingdom and its realities were still best communicated by COMPARISON until after the Cross.
    - c. After the Cross, the **Epistles** are in the realized/reality phase of redemption. Straightforward explanations ensue. What a turning point in history the epistles are!

Luke 8:5 “The *one* dispersing seed went out to disperse his seed. And in his dispersal, some, on the one hand, fell alongside the road; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it.

- G. “A sower went out to sow” is a good translation. Many Americans just don't immediately connect “sow” to planting.
1. Again, the previous two times Jesus used a comparison in Luke (5:36 & 6:39), it was in the flow of another thought. Here, it is a SEPARATE PARAGRAPH to itself.
  2. Farmers carried bags of seed for some plants. They tossed the seed (carefully) into furrows they had ploughed/hoed.
  3. “Fell” is the result of the deliberate casting of seed, since the word is used for all 4 kinds of soil, v 6, 7, 8. I.e., this wasn't seed that accidentally fell from his bag.

**Kid-speak:** What is this Parable about? It's about a planter who planted seeds by throwing them into places he had dug up in the ground for the seeds.

- H. The first of four conditions of reception: “Trampled down” indicates the area between furrows where farmers walked.
1. By comparison to the other soils, then, this is UNPREPARED soil. Seed couldn’t penetrate the surface, so it became part of the topsoil- easy pickings for the birds.
  2. Bear in mind the *receptivity* of the soil for the upcoming analogies and explanations

Luke 8:6 “And other *seed* fell on rock; and growing, it turned dry through lack of moisture.

- I. A second category of reception/soil: Mark and Matthew have “on rocky *places*”
1. This is where the surface was only a thin layer of soil on top of limestone (per that region) rock
  2. Still, enough soil to encourage sprouting
- J. “Moisture.” Note the precision (commonplace in an agrarian society, but noticeable to us). Not “rain,” since planting right by a water source might also provide sufficient water.
1. Luke is using a medicinal word for bodily “juices.”
    - a. Remember, all the Gospels and all histories are simply edited observations. There is no such thing as a ‘science’ that guarantees historical accuracy (It’s been tried). The writer is either observant and honest or not.
    - b. Jesus spoke more extensively than what we read, beyond what the Gospel writers chose to write.
  2. (Back to the ‘juicy’ details) Soil retains water or allows seed access to the water table. A rock layer prohibits both.
  3. So the problem here is the soil’s depth (as Matthew and Mark make more explicit)
- K. (“On rock” is literally “on the rock.” Interestingly, it is the same phrase from Lk 6:48 2x for the one who hears and does Jesus’ sayings.)

**Kid-speak:** Jesus told about somebody putting seeds in the ground. *Who* is that person like? *Jesus* telling about God and His Word... **and** *us* telling about God and His Word too!

Luke 8:7 “And other *seed* fell in the middle of the thorn (bushes), and the thorns growing up with *the seed*, *they*

choked it off.

- L. A third category of reception: “Thorn bushes” or “thorns” (same word).
1. The rock hindered growth ‘invisibly’, the thorns visibly: right alongside. “In the middle of” depicts the threat.
  2. “Thorns” probably includes all weeds: un-purposed plants.
- M. The “choking” could be from blocking the sun, entangling, crowding out root nourishment, or some combo of these

**Kid-speak:** Jesus said that some of the seeds the farmer planted didn’t live long. What does that tell us we have to be careful about? About *how we listen to Jesus and the Bible!*

Luke 8:8 “And other fell into good earth, and having been grown, it produced fruit- a hundredfold.”

Saying these things, He was crying *aloud*, “The one having ears to hear, let him hear/ he must hear/ he’d better listen!”

- N. The fourth and final category of seed reception: “Good earth.”
1. The word “good” is broad here. It must be understood in terms of what is “good” agriculturally.
    - a. Agriculturally, “good” is not mainly the quality of the soil. The rocky and thorny soil could also have been rich. They failed to nurture plants through *other* factors.
    - b. Likewise, there’s no soil that prohibits thorns while nourishing desired plants. “Good earth” therefore includes *all* the factors making the soil “good” for production.
    - c. Particularly, the context points to soil that has depth and which isn’t surrounded by ‘aggressive’ competitors.
  2. Note: the character of the story makes the sower’s work a constant, making the differing soils the reason for their success or failure
    - a. The point is to depict different kinds of listeners/ respondents. See “hear” in v 12, 13, 14, 15
    - b. Whether the sower also does weeding, for instance, would be ‘another story’, as it were
    - c. The reality pictured? E.g., the thorny soil would be a human. Humans make *choices* about their company. The thorns would be their fault, per this parable.

O. The good soil, then, is a “lovely and moral heart” that God Himself has changed, v 15. Being alive, it will bear living fruit, more abundantly than it realizes!

**Kid-speak:** Jesus has to give us a new heart. When will you call out to Jesus for that new heart? When you see what an old, bad heart we all have to start with.

- ★ P. Jesus Himself is the main fulfillment of the sower in the parable
  - 1. Even when *we* sow good news seeds, it is still CHRIST who is ultimately speaking, including the agency of the Spirit
  - 2. Making *our* speech both more *and* less consequential
- Q. “Saying these things, He was calling out”
  - 1. This makes the calling out *interspersed* with the teaching. NET has “As He said these things.” I.e., He didn’t give the parable, *then* call out.
  - 2. Again, this is edited. Now we can read back into the account *Jesus’ interspersed exhortations to pay attention and give heed to what He was saying!*
  - ◆ 3. Inserting this call at various points the parable, how He must have been overcome with His hearers’ need TO HEAR!
  - 4. The parable is about hearing, but *He doesn’t simply lay depend on their ‘ears’!!* It’s easy to imagine his difficulty in containing Himself. Every segment of the teaching brought a seizure of His spirit: *How could they hear and yet not hear?!!*
  - 5. This is amazing. Yet what dramatic presentation of Christ ever includes this?
  - 6. Jesus surely fulfilled love of neighbor. He loved men’s souls. I see that I’m still far from it.

**Kid-speak:** While Jesus was teaching this, He would holler out, “You have to listen to this!” He’s hollering to us now- by His Spirit.

- R. “The one having ears to hear, he must hear!”
  - 1. It’s in the imperative. It’s a command. If it was in second person instead of third, we’d translate it, “HEAR!”
  - 2. We might say, “Please listen” to someone, which is fine, but it’s closer to “you must listen”- not bossy, but emotive, overcome with concern.

3. Of course, qualifying part of His audience (the ones having ears to hear) made **all** of them question whether they themselves had hearing ears.
4. And, as the parable itself, this description did sifting work!
  - a. It is doing sifting work now!
  - b. How blessed the assembly in which each heart is concerned: “Is that me? What if it’s not me? How can I *know* that it’s me?”
5. Hereby God calls His elect, doing *His* saving/rescuing work. Hereby the elect are revealed to *themselves*: not by their confidence, but by their concern (perhaps ironically)!

IV. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, “Uphold the strengthless”)  
If my ear can bring me near Jesus’ teaching, I can be made whole.

V. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, “Convince, rebuke”): **What have I done wrong?  
How have I lost righteousness?**  
How like the unreceptive soils am I?

VI. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, “Exhort/encourage”):  
**How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?**  
God, help me see where the Word fails to grow my inner man-  
fails to change my words and attitudes.

VII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?**  
Christ, let Your “You must hear!” ever echo in my soul.

Wrap-up: Three of the soils are who they are naturally. One is who they *become* supernaturally- from God.

But the rocky and thorny soils show that men can understand their need and Christ’s salvation. If they come to Him and fall away, it’s because they ultimately find their natural state acceptable/ preferable.

The elect FEEL that downward pull of the Old Man, and it FEELS like keeping their souls preferring Christ is all on them. The New Man often seems shrunken to the size of a seed. But didn’t Jesus say that faith that size was enough?