

Luke 8:1-21

This passage of Scripture is all about hearing!

1. Dullness of hearing has always been a problem.

2. Acts 28:25-27 *"Go to this people, and say, You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them."*

3. Three times in Hebrews the verse is quoted, *"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion"*

4. Seven time in the first 3 chapters of Revelation we are told, *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

And that is exactly what this passage is about. Hearing!

v1-3 *Soon afterwards, He began going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God. The twelve were with Him, 2 and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means.*

v4-8 *When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: 5 "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. 6 Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. 7 Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. 8 Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."*

1. That was the end of His sermon.
2. No explanations...not application...just a story.
3. Which leads to the following discussion...

v9-10 *His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable meant. 10 And He said, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND."*

1. A parable is often defined as an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.
2. We might often think of it as an illustration to help clarify the messages' meaning.
3. That is not what Jesus says the purpose is however. *"to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND."*
4. Jesus taught in parables not to reveal...but to conceal!
 - a. So Jesus told His parables and waited to see who was content with entertainment
 - b. And who wanted to know more.
 - c. Those content with the entertainment and amusement of the new Rabbi would miss the real meaning of the parables.
 - d. Those who were intrigued and wanted to know the deeper truths hidden under the surface of the parables would follow closely to Jesus *"To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God."*

Thankfully for us this morning, Jesus explains the meaning of the parable to His followers in the remainder of the text. We see the parable divided into 3 main points.

1. Sower
2. Seed
3. Soils

He who has ears to hear, let him hear....

I. The Sower

v5 *The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up.*

1. Little attention is given to the sower.
2. He has only one task...to sow the seed.
3. Jesus Himself is the sower in this context.
 - a. His disciples...the apostles...would become sowers
 - b. Believers of all ages until today sow the seed...what is the seed?

II. The Seed

v5 *The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up.*

The seed is the same regardless of where it is sown.

1. On the path...it is still seed.
2. On the rock...it is still seed.
3. Among the thorns...it is still the seed.
4. On the fertile soil...it is still the seed.
5. The seed was good seed, bursting with life awaiting germination.

v11 *Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God.*

1. Jesus said that the seed is "the Word of God."
 - a. There is nothing else we should be sowing!
 - b. There is nothing else that works any better.
 1. We might be able to fill the room better with a circus or a mock rock concert.
 2. But only the Word affects our souls!

2. Hebrews 4:12-13 *For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.*

3. 2 Timothy 3:16-4:4 *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 4:1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.*

III. The Soils

How are these four soils characterized

1. The Trampled Soil v12

Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved.

- a. Satan comes and snatches the word away
 1. *Before*—before we read, before we arrive, before the sermon
 2. *During*—during our reading, during the sermon.
 3. *After*—how quick we are to forget...to be distracted
- b. Satan is busy snatching away the seed.

2. The Rocky Soil v13

Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

- a. They come forward when the invitation is given.
- b. They say the right words, pray an appropriate prayer, start to attend church, and rejoice in their new family and friends.
- c. But, the truth takes no real root in their hearts.
- d. They never really count the cost...they are unwilling to pay the price.
- e. Salvation is a free gift, but it will cost us everything!

1. Luke 9:23-26 *And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24 For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? 26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*

2. Luke 14:26-33 *"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.*

- a. Can you afford to follow Jesus?
- b. Can you afford NOT to follow Jesus?
- f. Salvation is all of grace (free of charge) but it will always cost you everything...and it is worth it all!
- g. Come the first breath of opposition or disagreement and off they go.
- h. They professed Christ, but never possessed Christ.

3. The Thorny Soil v14

The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

- a. They hear but are preoccupied with more pressing matters.
- b. The Word that the Lord used describes the bustle of an active life and the coming and going of people who are transacting business.
- c. Their lives are spent chasing after prosperity, possessions, and pleasures of the world.
- d. Matt 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.
- e. 1 John 2:15-16 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world
- f. The soil looks a lot like American Christianity today.

4. The Fertile Soil v15

But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.

- a. **Good soil is found in an honest heart**—"You desire truth in the inward parts."
- b. **Good soil is found in an enduring hand**
- c. **Good soil is found in an abundant harvest**
 1. Are you bearing fruit?
 2. John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.
 3. Luke 6:44 for each tree is known by its own fruit

While four soils are identified, there are only 2 types:

1. good and bad
2. fruitful and unfruitful
 - a. If you are trampled soil
 - b. If you are rocky soil
 - c. If you are thorny soil
 - d. You are bad soil...unfruitful.
3. There is only one soil that is good and fruitful...the fertile soil

The good news is, you can cultivate the soil of your heart! How? By learning to hear. This is what makes for good soil. We must be good hearers of the Word. We have two hints in the rest of our text as to what this looks like.

16 Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light. 17 For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. 18 So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him

1. We could say, STEP 1: **Progress in your hearing of the Word**
2. If you improve upon your hearing you will continually grow.
3. If you fail to hear well, you will lose growth.

4. What trajectory are you on?

5. Mark 4:24-25 *And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."*

19 And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd.

20 And it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You." 21 But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

1. We could say, STEP 2: **Progress in your obedience to the Word**

2. Be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

a. It is both/and

b. Don't be a dead sea ... or an ignoramus

3. My mother is the older woman who hears and obeys

4. My brothers are the young men who hear and obey.

Conclusion:

When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.