



## The Gospel According to Luke Wk. 35 "The Importance of Fruit" By Pastor Jody May

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### Luke 8:1-15 ESV

**8** Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, <sup>2</sup>and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, <sup>3</sup>and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

### The Parable of the Sower

<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."

### The Purpose of the Parables

<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.' <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. <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. <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. <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.

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Just an observation today before we jump into the main part of the text. Luke is doing a good job here to make sure that we understand that Jesus was just as intent on saving women, distributing the secrets and blessings of His Kingdom, as He was for men. That's an observation from our story last week, the widow rewarded with a resurrected son, a positive portrayal of Mary, and



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these 2 verses. Luke's Gospel is considered by some to be the *Women's Journal* of the Bible. In that day and age, how women reacted to Jesus said a lot about who Jesus was.

Looking back at last week we saw a young woman take up her life savings just to anoint Jesus' head as the Lord, her Lord, with what she had saved up for her future being she had no one, said volumes about the appeal of Jesus and His character. Ladies, I want to take this opportunity to show you something this morning before we go further. A relationship with Jesus may be what you want, it may even be the doctrine you were taught in your church growing up that the offer for Salvation is to have a personal relationship with the Christ, but the way these ladies were having a personal relationship with Christ was by being obedient to the same offer Jesus offered men, **leave it all behind and follow me.**

I say all of this just to reiterate the point that Luke is trying to make in His Gospel. The proclamation of the Gospel is the command to surrender to a King, to follow Him, to pick up His causes, to consider Him more important than yourself, to see His wants as a higher priority than your own. I have to say this because current culture portrays for women, especially in the West, that you obtain a personal relationship with a man to get what you want not necessarily to give him what he wants. I want to be as loving to my sisters in this room as I can, because I have seen many ladies walk away from their faith because they discovered they could not control the God they followed by being in a relationship with Him. Yes, you do get to have a relationship with our Lord, but it comes from a position of being a servant. V.3 says that these women "**provided for them out of their means**". Their path in following Jesus was not running away from serving it was running to it.

### 1. Why a Story?

#### A Parable what is it?

A Parable is a story with a principle behind it. The famous Aesop fables are a good example or in modern times Avengers End Game that teaches you not to mess with Earth's Mightiest Heroes!

You might imagine that as something as important like the gospel that the Messiah might want to use a means of teaching about it that is very plain and easy to understand. BUT Jesus never does anything like we would do it for He is God and **"His ways our not like our ways" (Is. 55:8-9)**. He explains for us "Why Parables?"



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<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.'

Parables, that hold the gospel, are told so that people will know by **COMPREHENDIGN THEM** if they are in the Kingdom. The Gospel is good news that not only shares a truth about Salvation but it necessitates action whether because it demands obedience or it looks so enticing to you that you begin to change things in your life so that you don't miss it. Remember to Jesus Hearing is synonymous with obeying... It's like a man that discovers a treasure in a field, goes home and sells everything, so he can purchase that field (Mat. 13:44-46). John sheds some light on a parable by telling us what is happening behind the scenes:

### **John 16:13 ESV**

<sup>13</sup> When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

**The HS comes, it convicts through the story and we respond.** So before going any further this morning here's something to think about. Many of us today have had weeks where we have felt discouraged, but could it be that the reason you are discouraged is not necessarily what has happened to you, but it is our lack of faith in the gospel and how it changes everything in our life? **Did you get wrapped up in things to make you forget about your life this week and in that process allow the things you run to keep you away from God's Word?** You may have even stayed away from God's Word because it intimidates you a little, but there's good news here you may be missing. **According to John 16:13 it is the Spirit that will guide you into all Truth**, not your education, not your insight, but God's gift of GRACE because He wants you to know it.

This Truth answers that nagging question we all have today, how do I know that I am saved? You know because you have believed, and belief shows that you are taking steps to ensure that you keep the gospel.

## **2. Who's the Story for?**

**8** ... And the **twelve** were with him, <sup>2</sup> and also some **women** who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, <sup>3</sup> and Joanna,



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the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means. <sup>4</sup>And when a **great crowd** was gathering and people from town after town came to him,

We have two groups of people here **Disciples and Seekers**. Men and women traveling with Jesus, following and doing as he does and as He leads, and there are groups of people who like Jesus, like the good news, but are not effected enough to leave things and follow Him. I am going to tell you a little secret this morning about why you should not be living in some Christian bubbles and why you will never have 100% of the people in your church saved. **Seekers are essential to build the faith of Jesus' disciples because that's how they begin to see they are different.** It is one way that their minds begin to comprehend the gospel. It is also what drives Christians to evangelize others because when they look at seekers they see how they themselves once were.

There is always a universal preaching of the Gospel, but the message is never received with belief by everyone.

What you see in the text and all through the Bible is the classic doctrine of Reformed faith, TULIP for you Calvinist. L - Limited Atonement, it is not that Jesus blood is limited in power but that the call to believe in the Gospel is according to God's Election. It's what Jesus believes according to John 3 as he explained it to Nicodemus. The Spirit goes where it goes.

The story is for believers and seekers because it is the way that God let's His people know they are on the right path and it is in point three that Jesus explains the parable and shows you this very point.

### 3. What does the Story Mean?

Right up front let me give you the **Spoiler Alert** - the parable shows us the type of person that is saved, has eternal life, in the kingdom, and is following Jesus. That's what it is about!

**Next let's define terms -**

**The Seed** is the Gospel, it is full of Truth but lies dormant until planted. (v.11)

**The Ground** is the heart of the person or the soul (v.15)



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**First up -** <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>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.

That is pretty self-explanatory. The ground (heart) is totally unprepared for the Gospel. It would be the equivalent of trying to plant on asphalt, it doesn't even make sense for it to be there. When it is left in such an obvious manner the devil and the world is quick to snatch it up.

It is the next two categories that I want us to pay special attention to for these typically tend to be the issues that people who try out Christianity, maybe go to church, experience. Let's call these two categories **Superficial Christianity**. It is a faith that only goes skin deep.

**Next -** <sup>6</sup> And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture... <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.

These people receive the Gospel with Joy, that's what makes this one a little tricky, because I hope that is a descriptor of all of you in here today, but I hope it is not in the way this means. What I think this gets to is that upon first hearing the Gospel it gives hope, it's different, it catches your attention, it is the new shiny toy that lights up your life. But instead of taking root, the heart is still hard, and instead of producing fruit it grows quickly and shrivels because to these poor people **it is not THE answer but merely AN answer** and **when the gospel is not the answer for you then you have no answer at all**.

So what we learn is that **JOY is not a depicter of whether one is saved or not**, Joy is fleeting. I have counseled recently with a young man, he's held in the grip of this world, I pray for him and there is this pattern he keeps living. He tries to live as good as he can for a while, trials hit and because the gospel is not planted securely it give him no hope, so he ends up fleeing to drugs, adultery, crime, etc... Then he comes to me when he is down and wants the gospel preached to him to make him feel better. All he's doing is trying to use the gospel as a B12 shot for his misery. And he is so lost in this it kills me.



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**Third** - <sup>7</sup>And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it... . <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.

I'm going to call this type of Superficial Christianity, Amazon Christianity. That's where people put the Religion of Christianity in their shopping cart along with all their other goodies waiting to check out. It is just placed along-side the other things in life that make you happy, and when added to the cart with other things the importance of what it does is lessened. I see this a lot in a church and it is hard to stay away from. Christianity, pursuit of Jesus in a church is not a part of your life, it is your life!

**Lastly** - <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." ... . <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**.

But what happens when the seed is placed in the heart that has been cultivated rightly? That soil grew and yielded a hundred times more than what it started with. Jesus said that the **"honest and good heart will bear fruit with patience"**.

My family does a garden every year. We try to avoid it really, because many times over the last 10 years it really is a hit or miss endeavor. But if there is one thing I have learned that makes our garden successful it is not the seed we buy, or the rain we get, nor the sweat of our brow **but it is all about the dirt!** What makes gardening hard is the fact that soil conditions have to be paid attention to all year long. I can wait till spring to address it, it started in the fall when I put down a coat of leaves and grass clippings. It continued when in early march I put down fertilizer with a pre-emergent to keep weeds from germinating. Then it culminates when I distribute the compost through the garden for another tilling in early April. Then and only then should I expect there to be a production of food. Then when the seed is planted, I watch the conditions still, water only when needed, continue to weed, and check for insect damage. It is only by not giving up, years of learning, trial and error, that we may get a good yield this year, **it all took PATIENCE!**

**My friends this is the picture of your heart.** All of us will have to travel through superficial Christianity, we will have to get tired of eating small and tasteless fruit, and it is only then when



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we have cultivated the conditions of our heart, by patience and not surrendering to despair, we have been promised a yield a hundredfold. Here's even better news, if we but confess with our mouth our deep need for Christ, Jesus Himself through the Spirit is the one that begins that weeding process. **The Gospel is not about you cleaning up the state of your heart to receive Jesus, but the Gospel says you have received Him, now be PATIENT, keep the garden weeded, pay attention to your soil, and your heart will produce Fruit.**

That all points back to the principle behind this Parable,  
"Do you want to know if you are Saved? Then you must look for the fruit."

Because the Gospel has been planted in your heart does not mean you can shirk the responsibility of being the caretaker of what you have. If your heart is producing angst, anger, lust, greed, on a daily basis you may have soil issues, the weeds are choking your heart out. Jesus Gospel will produce, it is guaranteed, it was coated with His sweat and blood to produce in your heart the greatest yield of joy, patience, kindness, steadfastness, and love for it is born of the Spirit. The question is are you tired of eating tasteless food produced by soil that is being choked out by the world or are you ready to taste a vine ripened and fertilized by the patience of God Himself?

**What I want you to walk away with this morning:**

**We should not be settling for a meager production from our hearts but we should be cultivating a real Garden of Eden because God's Glory demands it!**

**Three things as reminders to help us be good soil cultivators expecting that hundredfold harvest.**

- 1. Pay attention to the soil and weed your heart regularly.**
- 2. Get help / Gardening is successful with more hands.**
- 3. Be patient / it takes multiple seasons of toil to get to a good harvest.**

**God's people are called not to settle for a Meager Production but we are called to cultivate a garden to share it with others - His Glory Demands it!**



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**COMMUNION**

**PRAYER**

**BENEDICTION**

Go in the name of the Father that gives us a new heart of flesh so that we may cultivate that which is alive not a heart of stone.

Go in the name of the Son that bought the good seed with His blood and assured its' effectiveness by the sweat of His brow.

Go in the name and power of the HS that shows us the fruit in our lives assuring us that God is truly preserving us in eternal life now go share that fruit with others!