

I. **INTRODUCTION.**

A. Scripture text: **Luke 8:9-11.**

And His disciples *began* questioning Him as to what this parable might be. [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, in order that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND. [11] "Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God.

B. In the parable of the soils, Jesus is not teaching us how to be good farmers. The spiritual lesson is one of knowing the different responses to the gospel.

C. Our sermon today deals with how we are to react to the Word of God.

II. **HEAR THE WORD.**

A. See Lk. 8:4-8.

And when a great multitude were 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] "And other *seed* fell on rocky *soil*, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. [7] "And other *seed* fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it, and choked it out. [8] "And 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."

B. Planting seed in the first century is unlike how it is done today. The farmer or gardener would take seed out of a bag and throw it, or sling it out.

C. The farmer knew that every seed sown would not grow and reproduce. The same is true with the gospel.

D. On many occasions Jesus said, "He that has ears to hear, let him hear." There has to be some effort put forth by the listener for the gospel to be understood. One has to think a little and reason to understand the teachings.

E. John told his readers in Revelation that for the blessing to be theirs they had to do more than just listen; they had to read, hear, and heed (Rev. 1:3).

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

F. The seed is the word of God (8:11), we need to hear the word.

"Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God.

III. **RECEIVE THE WORD.**

A. See Lk. 8:9-15.

B. Jesus describes 4 different kinds of hearts in explaining the parable. They are:

1. The hard soil (8:5,12).

(Lk 8:5) "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.

(Lk 8:12) "And those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they may not believe and be saved.

This individual never allows the gospel to even begin to take root in his/her life. The devil is able to snatch it away as soon as it is sown.

2. The shallow soil (8:6,13).

(Lk 8:6) "And other *seed* fell on rocky *soil*, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture.

(Lk 8:13) "And 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.

This soil represents the emotional hearer who quickly responds to the message, but their interest soon wanes. There is not a sufficient foundation for continued growth.

3. The crowded soil (8:7,14).

(Lk 8:7) “And other *seed* fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it, and choked it out.

(Lk 8:14) “And 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.

This type of person does well for awhile, but the temptations and cares of the world are never dealt with in such a way to produce a harvest. Other things crowd out spiritual priorities.

4. The good soil (8:8,15).

(Lk 8:8) “And 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.”

(Lk 8:15) “And 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.

This soil alone is fruitful. It illustrates the one who hears the Word, understands it, receives it, and produces fruit.

- C. What one must do is find themselves in the parable. Find yourself as to where you are in the story, and where you would like to be.
- D. Learning to receive the word means growth, maturity, and spiritual fruit.

IV. **SHARE THE WORD.**

A. The text (Lk. 8:16-18):

“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, in order that those who come in may see the light. [17] “For nothing is hidden that shall not become evident, nor *anything* secret that shall not be known and come to light. [18] “Therefore take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him shall *more* be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.”

- B. When a plant is growing and producing fruit it cannot help from being noticed.
- C. Xians are to be the same way. If we are good soil, in which the gospel can grow, we will be doing things that make our spirituality evident
- D. You will not be trying to hide your faith, or practice your Xianity in secret. The spiritual light will be evident to all, and everything that is good and profitable will come to seen.
- E. Brethren who share their faith, are those in which the gospel is growing. They are no longer babes who must always be like a sponge only taking in the word, but they are mature adults able to share what they have with others.
- F. One barometer of spiritual growth is to think back as to when was the last time you shared your faith with a non-Xian. Xians who are growing and maturing do not have to look back that far!!

V. **OBEY THE WORD.**

A. See Lk. 8:19-21.

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.”

- B. Spirituality does not come by only hearing the word. Some people spend a great deal of time listening to radio and TV preachers, listening to gospel radio stations, and listening to gospel singing tapes. But this does not make one a spiritual person!
- C. We must practice what we learn. Listening to all that preaching and singing is fine, but it must become part of our life before it does any good (see 8:21).
- D. Don't be a spiritual auditor, only listening to make sure that what is said is in the Bible. Listen with the intent to obey what the Bible says.
- E. We are going to be held accountable for what we hear (Mk. 4:24), and how we hear (Lk. 8:18).  
(Mk 4:24) And He was saying to them, “Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it shall be measured to you; and more shall be given you besides.  
(Lk 8:18) “Therefore take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him shall *more* be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.”

- F. To be part of the family of God, one must hear and do (Jas. 1:21).  
Therefore putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

VI. **CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**

- A. Parables are dangerous! They make us look at ourselves in ways that are uncomfortable and demand change.
- B. If you have seen this parable in such a way that you need to make some changes in your life, then the seed (word of God) has penetrated the soil (your heart).
- C. Which soil are you? The hard soil, the shallow soil, the crowded soil, or the good soil? What kind of soil should you be? What kind of soil do you want to be?
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.