

LIFE Group Sermon Questions

The Center of Everything: Hearing

Pastor Josh Parsons

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Luke 8:4-21



THE ORCHARD

Luke 8:4-21

4 And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable, 5 “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. 6 And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. 8 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.” 9 And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, 10 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.’ 11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 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. 13 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. 14 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 pleasure of life, and their fruit does not mature. 15 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.

16 No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. 17 For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light. 18 Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away.”

19 Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. 20 And he was told, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you.” 21 But he answered them, “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.”

Sermon Outline

What to do with God’s Word:

I. Receive it (Luke 8:4-15)

- a. The hardened hearer (8:5, 12)
- b. The superficial hearer (8:6, 13)
- c. The distracted hearer (8:7, 14)
- d. The receptive hearer (8:8, 15)

II. Share it (Luke 8:16-18)

III. Obey it (Luke 8:19-21)

Discussion Questions

1. What did you learn today from the Scripture passage(s) that you didn't know before? What is something that hit you in a fresh way?

2. Read Luke 8:9. It's sometimes hard to understand what Jesus says even when we *do* want to receive it. We need the Holy Spirit's help! How could you pray to ask for his help before your personal time in God's Word? Before diving in at LIFE Group? On your way to church on Sunday morning?

3. Read Luke 8:10. Jesus often used parables not only to *explain* Biblical truth but also to *conceal* it. For those who had no interest in what he had to say, what he had to say often hardened their unbelief. Why do you think that's the case?

4. When are times when you have the opportunity to *hear* God's Word? How might you best leverage those times for your spiritual good?

5. In Luke 8:4-15, Jesus tells (and explains) a parable about a sower, seed, and four kinds of soils. How would you summarize the four different kinds of hearers (represented by the soils)?

6. Jesus' parable focuses on the soils, but it's the *seed* that brings about life. What does that tell you about God's Word? How have you seen God's Word work powerfully in *you*?

7. What do you think it looks like in real life to...
 - ...resist the Bible?
 - ...let go of the Bible?
 - ...be pulled away from the Bible?
 - ...hold onto the Bible?

8. How have you seen the Bible bear fruit in your life? Why is it important to remember that bearing fruit will take "patience" (Luke 8:15)?

9. Discuss how you might "share" something from Luke 8 with someone else that you know. Who's someone you know who would be helped by hearing the truth of God's Word?

10. Why is it not right to hide the light of Scripture (Luke 8:16)? What are some different ways we might share it?

11. Only those who've received God's Word will be able to share it. You can't shine a light you don't have. You can't give what you haven't taken in. How might you change your habits or the way you receive God's Word to enable to you more effectively share it with others?

12. What in the Bible is easy for you to hear but hard to obey? Why?

13. What might be the consequences of *not* doing what Jesus says...

- ...to our own spiritual life?
- ...to our witness in the world?

14. Why is it important to remember that our obedience is *evidence* that we belong to Jesus rather than the *means* by which we come to belong to him?