

THE WORD BECAME FLESH



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#17 - The Parable of the Seed and Sower Luke 8:1-18

PICTURES (Note: Inserted in brackets at the appropriate place in the lesson is the number of the picture to show the students.)

17-1 A man sowing seed

17-2 Four types of soil

REVIEW (Before teaching lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review)
Where was John the Baptist? What did he send his disciples to ask Jesus? How did Jesus reply? What did the sinful woman do for Jesus? What did Jesus do for the woman? What was the difference between Simon and the woman?
- **Big Question Review:** What do we do before we judge the sin of others?
Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** Luke 6:41, 42b
We have to uncover and deal with our own sin first.

(⁴¹"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?") ⁴²... You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

LESSON CONTENT

Note: The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

What was Jesus doing for the people who came to him? Jesus was healing people who were blind, paralyzed and sick. He also raised the dead and forgave sin. He was preaching the truth about God.

Where had Jesus mostly been teaching? Jesus had been mostly teaching in the synagogues but then he started to go around the countryside teaching the people.

Luke 8:1-3

¹After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, ²and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; ³Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

What were the women doing for Jesus and his disciples? The women were using their own money to provide for Jesus and his followers. They were taking care of their physical needs.

What does that tell you about the women? They were devoted to Jesus. They believed his teaching. They knew who Jesus was and wanted to support all that he was doing.

Could Jesus have supplied what was needed through miraculous means for himself and his disciples? yes Why didn't he do that? All sorts of people would have wanted to follow him to receive physical provision. It wouldn't have been just the truly devoted. People would have hung out with him because of the miraculous provision, not because he was the Son of God. They would have expected the miraculous, not valued it as a testimony of who Jesus was.

Luke 8:4-8 (picture 17-1)

⁴While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: ⁵"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. ⁶Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. ⁸Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."

When he said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Why did the farmer scatter seed? It was the way seed was planted (sowed) before there was machinery. (Demonstrate how they would have tossed it out.)

What are the four places the seed fell? What happened to the seed in each place? (Draw the chart below on the board, then fill in location and parable. The meaning will be filled in after the explanation.)

Location	Parable	Meaning
Path	Trampled, birds ate it up, hard ground, visible to birds	Devil takes word away so person won't believe and be saved.
Rock	Withered, no water, roots can't penetrate to take hold	No root, person falls away in times of testing
Thorns	Choked out by what's growing with it	Choked out by life's worries, riches and pleasures, person doesn't mature
Good soil	Yielded crop, ground plowed and ready to receive seed	Noble and good hearts, hear word, retain, persevere & produce crop

What does Jesus mean when he says, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear"? If you are seeking God and listening to him, you will receive what Jesus is saying and understand. You will really think about it until you comprehend its full meaning.

Luke 8:9-10

⁹His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, " 'though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.'

Why did Jesus say he spoke in parables? So that people wouldn't see and understand.

Does that mean Jesus doesn't want people to understand what he is saying? no

What does it mean then? If you don't see and understand, you should want to figure out why. A person who is seeking God will continue to think about and try to understand what Jesus is saying. Someone who doesn't care will just let it go. It separates those who are seeking God and his truth from those who aren't. It is like the verse from last lesson that he who has been forgiven little loves little. If something is easy and doesn't cost much, you don't value it. If you have to work at understanding and persevere through faith, you appreciate the insight you gain all the more.

Why doesn't Jesus want to make it easy for us to understand? Pursuit and perseverance reveal desire and the condition of a heart, what a person wants and is seeking after. Jesus then explains the meaning of the parable to his disciples.

Luke 8:11-15 (picture 17-2)

¹¹"This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹²Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

What is the meaning of the parable? (Fill in the meaning section of the chart.)
Jesus continues his teaching.

Luke 8:16-18

16"No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light. 17For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open. 18Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him."

In terms of hearing and receiving the word, what does the lamp stand mean? Those that come to know the truth should demonstrate it in their lives and share it with others. A light won't penetrate the darkness if it is hidden under something. It needs to be out in the open and uncovered to spread. It shouldn't be hidden from others.

What does verse 17 mean? (*For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open.*) The truth was going to be proclaimed. What is true about both people and Jesus would be made clear to the world.

What does verse 18 mean? (*Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him.*) If a person seeks understanding, then he will gain more. Those who think they already know what they need to know and don't seek to understand will lose the understanding they do have. You have to pursue truth to gain truth.

What does this mean in terms of us? If we want to understand the truth of Jesus we have to pursue understanding. It isn't easy. It doesn't just come to us without effort on our part. We have to take in his words, think about them and live them out. (Love Jesus, Learn from him, Live out his truth) We have to consider (think about) carefully how we listen.

In order to really understand this parable, it is important to think through the whole process that a farmer goes through to grow a crop. What does a farmer have to do first to prepare the land to produce a crop? He has to plow the ground to break up the hard soil, otherwise the roots won't penetrate when the seed sprouts.

What is plowing like in terms of preparing the heart of a person to receive the Word of God? Plowing is the humbling and breaking of pride. It makes a heart ready to receive the seed. A person has to see himself in need of Christ before he can receive him. It was like John the Baptist coming to make the people ready. He told them that they were sinners and needed to repent and be saved.

The sowing of the seed is the truth of God going out. Once a farmer sows the seed what does he have to do to make sure he reaps a harvest? He has to take care of the plants that sprout up and get rid of the weeds. He has to weed and water the field and scare away the birds.

What is that like in terms of producing a crop from the Word of God? We have to get rid of ideas or worries that will choke out the truth of God. We have to continually examine what is in our minds and what we are believing and pursuing. We have to make sure that there is plenty of water in terms of the truth coming in. We have to know the Bible. We have to watch out for wrong ideas and the people that promote them that will snatch away the truth.

What happens if something other than God's truth is planted in a heart? The seed that is sown is the seed that will grow. We have to be discerning about what is planted inside us. We have to recognize a seed for what it will produce. That means we examine the outcome of the ideas that come our way. We have to look at the fruit we are producing in our lives.

The memory verses says, *But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop. Truth will produce a good crop.*

What does the memory verse mean? Lies that aren't of God will produce a bad crop. If we are pursuing what is good and right we will receive the Word of God and it will bear good fruit in our lives.

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** What are the four types of soil the seed falls on? What happens to the seed in each of the types of soil? What do people do with a lamp? Why?
- **Thought Questions:** How do you know what is happening to the seed in your own life?
- **Prayer:** Pray that you would have a heart that hungers after truth. Pray that your mind would be open to receive and understand the Word of God and that it would impact the way you think and live. Pray that you would recognize the fruit that ideas produce and want what God wants.
- **The Big Question:** **What does it take to produce a good crop?**
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse: Luke 8:15**
The truth planted in a good and noble heart will produce a good crop.

But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Questions: What does it mean to for a seed to be planted in good soil?

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: The Word of God is sowed through the teaching of truth and the condition of the heart of a person will determine whether it produces a crop or not.

1. If the truth falls on a hard heart like the path the devil will be able to snatch it away before it even sprouts.
2. If the truth falls on a heart of stone the roots won't penetrate and take up water so that when testing comes the truth will wither and die.
3. If the truth falls in a heart that holds on to the ideas of the world or pursues the things of the world, it will be choked out.
4. If the truth falls on a heart that is broken and ready for the truth it will retain it and produce a valuable crop.

Questions: Why do I need to know this? I need to examine what is happening to the seed in my own life. Is it producing a crop or is it being snatched away or withering? What impact is the Word of God having on me?

- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the booklet and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse in the inside.

- ★ **Activity Page:** Unscramble Words

Instructions: Unscramble the words in the steps of growing a crop and discuss the meaning of each in terms of the parable and a person's walk with God.

1. plow – Prepare the heart, make it ready to receive the truth
2. sow – Plant the Word of God, know what the truth is
3. water – Continually learn from Jesus and fellowship with him
4. weed – Examine and get rid of wrong ideas/attitudes, pray and be open to conviction of sin
5. reap – Enjoy the good fruit a life in Christ produces
6. share – Give to others the good fruit of your life

- ★ **Further Understanding:** Bible Study Skills

Instructions:

1. Read the whole passage below to the students as they read along in their Bibles or on the discussion notes.
2. Read the passage verse by verse and have the students explain each verse.
3. Have the students extract one important truth from the passage. This can be done as an entire class or you can break into pairs or small groups.
4. Have the students answer the additional two questions: How can you apply this truth in your life? What will be the result of applying that truth?

Galatians 6:7-9 – A Man Reaps What He Sows

⁷Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Discussion Questions: What does it mean to sow? What does it mean to reap? What does it mean to reap what you sow? When will we reap a harvest?

JOURNAL

The daily journal inside the booklet has six readings that relate to a theme. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Journal Focus: What does the Word of God do for us?

Reading 1: 2 Timothy 3:10-17 God's Word equips us.

What did Timothy know about Paul? Why was it important for Timothy to remember those things about Paul? What does God's Word do for us?

Reading 2: Colossians 1:1-14 God's Word bears fruit.

What had the gospel done for the believers in Colossae? What was Paul's prayer for them? What did Paul want to be the outcome of that prayer?

Reading 3: Colossians 3:15-17 We live out the Word in us.

How is the Word of God to dwell in us? What does that mean? What will be the result of the Word dwelling in us richly?

Reading 4: Romans 11:33-12:2 God's Word transforms our minds.

What does God's Word contain? Because of all God has done for us what should be our response to him? What should we let God's Word do to us? What does that mean? What will be the result? What does that mean?

Reading 5: 1 Thessalonians 1:4-10 God's Word teaches us to imitate Christ.

What does receiving God's message enable us to do?

Reading 6: Psalm 1:1-6 God's Word causes us to flourish.

What does it mean to be like a tree planted by streams of water? What do we have to do to be like that tree?