

Luke 8 Chapter Study

VII. The Galilean Ministry 4:14-9:50

Q. Making the Rounds of Galilee 8:1-3

¹ Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, ² and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, ³ and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.

Jesus is wrapping up his ministry in Galilee and makes a tour throughout the entire region.

While large crowds followed Him everywhere He went, it was only the 12 & a small band of women who stayed with Him the entire time.

Luke identifies some of the women who had attached themselves to Jesus.

They were all people Jesus had touched in a *miraculous* way, bringing deliverance & healing.

Mary was from the village of Magdala (Migdal) so she was called "Magdalene" as a nickname.

Since there were some other Marys who followed Jesus, we can understand why she was given a nickname.

Mary'd had a tough past, being possessed by numerous demons.

In gratitude to Jesus for her deliverance, she'd set herself to follow Him.

Throughout Jesus' ordeal at the cross, she was there & followed the men as they placed His body in the tomb.

She was the first to go to the tomb on Sunday morning, & is the first one Jesus appeared to after His resurrection.

It's unfortunate that Mary is often thought of as being a prostitute as there's nothing in the gospels that would give that suggestion.

Another woman who followed Jesus was the wife of the chief steward for Herod.

Some of these women were wealthy & helped provide for the daily & practical needs of Jesus & the disciples out of their financial resources.

This was the standard way rabbis & their students were supported. Wealthy benefactors would appoint one of their servants to travel with a rabbi acting as both a conduit for financial support as well as taking care of the daily chores; preparing meals & mending clothes.

R. Parable of the Soils 8:4-18

1. Parable given vs. 4-8

⁴ And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: ⁵ “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. ⁶ Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. ⁸ But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.”
When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Since we’ve taken an in-depth look at this parable in our studies in both Matthew & Mark, we’ll be much more summary with it tonight.

If you want to dig a bit deeper on your own – pick up the CD for Matt 13 or Mark 4.

Jesus told this parable because as He’s now a couple years deep into His ministry, people are settling into a *habit* of how they’re *hearing Him*.

He told this parable to urge them to be *careful how* they heard what He said.

A Parable was a story drawn from everyday life meant to illustrate a spiritual truth.

When Jesus told a parable, He drew from images that were all around the people he spoke to.

This parable is a good example. These people were well

acquainted with the process of a farmer sowing seed.
And the 4 kinds of ground Jesus referred to were things they were intimately aware of.
Bordering every field was the footpath where everyone walked, equivalent to our road.
The soil of Galilee is rich but literally filled with limestone rocks. And of course, weeds are to be found in nearly every patch of dirt. But then there are those patches of soil that just seem to be perfect. By diligent work, over time the farmer can take a rock, weedy patch of soil & turn it into a productive piece of ground.
It's a lot of work, but it can be done. In fact, it's a task every good farmer in Galilee was engaged in – making his soil better for producing crops.
Keep that in mind as we look on -

2. Purpose of parables vs. 9-10

⁹ Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” ¹⁰ And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that ‘Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.’”

We often hear that Jesus told parables to illustrate the truth He was teaching.

Really, that's only *half* correct. Here we get the *other* half – He used parables to *hide* the truth as well as illustrate it.

This parable is in itself a good illustration of what Jesus says here about His use of parables.

He was calling the people to take care how they heard Him because how they heard would determine the successfulness of their lives.

You see, for those *wanting* to know the truth, they would hear in Jesus' teaching the ring of truth.

For them, the parables served to amplify and clarify what He was teaching; they were illustrations that made the truth more clear.

But for those *rejecting* Christ, and so rejecting truth, the parables would only serve as excuses to reject what He was saying.

They accused Jesus of *not speaking plainly* – of hiding *behind* parables; using stories to appeal to the common people & so

enhance His popularity.
So while the parables helped those seeking truth to find it, they obscured it from those who rejected Jesus.

3. Parable explained vs. 11-18

11 “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13 But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. 14 Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. 15 But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience. 16 “No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. 17 For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. 18 Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.”

Again, we covered this parable in much greater depth in 2 different Sunday sermons, so we'll just summarize it tonight.

The 4 soils represent for different reactions to Jesus' teaching – which he calls in v. 11 the “Word of God.”

- 1) There were some who'd stopped hearing altogether.
Their hearts were hard & they had no interest in learning anything from Jesus.
- 2) Others got real excited by the novelty of Jesus' teaching, but never implemented it into their lifestyle.
As soon as a **challenge** came between what He said & what they wanted, their desires always prevailed.
- 3) Still others heard in Jesus' words the unmistakable ring of truth &

knew they ought to comply – but when push came to shove, the love of the world always prevailed.

4) Finally, there were those who heard & obeyed what Jesus said.

Jesus warning in v. 18 means that if a person realizes he/she has not been receiving the Word of God in the right way, they can change. Just as the farmer in Galilee could improve the soil for his crops, we can change the condition of our hearts by taking some earnest attention to it.

1) Is your heart **hard** because you've let the world trample it down.

Do you spend more time letting the feet of the world's **influences** trample your mind & heart?

That's the footpath – seed occasionally falls onto the footpath, but it never gets down into the ground because the world beats it hard by constant pressure.

Are you in God's Word daily?

Do you make attendance at bible study a priority commitment?

Are your eyes & ears given to the Word of God, or to the World?

If you're just hardened to God & realize that's not where you ought to be – let me suggest you to do 2 things –

1 – Make a commitment to attend church every weekend & Wednesday for 3 months.

2 – Take 15 minutes every day to sit down with the Bible and prayerfully read it, starting with the Gospel of John.

[PRAY]

2) Are there a lot of hard-spots in your heart, like that rocky-soil?

Some people go to church **fairly** regularly & **start** daily devotions.

They have an excitement at the relevance of the Bible but then they realize it speaks to some issues of their lives they don't want God messing with.

Relationships, money, materialism, sensuality; whatever.

They try to pick & choose their obedience to God.

If this is you – do what the farmer does with the rocky soil – remove the stones that come to the surface.

Over time, rocks in the soil come to the surface, and it is then the farmer lifts them out and places them along the side of the field to form a wall, protecting the field.

As the Holy Spirit convicts you of the hard spots in your life,

deal with them one at a time.
Don't worry about perfect obedience all in one step.
Deal with things one at a time as the Holy Spirit brings them to
your attention.
And watch how the Lord moves those things to the side &
makes really cool memorials to His power out of them.

[PRAY]

- 3) Maybe you're one of those who walked with the Lord for a time &
even had some ministry you were a part of.
But now the passion for God has cooled & the ministry is only a
memory.
In the process of living, the old struggle with the world returned,
& instead of fighting, you just gave up and consigned yourself
to what you know is a second-class spiritual life.
The battle with temptation wearied you, and you bought the lie
that being tempted was a sign of weakness, and weak
Christians can't really be used of God.
That's all a lot of hogwash – and you're not the first or last person
the devil's used that lie on.
Do what the farmer does once he's planted the seed – he tends the
field, walks the rows, and pulls the weeds when they sprout.
When you see things arise in your life that are contrary to God's
will, repent and uproot. Don't let your heart go to weeds.

[PRAY]

S. Jesus' Family 8:19-21

***¹⁹Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could
not approach Him because of the crowd. ²⁰And it was told
Him by some, who said, "Your mother and Your brothers
are standing outside, desiring to see You." ²¹But He
answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers
are these who hear the word of God and do it."***

At first, it seems Jesus is being a bit disrespectful toward His mother
& brothers.

But the other gospels shed some light on this; his brothers were
actually coming to try to persuade Him to back off and ease
down. [Mark 3:21; 31-45]

Word had gotten out that the religious leaders had taken an

official stance against Jesus. But Jesus wasn't at all conciliatory toward them.

You didn't want to make enemies of these guys because they had control of Jewish social life.

Mary & her sons were concerned Jesus was so caught up in His popularity with the common people He was blind to the trouble brewing with the authorities.

For His safety's sake, they came to Him to take Him home & try to talk some sense into Him.

So when they came & announced themselves as "Jesus' family," they were making a special claim **ON** Him, trying to use their relationship as the basis for demanding He listen to them and do what they thought best.

Jesus made it clear that He would not be dissuaded from His course – & that the only family that had any real claim on Him was the family of those who believe in God.

There was not an ounce of disrespect in Jesus' response.

But there *was* a mild rebuke to His mother & brothers for assuming He *wasn't* doing what was best.

Jesus' mother & brothers were motivated by a *good* desire – to **protect** Jesus.

But they *assumed* He didn't have the wisdom to know or power to do the best Himself; they went to *rescue* Him.

Christians still do this today – they try to **protect** Jesus.

Something is happening that they think will go really badly for the Lord if it turns out a certain way, and they send word to Him to *fix* it.

"Lord, don't let that person get sick or die because it will cause people to lose faith in You."

"Lord, don't let this person get that promotion at work because they're terrible & the company will fold & people will *blame You*."

Jesus' answer to all such misguided help today is the same as that which He sent to His mother & brothers –

- 1) He knows what He's doing.
- 2) He's in no danger.
- 3) And the work He's doing is more complex & far-reaching than they know.

[PRAY]

T. Jesus' Authority 8:22-9:9

Now we have some stories that illustrate Jesus' authority . . .

1. Over nature 8:22-25

22 Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out.

23 But as they sailed He fell asleep.

The gospels tell us Jesus was in the habit of rising early to begin the day in quiet seclusion with the Father.

As we read in v. 1, He's now spending His days traveling the length & breadth of Galilee, teaching and ministering to the practical needs of the sick & needy.

It's not hard to imagine how tired He would be.

So once they launch out into the water of the Lake, the gentle motion of the boat lulls Him to sleep.

And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy.

There are several valleys that lead from the plains to the north onto the surface of the lake which is well below sea level.

It's not uncommon for a front to move through that causes fierce winds to sweep over the surface of the lake, turning the water from the gentle ripples that lulled Jesus to sleep into towering waves that crashed into the boat.

24 And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 But He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"

The rebuke of Jesus seems a bit out of place at first reading.

Who wouldn't be terrified if their boat was filling with water?

But when we take a closer look at the story we realize the disciples' problem was that their fear was *misplaced*.

The Greek makes it clear – while they'd begun *afraid* of the storm –

they ended *terrified* of Jesus!

But their terror wasn't the fear of being *harm*ed by Jesus – it was an overwhelming awe & wonder at Who He was & the power He possessed.

If you take up snow-skiing, you'll go through a routine almost everyone does.

At first the bunny slope is a fearful thing to go down.

But after you take a couple dozens runs, you're ready for something a bit more challenging and go over to a true beginner's slope, with a Green Circle.

Steeper, longer. = Fear

But no fear at the bunny hill now.

Next – Intermediate w/Blue Square.

Steeper still, even longer, can't see the bottom, and little bumps here and there.

Fear. But no fear of the Easy slope, and on the bunny hill you're doing 360 spins,& sitting on the back of your skis!

Then – The Black Diamond Difficult run.

Straight down, moguls the size of houses. – Fear!

But not one bit of fear when flying down the Intermediate slopes, jumping over the bumps to get the thrill of a little air time.

Fear of the greater swallows the fear of the lesser dangers.

As it is in skiing, so it is in all of life.

We need fear no one & nothing but God because He has pledged Himself to protect & take care of us.

Just as Jesus told them in v. 22, “Let us cross over to the other side of the lake” and He was in the boat with them to that end, so He says to us, “Let's cross over to the other side of this life,” and we can be confident that He's with us every step of the way.

No matter how fierce the wind blows, or high the waves mount – He'll see us through.

Jesus is not going to take us to the middle of the Lake of this life then leave us to deal with it on our own. He will bring us safely to land.

As we saw Sunday – what can separate us from the love of God?

[PRAY]

2. Over spirit 8:26-39

26 Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee.

This takes place right after the storm on the lake where Jesus has demonstrated His power over nature.

Gadara is on the eastern shore of the lake. This area was occupied by both Jews & Gentiles.

In fact, most of the Jews of Israel held the Jews who lived in this area in low regard because they had such regular contact with Gentiles.

27 And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.

This man was so out of control no one could restrain him.

The other gospels tell us he was so rowdy they'd tried to chain him, but he broke out and ran off to live among the tombs.

[Mark 5]

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!" 29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. 30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him.

This poor man was severely possessed with many demons who'd come to inhabit him.

A Roman legion had 5 to 6,000 soldiers.

What or how he'd opened himself to this possession we're not told, but the point is, he's utterly out of control – & living in isolation with everyone terrified of him.

If find it interesting that the presence and influence of demons in this man's life resulted in his being utterly cut off from human companionship.

That is precisely the end of following the counsel of the demonic – isolation & estrangement from others
People think that by following the ways of the world, they'll keep their friends.
But the world is in league with the devil; as 2 Cor. 4:4 says.
The world's ways are designed by Satan, and his goal is to kill, steal, & destroy.
If we follow the world, the end is isolation and estrangement.
Those so-called friends will be seen for the selfish, petty and backstabbing lost souls they are – every time!
It's following the Lord that leads to a life of genuine fellowship & rewarding relationships.
Christians aren't perfect, and they will disappoint one another, but they're on the path to perfection and have the awesome privilege of being able to assist one another toward perfection.
If you're someone who's been hesitant to give yourself totally to the Lord for fear of losing your friends, ask yourself this: If they were truly friends, wouldn't they stay so if you did give yourself totally to the Lord?

These demons pleaded with Jesus to not torment them. What that means is made clear in v. 31 . . .

31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Without getting overly technical here – let me try to explain what's going on.

When Lucifer rebelled against God and lost his position as the chief cherub, he took a third of the angels along with him into ruin & damnation.

These fallen angels became the demons who've set themselves in opposition against God. Their main way to get at Him is by attacking the one creature that bears His image – Man.

Now, God has ordained that the time of rebellion will eventually end & the devil & demons will be confined to the Lake of Fire.

But not yet. At present, they roam the earth and seek to do mischief.

As we saw Sunday, God uses this mischief to advance His plan for our lives.

So, at present, demons have access to Earth & to harass human

beings.

But it seems there is one class of demons who went too far and overstepped the bounds God set for them earlier in history.

Because of this, as judgment, they were consigned to a place called *the abyss* or “*Tartarus*.” [2 Pet 2:4 Rev. 9:1]

These are the demons that will be released and set loose to do such damage on earth during the Tribulation.

The demons possessing this man believed they may have duplicated the error of those earlier demons & that Jesus would now send them to the abyss as well.

This freaked them out and they asked to please not be sent there.

32 Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. 33 Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

And so the origin of “deviled ham.”

Demons desire to have a body.

They lost the body of glory they possessed as angels & seek now to be robed in the glory of lesser flesh. If they cannot have a human body, then apparently pig will do.

But the pigs were too smart to be abused this way & ran & drowned themselves.

34 When those who fed *them* saw what had happened, they fled and told *it* in the city and in the country. 35 Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. 36 They also who had seen *it* told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. 37 Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned.

As we’ve noted when studying this story in Matthew & Mark – these Jews were raising pigs, unclean animals, to sell to the Gentiles

markets.

Their monetary profit was of greater concern to them than the deliverance of this man. Yet he had terrorized the area for years.

Most people are more concerned with their bottom line than their morality.

There have been several attempts to build a casino in Oxnard.

One of the big pushes for it is that it will add jobs and tax revenues, as well as bring a lot of traffic to the city which will help local businesses.

They say they'll be more money for police and fire.

But it's been proven time & again, in community after community, that the problems caused by casinos and gambling far outweigh any benefits.

Crime increases, immorality grows, property values decline, society crumbles.

On the other hand, the City has taken an oppositional stand toward churches because they don't generate tax-revenue.

We don't pay city or property taxes and as a non-profit, our operation isn't taxable.

So they block us from prime locations because they want to reserve them for businesses they can tax.

What we've tried to get across to them is that a healthy, vibrant church community will save the City countless dollars in social services because individuals and families will be stronger.

The healthier and stronger the family, the better the society.

You don't need a huge Police force if people are obeying the Law because they obey God.

You don't need social services when the family is taking care of its own needs.

[PRAY]

³⁸ Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

This man wanted to stay with Jesus – but Jesus sent him back to his family & friends with a mission - to tell them about Jesus. This man did what Jesus said – & covered the area with his testimony. That's what we need to do, just tell others about the great things Jesus has done for us.

3. Over disease & death 8:40-56

40 So it was, when Jesus returned,

Back to the western side of the lake.

that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. 41 And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, 42 for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying. But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. 43 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, 44 came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

As Jesus was making His way to Jairus' house, this woman with a serious medical condition came up behind Him & reached out to touch the tassels that hung from the hem of His garment.

In Numbers 15:38-39, God gave instructions that they were to put blue tassels on the hem of their garments as a reminder of their call to be a holy people.

A tradition had risen among the people that when the Messiah came, He would be so holy, there would be healing virtue in His tassels.

This woman, who because of her condition was prohibited from having regular contact with people, and who'd been impoverished by the medical profession, went to Jesus in desperation.

The other gospels tell us she thought to herself, "If I can just touch those tassels, I know I'll be healed." Sure enough, she was.

45 And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' "

This is pretty funny – in a crowd, when a famous person is passing by, what does everyone do? They try to touch him.

As Jesus was walking along, all kinds of people were touching Him. But when He stopped and issued this challenge, they all stepped back and said “Oh, not me!”

46 But Jesus said, “Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.”

Jesus didn’t mean the touch of a groupie wanting to make contact with a celebrity – He meant who touched Him – touched Him with faith in who He was!

In light of His reaction to this woman’s touch – what we might be more wondering about is – was she the only one in that whole crowd who understood Who Jesus was?

Hers was the only touch He recognized because it was a touch made in faith in Him.

47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. 48 And He said to her, “Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.” 49 While He was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue’s house, saying to him, “Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher.” 50 But when Jesus heard *it*, He answered him, saying, “Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well.” 51 When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. 52 Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, “Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping.” 53 And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead. 54 But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, “Little girl, arise.” 55 Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. 56 And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened.

Here's Jesus breaking up another funeral.

And the guys who made a living as professional mourners did not like their gig being interrupted.

They made money off of death and didn't want this little girl to rise.

Too bad – Jesus is not concerned with the income of those who make merchant of other's grief.

Jesus has now demonstrated His total authority & power over nature in calming the storm,

Over the spiritual realm by delivering the possessed man,

And over disease & death in the woman and Jairus' daughter.

All of this ought to add to our awe for & confidence in Jesus.

It ought to sharpen the fear we have toward Him, a fear that frees us from all others.

[PRAY]
