

Zoom Christian Growth Hour, Sunday January 17, 2021, Luke 8:9-15

Context: The Parable of the Sower, **Luke 8:4-8** 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.”

Luke 8:9-15 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 pleasures 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.

What did Jesus mean when 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.’?”

Hint: Jesus was quoting the prophet Isaiah (Chapter 6:9-10). Isaiah was called to preach judgement against Judah because their hearts were hard and they refused to turn from their wickedness. As a result of their hardness of heart, Judah was defeated and exiled to Babylon in 587 BC.

Isaiah 6:8-10 ⁸ And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.” ⁹ And he said, “Go, and say to this people: “‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ ¹⁰ Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”

In the parable of the sower, what does the seed (8:11) represent?

What do the various places where the seeds fall represent?

What does the “path” represent?

What does the “rock” represent?

What do the “thorns” represent?

What does the “good soil” represent?

What three characteristics are found in those likened to “good soil?”

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What is meant by the word “heart” in Luke 8:15 and the verses above?

How can we cultivate “an honest and good heart?” Let’s look at God’s Word:

Proverbs 4:23 ²³“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

The Hebrew translated “guard” means to “keep above all keepings”. So, above ALL you guard – your marriage, family, bank account, passwords, your car or house – guard your heart with more vigilance than anything else.

How do we guard our hearts?

Have you ever encountered someone who has built a wall around their heart?

How is “guarding our hearts” different than building a wall around our hearts?

Psalms 119:11 ¹¹I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

According to this verse, how might we keep from sinning? How does this work?

Luke 6:45 The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Proverbs 27:19 As water reflects the face, so one’s life reflects the heart.

How do these two verses reflect the “garbage in, garbage out” (GIGO) computer science principle?

James 1:14-15 ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

What is the root of sin and death?

2 Corinthians 10:5 ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

How can we take every thought captive?

Closing prayer:

Psalms 139:23-24 ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! ²⁴ And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!