

(Through the Bible) Luke 7-8

by Chuck Smith

In this sermon, Chuck Smith explores the miracles of Jesus in Luke 7-8, highlighting themes of faith, compassion, and forgiveness.

Duration: 1:27:08

Scripture: Luke 7:24-25, Luke 8:15-18, Luke 8:21-25

Topics: "Kingdom Of God", "Faith And Healing"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of both preaching and demonstrating the message of the kingdom of God. He refers to Jesus as the ultimate example of this, as Jesus not only preached about the kingdom but also showed its benefits through healing the sick and feeding the multitudes. The preacher also highlights the urgency and faith required in approaching Jesus for help, using the examples of a woman with a health issue and a father whose daughter was dying. Finally, the preacher references the parable of the sower to emphasize the need for receptive hearts to truly hear and understand God's message.

Transcript

Turn now in our Bibles to Luke's Gospel, chapter 7. At this point in Luke's Gospel, he's going to give us a series of events, miracles that transpired in the life of Jesus. When he had ended these sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion servant who was dear unto him was sick and ready to die.

And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying that he was worthy for whom he should do this, for he loves our nation and he has built us a synagogue. The Roman centurions were special men.

They are mentioned several times in the Scriptures and always in a favorable light. They were always, it seems, outstanding men. We remember the Roman centurion Cornelius in Caesarea.

It was while he was in prayer that the Lord spoke to him and commanded that he should send his servants to Joppa in order to get Peter to come down and teach them the way of the Lord more completely. And so, it was in the Roman centurion's house in Caesarea that the gospel was first preached to the Gentiles and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon his house and those that were with him as God began his work

among the Gentiles, actually in the house of a Roman centurion. So, they are mentioned several times in the Scriptures, always in a kind and favorable light.

This centurion in Capernaum was declared to be a worthy person by the Jewish leaders who came to Jesus on his behalf. They said that he was worthy for whom he should do this. This is interesting to me because the Jewish people, even to the present day, and I'm certain that it doesn't have its roots in the New Testament, but to the present day they have awards that they give to worthy people.

And it is a phrase that they yet use today. In fact, I've been awarded a worthy person by the Jewish community, whatever that might mean. And I haven't found out yet, but I don't know that I fully want to.

But I think it's good because they were smiling when they awarded me. But it's a title that they still give today for a person who has, and I suppose it is a person outside of the Jewish faith, who has shown kindness and consideration to the Jews, would be my estimation of this title. And such was the case with the Roman centurion.

He had built a synagogue for them and he loved their nation. And so, having this as his credentials, the Jewish leaders came and besought Jesus to do the favor for him by healing his servant. It was unusual for a master to have a close relationship with his servant.

The servants in the Roman Empire really had no rights whatsoever. And there was a Roman writer who said that every year a man should take stock of his possessions and should hold on to that which is still producing and beneficial and should get rid of that which was no longer productive. And included in that getting rid of that which was no longer productive was a slave who was no longer capable of putting out a day's work.

And so, when he got to that place, he would just be put out and left to die for he had no other recourse. The slave was so much a part of just a possession of his master that in the Roman Empire, a master could put his slave to death and not face any charges for it. After all, you're just destroying your own property.

So, for him to have this attitude towards a slave was unusual in itself. And it does show that he is one of those men above the ordinary. He loved this slave very much and was concerned because he was almost dead.

Then Jesus went with them. And when he was not far from the house, then Centurion sent friends to him saying unto him, Lord, do not trouble yourself for I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. Wherefore, neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee, but say in a word and my servant shall be healed.

Now, the commendation that the Jewish leaders had given to Jesus is this man is worthy. As he answers or responds when he finds out that Jesus is getting close to his house, sending other friends, he said, I'm not worthy that you should come under my roof. He used a different word for worthy.

But then he did say using the same word for worthy, neither did I think myself worthy to come to thee. In that culture, it was unlawful for a Jew to enter the home of a Gentile. He knew for Jesus to come into his house would be putting a strain upon Jesus.

When Peter entered the house of Cornelius, he apologized for doing so. He had taken some Jewish friends with him from Joppa and he apologized for doing so. He said, you know, it isn't lawful for me to

assemble with you fellows that are coming into this house, but the Lord told me not to ask any questions.

So I'm here. What do you want? But he was apologizing for entering into the house of a Gentile because that was forbidden to the Jew. So he is saying to Jesus, I'm not worthy that you should come under my roof.

I didn't even feel I was worthy to come to you. It is interesting when we remember when the woman from the area of Sidon came to Jesus concerning her daughter, who she said was vexed with the devil. And Jesus said, the disciples, Jesus didn't answer.

The disciples said, Lord, do something for her. She's bugging us and driving us crazy. Jesus said, it isn't right to give the children's bread to the dogs.

Now, Jesus was declaring that these benefits that he was bringing were for the Jews. This centurion did not feel worthy to come to Jesus and ask that Jesus would even come and was sort of embarrassed that Jesus was coming. But then he made a remarkable statement.

He said, just say the word. You don't have to come. I'm not worthy that you should come.

Just say the word and my servant will be healed for I understand authority. For I also, I also recognizing that Jesus had authority. I also am a man set under authority, having underneath soldiers.

I am a man who is under authority and I have underneath soldiers. I understand what authority is about. I submit to an authority, but I also have authority and I understand how authority works.

I also recognizing now that Jesus had this authority. I also am a man under authority, having under me men or a man said in authority, having under me men. And I can send to one go and he goes to another.

I say, come and he comes and to my servant, do this and he will do it. When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him and he turned about to the people that were following him. And he said unto them, I say unto you, I have not found so great a faith.

No, not in Israel among the Jews to whom he came. He did not see as much faith as this centurion. So they who were sent when they got home found the servant that had been so sick, nearly dead, was alive and well.

So it came to pass the day after now, this is at Capernaum. He went into a city called Nain. Nain is about 25 miles from Capernaum.

So Jesus is making tracks and many of his disciples went with him and a lot of people. Now, when he came near to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man being carried out and he was the only son of a mother who was a widow and many people of the city were with her. And when Jesus, or when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said unto her, weep not.

The picture could not be more pathetic. A woman who was a widow following the procession as her only son is being carried out for burial. Now, in those days, they did not have caskets, but usually carried them in baskets and put them in a sarcophagus.

The word sarcophagus from the Latin means flesh eater. They have these limestone sarcophaguses there in Israel. In fact, you can see them just in excavations where they've dug for a highway.

They uncover them and they just leave them set there in the sides and you can find them all over. There is something about the limestone that eats away the flesh very rapidly. In fact, within a month or so, and that's the name sarcophagus, the flesh eater.

And so they would usually place them in the sarcophagus until the flesh was eaten away and then they would later bury the bones. And so he was being carried probably in a basket to the place of burial, either a cave or a sarcophagus. And the mother with the crowd, the sad, pathetic scene, and they didn't just weep, they wailed.

And Jesus had compassion on her. In the Greek, there is no word that is more expressive of feeling sympathy than the word used here translated compassion. And it is used many times of Jesus.

It's the strongest Greek word that expresses the deepest kind of feeling towards a person. Jesus had compassion on her and said unto her, weep not. And he came and touched the buyer and they that bear him stood still.

And he said, young man, I say unto thee arise. And he that was dead sat up and began to speak and Jesus delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all and they glorify God saying that a great prophet is risen up among us and that God has visited his people.

This term, God has visited his people. If you'll go back to the first chapter at the birth of John the Baptist, when God opened the mouth of Zacharias, his father, he began to prophesy. And some of the first words of that prophecy back there in chapter one were blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited his people.

And so here the people are declaring God has visited his people, the fulfillment of this prophecy of Zacharias. And this rumor or story of him went forth throughout all of Judea now Judea is on to the south, 60, 70 miles. So this story really spread concerning this young man who was dead, brought back to life by Jesus.

And throughout all of the regions there around about the area of Nain in the Galilee region. And the disciples of John were telling John about all of these things. And John called him two of his disciples and he sent them to Jesus saying, are you the one that is to come or should we look for another? And when the men were come unto him, they said, John the Baptist has sent us unto these saying, are thou he that should come or should we look for another now in John's gospel? He tells us that when John saw the spirit of God descending upon Jesus that he knew that he was the Messiah for the Lord told him that upon whomever you see the spirit descend, he is the one.

And so John, in referring to Jesus said to his own disciples, behold, the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. And he pointed men to Jesus Christ. Now, John has been in the dungeon for a while.

Herod's prisoner. He does not like confined quarters for he is a man of the outdoors. He grew up in the wilderness.

He was a man of the woods, so to speak. And this confinement, no doubt, was very irritating to him. And I would imagine that John, like the other disciples of Jesus, was anticipating the immediate establishing of the kingdom of God.

And he was probably wondering, how long am I going to sit in this prison? And the question, are you the Messiah, was not so much a question. As was sort of an urging, let's get things going. Let's get moving.

It could be that the fact that Jesus did not immediately establish the kingdom overthrow Herod and the Romans. That John did have second thoughts, whatever be the case, the response of Jesus is quite interesting. In that very same hour, he cured many of their infirmities and of their plagues and of the evil spirits.

And unto many, many that were blind, he gave sight and Jesus answering, said unto him, go your way and tell John the things which you have seen and heard. How the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and to the poor, the gospel is preached. Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Now, Jesus said to his disciples, believe me or else believe me for my works sake. Again, he said, the works that I do, they do testify of me. Jesus pointed to his works as a testimony to his identity, who he was.

My works bear witness. They do testify of me. And if you don't believe me, he said, believe me for my works sake.

So he called upon his works as the witness as to his authority and to his identity. And they form a very strong witness as to his identity and his authority because no man can do these things except the Lord be with him. The works that he was doing were the works that were prophesied of the kingdom age.

And of course, that's what John was concerned about. The kingdom. Are you the one? You know, why haven't you set up the kingdom? Are you the one or shall we look for another? And the works that he was doing were works that were the fulfillment of the kingdom age.

Where the lame would leap as the deer, the blind would behold the glory of the Lord and the dumb would sing praises unto him. And unto the poor, the gospel would be preached. He just said, go back and tell John.

He knew that John knew the scriptures. He knew the scriptures well enough that when they come back and tell John the things that they saw, the things that they heard, that John would know the scriptures well enough to know that yes, he was indeed the promised one. So when the messengers from John departed, Jesus began to speak to the people concerning John.

And he said, what did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaking in the wind. Now the area where John was baptizing, the Jordan River was surrounded by these reeds. They were very, very common sight.

And obviously they didn't go down to the Jordan River just to see reeds blowing in the wind. What did you go out to see reeds blowing in a wind? No. What did you go out to see a man clothed in soft raiment? That is a man who was robed in beautiful robes.

And then in a bit of satire, Jesus said, behold, they, which are gorgeously appareled and live delicately are in King's courts. They're not in the King's dungeons, but what did you go out to see a prophet? Yes, I say unto you much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written.

Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say unto you among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist. And so Jesus puts John at the top of the list of those prophets that have been sent by God to the Jewish people.

All of the men born of women, not a greater than John the Baptist, but then an extremely remarkable statement, but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. The privileges that you have as a child of God living in this age are superior to the highest position under the old dispensation where God related to man in a legal way through the law. Now, those who related to God from that legalistic background, the greatest of all was John the Baptist.

And yet he who is least in the kingdom of God has greater privileges, a deeper relationship with God through the Holy spirit than the highest of that prior dispensation. For we have not a legal, but a loving relationship with God and all the people that heard him and the publicans, that is the tax collectors justify God. They declared yes, that's right.

Because they have been baptized with the baptism of John, but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves because they were not baptized by him. Jesus used this later on when they were asking him a bunch of questions that he didn't want to answer at that moment. He said, I'll ask you a question.

You answer my question. I'll answer yours. John's baptism.

Was it of God or was it of man? And they knew that if they said it was of man, then all the people would turn against them because they all believe John was a prophet. But if they said it's of God, then Jesus said, well, then why weren't you baptized by John? So he said, well, we can't answer you that question. She said, I don't answer you yours either, but he used this here, here there was the division.

It was marked, uh, the opinions concerning John. He was officially rejected by the religious leaders, but widely accepted by the people. And so the Lord said, what shall I like in this generation too? What are they like? They are like children who sit in the marketplace and calling to each other.

They say, we have played our pipes and you have not danced and we've mourned with you, but you've not wept for John. The Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine. And you say he has a devil, but the son of man has come eating and drinking.

And you say, behold, the gluttonous man and a wine bibber, a friend of the tax collectors and sinners. But he said, wisdom is justified of all of our children. In other words, what do you want? You're in a position that nothing satisfies you.

John came living in ascetic life. And you said he has a devil. I came mixing with people, eating with the publicans and all.

And you say, Hey, he's a wine bibber. He's a gluttonous man. What do you want? One of the Pharisees desired that he would eat with him.

And Jesus went to the Pharisee's house and sat down to meet that is to eat the dinner. And behold, there was a woman in the city, which was a sinner. And when she knew that Jesus was sitting in the Pharisee's house for dinner, she brought an alabaster box of ointment and she stood at his feet behind him weeping.

And she began to wash his feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. And she kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment. Now, when the Pharisee, which had bitten him, saw it within himself, he thought, Hmm, if this man were a prophet.

And if you know what kind of a woman this is that is touching him, he wouldn't allow her to do that because she's a terrible sinner. And Jesus said unto him, Simon, I have something to ask you. He said, go ahead and ask it, Lord.

Jesus said there was a certain creditor who had two debtors. The one owed him 500, 500 pence and the other 50. And when they had nothing to pay, he completely forgave both their debts.

Tell me. Which of them loves him the more? And Simon answered and said, Well, I suppose that he to whom he forgave the most. And Jesus said unto him, That's right.

And he turned to the woman and he said unto Simon, Do you see this woman? I entered into your house and you gave me no water for my feet, but she has washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil you did not anoint, but this woman has anointed my feet with ointment.

Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven for she loved much, but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Simon was a rude host. And in that culture, hospitality was something that was treasured highly.

When you invited guests to your home, they would leave their sandals at the door, but immediately there would be a servant there with a towel and with a basin of water. And the host would provide that servant to wash your feet in order that you might come into the house to dine. Of course, they wore open sandals.

They had dirt pathways that they walked on. And it was just a common accepted courtesy that the guests that were invited would have their feet washed by the servant when they entered the door of the house. And then it was customary to greet your friends with a kiss.

Usually it was a kiss on each cheek. This was just common. And in fact, in some of those areas, it is still practiced today.

Italy, the men in the church, when they come up and greet you, kiss you on both cheeks. And it's a sort of a beautiful, loving thing. But it was common in that culture.

And then also it was common to anoint with oil, to pour oil on the head of the guest, which was a symbol of the joy that you hoped to share together that evening. And they would then serve you your first cup of coffee. No sugar.

Strong Turkish type coffee. Bitter. The idea being that you are washing away now all of the bitter experiences that you've had.

The second cup they offer you is very sweet, symbolic of that sweet time that we can now share together, that all of the bitterness is taken away. Simon was a poor host. He did not show to Jesus any of these common courtesies.

He did not wash Jesus' feet. He did not anoint his head with oil, nor did he kiss him when he entered the house. But this woman washed his feet with her tears, dried them with her hair.

Kissed his feet continually and anointed his feet with ointment. And here's Simon, the Pharisee, sitting there in his pompous, self-righteous attitude said, hmm, if he were really a prophet, he wouldn't allow this to go on. He'd know what kind of a woman she was.

And he wouldn't allow her to touch her. You see, Simon wouldn't touch that woman because if you touched her, you'd be considered unclean. She was a sinner.

Don't let that woman touch me. I'm glad that Jesus is touchable, even by sinners. I appreciate that so much.

I can reach out and touch the Lord no matter how badly I fail. He's always within reach. And so Jesus gave to Simon this little parable about the fellow who had two debtors, one owed him 500 pence and the other 50 pence.

He forgave both their debts. Which one loves him the more? The one forgiven the most. And so Jesus said, yes, that's right.

And this woman, because her sins are many and are forgiven, loves me the most. And so he said to the woman, and I'm sure this is just to get Simon's goat. He said to the woman, your sins are forgiven.

And it had the reaction I'm sure he was expecting. And they that were sitting at dinner with him began to say within themselves, who is this that forgiveth sins? And he said to the woman, thy faith hath saved you. Saved thee.

Oh, isn't this interesting? Jesus is bringing to man a whole new relationship to God. A relationship that is based on faith and salvation through faith. And here this woman's faith puts her a step ahead and already into that new dispensation of God's grace.

Thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace. Always the result of having our sins forgiven.

And it came to pass afterward, as he went throughout every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the 12 were with him. Certain women, which have been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene.

Uh, that was, uh, this, she was from Magdala and because there were many Mary's she was identified as Mary of Magdala or Mary Magdalene. Jesus was called Jesus of Nazareth because there were many people by that name also. And so to identify who he was, they referred to him as Jesus of Nazareth, common Jewish name, Joshua in Hebrew.

And it was a common name for the little boys. And so to identify him, it was Jesus of Nazareth. Uh, here it is Mary of Magdala.

And so they called her Magdalene because that was the city from which she came and Jesus had cast seven devils out of her. And Joanna, who was the wife of Cusa, who was Herod's steward and Susanna and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance. In other words, these women that were following with the company of disciples were taking care of their needs with their substance.

They were the ones that were providing the food and taking care of those needs. I'm certain that in heaven, these women who sacrificed to minister to the physical needs of Jesus during his lifetime have a very special place up there. And I imagine that they are very special women.

We don't really hear much about them. Not much is said concerning them, but they no doubt are very special women and have a very prominent place there in the kingdom of heaven. And it will be interesting to meet them and to get their side of the story.

Because if they're anything like my wife, they can tell you so many more details of the color of their hair and eyes and what they wore than I can ever remember. And so the fact that we have men, gospel writers, we've lost a lot of details that these women will no doubt be able to fill in for us. And it will be interesting talking to them indeed.

Now, Jesus went about every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. Paul, the apostle, as he was talking to the elders of Ephesus there on the beach at Miletus and knowing that this is the last time that he will probably see them, he said, you know how that I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but I have showed you and have taught you publicly and from house to house. He's talking about his ministry there in Ephesus.

And he said in my ministry to you, I showed you and I taught you. There is much that we can learn from a lecture, but there is much that cannot be learned from a lecture, but must be learned by observation. As a person's life demonstrates what he preaches many times, what a person preaches is totally negated because the life that he lives is not in harmony with the message that he preaches.

Jesus both preached and showed. He demonstrated the message of the kingdom that he was preaching to these people. The message of the kingdom of God was the central message that Jesus had to declare to man.

Many people are confused about the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. And there are some people who have tried to make a difference and make spiritual kind of meanings and mysteries. And, and, you know, these little has God revealed to you brother bit, you know, of, uh, you know, the kingdom of heaven versus the kingdom of God.

But the terms are used synonymously. Matthew usually refers to the kingdom of heaven and the other gospel writers to the kingdom of God. But you can cross reference the scriptures and find that they are used synonymously.

The kingdom of heaven usually refers to the kingdom of God when it has come to the earth, but it is all under the kingdom of God. And the kingdom of God is that kingdom where God is King. So when Jesus said the kingdom of God is among you, he was showing to them the kingdom.

He lived a life in complete submission to the father. He showed him what it was like to live a life in submission to the father. He said, I do always those things that please the father.

And he showed them what kind of a life it was when you lived in complete submission to the father as King. And when you live in submission to God as the King of your life, you are living in the kingdom of God. It's just that simple.

And there's no sense of trying to make some deep spiritual mystery out of it. It's an extremely simple thing. So simple that a child can understand it.

And so simple that unless you become as a child, you can't enter it. You've got to get rid of all this hocus-pocus mystery, spiritualizing of stuff, because Jesus said it isn't that. It isn't some kind of a difficult

mystery only revealed to some initiates.

It is something that a child can perceive and understand. And you've got to come as a little child to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Just as a little child says, I love God and I want to serve God.

Bowing before God, acknowledging God as the King of your life, you've become a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. That's all it takes. Obedience to God, submission to God, and you are a part of the kingdom of God.

Jesus preached to the people of the kingdom of God. It was something that was central in their minds. They were anticipating God's establishing the kingdom of heaven on earth at that time, especially the disciples.

They felt that when the Messiah came, he was going to immediately establish the kingdom of God upon the earth. But that was not God's plan. But you remember that this was so important to them that even when Jesus is saying to them, now I'm going to go away, but I'm going to pray the Father and He's going to send you another comforter, even the spirit of truth, that He may abide with you forever.

And now wait in Jerusalem until you receive this promise from the Father, which you have heard of me. Or John baptized you with water, but I'm going to baptize you with the Holy Spirit in a few days. And they said, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom? Is this when you're going to set up the kingdom of God? Jesus said, look, it is not given to you know the times and the seasons that are appointed unto the Father, but you'll receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.

They were anxious for the kingdom of God and rightly so, because they were living in miserable conditions as far as the world itself was concerned. We should also be anxious for the kingdom of God. And I'll tell you, there are times when I groan and cry for the kingdom of God.

When I read the statistics of Orange County, the abused children for the month of September, and I read of all of these things that are happening to these little children, I'll tell you, my heart yearns for the kingdom of God. It cries for the kingdom of God to be established. How long, God, how long are you going to allow man to go on in his rebellion against your kingdom? How long, God, will you forbear? And it is my prayer that the Lord come quickly and establish his kingdom, for I don't think that mankind can go on much longer.

I don't think mankind will survive much longer. I think that it is imperative that God establish his kingdom soon. And as I look at the world today, my heart yearns for the kingdom of God.

As I look at my little grandchildren and I think of the world that they are growing up in, I'll tell you, my heart cries out to God, I don't know what I would do should some sex pervert touch one of my grandchildren. He'd probably have to bail me out. I cry, oh God, come quickly.

Things can't go on much longer. But Jesus was preaching the good tidings, the glad tidings of the kingdom. And it is glad tidings.

A glorious day is coming, a day when man will live with peace with one another, a day when God will reign, a day when we will see the earth as God created it and intended it to be for all time, where the deserts are blossoming like a rose and there are streams in the deserts and rivers in dry places and the parched ground has become a pool and the blind will see and the lame will walk and leap as the deer and

all. These were the things that Jesus was showing as he was healing the sick, as he was feeding the multitudes. He was showing the things that would transpire in the kingdom age.

And he proclaimed how beautiful and glorious it is when the man lives in obedience to God and in submission to God. And so he preached and he showed the kingdom of God. When Jesus was born and the angel announced to the shepherds, he announced it with these words, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

The shepherd was proclaiming the kingdom of God. The king is born. He has come.

He's over in Bethlehem. He's lying in a manger. You'll find him there swaddled.

And suddenly there was with that angel, a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God and saying glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men. They were proclaiming the conditions of the kingdom, but the kingdom was to be brought by this child who the angel said for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a savior Christ the Lord. And to those who have found Jesus as their Lord, they have entered into the kingdom of God.

And you can begin to enjoy even now a part of the benefits of the kingdom as God fills your heart with his love and with his peace. Now, there were many people that were gathered together and they came to him out of every city and he spoke to them by a parable. And he said, a sower went out to sow his seed.

And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside and was trodden down and the fowls of the air devoured it. Some fell upon a rock and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away because it lacked moisture and some fell among thorns and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. Another fell on good ground and it sprang up and it bear fruit a hundred full.

And when he had said these things, he cried, he that happened here to hear, let him hear. Jesus was always saying that. And in his messages to the seven churches, he repeated it to each church.

He that happened here to hear, let him hear what the spirit sayeth to the churches. How important that we have an ear to hear what God is seeking to say. I'm constantly praying, God, give me an ear to hear what you have to say.

And that is more than just hearing. It's understanding what God's message to man today would be. God, what is your message to me? What are you saying to me? What are you wanting to say to me? God, give me understanding.

Give me an ear to hear. For I realize that unless the spirit does teach me, I can't learn. No matter how intelligent I might be, I cannot learn spiritual truth apart from the spirit of God, opening my heart to understand and to receive for the natural man understand that not the things of the spirit, neither can he know them.

They are spiritually discerned. God, give me an ear to hear. And so the disciples asked him saying, what does this parable mean? And he said unto them, unto you, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others, it is spoken in parables that seeing they might not see and hearing they might not understand.

Now the parable is this. The seed is the word of God. So we realize that the word of God falls on different types of soil, or there is a different reception in the hearts of people to the word of God.

And the, the, the Lord is sort of illustrating the four types of people upon whom the word of God falls. Now, these are those that are by the wayside. There are those that hear the word of God, and then the devil comes and takes the word out of their hearts.

Less they should believe and be saved immediately. There's just nothing. There's no penetration.

The word comes, but immediately Satan snatches it away. And it's as though they had never heard they there on the rock. Are they, which when they hear the word, they receive it with joy.

They have a great emotional experience, but these have no root, which for a while they believe. And in time of temptation, they fall away. And that which fell among the thorns is that which when they have heard, or those when they have heard go forth and they are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life.

And they bring no fruit to perfection or completion. There's no real fruit that comes from their life. They hear they receive, but the fruitfulness is choked out by pleasures, riches cares, but that which fell on the good ground, are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it.

And they bring forth fruit with patience. Now, as you look at your own life and examine yourself on what kind of soil has the word of God fallen in your life, in which of the four categories, would you place yourself A, B, C, or D. And it might be good to take a moment with an honest look at your own heart. Am I bringing forth fruit onto completion? If not, why not? Have I allowed cares, riches, desire for pleasure to choke out my fruitfulness on what kind of a soil has the word of God fallen in your own heart? God help us that we might bring forth fruit with patience.

Be not weary in well-doing in due season. You will reap if you faint not. Jesus said, no man, when he has lighted a candle covers it with a vessel or puts it under his bed, but he sets it on a candlestick that they which enter in may see the light for nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, neither anything hid that shall not be known and come abroad.

Take heed, therefore, how you hear. Be careful how you hear the word of God. For whomsoever hath to him shall be given and whosoever hath not from him shall be taken, even that which he seems to have.

The importance of using what God has given to me for his glory. And if I do, God will add more. The Lord said, thou has been faithful in a few things.

Now I will make you ruler over many things. That is always the process of God. Unless you are faithful in those little things that God has laid before you, he'll never lead you any further.

There are a lot of people who want to jump into some big major work for God. That's where they want to start. But they don't want to.

You know, they don't have time for teaching a Sunday school class. Or helping out in the nursery. I want to do great things for God.

And. God always promotes through the ranks those who begin and are diligent in those small things. God gives more.

If you're not faithful in the little things and who's going to entrust to you the things of the kingdom then came to him his mother and his brothers. And they could not come in because of the crowd. And it was told him by certain ones, which said your mother and your brother are standing outside and they desire to see you.

And he answered and said unto them, my mother and my brothers are these which hear the word of God and do it. Now, in the previous parable, there was that emphasis upon doing also. But here again, Jesus is declaring that that relationship that we have with him who hear and do his word is that of a brother.

Close relationship. Now it came to pass on a certain day that he went into a ship with his disciples and he said unto them, let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And so they launched forth.

And as they sailed, he fell asleep and there came down a storm of wind on the lake and they were filled with water and were in jeopardy. And they came to him and they awoke him saying, master, master, we're perishing. And so he arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water and they ceased and there was a calm.

And he said unto them, where is your faith? And they, being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, what manner of man is this where he commands even the winds and the water and they obey him. It is interesting that Jesus rebukes them for their lack of faith when the ship was in jeopardy of sinking. Interesting because from all appearances, they were going to go under.

Where's your faith? They weren't listening when Jesus said in verse 22, let us go over unto the other side of the lake. Now, when you have the word of Jesus, you're going to go over to the other side of the lake. There's no way you can go under.

He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear. And they weren't listening carefully. And so when they were afraid that they were going to go under, he rebuked them because of their lack of faith because he said, let's go over.

And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. Now, the city of Gadara has recently been discovered in the last two years. And at the present time, they are excavating the site of the city of Gadara.

Actually, they were building a new road up into the Golan Heights. And as they were building this new road, they began to come across these ruins. And so they halted their building and called in the archaeologist and they discovered the site of the ancient city of Gadara.

And so they've moved the road a few hundred yards and are now excavating the city of Gadara. Interestingly enough, a mile or so, a couple of miles from the site of the city of Gadara is the only place around the Sea of Galilee where there is a steep incline leading into the sea. So the very area where Jesus landed in his boat can be ascertained there today.

And it is near the ruins of the ancient city of Gadara. So in this very area, Jesus came with his disciples. And when they came to the land, there met him out of the city, a certain man which had devils for a long time, and he wore no clothes, nor did he live in any house.

But he lived in the tombs, the rock tombs out there. And when he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him. And with a loud voice, he said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God most

high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

For he had commanded, Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many times it caught him, and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters. But he broke the bands and was driven by the devil into the wilderness.

And Jesus asked him, saying, What is your name? And he said, Legion, because many devils had entered into him. And they begged him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. The word translated deep is the Greek word of buso, which in other places in the New Testament is translated the bottomless pit.

There are four places mentioned in the Scriptures as the places of abode for the wicked dead and for the disobedient angels and spirits. There is a place known as Tartarus, where certain angels are kept bound, awaiting the day of judgment, and they are bound in chains of Tartarus, awaiting that day of judgment. In the center of the earth, there is a place in the Scriptures called Hades.

In the Hebrew, it is called Sheol. It is oftentimes translated grave and many times translated hell. It is in the center of the earth.

Prior to the death of Christ and resurrection, it was divided into two compartments. And in a few weeks, when we get to the 16th chapter of Luke's gospel, we will get a description by Jesus of what this place in the center of the earth is like, known as Hades. We know that it is in the center of the earth because when they asked Jesus for a sign, he said no sign will be given to this wicked and adulterous generation, but the sign of the prophet Jonah.

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. And so when Jesus died, he descended into hell, into Hades, into this compartment in the center of the earth. And according to Peter's gospel, there he preached to those souls that were imprisoned.

And according to Paul's letter to the Ephesians, when he ascended, he led these captives from their captivity, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, this 61st chapter, where he would set at liberty those that were bound and open the prison doors to those that were captives. And so Jesus led the captives from their captivity at the time of his resurrection. And they with him ascended into heaven.

However, Hades was divided into two compartments of which there could be no concourse back and forth. And we'll get that in Luke's 16th chapter. And we'll just wait till we get there and talk a little bit more at that time.

Now, somewhere upon the earth, there is a shaft that goes from the surface of the earth down into Hades. This shaft in the scripture is called the abuso. It is translated the bottomless pit.

And this shaft is the abode and incarceration of evil spirits. The Antichrist will ascend out of the abuso, this shaft. When Satan is bound during the thousand year reign of Christ, he will be cast into this same abuso out of which the Antichrist came.

In the book of Revelation, we read where an angel is given the key to the abuso during the time of God's great tribulation and judgment upon the earth. And he opens up the abuso. And when he does, these creatures that John graphically describes in the book of Revelation come out of the abuso and begin to

attack men upon the earth.

These hordes of demons released and attacking men during the great tribulation period. I mean, those who have made these fantasy movies haven't seen anything yet. When you read of these creatures that will come out of the Abuso, these demon apparitions, actually, and demons themselves who come and attack men.

And through the ultimate result, one third of the earth's population will be destroyed. In the beginning, they have power only to hurt men for six months. And then they begin to these other horse like creatures have power to kill.

And by them, a third of the earth's population will be wiped out. Now, when Jesus comes again and he destroys the Antichrist and the false prophet, they will be cast alive into Gehenna. Gehenna is described as in outer darkness.

Now, how far out does space go? They say that they have discovered galaxies that are 12 billion light years away from the earth. When you get that far, I don't know how accurate your measurements can be. But give or take a few billion years.

But if you continued out beyond the farthest galaxy and continued on into space until 12, the light of our galaxy did not shine. It could be that Gehenna is out there or it could be that Gehenna is a black hole sucking everything into it. The gravitation so heavy that not even light can escape.

But it is called in the scripture outer darkness. This is where the Antichrist, the beast and the false prophet will be cast when Jesus returns to the earth. A thousand years later, Satan will be released out of the Abuso, this pit.

Now, Satan and the demons will be put in the pit during the thousand year reign of Jesus Christ, the kingdom age, but then they will be released. Now, notice they are begging Jesus that he would not command them at this time to go to the Abuso. They know that the time is coming when they will be consigned to the Abuso.

They're begging for their liberties now. Which, interestingly enough to me, Jesus gave to them. He did not at that time command them, torment us not.

Don't send us to the Abuso. And Jesus at that time did not send them to the Abuso. However, they will have their time when Satan is bound.

Now they will be released and will create in the heart of wicked man a rebellion against God and against the reign of Jesus Christ. And then they will be cast into Gehenna where the beast and the false prophet are. And then the great white throne judgment of God, when all men, small and great stand before God and whosoever's name is not found written in the book of life will also find his place in Gehenna.

Blessed is he who takes part in the first resurrection because he's got it made over him. The second death will have no power, but this is the second death. It is God's final consignment of the wicked.

They hate the light. They will not come to the light. And so God honors their desire for darkness and cast them into outer darkness.

Way down in the depths of organ caves, they turned out the lights and we experienced what the guide said was total darkness. And I mean, that was dark. We waved our hands in front of our faces to see if we could pick up any kind of a movement.

You couldn't. In fact, there is something that just sort of began to press in on you. I was glad when they turned the lights on because total darkness can freak you out in a hurry.

Especially if you're a little kid and have a vivid imagination, they will be cast into outer darkness. And Jesus said of Ghana, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth and their worm diet not. And in the book of Revelation, speaking of it, it said, and the smoke of their torment ascended from the ages throughout the ages.

So four places by the grace of God, we don't have to go to any of them because now. He that lives and believes in Jesus Christ shall never die. We will be changed.

We know that when this earthly tent is dissolved, we have a building of God not made with hands eternal in the heavens. So we who are still living in these tents, our earthly bodies often grown earnestly desiring to move out not to be unembodied spirits, but we might move into that new building of God not made with hands. For we know that as long as we're living in these tents, we're absent from the Lord, but we would choose rather to be absent from these tents and to be present with the Lord.

Someday you may read Chuck Smith died, don't believe it. Poor reporting. Chuck Smith moved out of an old worn out tent into a beautiful new mansion, a building of God not made with hands eternal in the heavens.

For Jesus said he who lives and believes in me shall never die. But here they are begging not to be sent to the Abuso. So there was a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain.

Now that's illegal. These men were trafficking in an illegal trade is like growing cocaine or poppies. And so these demons legion besought him that he would allow them to enter them.

And so he allowed them. And then with the devils out of the man and entered into the swine and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake and they were choked. Now, my son would say this is the first account of deviled ham.

I wouldn't say that. But now when those who were feeding the swine saw what was done, they fled into the city and they told the people what had happened. And so the people came out to see what was done and they came to Jesus and they found the man out of whom the devils were departed.

And he was sitting at the feet of Jesus. He was clothed and in his right mind healed, no longer naked and screaming and crying and having to be bound with chains. But he's sitting there clothed in his right mind and they were afraid.

And they also which saw it told them by what means the man who was possessed of devils was healed. And then the whole multitude of the country of the gatherings round about begged him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear. And he went up into the ship and returned back again.

Isn't that tragic? The people were more interested in their swine than they were this man's deliverance. The loss of their swine was of greater concern to them than a man's help. They begged Jesus to depart.

But the man out of whom the devils were departed begged him that he might be with him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, return to your own house and just show how great things God has done to you. And he went his way and published throughout the whole city the great things that Jesus had done for him.

Now, it came to pass that when Jesus was returned, that is, back over the other side of the Lake Capernaum, the people gladly received him, for they were all waiting for him. What a contrast. On the one side, they're saying, would you please get out of here? And on the other side, the crowd is waiting.

And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and he besought him that he would come into his house, for he had only one daughter, about 12 years old, and she was dying. But as he went, the people were thronging him.

And a woman having an issue of blood for 12 years, which had spent all of her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind him and touched the border of his garment. And immediately her issue of blood was stopped. And Jesus said, Who touched me? And everyone denied.

And Peter and those that were with him said, Master, the multitude is thronging, impressing against you. And you say, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody's touched me, for I perceive that virtue has gone out of me. It is interesting to me that in a multitude of people who are thronging, impressing against Jesus, there is one in the crowd who touches him.

Her touch was different from the press of the throng. It is interesting to me how the Lord can minister to people, individual, even in a throng, even in a multitude. And here we are tonight, a multitude of people gathered together, many pressing, many thronging.

How many are touching? Really receiving the touch of Jesus in your life by faith, reaching out and really touching the Lord. Here we have two cases, contrasting cases. Twelve years earlier, before the event that we read, this woman came down with a debilitating malady.

She began to hemorrhage and it would not stop. She had gone to many doctors. They treated her until her money had run out, but her condition did not improve.

It was only worse. In that society, for a woman to be bleeding meant that she was unclean from a ceremonial sense and could not enter the synagogue or the place of worship. A woman afflicted with a malady for 12 years.

The loss of the relationship with her husband, according to the law, he could not touch her while she was hemorrhaging. She could not worship God in the synagogue while this condition persisted. And no doubt anemia can weaken as the result.

For 12 years, she lived in darkness, hopelessness and was getting worse. On the other hand, 12 years earlier, in the house of Jairus, a little girl was born. And as little girls, no doubt brought great joy and happiness and light and laughter and beauty into the home.

And for 12 years, they'd enjoyed watching this little girl as she grew up, as her personality began to develop and all of the cute, wonderful things that she had done. In one household, 12 years of darkness and despair. In the other, 12 years of life, laughter and beauty.

And so they are approaching Jesus from different angles. In both cases, the light was going out. This woman was getting worse.

She didn't have any more money. She had only one hope, get to Jesus. Touch him, touch him.

To this dad, the light was going out. His little girl who had brought such life and joy and happiness into the home was at home and she was dying. And he had only one hope, get to Jesus.

And as Jesus was going to his house and it was urgent, the girl was dying. As he stopped, I imagine that Jairus was a little irritated that he had stopped over a triviality of who touched me. For as he was going, the crowds were going with him and pressing him and pushing and thronging against him.

And I can imagine Jairus saying, Lord, let's get on to my house. My daughter is dying. You don't understand the urgency.

Why stop over a triviality of someone touching you in this crowd? But Jesus is persisting. And even the disciples are beginning to object. They said, Lord, with people pressing and thronging, what do you mean who touched me? Jesus said, someone's touched me.

I felt the virtue go out from me. And this woman stepped forth and she kneeled before him, trembling and said, I did it. And she told her story 12 years ago, 12 years.

That must have flashed on Jairus 12 years ago. I was stricken with a malady that ostracized me from the community, from my family. But I'm healed.

The moment I touched, I knew I was healed. I'm healed. It stopped.

I felt it. I know it. And Jesus continued on to Jairus's house after saying to her, be a good comfort daughter.

Thy faith hath made thee whole. Go in peace. Now, as he was speaking and Jesus knew doubt, no doubt knew this as he was speaking to the lady, one of the servants came running up and he said, don't bother the master anymore.

It's too late. Your daughter died. But Jesus turned to him and he said, fear not, only believe and she shall be made whole.

So when he came to the house, he did not allow any man to go in except Peter and James and John and the father and the mother of the girl and all of those that were weeping and wailing because of her. But he said, don't weep. She's not dead.

She's only sleeping. And they turned from their weeping and laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And so he put them all out and he took her by the hand and called, saying, made arise.

The word in the Greek is my little child, 12 years old, beautiful little girl, no doubt. As who has never seen a 12 year old girl who wasn't beautiful? And he said, my little child, very endearing term in the Greek, Talitha, my little child arise. And her spirit came again.

You see, this indicates that at death, our spirit departs from our body. Our spirit moves out of our body and moves into that new body that God has. The real me is spirit.

The real me isn't this body. The body is only a tent in which I'm dwelling for a while. It was designed by God to exist in the conditions of this planet Earth.

It was designed by God and purposed by God to be the medium by which I might express me. But the body isn't me. Only the medium by which I express myself.

The real me is spirit. One day my spirit will move out of this body. Now, her spirit returned to her body.

It had moved out. She was dead. The spirit had moved out of the body, but her spirit returned, came again into her body and she arose immediately.

And he commanded that they give her something to eat. And her parents were astonished. But he charged them or commanded them that they should not tell any man what was done.

Interesting little insights into the ministry of Jesus. The miracles that he performed given to us by Luke, who being a doctor was quite interested in these various healings that Jesus brought to the people. And interestingly enough, he uses terms that are medical terms in the Greek language and can be found in much of the classical Greek in the very same types of diagnosis in records in classic Greeks that Luke is describing here of those being healed by Jesus.

Next week, chapters 9 and 10, as the Lord wills. May the Lord be with you and may the Lord bless you and may the Lord fill you with his love and give you his grace and his power to live and to be as God would have you to live and to be. For he would have you to live in his kingdom as a child of the kingdom.

Enjoying the peace and the love and the joy that mark his kingdom for the kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but righteousness, peace and joy. For extra credit, get a concordance and follow up the kingdom of God and what the requirements are of that kingdom. You'll find it a very fascinating study as much is written concerning the kingdom of God.

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