

Hearing Jesus...Can You Hear Me Now?

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[0 : 00] Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to Luke chapter 8. Luke chapter 8. We come to a passage that is pretty well known, or at least a parable that's quite well known.

The parable of the sower. The sower goes out to sow, right? The seed falls on these different grounds. So, when I taught this in the Gospel of Mark six years ago, we slowed down and took time looking at each one.

We're not doing that this time. We're going to take a big picture. My desire in going through the Gospel of Luke is to take bigger chunks, get bigger pictures. So, if you're feeling cheated by not going through each of the areas, I believe our notes and sermons are still available from six years ago.

You can look that up and dig in and have fun. Luke chapter 8. We're going to be reading from verse 1 through verse 21.

And I'll explain why we're taking all of that after we begin. So, if you're able, please stand. I will read Luke chapter 8, beginning at verse 1.

[1 : 31] Soon afterward, he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God.

And the twelve were with him. And also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town, came to him, he said in a parable, 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. And some fell on the rock.

And as it grew up, it withered away because it had no moisture. And some fell among the thorns. And the thorns grew up with it and choked it.

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.

[3 : 18] And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, 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. Now this parable is this. The seed is the word of God. 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. 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. And as for what fell among the thorns.

[4 : 18] 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. 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. No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar. Or puts it under a bed. But puts it on a stand. So that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is hidden. That will not be made manifest.

Nor is anything secret. That will not be known and come to light. Take care, therefore. How you hear.

[5 : 23] For to the one who has, more will be given. And from the one who has not. Even what he thinks that he has. Will be taken away.

Then his mother and his brothers came to him. But they could not reach him because of the crowds. And he was told. Your mother and your brothers are standing outside. Desiring to see you. But he answered them. My mother and brothers. Are those who hear the word. And do it. So he reads the word. Let us pray. Father, speak to us today. Give us ears to hear. Particularly give us good hearts. That will not just receive it temporarily. But will receive it. And hold fast to it.

[6 : 29] Make our hearts the good soil. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. You ever been to a hearing test?

What? You ever been to a hearing test? What? Ever been to a hearing test? What? Anyone have loss of hearing?

Sorry. That's depressing. You know, I go to a hearing test. I always prided myself. I could hear. You know, even people were telling secrets over there. I could hear.

You know? And now I can't. You go to a hearing test. They're like, yeah, you've lost hearing. What? What? You lose hearing.

It's hard to hear conversations. It's hard to understand voices. My mother could never hear women's higher voices. She couldn't hear.

[7 : 36] They'd be talking. She'd over talk. Never. Didn't even know they were talking. It's hard as well. If you're hard of hearing.

It becomes harder when we're disrupted by other noises. Crowds and, you know, noises. So that's physical hearing. There's also non-physical hearing problems.

You know, we have ears to hear, like Jesus says. If you have ears to hear, listen. We have ears to hear, but a lot of times we, what? We don't listen. Why? Are you listening?

Dylan has to say, are you listening right now? Because sometimes we don't listen. Why? Because sometimes we're tired. Sometimes we're distracted. Sometimes we're simply not interested.

Sometimes we don't like what we're hearing. And so we tune out. The same thing is true when we listen to the Word of God.

[8 : 36] We can hear it, but not listen. We can hear it and not like it and dismiss it. So Jesus tells us it's a serious issue.

Be careful, therefore, how you hear. We can hear the Word of God.

We can read the Word of God. We can hear it read and preached and taught, but do we listen. So what keeps us from truly hearing the Word of God?

What causes some who hear so superficially that they eventually walk away? Or as Jesus' fall away?

So we have the parable of the sower. It's about hearing. After Jesus tells the parable, He says, verse 8, let those who have ears to hear, hear. And then verse 18, be careful, therefore, how you hear.

[9 : 50] To the one who has, more will be given. To the one who does not have from him, even what he thinks he has will be taken away.

So in other words, the seriousness of this topic is you either progress or you regress. There is no neutral in Christianity.

You cannot take a break from Christianity or cruise in neutral for a period of time and then come back and think you're going to be where you were before. You won't be.

That's what Jesus is saying. Careful, then, how you hear. So note that Luke frames this passage. Verses 1 through 3, he talks about the crowds that are gathering. He talks about, verse 1, how Jesus is on a preaching tour, basically. You know, musicians go on tours, right?

[10 : 52] They go on music tours, right? They go on their final tour, their goodwill, goodbye tour, whatever. So Jesus is doing a tour.

He's going through towns and villages. He's preaching everywhere. Notice what he's preaching. Verse 1, he's preaching and gospelizing, bringing the good news about what?

What's his message? The kingdom of God. That's his message. Everywhere he goes, the kingdom of God. Okay, so that raises a question. What's that? He tells us that the 12 are with him, and there's a bunch of women with him.

So as he goes on this tour, he's got the 12. They're with him the whole time, and there's a whole group of women that are with him. Luke is the only gospel writer that lets us know that early in the gospel.

The other gospel writers tell us about Mary and Joanna and Susanna, these other women, and there's a bunch of other Marys. There's about 1,800 Marys, right? They're all Marys, yeah.

[11:55] That's why this one has to be Mary the Magdalene one, you know, from Magdala. The other gospel tells us that at the end, you know, when they're at the cross, when they're at the tomb, when they're at the resurrection, these are those women that had been with him from the beginning.

Luke tells us up front, there's women involved, which for a rabbi is a no-no. You don't do that, first century. Women don't attend.

Women can come and attend, but to be serving you, to be with you, traveling with you, journeying everywhere you go, part of the entourage, no. So that's interesting.

And then notice at the end, the other part of the frame, where my friend Dan likes to say the sandwich, there's the bread on top is verses 1 to 3, the bread on the bottom is verses 19 to 21, where he talks about the family.

Mother and brothers come, and they want to see him. They're on the outside. They're wanting to see him, and Jesus makes this statement. My mother, my brother, are the ones who hear the word of God and do it.

[13:02] So at the opening and the close of this passage about this parable are the followers of Christ listening to the preaching on the message of the kingdom of God, and then the family.

So that's the slices of bread, and then in the middle is the meat, right? In the middle is the core, and that's the parable on the sower, which is about hearing.

Who can hear the mysteries? Because he calls the parables the mysteries. So Jesus is going to explain in verse 10 why he teaches in parables.

He is altering his teaching. There are times that Jesus, and he will do this more and more later in Luke. So here he is this first big parable, parable of the sower.

And the disciples are asking, what does it mean? They're also asking, why are you doing this? Are you teaching in a way that's mysterious? They're not illustrations to make things clear.

[14:11] These are parables to make things hard. They're hiding things. They're not making it clear. I was told in seminary, yeah, Jesus told parables all the time to make things clear.

I'm like, uh-uh, that's not what he said. Okay. So, in fact, I got curious about this.

Where are the majority of his parables? Jesus taught 29 parables in the Gospel of Luke. 23 of them are from chapter 10 to 20.

So later. He alters his teaching method. Okay. That's significant. For a reason. He's not wanting to grow large crowds.

He's getting large crowds. Why? Because he's healing people. And he's delivering them from demons. No wonder. Absolutely. Yeah, crowds come.

[15:12] But he's wanting to thin out the crowds and find out who the real followers are. And parables is the method to determine that. Okay.

So, two things I want to do here in these verses. Verses 4 to 10, he tells the parable. And in verse 10, he gives the reason.

So, dividing this passage into two parts. So, the first part is the import of parables. Why parables at all? In general.

What's the purpose of parables? Right? And then secondly, his second point is in verse 18. After he explains the parable, he gives that warning.

Be careful then how you hear. Hearing is really, really important. Everybody hears, but not everybody hears.

[16:16] Okay? So, let's look. First of all, verses 4 to 10. This parable. Why the parable? He explains in verse 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. That's why I tell parables. For others, the secrets are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.

Okay? So, summarize it this way. Kingdom mysteries, kingdom secrets, kingdom, the mysteries of the kingdom are revealed only to true disciples. Excuse me.

Revealed only to true disciples, and the flip side of that is they're hidden from others. That sounds like, why would Jesus do that? Why would he want to hide stuff?

Why would he want some not to understand? So, let's walk through this. First of all, we learn three things about parables. In verses 4 to 8, they are pictures.

[17:21] Right? So, we have a picture here of farming. In verses 4 to 8, the sower goes out to sow. He sows on different kinds of soil. Right? He's sowing and planting.

That usually happens in late fall. October to December is when they plant the seeds. And then in the spring, April, May, that's when the seeds spring up.

They sprout. And then in the summer, around June, they harvest. Okay? So, he's explaining something that they all know. They're all familiar with this.

They see this every year. It's a common practice. And the way he describes it is extremely common. They don't plow the field first.

They don't get all the rocks out first. They just throw the seed out on the soil. Sometimes they'll follow it up with plowing, but they throw it out.

[18:13] They just throw it. They've got a bag over their shoulder. They pull the seeds out and just start scattering it. Walking through the field, they just scatter it. It goes everywhere. And obviously, some go in different places. Some go on the paths.

Some go on rock or literally bedrock. No, we're not talking about rocky ground. We're talking about ground that has bedrock. It's not like, oh, they didn't get the rock out. There's just rock there.

It's kind of like planting here in Palmer Lake. You know? You live in the Rocky Mountains. You've got rock. So, it's hard to grow some stuff sometimes. It's not like California.

We just throw it in the ground and it grows. We thought we were good at gardening when we lived in the Bay Area. It's like, yeah, just throw it in the ground and it grows. What's the problem? And we lived in Illinois. It's like, does anything grow here?

But Israel is in a climate where they don't have as much issues of weather. So, you've got these different places.

[19:12] And notice that he uses different prepositions for each of these areas. So, alongside the road. And then upon the rock.

And then among the weeds. Or thorns. And then into the soil. So, only one goes into the soil. One goes by the road.

One goes on the rock. So, it can't go any deeper. And then one goes among the thorns. And that wasn't purpose.

It's not like they didn't weed it first. It's like there's seeds of the thorns and seeds of weeds out there already. So, they don't know until it grows up that they're there. Okay? That's the picture of what's going on.

So, verse 9. So, he tells this parable. He says, let everybody hear. Verse 9. The disciples ask him what this parable meant. So, we find out that there's two purposes to the parable.

[20:10] One is to reveal. Secondly, to conceal. It's to reveal to some and to conceal from others. So, who does he reveal it to?

He says, verse 10. To you it has been revealed. To who? Who is he talking to? The crowd? Who is he talking to in verse 10? Anybody reading?

Anybody reading? Anybody? Can you hear me now? Can you hear me? Yeah, the disciples. Verse 9. They're the ones that ask the question. To you. To the ones that ask. To the ones that are seeking.

To the ones that want to know more. To the ones that want to understand. To you it's given. After I'm done talking, you don't understand.

You come up and you say, what does that mean? That's the to you. To you. To the true disciples. To the true disciples. To the true followers. To the ones who are listening and want to understand more.

[21:13] And who admit, I don't get it. Tell me what it means. To you. To you. To you. To you. Are given the secrets of the kingdom.

The mysteries of the kingdom are given to you. What are mysteries? What are these secrets?

They're hidden truth. Things that are hidden until they're revealed. They're simply covered up until concealed.

Until they're opened up. And they're opened up to some. Paul talks about mysteries all the time. He talks about. You know, how he was a Pharisee.

He saw things a certain way. When Christ came. It was concealed from him. He didn't know until the blinders were taken off. And it was revealed to him. And then he saw. Oh.

There were certain things that God planned to do all along. That were secret. Kind of hidden. There were little hints. But mostly hidden. And then revealed after Christ came.

[22 : 11] Like the whole Gentiles coming in. That was a big surprise. There were clues to that in the Old Testament. But it was mostly a surprise. And that Jesus would come the way he did.

The Messiah would come the way he did. A conqueror. But not like the kind of conqueror we were thinking. Right? Mysteries. And so now he's telling the disciples.

There are other mysteries. That give you insight. Into how you grow. As a follower of Christ. How you bear fruit.

How do I move on? How do I. Right? And so all these different parables. Will explain those. Hidden truths. That be revealed to those who ask.

So then in verse. The end of verse 10. He says. But to others. To others. They are in parables. So that seeing. They may not see. And hearing. They may not understand. Why?

[23 : 11] Why is he hiding? There are others who are not seeking. Not asking. Not even interested. They hear. But Jesus knows.

They're not really. They don't really want to know. So I'm just going to tell them a parable. And if they're really interested. They'll come and ask. Ask. That's how I'll know.

Who my disciples are. That's how I'll know. Who my followers are. Because if they just kind of hear the story. All they get. He says. To that. To the others. It's just parables.

So all they get. Is a story about farming. And they walk away. And go. What did you hear the master say today? Talk about farming. I don't get it. Nothing new.

Everybody knows about sowing. You know. You know what that was about. Okay. That's what they get. And they don't even care.

[24 : 08] So parables show who the true followers are. They separate the sheep. And we see from this. That Jesus is not seeking numbers.

He's not seeking to get a big crowd. He's seeking to distinguish who are true followers. Now I started to experience this.

In my first pastorate. Back in San Jose. Came to the. The little church of Willow Glen.

Neighborhood church. In San Jose, California. And I was just out of youth ministry.

Didn't know anything. But I knew the word. And I started teaching the word. And after a few years.

There were some members that were kind of. Not liking the messages.

And I remember one. One older man in particular. Who pulled me aside afterwards. And we were talking.

[25 : 06] I was teaching on. I think John 15. The vine and the branches. And that Jesus said. Apart from me you can do nothing. So I made the statement. You may do good works. But if you don't do them.

Depending on Jesus Christ. They're nothing. And this was a man who did good works. And he said. Is that really true? Is that what that means? They said yes. Absolutely. That's what Jesus means.

If you do good works. Apart from him. They're nothing. He said. I don't like that. I don't like that. I

don't believe that. I'm leaving. He left the church. He'd been there for. Longer than I was.

Oh. I was 30 at the time. I remember going to the elders. To the church. And going. And that he was just representative. Of others that were leaving. I said.

Guys. I feel bad. What do you want to do? And they're like. Preach it. Keep preaching. It hurt to see some people go.

[26 : 03] But that's the result of the word. The word will do that. But if we don't want people to leave. Then we don't. Tell all the truth of the word.

And that way people can feel good. This was a man who wanted to feel good about it. He did good work. He wanted to feel good about himself. Jesus isn't interested. Make it feel good about yourself. Not interested at all. So. What is the kingdom that Jesus is preaching? He talks about verse one. He's preaching the kingdom of God.

Verse 10. He says the parables. Are hiding. Secrets. Of the kingdom of God. What's the kingdom of God? When I grew up. When I grew up. Under a certain teaching and theology.

That the kingdom of God was all future. And it was about when God was going to come back. And when Jesus was going to return to earth. And set up his kingdom. And the kingdom would be a thousand years. And all that.

[27 : 01] I had lots of questions about that. I'm like why? Why a thousand years? What's that bad? Why is he doing that? Well because he is. Anyway. Anyway. That's not what the gospel says.

That's not what the gospel says. That's not what the New Testament says about the kingdom of God. So let me give you a brief surgery. Surgery. Surgery. Of the kingdom of God. So back in verse one. He is bringing good news of the kingdom.

He is gospelizing the kingdom of God. So in other words. The kingdom of God. Is the message about the gospel. Hope. Okay. It is the gospel.

So it's not just something future. Remember chapter six. When Jesus preached his sermon.

Remember he said. Blessed are the poor. For theirs is what? Theirs is the kingdom of God.

They already have it. Whoever the poor are. They're blessed. Because they already have. They're not waiting for it. They have it. Okay. What is it? It's the gospel. Well John.

[28 : 05] In the gospel of John. Remember Nick at night. Nick comes to Jesus. You know. And Jesus says to Nicodemus. You can't enter the kingdom of God. Unless you are. Born.

From above. Wait a minute. I got to go back on my mother's. Nick. You're supposed to be the rabbi man. You don't know this. I'm talking about being born of the spirit.

A spiritual rebirth. If you're not born again. You can't get in the kingdom of God. So those who are born again. Of the spirit. Are in the kingdom of God. They've entered. Remember Jesus before Pilate.

My kingdom is not of. This world. If my kingdom was of this world. Legions of angels. You'd be. You know. Frying. So what's the kingdom.

So Paul. I like the way Paul summarizes it. Romans 14. 17. He says. The kingdom of God. Is not a matter of eating and drinking. Not about physical stuff. The kingdom of God.

[29 : 10] Is not about eating and drinking. But. Of righteousness. And peace. And joy. In. What? The Holy Spirit.

That's the kingdom. The kingdom. The kingdom is about. Righteousness and peace. And joy. In the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God. Is about the work of the Holy Spirit.

Giving us righteousness. Peace. And joy. Isn't that something that Christians experience now?

We're not waiting for. Yeah. 1 Corinthians 15.

Paul talks about. Yeah. There's an already kingdom. And there's a. There is a kingdom. That's yet to come. In its fullness. He's explaining. In fact. We read these in our. In our. Call to worship this morning.

1 Corinthians 15. To talk about the resurrection. Then comes the end. When he. Jesus. Delivers the kingdom of God. To the Father. After destroying every rule.

[30 : 06] And every authority. And every power. For he must reign. Until. He has put all. His enemies. Under. His feet. In other words.

The kingdom is going on now. Where is Jesus? While the kingdom is going on now. Seated at the right hand. Right? He is ruling. He is putting his enemies.

Under his feet. One. By. One. We'd like him to go faster. But he's going. As he wants. Right? He is ruling. He is reigning. The kingdom is.

Now. I like to say. When people ask. How's it going? In a rough time. Well. My king. Is on his throne. So we're okay.

My king is on his throne. And this is my father's world. No matter what's going on. Then.

[31 : 05] Paul talks about again. Colossians 1. 13. How the father has rescued us. From the domain of darkness. And transferred us. Into the kingdom. Of his beloved son.

So when we're saved. We're transferred in. We're. We're moved out. Out of Satan's kingdom. Into. Christ's kingdom. And then finally. Revelation 1.

This is a blessing. At the beginning of the book of Revelation. To him who loves us. And has freed us from our sins. By his blood. And made us. A.

Kingdom. Priests. To his God. And father. To him be glory. And dominion. Forever and ever. When he freed us from our sins. What did he do? He made us a.

Kingdom. He made us a kingdom. We're not waiting for a kingdom. We're not waiting for that. Set. That time. When they come back. And wait for a thousand years. And whatever. Whatever that's all about. I'm not sure the book.

[32 : 01] We're out. We. Well. Get the tape on that one. It's something now. It's. It's. So in other words. The kingdom is the gospel.

It's about being delivered. Into Christ's kingdom. It's a kingdom. It's not of this world. It's a kingdom. That Christ is now ruling. From heaven. And it is a kingdom. That we experience. When we're born again. And receive the Holy Spirit. And begin to. Have this experience. Of righteousness. Peace. And joy. That comes through the work.

Of the spirit. That's the kingdom. There is a future. Absolutely. There is a culmination. There is an end. When he comes. And he gives the whole kingdom. Then to the father.

After he's done. With all his enemies. That's the kingdom. So. What's.

[32 : 56] The significance. Of this parable. Or of parables. Well. One. Is kingdom mysteries. Are revealed. Only the true disciples. And true. Disciples. Are. Are those who show.

Interest. Those who ask. Okay. Secondly. So. Then. Now. In verse. Eleven. And following. Or verse nine. No.

Verse eleven. Now. He explains. The parable. So. Jesus walks. Through these parables. Or walks. Through these. Different seeds. He talks about. The path. And the rock.

And the. The thorns. And then the good soil. He explains. Each of them. Okay. So. In other words. When we read. The original. Parable.

In verses. Four through. Eight. Eight. We should not. Get anything. More. Out of them. Than what. Jesus explains. In verses. Twelve. To fifteen.

[33 : 53] If we get more. We're reading. Too much. Into it. He shows us. What the parable. Means. And that's it. I can't make the rock.

Something else. I can't. You know. I can't. I can't. Spiritualize. This and that. It's simply. What he explains. It to be. Okay. That's. So.

So. What we learn. In Jesus. Explanation. The parable. For one. Is. How to be careful. In our interpretation. Not. Not over spiritualize. Right. Just kind of.

Connect dots. That he. Shows us. How to do. So. Here's the second. Purpose. What's the purpose. Of this parable. It's to tell us. That how carefully.

We hear. Determines. If we progress. Or regress. How. Carefully. We hear. Will determine.

[34 : 50] If we progress. Or we. Regress. Be careful. Then. How you. Hear. What it has. More will be given.

The one. It does not have. Will lose it. In other words. There's no. Neutral. In the Christian faith. There's no. Neutral. There's no cruising. Oh.

You can cruise. But that doesn't mean. You're going to stay in the same. You're not in the same place. You can't take a break. You can take a break. And I understand. Taking a break. Right.

We get overwhelmed. We can. We can have a season. Doing that. Because we're discouraged. But recognize. When we do that. We don't come back. To the same place.

We were. We will have regressed. We will have lost something. We will have a break. Because our hearing has stopped. Okay.

[35 : 44] So notice first of all. What does he emphasize? First of all. He emphasizes hearing. Eight times. From verse eight. Between verse eight. And verse 21. He used. He used the word hear.

Hear. Hear. Hear. Hear. Hear. Verse eight. The one who has ears. Let him hear. right see it in verse 10 the one that to others are in parables so that seeing they may not see hearing they may not understand so there's a hearing there but the point is verse 18 look again at verse 18 take care then then is too weak the word is therefore remember when we see therefore what do we ask what's a therefore right he's making a logical connection a logical point therefore take care how you hear for the one who has more will be given from the one who has not even what he thinks he has will be taken away but take care how you hear in other words how you hear is the difference between gaining or losing between enduring or falling away how we hear makes that big difference and you say okay but sometimes pastor you're hard to listen to

I get it I'm very sympathetic to that sometimes you talk too much or too long get it deal with it sorry too old now not kind of joking but kind of reviewed that issue and and the elders have said don't worry about the text takes however long the text takes we're not even compared to how the puritans did or how Paul did it all night we're not even going there so length isn't it really an issue but I do understand we get tired and I understand we have we diminishing returns I get it I try to be careful about that I even pray I've told you I pray every Saturday not only that you give me insight and boldness and freedom and all that but that you all the Lord please also restrain any unnecessary words from my mouth sometimes I after the sermon

I wonder were you doing any of that I think I went off a little bit like now so here how you hear so in other words how you hear shows who real Christians are verse 10 some only hear from the surface they see but they don't see they hear but they don't understand because they don't hear with understanding they're just hearing on the surface now notice in verses 12 to 15 when he goes through when he walks through this the ones on the path notice verse 12 the ones along the path are those who have heard they hear verse 13 the ones on the rock are those who when they hear the word they hear verse 13 and what about the ones among the thorns they are those who hear they hear too verse 15 fast for the good soil those are those who hearing the word so notice that hearing is part of the dimension of every one of those soils every one of those people he's talking about four different responses to the word of God there are four every one of them hear they all hear on some level they either hear superficially they hear kind of minimus a little bit or there are those that dig but out of those four only one endures only one that out of warm us

I think this parable is a warning now there are obstacles so verse 12 what's the obstacle on the path those on the path right are those who have heard then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts interesting the word made it into the heart and the devil goes into the heart and takes it out wow why so that they will not believe and be saved that's spiritual warfare there are some people that don't hear at all it doesn't get anywhere because the devil comes and takes it that's a reality it never got a chance and then so you have that you have the devil who the New Testament talks about how the prince of this world blinds unbelievers blinds them and all of us before we were saved were blinded okay so it doesn't mean it's absolutely hopeless for this person at that point that's where they were it doesn't mean that later God didn't open their eyes because Paul was blinded for years was he not

[41 : 24] I was blinded for years if you're saved you were probably not probably you were blind at some point even though you believe maybe you grew up in church like I didn't believed it all you're still blind until God opened your eyes so then those on the rock what about the rock well those those are the ones who hear the word verse 13 receive it with joy oh this is good they receive it with joy but these have no root they believe for a while and in time of testing fall away so these are interesting the ones on the rock are interesting they receive it with joy that sounds good right they believe for a while that sounds good right they're believers and technically the word they believe for a while they believe for a season kairos they believe for a season whatever however long that is in scripture a season is however long God says the season is could be months could be years and then in a season of testing they fall away so what's the barrier for that one trial when the trials come not just one but several trials come that shows where they are then they fall away they fall away it could even be read that they walk away they desert it's hard to know how strongly

Jesus said that verse 14 and then there's the obstacle for the thorns the ones that fell among the thorns those are the ones they hear but as they go on their way in other words they begin to grow but they're growing in the midst of the thorns they're all growing together and when they grow the thorns choke them out and Jesus describes interprets the thorns as they're choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life and their fruit does not mature so this is an interesting group as well they're growing they're growing they look hopeful but then they're choked out they're suffocated they're strangled they can't in other words it's the worries of the world the cares concerns of the world we all have that the riches of the world oh interesting so they're falling to the temptation of riches snare of riches right and what the pleasures that's the word for hedonism that means you live for yourself you live for you know whoo it's like paul said if there's no resurrection then eat drink and be merry let's go be hedonists get all we can out of life so in other words these people turn to a life of just whatever give my pleasure now not waiting and then it says their fruit does not mature so that's what does that mean it doesn't say no fruit they had some fruit but it didn't mature what does that mean are they actual believers that just shortcut

I don't know if the fruit doesn't mature is it any good is it gardeners is that any good diet is it fruit done mature is it any good no it's pretty useless it might be one of those apart from me you do nothing you know you do your own fruit but it's not mine so it's not real so you got the he points out the obstacles and then verse 15 we see the difference look at the difference of the good soil as for that verse 15 on good soil there are those who not just hear but are hearing they keep hearing the word they keep hearing the word they hold it fast in an honest and good heart and they bear fruit with patience so I see four markers there first of all they hear it with a good heart they hear it with a heart that's different than the other ones he uses two adjectives he says they hear it with an honest

and good heart so in Greek it's two different words for good they hear it with a good and a good heart a good heart that's fit sound healthy and a good heart that is upright good in terms of upright moral how'd they get that kind of heart how do

I get that kind of heart what if I don't have that what if I'm a sinful person I don't have that kind of heart my if I'm a sinful person which we all are if I'm a sinful person then I got a heart that's not fit I haven't got a heart like Jeremiah says it's deceitful and desperately sick oh he's got a good heart does he well Jesus said this one has a good heart how do I get a good heart Psalm 51 created me a clean heart renewed in me a right spirit sustain me sustain me with a willing spirit I get a clean heart a good heart a fit heart when I'm born again when God cleanses me creates that in me so I don't make my heart good enough to make you know and because his heart is cleansed and new he's able to cling to the word notice he's holding fast the word he keeps holding fast clinging to the word reflecting on the word digging into the word depending on the word asking questions of the word that's what he's clinging and because he's clinging then he also bears fruit with endurance so I see four things he's got a heart that's good he keeps clinging to the word he's bearing fruit but he's doing it with patience he's doing it by endurance how do we bear fruit do we bear fruit every single day how does fruit bearing work when we're talking about farming and you know you plant a tree or we planted cherry trees and you know there's just there's no fruit cut it down right no way right we got berry bushes but they're not buried all the time buried they're not buried it takes time remember in the vine and the branches

John 15 Jesus talked about the season he talked about after we bear fruit what does the father do he proves so that we might bear more fruit so there's there's different seasons there's a planting and then a growing and then ultimately a fruit bearing when we think about the fruit of the spirit when do those come out they come out over time they come out as he wants they come out particularly through endurance I mean when do you show what's the fruit of the spirit love joy peace skip the next one love joy peace patience when's that one come out right right when's the peace one come out right you get sometimes it takes time and sometimes it takes the trials to bring them and it's the endurance through the trials that brings those up they bear up under trials they're patient for the promise sometimes how do I have joy when I'm going through trial how do I have peace when I'm going through anxiety when I'm uncertain about the future how do I have that right how do I get that peace that passes understanding right what does he tell us pray pray pray pray pray pray with thanksgiving

[50 : 05] I'm anxious how do I pray with thanksgiving that's the secret to praying and finding peace you have to pray with thanksgiving in the anxiety because that doesn't make any sense but that takes faith thank you Lord for these trials thank you I love feeling uncertain and sure you know that takes faith all right keep me on track Lord now verse 16 so he gives an example okay he explains the form and he talks about a lamp and a light what's that first time I read this you know verse 16 no one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar puts it under a bed puts it on a stand so that those who enter may see the light so first time I read that oh he's talking about our witness you know or the light of the world we're supposed to show the light we don't hide it and keep reading right so he explains that nothing hidden that won't be manifest nothing secret that won't become to light verse 18 therefore wait a minute he's making a connection between about hearing he's making a connection with this whole little picture of the lamp so it's not a separate parable about about my light the light is something else the light is something else the lamp is not about me the lamp has something to do with how

I hear be careful therefore how you hear because of the light in other words I believe the light is the word the word don't hide the word what do I do with the word do I cover it do I put it under the bed take my Bible put it under the bed I'll dust it off and get it next Sunday right what do I do with the word do I hide!

do I cover it or do I walk in its light do I walk in its light verse 17 why would I do that because in the end it will all come out the light is going to shine no matter what whether you pay attention to it or not the light will shine and it will expose who you are you're either somebody that comes to the light or you're somebody that hides from the light remember remember 1st John 1 we walk in the! as he is what happens when we walk in the light I mean when I walk in the light it exposes all my blemishes all my dark you know I don't want to walk in the light because that's scary because everything shows but John talked about if I walk in the light as he is in the light what happens when I'm in the light it gets cleansed!

that's how he cleanses! I confess! and I walk in the light I'm just here I am I can't fix me and it's this let the light shine let it shine let it expose let it cause you to ask questions let it make you uncomfortable let it do what it needs to do to heal you and to bring you closer and to reveal what you need and to show you Jesus and to show you his matchless grace for all your failure his matchless grace believe again right so here's a parable I think that is a warning to us now we [54 : 10] Christians we believers can read this parable and we can say sometimes I think I'm in the thorns sometimes my life what I'm interested in is choking out the word we can go there can't we and sometimes we think oh you know what I'm going through the trial I don't want to deal with the trial I'm checking out and so we say oh maybe I'm the one on the rock I don't have enough root see we can look at ourselves at points in our lives and say I've been there I've been there I want to be the good one how do I stay there I keep going back to that other one I want you to notice that what Jesus is describing are groups of people not different seasons of our own life you're either a group that is you don't even have chance the bird's taken it away the devil's taken away or you're on the bedrock with no root and the trials come and you check out or you're the one among the thorns you just constantly keep living your life yeah you're a believer you do good for a while but then it all gets choked out yes we can be we believers can be tempted by some of those other things we can struggle with trials we can we can what do we call it backslide for a while yeah we've done that

I've been there but if you're good soil then you come back don't you you endure you endure ultimately you endure and certainly we can be tempted by the cares of the world and the riches and sometimes we just want man I wish I had more live easier right we don't have to worry about that paying that bill or whatever but Jesus is talking about four different kinds of hearers that's why he says be careful how you listen put effort into your list don't come and be casual even if you're tired don't come and be casual listen right we've been sending out reflections a couple times a week I send out reflections right reflecting on the word that's a good way to help us oh yeah let's go refocus let's go dig a little bit let's go think a little bit more that's that's that's the one clinging to the word by the way that wasn't my idea that was

Mark's idea and I know some of you have responded and said how much you appreciate that it's a nice reminder so what does it stake in how we listen to the word why is this so important listen to the words of Hebrews 3 the writer says take care brothers lest there be in any of you brothers an evil unbelieving heart leading you to fall away from the living God wow he's saying that to believers brothers take care lest in you there's an evil unbelieving but exhort one so what do we do with that we'll exhort one another we need each other that's why it's so important that we gather exhort one another every day not just once a week but every day as long as it is called today when is it called today that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sins if we don't gather if we don't exhort one another we can potentially be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin for we have come to share in Christ if indeed we hold our original confession firm to the end we're holding fast as it is said today if you hear his voice so this applies today every day today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts how am

I listening today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts do not tune out as in the rebellion for who were those who heard and yet rebelled was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses and with whom was he provoked for forty years was it not those who sinned whose bodies fell in the wilderness and to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest but to those who were disobedient to the word they heard directly from God in the wilderness they're not hearing a preaching of a word from years ago they heard the voice of God they saw his pillar and his fire and his miracles and yet they rebelled see it doesn't matter it doesn't seeing doesn't bring faith seeing doesn't bring faith faith comes by hearing and a particular kind of hearing hearing the word of Christ he must speak remember what the centurion said just say the word just say the word I just need that word make it so so we see that they were unable to enter the promised land why because of their unbelief their disobedience was just a reflection of their unbelief and so why today why do some fall away this breaks my heart there are some that are not here anymore used to be here and they didn't move away they didn't join another church they just left they fell away I don't know! [60 : 38] but it's heartbreaking why? why do some fall away? well Hebrew says part of it's a hardening by sin they hear but they rebel they just for whatever it why do they hear but rebel because they have an unbelieving heart heart I don't want to believe that about some folks that have left here I don't want to believe that but it may be true it may be true how do I guard against hardening I don't want to be them but I understand the temptation I understand the want to just kind

of check out for a while I get it especially in depression I get it!

how do we guard against that vulnerability well Jesus says take care how you listen that means how I listen requires some effort it requires some intentionality it requires some deliberateness I don't just come casually to listen when I read the word if I'm going to read the word I don't just kind of read it put it down check it off my list that's casual I put some effort into it put some deliberateness into it what makes me listen better well for me I like to draw I like to color it gets me in a little bit I just kind of start picking it helps me pay attention more whatever help reading it out loud I don't know what helps you put some effort some deliberateness into your hearing as you're reading and as you're listening taking notes if that's what helped

I don't know what helped you everyone's a different kind of learner if you need to get up and walk around while you listen I get that there's some people that need to do that they can't sit for long periods of time some just can't sit for long periods of time because you know body doesn't do that I get that too I've told people before if you need to get up walk around do it I don't mind!

all right um! how we how carefully we hear determines if we progress and endure or if we regress and fall away that's Jesus' point how carefully we hear determines how we go let's pray Father we thank you for this great teaching of Jesus help everyone who hears this Lord to remember what he has said nothing that I have said take my mumblings and make them clear for others by your spirit we pray oh Father that you would build up this little flock that you would be pleased to give us a season of blessing of fruitfulness that remains this we pray in Christ's name amen