

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #25

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 8:1-21

Sermon Date: Mar 12, 2006

Introduction:

I learned how little I knew about gardening when my Sicilian father-in-law visited me some years ago. While I was at work one day, he was at my house tilling the flower beds. It looked somewhat better when I got home, and I thanked him of course, but I had no idea how much the tilling of the soil he had done would transform those flowers and shrubs. Within days there was such a difference! And the effects lasted for a long time!

How are you at gardening and planting? Are you a "green thumb"? What are your secrets of success (or your thoughts about the reasons for your lack of success if you're more like me)?

In chapter 8 of Luke's gospel, we get a "gardening" lesson which relates to our spiritual growth and our roles as "sowers" spreading God's "seed" – his Word of truth – throughout the flower beds he has planted us in.

Bible Study:

1. Read this week's bible passage and use the chart on the next page to make observations and jot down any questions you have.

This bible study was developed by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. To hear a sermon on the same scripture passage covered in this bible study, come to one of our Sunday worship services (8:30am or 11:00am) on the date listed on page 1. Or after that date you can hear it by logging on to www.southshorebaptist.com/sermons/

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Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him,² and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out;³ Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.</p> <p>⁴ While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: ⁵ "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. ⁶ Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."</p> <p>When he said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."</p> <p>⁹ His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that,</p> <p>"though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand."^a</p> <p>a Isaiah 6:9</p>	

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>¹¹ "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹² Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴ The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵ But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.</p> <p>¹⁶ "No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light. ¹⁷ For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open. ¹⁸ Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him."</p> <p>¹⁹ Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. ²⁰ Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you."</p> <p>²¹ He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."</p>	

2. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

Dig a Little Deeper:

4. Explore some historical background.
- a. What were some of the meanings of the word “**seed**” for those in Jesus’ audience?

Consult a Bible encyclopedia (try <http://studylight.org/enc/isb>), a study Bible, or other resources you may have access to. See Gen 13:15-16 (note translation differences – NIV says “offspring”, NASB says “descendants”, KJV says “seed”).

- b. How familiar would Jewish listeners have been with metaphorical uses of the concept of “**sowing**”? What biblical concepts might they have therefore tended to associate with sowing?

See Ps 126:5-6, Prov 11:18, Eccl 11:1-6, Isa 28:25, 32:17-20, Hos 8:7, 10:12

- c. What are the concepts of seeds and sowing used to represent in other New Testament passages?

See John 4:35-38, 1 Cor 3:6-9, 2 Cor 9:10, and Gal 6:7-10

5. How many times does the word **hear/hearing** appear in this passage? This is obviously a key idea. Read Isaiah 1:1-3, 6:1-10 and Acts 28:23-31.
 - a. Along with the obvious quote that connects them, what do the circumstances that Isaiah, Jesus, and Paul faced have in common?
 - b. What parallels do you see in our modern circumstances with those biblical scenes? How does Isaiah 6:9 resonate with you today?
6. Family was extremely important to people in the Jewish culture of Jesus’ day, so his statement about his true followers being his “mother and brothers” (as he apparently ignored his biological kin) was very significant. This implies that we, if we are followers of Christ, can be very close to Jesus. Are you experiencing such closeness? Which kind of soil in the parable of the sower best represents your connection with God these days?
7. How do the different soils relate to your ability to hear and retain the Word? For example, how do you do at remembering sermons, memorizing scripture passages, or knowing the basic points of the gospel? (recall the Romans road of Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9, 10:13) What tends to most hinder you from hearing the Word, retaining it, and bearing fruit as a Christian?

8. What are some **consequences** of not hearing the Word of God?

Luke 8:12

Luke 8:13

Luke 8:14

9. Despite the many burdens of our busy lives and information overload, Christians can still have confidence that we can and do walk closely with our God. Why? (Consider John 14:26)

10. Parables are intended to produce an intended response.
What response on our part is called for by this parable?
What specifically will you do in response to hearing it this time?

Scripture Memory Challenge: Luke 8:15 (NIV)

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