

# **“The Story Teller”**

**(Luke 8:4-18)**

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**Chapel Pointe**  
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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Listening to Garrison Keeler**

1. Saturdays on Public Broadcasting
2. “A Prairie Home Companion”
3. Stories from Lake Wobegon
4. Uses stories of common things to drive home a deep truth
5. Sold out concert this past August at Meijer Gardens
6. A great story teller
  - a. A modern day Mark Twain

### **B. Jesus...the consummate story teller**

1. Used everyday people and events to drive home deep truths
2. We call those stories “parables”
3. Used things people knew about
  - a. Weeds in your garden
  - b. Problems in the kitchen
  - c. Fishing
4. Today, a simple story about a guy planting wheat

## **II. Review**

## **A. Returning to the Gospel of Luke**

1. **Prior to His Public Ministry (Luke 1-4)**
  - a. His birth
  - b. His baptism
  - c. The 40 days of Temptation
2. **Proving his Deity (Luke 5-8)**
  - a. Stated that he was God's son
  - b. Then proved by showing his power over:
    1. Disease, death, and demons
  - c. But first, this parable
3. **Preparing his Disciples (Luke 9-12)**
  - a. The real life challenges we face
4. **Parables and other life lessons (Luke 13-18)**
5. **Passion week (Luke 19-24)**

## **III. Text...Luke 8:4-18**

### **A. The Setting (Luke 8:4)**

*(4) While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable*

1. Jesus never had to advertise to attract a crowd....v. 4
  - a. They came to hear what he had to say
  - b. And he never refused them
  - c. He loved them and wanted to use every possible chance to preach the truth
2. Matthew 13:2 says Jesus taught from a boat

- a. On the Sea of Galilee
- b. The crowd stood on the shore
  - 1. More people could see and hear him
- 3. Jesus shared a story with them

## **B. The Parable (Luke 8:5-8)**

*(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.”*

*When he said this, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”*

- 1. “**Behold**, a farmer went out to sow his seed” .....v. 5
  - a. “Behold” in original
    - 1. With the wave of His arm
    - 2. “Look at the sower over there”
    - 3. Warm spring afternoon
    - 4. Planting wheat
      - a. They all were very familiar with farming
  - b. How seed was planted
    - 1. Draped a bag of seed over their shoulder
    - 2. Opening in one end
    - 3. Would walk through the field and scatter the seed
- 2. They knew that one of four things would usually happen to the seed
  - 1. *The pathway soil (v. 5)*

***(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.***

- a. The long rectangular fields
  - 1. Divided by paths
  - 2. Where travelers and their animals walked
- b. The “pathway” was ordinary soil
  - 1. Yet packed by traffic
  - 2. As hard as asphalt
- c. Nothing could penetrate it
- d. Birds waited for seed to land there
- e. No matter how careful the sower was—the wind or his throw will put some seed on the hardened pathway

***2. The rocky soil (v. 6)***

***(6) Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture.***

- a. Israel’s soils
  - 1. Rocks everywhere!
  - 2. They would clear the fields
  - 3. Yet some soil was only inches thick
  - 4. Limestone under the surface
- b. Sprouts would pop up quickly
  - 1. Soil was warmer
- c. However when the summer heat came....v. 6

***(6) The plants withered because they had no moisture***

- 1. No place for roots

2. All the growth was up...and not down!
3. Died when the heat hit

### 3. *The thorny soil (v. 7)*

*(7) Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants.*

- a. Deep rich soil
- b. And the weeds loved it too
- c. The thorns and their roots choked the young plants
- d. The seed never had a chance to mature

### 4. *The good soil (v. 8)*

*(8) Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."*

*When he said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."*

- a. This soil was:
  1. Soft not Hard (Pathway)
  2. Deep not Shallow (Stony)
  3. Clean not Weedy (Thorny)
- b. The result?
  1. Yielded a crop
  2. Bore fruit a 100 fold
- c. This is a great return!
  1. A good yield is 10 fold

## C. The Purpose of Parables (Luke 8:9-10)

*(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, "though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand."*

1. Those who choose to accept Jesus
  - a. Will see deeper truths
  - b. They will understand (vs. 16-17)
  - c. To help us understand great spiritual truths
2. The “others” who choose to reject Jesus
  - a. Will not understand the parables
  - b. People that have rejected the light God gave them

## **D. The Four Responses (Luke 8:11-15)**

### *#1 The Pathway Hearers (vs. 11-12)*

*(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 the hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.*

- a. Three key questions

#### **1. The Seed**

- a. (verse 11) *“The seed is the word of God”*

#### **2. The Sower**

- a. Jesus Christ (Mt. 13:37)

*“The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man”*

- b. Every Christian who spreads the Word (Mk. 4:14)
- c. Even a young child can toss the seed

#### **3. The Soil**

- a. People who hear the call to follow Jesus
- b. The Pathway hearers reject the call to salvation
  1. The hardhearted person

2. The Gospel doesn't penetrate at all
3. Hits and bounces
- c. Not sensitive to things of God
  1. Are not "seekers"
  2. Like the fool of Proverbs they say, "There is no God"
  3. Don't bother me

## ***#2 The Rocky Hearers (v. 13)***

***(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.***

- a. Receives it with joy
  1. Enthusiasm
  2. Indication of change
- b. Yet it isn't real
  1. No roots
  2. A superficial reaction
- c. Emotions vs. the will
  1. I've seen them come and go
- d. May even grow faster at first
- e. But when trials come—they "***fall away***"
  1. When the excitement fades
- f. It takes roots to survive
  1. Or burn off with the first heat
- g. Who are these people
  1. "terminal backsliders"

- 2. Carnal Christians?
- 3. Have they lost their salvation?
  - a. Probably never had it
  - b. An emotional response
- h. The value of testing and perseverance
  - 1. Exposes the false sprouts
  - 2. Why we wait for proof
- i. Testing strengthens the true sprouts and exposes the false

### ***#3 The Thorny Hearers (v. 14)***

***(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.***

- a. The rich young ruler
  - 1. Didn't want to give up things he loved
    - a. His riches
    - b. Unwilling to weed the garden
- b. Can't just add it to the rest of the weeds
  - 1. Must be willing to change the life
- c. These folks never seem to get committed to—
  - 1. Pursuing holiness
  - 2. Sharing their faith
- d. Would rather play in the weeds of the world
  - 1. They're either not saved
  - 2. Or Immature Christians lacking in evidence

- a. Problems with that

#### **#4 *The True Hearers* (v. 15)**

***(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.***

- a. Matthew says, “He hears and understands”
- b. Mark says, “He hears and accepts it”
- c. Luke says, He hears, retains, and by persevering produces a crop”
- d. Producing fruit is the only true test
  - 1. Some bear more than others, but all must bear some fruit

## **IV. Summary**

### **A. What I do know...**

***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***

#### ***1. We throw the seed....but God prepares the soil***

- a. The conviction of the Holy Spirit
- b. Don’t underestimate the working of the Holy Spirit
- c. Grace...not human effort

#### ***2. Every believer is capable of sowing seed***

- a. Tell the story
- b. What does Jesus mean to you?
- c. Many different ways to sow seed
  - 1. Use every opportunity
  - 2. KidZone and “Trunk or Treat”

#### ***3. The power is in the seed, not the sower***

- a. We don't need to be overly clever
- b. The power of the Gospel
- c. The conviction of the Holy Spirit

***4. We don't have to worry about running out of seed***

- a. The farmer has to be concerned
  - 1. But we don't
- b. Toss it everywhere and always
- d. Search for every opportunity

***5. Some appear to have been saved...but never were***

- a. This is not about people losing their salvation
- b. Never were saved
- c. God knows who is or isn't

***6. Fruit is the proof of true saving faith***

- a. Those that seem to flourish...and then fade away
  - 1. Without producing fruit
- b. Time and testing will reveal the true from the false
- c. Only God knows for sure

***7. Don't become discouraged***

- a. The majority of people will reject
  - 1. The key to sales
- b. Others will appear to be saved, and then break your heart
  - 1. A pastor's heartbreak
- c. Some are just not ready yet

**8. *Don't get too busy to sow seeds***

- a. Farmers with many important jobs
  - 1. Sharpen tools, etc.
- b. Yet, they've got to throw the seed or die
- c. Churches—
  - 1. Busy sharpening tools
  - 2. Arguing with other farmers
- d. First things first
  - 1. Plant the seed
  - 2. Look for the inviting soil

**9. *Some soil may be hard today... but ready another***

- a. The granaries of Masada
- b. The flowing of the Holy Spirit
  - 1. Breaks up the hard heart
  - 2. Usually through sorrow
- c. May lie in the ground a long time
  - 1. Fallow ground and the plowing of the Holy Spirit
- d. You may never know the results of your sowing

**B. The story of “Old Thomas”**

When a man sows the seed of the Word, he does not know what he is doing or what effect the seed is having. H.L. Gee tells this story. In the church where he worshipped there was a lonely old man, old Thomas. He had outlived all his friends and hardly anyone knew him. When Thomas died, Gee had the feeling that there would be no one to go to the funeral so he decided to go so that there might be someone to follow the old man to his last resting place.

There was no one else, and it was a wild, wet day. The funeral reached the cemetery; and at the gate there was a soldier waiting. He was an officer, but on his raincoat there were no rank badges. The soldier came to the graveside for the ceremony; when it was over he stepped forward and before the open grave swept his hand to a salute that might have been given to a king. H.L. Gee walked away with this soldier, and as they walked, the wind blew the soldier's raincoat open to reveal the shoulder badges of a brigadier general.

The general said to Gee:

“You will perhaps be wondering what I am doing here. Years ago Thomas was my Sunday school teacher; I was a wild kid and a real trial to him. He never knew what he did for me, but I owe everything I am or will be to old Thomas, and today I had to come to salute him at the end.”

Thomas did not know what he was doing. No preacher or teacher ever does. It is our task to sow the seed, and to leave the rest to God.

*Song.... “My God is mighty to save”*