

Sermon Outline February 24, 2013
“Dr. Jesus, Diagnosing Spiritual Hearing Problems”
Luke 8:1-15

When we read, preach, teach or hear God’s Word preached or taught we are dealing with a spiritual power that should have great impact on our lives and the lives of others, the writer of Hebrews tells us –

¹² **For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, ... (Hebrews 4:12 NKJ)**

Yet, while we know (or should know) this to be the case, we often see the Bible, preaching or teaching or even reading not having this kind of IMPACT on people, but it is often ignored or neglected and often NOT UNDERSTOOD! This is a terrible judgment of God –

⁹ And He said, "Go, and tell this people: `Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' ¹⁰ "Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed." (Isaiah 6:9-10 NKJ)

To some people understanding of God’s Word is GIVEN, to many such understanding is NOT GIVEN!

¹⁰ **And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that `Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' (Luke 8:10 NKJ)**

Jesus in His Parable of the Sower tells us -

I. For many God’s Word is stolen from their hearts by the Devil, even before it makes any impact on their lives -

⁵ **"A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it.**

¹² **"Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.**

1. *Seed eating birds and the Devil, what do they have in common?*
 - A. *Speed, to fly, to get that seed / word before it grows*
 - B. *Voracious appetites, birds can eat all day, many small seed eating birds will eat more than their body weight in food each day / Satan is quick and diligent to steal God’s Word from hearts, C H Spurgeon speaks of Satan’s Punctuality, Power and Purpose!*
2. *Examine your MEMORY concerning God’s Word, is it different than about other things? Some people can tell you what they watch on TV last night, but catch them coming out of church and ask – “what did the preacher preach about?”*
 - A. *Is it just a poor memory?*
 - B. *Or is it Satan snatching? Jesus tells us the Devil is at least part of it!*

II. For others, because their hearts are like rocky ground, with shallow soil, God’s Word does not take root -

⁶ **"Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture.**

¹³ **"But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.**

They lack moisture because they lack a real ROOT system, they are not established in the faith. Their hearts are hard toward the things of God.

John 6 provides a Biblical example of this, Pilgrim’s Progress provides an allegorical example -

They drew near to a very miry slough that was in the midst of the plain; and they being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the slough was "Despond." Here, therefore, they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with the dirt; and CHRISTIAN, because of the burden that was on his back, began to sink in the mire.

Pli. Then said PLIABLE, "Ah! neighbor CHRISTIAN, where are you now?"

Chr. "Truly," said CHRISTIAN, "I do not know."

Pli. At that PLIABLE began to be offended, and angrily said to his fellow, "Is this the happiness you have told me of all this while? If we have such ill speed at our first setting out, what may we expect 'twixt this and our journey's end? If I get out again with my life, you shall possess the brave country alone." And with that he gave a desperate struggle or two, and got out of the mire on that side of the slough which was next to his own house: so away he went, and CHRISTIAN saw him no more.

III. For others still, because their hearts are like thorn / weed infested soil, though God's Word seems to grow a bit, it is finally choked off -

⁷ "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.

¹⁴ "Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

Consider Demas – (also Judas, Lot's wife)

Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you. (Colossians 4:14 NKJ)

as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers. (Philemon 1:24 NKJ)

for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica-- Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. (2 Timothy 4:10 NKJ)

IV. For others their hearts / soils are Good Ground –

⁸ "But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Luke 8:8 NKJ)

¹⁵ "But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with patience. (Luke 8:15 NKJ)

How can we be certain our soil is GOOD SOIL?

1. *Break up the fallow (hard) ground of your hearts –*
¹² **Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, For *it is* time to seek the LORD, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you. (Hos 10:12 NKJ)**

- A. *Confession of sin*
- B. *Repentance*
- C. *Pray God will help you do these things right*

2. *Hide God's Word in your heart – VERSE MEMORY*
Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You! (Psalm 119:11 NKJ)

3. *Be careful, to think, focus on the best things –*
Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy-- meditate on these things. (Philippians 4:8 NKJ)

4. *Let God's Word have your time and be YOUR Guide and DELIGHT –*
Blessed *is* the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2 NKJ)

5. *Trust God will bless you –*
Blessed *is* ... Psalm 1:1
He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. (Psalm 1:3 NKJ)

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