

The Well-Worn, New Heart

Luke 8:15

Nutshell: The new heart God gives is more than a match for the Old Man in us, though we concede the Old Man's constant aggravation. The new heart grasps onto the Word, bearing fruit in its endurance.

I. Context: The parable of the soils.

II. Text

Luke 8:15 And the *one* in the good ground, these are *the ones* who, with a virtuous and sound heart, hearing the Word, they hold *it* fast and bear fruit in perseverance.

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

A. An outline of Luke to this point

I. About this Letter: So you'll know about this Jesus, 1:1-4

II. Rejoice! The Messiah is born! A boyhood turning point, 1:5 – 2:52

III. John proclaims repentance for Christ's coming, 3:1 – 20

IV. Messiah's Entry Credentials: Baptism and Genealogy, 3:21–38

V. His Initiation: Fasting and Temptation, 4:1 - 13

VI. His Self-Introduction and Hometown Rejection, 4:14 - 30

VII. Jesus: the FIRST MAN with absolute authority **in** Scriptures, and **over** angels/demons, sickness, and nature, 4:31 - 5:11

VIII. Turning-Point Healings, 5:12 – 32

A. Repatriating a leper, 5:12 – 16, touching the unclean outcast to preview His taking of our exile into Himself

B. Forgiving sin, 5:17 – 26, thus declaring His Deity

C. Healing/ renewal of a man's (Matthew's) soul, 5:27 – 32

IX. New and Old Covenants:

A. NC=OC *replacement*, ~~patch-up~~, 5:33–39. NC: Law in ♥.

B. 6:1-11, OC Sabbath *strict*, but intended as a *help*.

X. Picking the 12, 6:12-16; teaching / etc., incl. Tyrites, 6:17-19

XI. Jesus' manifesto: the **SERMON ON THE PLAIN, 6:20-49**

- A. The Sermon on the Plain gives the *earthly* evidence of the *spiritual* traits in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt 5-7. Here, the poor are literal and the rich are their haters. Christ's disciples are to love their haters.
- B. Christ's disciples are to give generously, living by pity
- C. Only right teaching can produce right living, always convicting *self* first. Only building squarely, exclusively on Christ will survive the floodplains life is lived in.

XII. Messiah & His Mission Portrayed in His Interactions

- A. Forecast: A **Gentile** seeks Jesus for a healing, Lk 7:1-10
- B. Forecast: Hope still held out to **Israel**: Nain widow, 11-17
- C. John's question clarified Christ's 2 very different comings and the interval between, 24-30
- D. The Jews rejected John and Jesus on opposite counts, but Wisdom claimed both John and Jesus as her own, 31-35
- E. Love for Jesus is tied to forgiveness. The sinful woman had both; Simon the Pharisee lacked both, 36-50.
- F. Jesus' evangelistic trek inaugurates His formal Parable teaching, 8:1-15

1. The Parable of the Soils

- a. There are 4 kinds of "hearing" of the Word
- b. Only one bears fruit
 - i. In the broader perspective, the other 3 bear fruit, it's just bad fruit, Matt 7:17; Lk 13:9
 - ii. It is the **Word** whose fruit is *not* borne in the 3 soils. When the Word's fruit is lacking, *the Old Man is the only man.*

2. The good soil = a "virtuous and sound heart"

- a. Glory be! Where could such a heart come from?
- b. Only God, proving both total depravity and election

Kid-speak: What kind of heart does God give Christians?
An honest and good heart!

3. The puzzle of the Good Me and the Bad Me, Rom 7

- a. Also represented in Gal 5:17; Eph 4:22; 2 Tim 2:22; Heb 12:1; Jms 3:2; 1 Pet 2:11
- b. We still "thank God" with Paul in Rom 7:25, but, as Paul, we accept the duality of "flesh" and "mind"

4. How virtuous and sound hearts distinguish

themselves: by “holding fast” to that same Word that gave them new birth, Lk 8:15 (Jms 1:18)

- a. Holding on ‘for dear life’
- b. The assumption of “holding on” (imperative in 1 Thess 5:21; Heb 10:23) implies the possibility of letting go, Heb 3:6, 14
- c. The fear of letting go empowers our holding on. I cannot part with Christ. I therefore cannot part with His Word.

5. Now today: “and bear fruit with endurance”

B. Lk 8:15, “and bear fruit with endurance”

1. God implants a “virtuous and sound heart”
2. That heart “hears the Word”
 - a. Not like before, but in the heart’s newness
 - b. That heart believes and receives the Word
3. That heart then “grasps onto” the Word
 - a. Like a lifebuoy
 - b. But also as desirable fare
4. And, connected to the Vine via the Word, they “**bear fruit with endurance.**”

Kid-speak: We’ve been saying that God’s Word is like a seed, and we’re like a plant that grows up from it. What are we supposed to do like a plant? **Bear fruit.** Let’s find out how.

Outline:

- I. The New Heart: the Only Soil in which God’s Word will ‘Take’
- II. The Virtuous and Sound Heart “Bears Fruit”
 - A. But the Word must be **IMPLANTED**. It must invade the soul.
 - B. Every agreement with the Word means a disagreement with the flesh. One must prevail, at least in our choices.
- III. The New Heart Finds its Life in Christ’s Resurrection
 - A. Providing the ground for us to bear fruit “to God”
 - B. Including voluntary deeds of goodness
- IV. This Fruit-bearing is Accomplished In “Endurance”
 - A. The Source of our “**Persistence**” is God. He is the God **of** it.
 - B. The Magnitude of our “**Constancy**”: Our final arrival intact depends on it
 - C. The Means of our “Endurance”: Trials

- D. The Place of our “**Perseverance**”: using our self-mastery to bring us to reverence: walking humbly with God
 - E. The Obstacle to our “**Constancy**”: Surrounding Sin
 - F. The Guide to our “**Persistence**”: The Lord to Christ
- C. Mark’ flow is similar to Luke with this parable, followed by the same instructions: Mk 4:21-25 with Lk 8:16-18
1. After that, Mark uses the compound word for “bear/carry fruit” again in Mk 4:28 as part of another parable
 2. There Jesus said, very interestingly, that the **earth** “bears fruit” “by itself”
 - a. There, the sower “does not know how” the seed does its work, v 27. It works even while he sleeps.
 - b. This will be helpful to us in Lk 8:16, concerning the proclamation of the Gospel
 3. The good soil of the virtuous and sound heart germinates the Word of God quite naturally... ↓ when “implanted”
 - a. Jms 1:21 makes it clear that we must “receive the implanted Word.” Only then can it “save our souls.”
 - b. Implanting means invasive roots going down. Do you want that degree of encroachment?
 - c. Factors that can cancel the Word’s implanting in v 21: “every defilement and overflow of vice.” We must “put away” these (like the dishes, except in the trash).

Kid-speak: So a Christian heart is supposed to bear fruit. Is there stuff we have to watch out for that can make our fruit go rotten? Yup!

4. So bearing fruit is **natural** to the new heart, but it comes through the new heart’s positive (implant) and negative (put away) *choices*
 - a. Privilege beyond all privileges! To make such choices!
 - b. Thank God for the new heart!
- D. Rom 7:4-5 uses “bear fruit” once in each verse
1. In v 4, Christ’s **resurrection** allows us to “bear fruit” to God
 2. In v 5, it is the “impulses of sins” that worked in our members to “bear fruit” “unto death”
 3. All men automatically relate to God via the Law (or the “work of the Law,” in pagan consciences, 2:15), 7:6

- a. The Law *itself* is never a problem, 7:25, but because of our sinfulness, all it can do *on its own* is condemn us
 - b. At regeneration, we begin relate to God through Christ
 - c. Now, wherever my present leaning on Christ weakens, I automatically, unconsciously take up the Law as my means to God
 - d. Lack of **JOY** and freedom would be one symptom of this
 - e. The internalized Law (Heb 8:10), then, is a **living Law**, mediated by the Spirit, experienced **JOYFULLY**, just as the psalmist did, Ps 119:14, 162; 97, 113, 163, 165
4. The Law, ironically (?) goes from condemning us to aiding us in “bearing fruit” to God- because of “the body of Christ,” Rom 7:4

Kid-speak: What is one of the signs that we are bearing fruit to God? Joy! If God has washed our souls and brought us into His family, that makes us HAPPY!

- E. In Col 1:6, the **Gospel** “brings forth fruit,” quite in keeping with our Luke passage; even more so in v 16 (next time)
 1. Part of *our* fruit-bearing is telling the Gospel,
 2. for the Gospel to bear its own fruit
- F. Col 1:10 is part of Paul’s prayer (the template I sent ya’ll)
 1. Praying (as we should for ourselves and one another) that we “bear fruit” in “**every good work**”
 2. Very helpful! Good works are, shall we say, the natural ‘air’ into which our fruits branch out
 3. And we’re always supposed to be rummaging around for some to do, Titus 3:8, 14
- G. Voila! Along with “bearing fruit” in the Parable of the Soils in Matthew and Mark, you know all 8 places the word is used
- H. The main point for our passage is that only the good soil bears fruit, because it alone represents a regenerate man
 1. Bringing us to our main question: *Am I bearing fruit?*
 2. An obvious checking place: the Fruit of the Spirit, Gal 5:22-23
 3. It will also help to figure out *how* fruit is borne. ↓
- I. “In **perseverance/ constancy/ endurance**,” 32x
 1. This is a noun from the compound verb, “to • remain/stay/ abide • under”

- a. The first time this word occurs in the NT
- b. Gives you the idea of hunkering down, waiting it out, as pictured in one of our Psalms, Ps 57:1
2. But more fully, accepting **a discipline-** its regimen over you
 - a. Which would include prayer, Bible time, and fasting
 - b. And simply “remaining under” mindfulness of God

Kid-speak: Christians are supposed to bear fruit a certain way. What way is that? We have to stick with it. **Keep going.** DON'T GIVE UP.

J. The Source of our “Persistence”

1. Rom 15:5 tells us that God is a “GOD of perseverance,” meaning that He’s the one who gives it *and* nurtures it
2. What we need, God must supply
3. Do we really *need* endurance, though?

K. The Magnitude of our “Constancy”

1. The 2nd occurrence of the word is Lk 21:19, “Obtain your souls by your endurance” (Or “you will obtain,” MSS)
 - a. That is, without constancy, we will lose OUR VERY SOULS
 - b. Hence, a virtuous and sound heart eventually finds a way to persevere. Its homing beacon brings it back to God.
2. But this is an exhortation, so we *will feel* un-constant and non-persevering

L. The Means of our “Endurance”

1. In Rom 5:3, given the starting point of DIFFICULTIES (like Jms 1:2), the very first thing trials produce is endurance (same word in Jms 1:3)
 - a. The endurance then works “proof,” which then yields “hope,” which is the golden attainment, Rom 5:4
 - b. “Hope” connects us to God’s “love,” Rom 5:5, keeping us from being “put to shame”
- ★ 2. So endurance/ persistence/ continuance is what is built out of life’s constant difficulties and tests

Kid-speak: How does our soul get strong enough to stick with it? By hard things that happen to us! What? I thought those made us give up! BUT by saying, “God, help me! I’m not giving up,” our soul gets stronger!

M. The Place of our “Perseverance,” 2 Pet 1:5-7

1. Peter’s graduated list is different, starting with faith, moving to manliness, knowledge, self-mastery, *then* “endurance”
 2. To endurance we are to add reverence, v 6
 3. So SELF-MASTERY is on one end and REVERENCE on the other end of our endurance
 - a. Suggesting that a well-worn soul is readier to relate to God, or at least relate realistically
 - b. A soul that does not bear suffering may look to God as the one who keeps unpleasantness away from me
 4. To reverence we must add brotherly-affection, v 7
 - a. (no faking that; we’re either inextricably bound or not), capping that off with *agapé*
 - b. ♦ A run-through-the-mill soul relates to God, accepting its concomitant duty to man, finding a bond to men in Christ, settling into enduring, transcending love
- ← 5. God is the source of endurance. Endurance takes us back to God. Self-discipline keeps our endurance intact.

N. The Obstacle to our “Constancy”

1. We spoke of Heb 12:1 containing a mini-Romans 7- but leading where? To running our race “with endurance”
2. Hence, one factor we must especially “endure” is our Old Man. He is “the sin that stands well around us,” Heb 12:1. We’re surrounded.
3. Our Old Man is going to wear us down and wear us out. We need “endurance” to fill our cup back up every day.
4. And with that “endurance,” we will do *more* than bear up, we will “bear fruit”

O. The Guide to Our Persistence, 2 Thess 3:5: The Lord TO Christ

1. The Lord directs us into a Christ-earned endurance
2. He ‘relives’ His endurance in us

Kid-speak: Who teaches us how to stick with it? Jesus. Just like He did it.

P. We asked whether we are bearing fruit

1. We have used Endurance to help us determine that
2. We have found that self-mastery leads directly to endurance. Do I have self-mastery? As evidenced by- ?
 - a. Privately
 - b. Publicly- deeds of goodness

3. We have found thAT endurance leads to reverence. Am I mindful of God (meaning pretty much always)?

IV. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, “Uphold the strengthless”) Endurance is probably not what you imagine. It is *not* unattainable, even in extreme weakness.

V. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, “Convince, rebuke”): **What have I done wrong? How have I lost righteousness?**

Do I have endurance that is bringing forth fruit to God?

VI. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, “Exhort/encourage”):
How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?

I will remember the Tomb from which my fruit and endurance spring.

VII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How do I take this on the road?**

Oh God of perseverance, thank You for my trials. Let me see in them an easier death to my flesh and rebirth of Your fruit.

Wrap-up: A well-worn heart. It is well-worn two ways. One is that it is frayed around the edges by the end of its journey. The other is that we are hoping God will say, “You wore it well.”

If we wore it well, we saw life as a trial: one overall trial connected by many daily trials. But we knew God both designed the trials and intended to fellowship with us in them. The Wisest of All helping us! Quite a ‘courage-in-ment’ (encouragement).

But our heart, tattered by tests, having endured a Final, One-Time Fire (1 Cor 3:13), will look at itself and say, “*Well!* God has done *well!* Look at the fruit I bore in spite of myself *and* because of my new self! Look at the love, the joy, the peace, the long-temperedness, helpfulness, goodness, faithfulness, mildness, and self-mastery!”

We need one another, both to endure and to bear fruit. When you stretch to help me, you are loosening limbs for your own fruit-bearing.