

# The Vine

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Sermon Series: Kingdom

The Kingdom in the Gospel of Luke

## A Bird's Eye View

Take a day or two and read chapters five to eight in the Gospel of Luke. As you read, consider what these chapters say about faith and responding to Jesus. We will dig in to chapter eight, so take note of what happens at the end of chapter seven.

## Week Two: Response to the Kingdom February 10 - 16, 2008

Someone probably asked you, "Did you watch the Super Bowl?" Responses vary greatly. One reaction would be an animated discussion about the final minutes of the game. Some of you may want to discuss the company you were with more than the game itself. Another answer might be a less thrilled ho-hum about sports in general. Whatever your response, it tells more than just what you were doing Sunday night. It also gives a window into your views on football, sports and maybe even the company you were keeping.

Our responses are often like that. They reveal what is inside of us. This week we are once again going to read four chapters in the Gospel of Luke. Then we will spend extended time on one parable in chapter eight. The parable will deal with different ways to respond to Jesus and the Word of God. So have your antenna up and watch how you respond to the Gospel of Luke in your daily devotions, during the sermon and in your small group.

## First Encounter

**Read Luke 8:1-15 slowly. Then read it again noticing the different paragraphs in the text.**

In verses 1-3, list all that you notice about Jesus' travels. What is Jesus teaching about?

What are the different parts of the parable in verses 4-8?

In Jesus' explanation, what do the seeds and four soils represent?

What is a unique characteristic of each soil? How would you draw a picture of each soil? (If this suits you, do this. Draw each soil.)

What is Jesus trying to explain with the parable? If you want to understand this parable better, what should you do?

## Parable

How would you define “parable” to an unchurched friend? Merriam-Webster defines it as “a usually short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle.” The New Bible Dictionary says that parables “formed part of Jesus’ proclamation of the Kingdom of God.” In the parable of the sower in Mark 4, Jesus says, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable?” It seems as if the parable of the sower holds clues as to how to look at all the parables.

**Prayer Reflection:** Spend some time in quiet prayer. Asking the Lord to reveal to you the places where your heart might be shallow or thorny. Ask him to cultivate your heart so you can respond to him well.

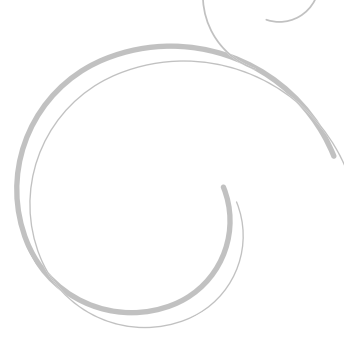

## *Second Encounter*

**Read Luke 8:4-15 a few times looking for any new details you may have missed in the last encounter.**

Between the parable and the explanation, there is an interesting dialog between Jesus and some of his followers. What do you find odd about verses 9 and 10?

What is the disciples’ response to the parable? What is Jesus’ response to their response?

Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9-10 here. It may be confusing at first. Mull over it. Pray over it. Wrestle with it. Talk to someone about it. What is Jesus trying to show with the parable?



Why does Jesus teach in parables?

**Prayer Reflection:** Ask the Lord for understanding. Ask him what the parable means. Don't do this too quickly. Stay here for awhile.

## *Third Encounter*


**Read Luke 8:4-15 again. How has your understanding changed since the first time you read it?**

People sometimes discuss if soils two and three are actually saved. This is the wrong discussion. A better discussion is this: How can you get your heart to be more like the good soil? When is your heart most that way? What helps it? What hardens it?

What is the main difference in the results of the good soil? What are some different types of crops a good heart might produce?

How does this parable clarify how faith and works fit together?

**Prayer Reflection:** Spend some time in quiet prayer. Ask the Lord to prepare your heart for the sermon and worship this weekend. Ask the Lord to prepare your heart each time the Word is preached.



# Small Group Guide

**NOTE: This is a guide. The following questions are designed for you to choose the ones that best apply to your group. Feel free to add to these questions or reword them as you prayerfully prepare for your small group.**

Look at verses 1-3 and discuss the who, where, why and how of Jesus' ministry.

What is the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven (verse 10)? (Note: This can't be Jesus on the cross because it hasn't happened yet.)

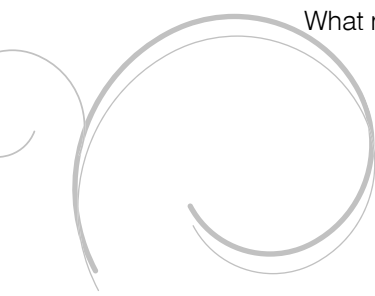
What did the disciples do right? The disciples later demonstrate many things they don't understand. So what is it they get right here?


Give examples of what could make someone hard hearted (verse 12). Read 2 Corinthians 4:4. How does that passage connect with verse 12? What implications arise from these verses?

Why would some people receive Jesus' teaching with joy and then "fall away" (verse 13)?

What should be the appropriate response to times of testing (see James 1:2-4)? How does this connect with the idea of having a "good heart" and producing a crop?

What might distract a person from Jesus (verse 14)? What hobbies? Secret sins? Even religious activity?





If you are honest, what distractions are most tempting for you? What has the potential, if left unchecked, to cause you to worry, chase things of no eternal value or hinder you from becoming mature?

Discuss how having the right kind of heart (good soil) leads to producing a crop (verse 15). What are some examples of the fruit produced by this kind of heart? In your life, where do you see this kind of fruit?

What implication does this parable have for you as a messenger sent by God to share the Good News with others?

How does the next parable, Luke 8:16-18, relate to this parable?

Why does Jesus speak in parables?

Written by The Vine Team.  
Email [theVine@Kcconline.org](mailto:theVine@Kcconline.org)  
with comments or questions.  
We would love to hear what  
you think about it. We are also  
looking for people willing to  
help create The Vine, so if this  
interests you, let us know.

