

# Apprenticing Jesus || A Series Through the Gospel of Luke

## The Four Hearts

---

**Sermon Synopsis:** Jesus describes the four different types of hearts, and how they respond to His Word

### Luke 8:4-15 (ESV)

And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable, "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold." As he said these things, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

Succulents. They see me and they start getting thirsty. **How can the same plant produce vastly different results** depending on its environment? That is the point of this parable: A spiritual lesson about the kingdom of God.

illustrated by agricultural context.

Seed is designed to produce a harvest

Sower is intent on harvest

The variable is the soil

Parable of "soils"

Soil = heart (12, 15)

AKA, the heart/inner life

IOW, this is a parable about how the kingdom of God is presently working, and why it can be accepted or rejected (How many of you tried sharing your faith last week?)

Context: Herod is still king, Rome still rules, and Israel is still subjected, but Jesus is King?

## The four hearts (soils)

### 1. The darkened heart

Context: birds eat the seed before it takes root (**hear/reject**)

**They are blinded by the devil**

2 Corinthians 4:4

For the church = they need a supernatural move of God in their life

If this is you = **Respond to His voice while you hear it!**

That's why Jesus gives an appeal to hear if you have "ears"

It's God's judgment to leave you to yourself<sup>1</sup>

It's God's mercy to open your eyes

Do not delay! (1 Timothy 4:2)

### 2. The shallow heart

Context: Topsoil over bedrock. There is no root. (**Sprouts fast, dies quick**)

Like the crowds in v4<sup>2</sup>, **They like the idea of Jesus** (for initial pleasure)<sup>3</sup>

**But when following Him gets challenging, they give up.**

**Passion is like a car battery**

You need an alternator (e.g., power that comes only from endurance)

**API!**

James 1:2-4 (NIV)

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Romans 5:3-5 (ESV)

...we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Weekend experiences are necessary, but not alone.

**A weekend experience will not get you through the war of suffering**

I can't count for you the people I've seen over the years who started out strong, hit a wall, and never came back.

Their initial excitement cannot replace the need for character

John of the Cross: the wall is God's way of purging our desire for the pleasures themselves, so that we can transition to loving God for God's sake. This often takes adversity. But for those who persevere through adversity with trust in God, they mature (slow growth through adversity)

There is a joy that comes with following Jesus, but it's marked by perseverance over a long and boring period of time.

1 Thessalonians 1:6

you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit

Not just the following God in the good, but learning to following Him in the bad, because he is worth it.

### 3. The distracted heart

Context: weeds drink all the water, leaving no sustenance for the plants

**Jesus is merely a supplement to their existing lives**

**But their security (idol) is in \_\_\_\_\_.** This takes all your energy.

**Busy/cluttered**

= stagnant

Hold fast, aka, prioritize

### 4. The responsive heart

#### 1. Hearing + holding fast to God's promises + patience

^all other hearts have this element. But it's not enough!

#### 2. Holding fast

^^"To keep firm possession of" – doing and responding

**AP!**

Hebrews 10:23 (ESV)

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

James 1:25

But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

1 Corinthians 15:2

and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

Philippians 2:16

holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

Hebrews 3:6

but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house, if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

3. Patience

Letting it "bear fruit with patience"

**The ivy my dad and I had to clear**

It was invasive

So it the word of God and the Kingdom!

Matthew 13:31-32

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.

Long game.

Word → respond, persevere, wait (harvest is coming)

Christianity is a "long obedience in the same direction"<sup>4</sup>

Those who travel it w/out looking back, the results = 100%

<sup>1</sup> Darrell L. Bock. Luke. (IVPNTC; Downers Grove, Ill: 1994). 149

<sup>2</sup> Morris. 170

<sup>3</sup> Garland. 345

<sup>4</sup> Eugene Peterson. *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*.