

Soil, Seed, and Fruit 2

#3146 0616 24P

Parable of the Sower Luke 8:5-15

Theme: Importance of Spiritual Growth

John 15:2 branch connected to Christ bears fruit
John 14:15 If ye love me, keep My commands
Acts 14:22 encourage fellow members in faith
2 Timothy 3:12 all that live godly in Christ
Luke 6:22 when men hate you, rejoice
2 Peter 2:9 Jesus knows how to rescue the godly
Titus 2:11 grace of God **12** trains us
Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses chose a godly life

Producing spiritual fruit means doing good things by the power of the Spirit **John 15:2**.

It means *staying* connected to Jesus and *treating* people in considerate ways as He told us to. To love Him is to obey Him regarding such things **John 14:15**.

Obedying His *words* results in *spiritual* fruit—leading to righteousness.

A branch must *stay* connected to the *vine*—and we must *stay* connected to *Jesus*.

If we are *not* yoked to Him in our ways and words, we fail to bear fruit and our faith withers—we cannot show spiritual fruit **John 15:4** “*except ye abide [stay connected; keep trusting] in me.*”

Part 1 reminded us that we are *saved* by grace, but we can *fall* from grace; We are *justified* by faith, but our faith can *cease* to exist.

We need constant nourishment from reading the Bible, attending church services, and receiving encouragement from Christian friends.

The apostles did that **NIV Acts 14:22** “*Strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. ‘We must go through many hardships [much tribulation AV] to enter the kingdom of God,’ they said.*”

Wanting to live the Christian life will bring about persecution from those who do *not* live a godly life of faith in God.

AV 2 Timothy 3:12 “*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*” We can expect some type of opposition or hostility because of our faith in Jesus.

Being persecuted may not just mean losing our *freedom* or our *life*—as many did in the first century, but there are various other *forms* of persecution.

Jesus said **AV Luke 6:22** “*Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company [exclude you NIV], and shall reproach you [insult you], and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.*”

23 *Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.*”

Simon Peter feared persecution because of being friends with Jesus, so he denied the Master three times.

The **second type** of person in the parable—*those on the rock*—had spiritual life and produced a plant.

Later, when a test or persecution was met, they gave up their faith in Christ. The plant would then wither and die—if no repentance is forthcoming.

[Analogy] If we had a plant growing in our garden and someone would say that the plant never had life in it, we would know that is untrue.

It **is** a plant, and it absolutely **does** have life in it because it is growing by taking nourishment through the root system.

As unreasonable as it may sound for someone to say a thriving plant ‘*never had life in it,*’ it is what the false grace proponents teach about eternal security—and is prevalent in churches today.

This **second person** [those on the rock] **did** have spiritual life since that *life* came from the *Word* which resulted in faith to believe and to trust God.

No one could *die* spiritually unless they first *had* spiritual life which comes from our believing the *Word* and acting in faith on it.

The **first person**—**12** *Those by the way side*—did **not** have spiritual life because they did **not** accept the *Word* and did **not** believe.

The **second person** on the rock **did** have **both** and that is why the **seed** of the *Word* **grew** producing spiritual life for a time.

Persecution from others because we take God’s *Word* seriously, *keep* it in our heart, and *live* by it every day, will prove our sincerity for the *Word*.

AV John 15:18 “*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*”

Jesus goes on to explain— **John 15:19** “*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*”

Jesus continued **20** “*The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*”

21 *But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.*”

Unbelievers know who the *believers* are and therefore *persecute* them, *exclude* them, *insult*, and *ridicule* them as Jesus said they would.

AV John 16:1 “*These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended [stumble; fall away].*”

Jesus is speaking to *true believers*—not *professing* believers—and is warning that it is possible to *leave* a position of faith in Him after hearing and accepting the Word.

NIV 2 Peter 2:9 “*The Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment.*”

There are only two types of people—the *godly* and the *ungodly*; the *righteous* and the *unrighteous*.

The *godly*, who have *faith* in Christ and *trust* God to keep them connected to the Word, will be persecuted as a *test* of their sincerity.

The *ungodly* who do *not* have faith in Christ and do *not* trust God for life issues, are *not* persecuted and are heading toward the flames.

Every believer is saved by grace, but the true grace of God is quite different from what false teachers want you to believe.

WEY Titus 2:11 “*For the grace of God has displayed itself with healing power to all mankind, 12 training us to renounce [say No to NIV] ungodliness and all the pleasures of this world, and to live sober, upright, and pious lives at the present time.*”

God teaches and trains us by His mercy and grace, so our response is to live a *godly* life of faith in Him—13 “*in expectation of the fulfilment of our blessed hope—the Appearing in glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ;*

14 *who gave Himself for us to purchase our freedom from all iniquity, and purify for Himself a people who should be specially His own, zealous for doing good works.*”

Works do *not* save us—they just give *evidence* that we are saved by God’s grace.

The **third** type of person—where the Word *fell among thorns* that choke their initial desire for a life of faith in Christ—allow the *cares and riches*

and pleasures of this life to discourage them and pull them away from faith and trust on God.

This **third** person fell away because of troubles and difficulties experienced; their desire for money or wanting the world’s pleasures.

Thorns of the world can choke the Word of God—preventing spiritual growth.

All too many *accept* the Word of God and *live* by faith in Him *for a time*—but later various things can snatch the Word from their heart and prevent spiritual growth.

John 15:2 NIV “*He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit.*”

Putting God’s Word into *practice* results in spiritual *fruit* which is necessary to prevent our faith from withering.

NIV John 15:2 “*He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit.*” By including *in me*, He means a believer who had accepted God’s Word, but later rejects the Word and no longer bears spiritual fruit.

Jesus clearly says AV John 15:6 “*If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*”

A branch is not a branch unless it is first connected to a tree. It is our choice to remain *in Christ* and *connected to* Him—from which comes spiritual growth, or we can choose to leave the faith, let go of God’s Word, and see *no* spiritual growth.

The person who remains *on* the Vine and holds steadfast *in* the faith for salvation, is the *fourth* type of person.

Those AV Luke 8:15 “*on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.*”

Another translation says, “*Having listened to the Message with open minds and in a right spirit, hold it fast, and patiently yield a return*” WEY.

Holding to the Word and patiently yielding spiritual fruit is deciding as Moses had to decide when faced with living by faith in God or living by self like the world.

AV Hebrews 11:24 “*By faith Moses, when he was come to years [of accountability], refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;*

25 *Choosing rather to suffer affliction [mistreatment] with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*

26 *Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches [in value] than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of [looking ahead to] the reward.*”

By his faith in God, he *refused* the world and *chose* to be mistreated along with those who also trust God and remain in His will.

We also must choose to live a *godly* life in Christ—which can bring persecution—like being insulted, left out, and mocked because of our desire to follow the Bible, but all that is not to be compared to the privilege of knowing God’s Truth.

Our faith in Jesus and obeying His words is of far greater value than all the money this evil world has to offer.

Keeping our *faith* in Christ and our *trust* on God, leads to our receiving the eternal *reward* of eternal *living* in Paradise!



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