

**LUKE 8:4-15 SERMON: "TAKE CARE OF HOW YOU LISTEN" ON 11/14/2021**

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**SERMON INTRODUCTION:**

EIGHT (8) OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WORDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARE:

**"I. ONCE. WAS. BLIND. BUT. NOW. I. SEE."**

AND, A MOST BEAUTIFUL SIGHT FOR ME TO SEE (FROM **THIS** VANTAGE POINT) RIGHT NOW ARE THE MANY PRECIOUS FACES... AND SOME OF THE PERSONAL TESTIMONIES IN THIS ROOM... WHO LIKE ME, ALSO WERE ONCE BLIND (BUT NOW SEE), AND WHO ONCE WERE DEAD IN OUR TRESPASSES & SINS – BUT WHO HAVE RADICALLY SURRENDERED & FOUND NEWNESS OF LIFE IN HIM!!!

I AM GRATEFUL, THANKFUL, APPRECIATIVE TODAY THAT HIS WORD / HIS REVELATION – THE BIBLE RENEWS OUR MINDS, AND PROVIDES:

- (1) THE FRESH UNDERSTANDING – OF HOW WE OUGHT TO LIVE NOW THAT WE ARE HIS KIDS &
- (2) A NEW UNDERSTANDING – AS TO HOW THIS [FORMER LIFE OF MINE] IS NOT ANY LONGER HOW I WANT TO LIVE ANYMORE IN LIGHT OF HOW WE NOW SEE DIFFERENTLY.
- (3) AND GOD'S PROGRESSIVE GROWTH IN OUR LIVES -- **"NOW THAT I'M ALL IN"!!!**
- (4) **TILL THE DAY I DIE!!! -- JESUS, YOUR NAME BE GLORIFIED!!!**

**THE SURE-FIRE PROPOSITION (FOUNDATIONAL PREMISE) FOR THIS SERMON:**

**OUR "AH-HA" MOMENT**

THE TITLE OF MY SERMON IS: **"TAKE CARE OF HOW YOU LISTEN"** AND **"SPOILER ALERT"** IT IS LITERALLY JUST THE GREEK TRANSLATION OF **MARK 4:24** AND **LUKE 8:18** (THESE ARE PARALEL PASSAGES):

- **MARK 4:24: "PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU HEAR (LISTEN): WITH THE MEASURE YOU USE, IT WILL BE MEASURED TO YOU, AND STILL MORE WILL BE ADDED TO YOU."**
- **LUKE 8:18: "THEREFORE, TAKE CARE THEN HOW YOU HEAR (LISTEN)..."**
- IN THE KOINE GREEK IT'S A SIMPLE PHRASE:
- THE ACTUAL GREEK IS: **"BLEPETE TI AKOUETE"**
- THE GREEK IS DERIVATIVE OF JUST TWO VERBS AND A SIMPLE PARTICIPLE IN BETWEEN.
- **"BLEPETE" MEANS "TO SEE"**
  - IN THE FIRST SENSE, IT MEANS IN THE NORMAL SENSE OF HAVING PHYSICAL SIGHT;
  - IN THE SECOND SENSE, IT MEANS IN THE SENSE OF OUR PERCEPTION;
  - FURTHERMORE, IT IS USED TO EMPHASIZE OUR "MENTAL FUNCTIONING" OF OUR MINDS;
  - TO UNDERSTAND WITH COGNITIVE UNDERSTANDING;
  - TO CONSIDER AND MAKE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND APPLICATION.
  - TO CONSIDER, MEDITATE, REFLECT UPON.

- **"TI AKOUETE"** WHICH MEANS: **"BE UNDERSTANDING WHAT"**
- **"TI"** WHICH MEANS IN GREEK, IT CAN BE A **"WHO" OR A "WHAT"**
- SO, IN OTHER WORDS, **"BE UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU HEAR"**
- OR **THE BEST LITERAL GREEK MEANS TO "TAKE CARE HOW YOU LISTEN."**
- IN OTHER WORDS: **"LISTEN CAREFULLY TO THE WORD OF GOD"** IS LUKE / MARK'S WISE ADMONISHMENT HERE REGARDING JESUS RED LETTER WORDS OF THIS PARABLE!!!
- **THIS IS THE MAJOR PREMISE AND CENTRAL IDEA!**
- THIS IS THE **IMPORTANT FOUNDATION AND MAJOR PREMISE** OF EVERYTHING JESUS IS SAYING IN HIS PARABLE AND IN THIS SERMON.
- **THIS IS THE HEART AND THE SOUL OF THIS PASSAGE!!!**
- **THE BREAD & BUTTER OF THIS PARABLE PASSAGE!!!**
- A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF THESE TWO VERSES IS: **"TO BE SEEING WITH YOUR MIND CLEARLY WHAT YOU ARE HEARING FROM HIM."** GET IT!!! UNDERSTAND IT!!! THIS IS THE PRIMARY IDEA!!!
- TO BE **"SEEING WHAT YOU ARE UNDERSTANDING / HEARING."**
- THIS ALL, IS THE UNDERSTANDING BEHIND THE LITERAL GREEK.
- TO HAVE THE RIGHT PERCEPTION & UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE LORD IS SAYING TO US.

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SO NOW, CAREFULLY WRITE THIS DOWN IF TAKING NOTES:

**PRACTICALLY SPEAKING: "HOW CAN WE BE GOOD HEARERS / LISTENERS"???**

**I AM GOING TO CAREFULLY ADDRESS EACH OF THESE AREAS MORE INDEPTH AND CLEARLY IN THE APPLICATIONS AT THE END OF THIS SERMON:**

**FOUR IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENER:**

- (1) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN OBEDIENTLY**
- (2) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN APPRECIATIVELY**
- (3) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN DEPENDANTLY**
- (4) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN CONFIDENTLY**

**AND BY SERMONS END, YOU ARE DOING TO BE TOLD HOW TO LIVE OUT THESE (4) FOUR LIFE APPLICATIONS IN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION & PRACTICE:**

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**NOW, JESUS HAD VARIOUS REASONS FOR TELLING PARABLES:**

**(A) REASON # 1 FOR TELLING PARABLES: TO GIVE CLEAR, EASY, RELATABLE WAY(S) TO UNDERSTAND**

- IN JESUS PUBLIC MINISTRY, THE EXPRESS MEANINGS TO SOME PARABLES WERE “**FAIRLY CLEAR**” TO UNDERSTAND, INTERPRETATE HIS TEACHINGS.
- IN FACT, IN THIS PARABLE, JESUS IS EVEN TELLING US WHAT EVERYTHING IN THE PARABLE SPECIFICALLY MEANS!!!

**(B) REASON # 2 FOR TELLING PARABLES: REQUIRES CAREFUL LISTENING SKILLS; FURTHER ADDITIONAL REFLECTION, MEDITATION & THOUGHT**

JESUS TOLD **SOME PARABLES** REQUIRING “MORE EXPLANATION,” & “FURTHER MEDITATION,” “FUTURE REFLECTION,” THOUGHT.

- MAYBE FOR SOME THEY MAY TALK ACTIVELY ABOUT THESE PARABLES AMONG THEMSELVES
- LIKE, FOR INSTANCE: “HEY, BARNABUS.... WHAT WERE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT WHAT JESUS SAID YESTERDAY???”
- MAYBE, ALSO SO THAT PEOPLE WOULD “SEEK HIM.”
- SEEK & YOU SHALL FIND
- ASK & KNOCK – DOOR WILL BE OPENED TO YOU.

**(C) REASON # 3 FOR TELLING PARABLES:**

IN JESUS PUBLIC MINISTRY, TOWARDS THE END OF HIS TIME ON EARTH, JESUS PURPOSELY USED PARABLES “**TO OBSCURE THE TRUTH AND MYSTERY FROM UNBELIEVERS; WHILE MAKING IT CLEARER TO HIS DISCIPLES.**”

- YES, YOU HEARD ME RIGHT.
- SOME PARABLES WERE FOR THOSE WHO COULD “SEE” THE TRUTH
- AND, SOME PARABLES SHOWED FORTH THE BAD FRUITS WHEN TESTED OF AN UNBELIEVING HEART.
- EXAMPLE OF THIS IS IN MATTHEW 13:11-12: “*HE (JESUS) ANSWERED & SAID TO THEM, “BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU TO KNOW THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, BUT TO THEM WHO DO NOT BELIEVE IT HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN.”*”

CAREFULLY NOTE: JESUS VEILING THE TRUTH FROM UNBELIEVERS THIS WAY WAS BOTH AN ACT OF “DIVINE JUDGEMENT” AND AN ACT OF “DIVINE MERCY.”

SEE ADDITIONAL NOTES AVAILABLE ONLINE – BY GOING TO CHURCH WEBSITE (SERMONS SECTION)

**“UNBELIEF” IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF “SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS” ([BOTH THEN & NOW])**

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**SO HERE IS A PERSONAL STORY.....**

**COCA-COLA STORY ILLUSTRATION IN ANDHRA PRADESH, SOUTHERN INDIA**

**AND, THE BASIS FOR SOWING SEED IS SOME “HAVE NOT HEARD” & “DO NOT KNOW”:**

- **ME: “SIR, CAN I TELL YOU ABOUT JESUS?!?!?!”**

● **UNSAVED MAN: "I AM SORRY, I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF A VILLAGE BY THAT NAME!?!?!?"**

● **\_\_ THAT, MY FRIENDS IS A DEFINING MOMENT IN MY LIFE THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET [[SOBS]]**

- NEVER, EVER?!?!
- NOT EVEN ONCE?!?!
- NO SINGLE CONTEXT OR FRAME OF REFERENCE FOR JESUS?!?!
- HOW CAN THIS BE?!?!?!?
- **JESUS, THE "NAME" THAT IS "ABOVE EVERY NAME" IN HEAVEN & EARTH?!?!**

● **\_\_ I WAS SO TAKEN BACK BY THE MOMENT – THAT I LOST ALL MY WORDS & DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY... OR, FROM WHERE NEXT TO EVEN PROCEED?!?!**

● **\_\_ TO MAKE MATTER WORSE, JUST DIRECTLY BEHIND HIM IN THIS SMALL, RURAL VILLAGE IN SOUTHERN INDIA WAS A LARGE "COCA COLA BEVERAGE SIGN"**

- **\_\_ MY FRIENDS, COCA COLA WAS FOUNDED IN 1892 (130 YEARS AGO)!!!**
- **\_\_ JESUS, CAME TO THIS EARTH OVER 2,000 YEARS AGO!!!**
- **\_\_ ALLOW [[THAT]] TO SINK IN...**

**SO, YES, WHILE SOME OF US ARE WAITING FOR "THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST" -- SOME HAVE NOT YET HEARD OF HIS FIRST (COMING)!!!**

**AND I IMPLORE THOSE OF YOU WHO KNOW CHRIST TO "GO" OR TO "PRAY" FORTH FOR MORE LABORERS, SOWERS WHICH IS "RIPE FOR HARVEST."**

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**LUKE 8:5: "TO SOW HIS SEED":**

SEED WAS SOWN BY HAND OVER PLOWED SOIL.

**WE NEED MORE LABORERS!!!**

**SO, I AM CALLING ALL "SOWERS": ALL HANDS ON DECK!!!**

**I AM LAYING DOWN THE GAUNTLET & POSTING SOME:**

- **HELP WANTED!!! SIGNS**
- **WE'RE HIRING!!! SIGNS!!! AMEN!!!**
- **I DO LOVE THE "YOU ARE NOW ENTERING YOUR MISSIONS FIELD" SIGN OUTSIDE OUR GREAT CHURCH????**
- **I AM CALLING US TO REAFFIRM (REDEDICATE) OUR COMMITMENTS TO THIS!!!**
- **REACHING OUT TO ST. PETE, FLORIDA FOR THE GLORY OF GOD!!!**

**LUKE 8:5: "THE HARD BEATEN PATHS": THE SOIL THAT IS "HARD HEARTED"**

IN THROWING SEED TOWARD THE EDGES OF THE FIELD, THE SOWER WOULD NATURALLY THROW SOME SEED THAT LANDED OR WAS BLOWN ONTO **“THE HARD” BEATEN PATHS** ON THE EDGES OF THE FIELD, WHERE IT COULD NOT PENETRATE THE SOIL AND GROW (SEE NOTES MATTHEW 13:4, 19).

- **“THE SEED FALLING BY THE WAYSIDE”**: IS SPEAKING OF THE FIELDS BEING BORDERED BY LARGE PATHS BEATEN HARD BY FOOT TRAFFIC AND ALSO BY THE DRY, HOT, BAKING SUN.
- OLD SAYING: **“THE SUN THAT MELTS THE WAX, HARDENS THE CLAY.”**
- OLD SAYING: **“THE SUN THAT MELTS THE ICE, HARDENS THE CLAY.”**
- THE SUN DOES BOTH THE **“SOFTENING”** AND **“HARDENING”** OF SAME MATERIALS, ELEMENTS, SURFACES.

THIS COULD BE IN REFERENCE TO **THE HARD, OBSTINANT RELIGIOUS ELITE / JEWISH LEADERS**

- SOMETIMES “THE RELIGIOUS” AMONG US CAN BE THE HARDEST HEARTS (SOIL)
  - GO TO CHURCH
  - TITHE
  - PAY TAXES
  - PRAY
  - DO GOOD THINGS
  - FASTING
- **ROMANS 11:11**: TALKS ABOUT THE RELIGIOUS (NATION OF ISRAEL) **“STUMBLING” UPON CHRIST, THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE**
  - THESE PEOPLE WERE SPIRITUALLY BLIND.
  - HAD EYES THAT CANNOT SEE.
  - HAD EARS THAT COULD NOT HEAR.
  - ZEALOUS, BUT NOT TRUE KNOWLEDGE.
  - **“BACKS BENT” = PEOPLE WHO CAN’T SEE STRAIGHT.**
  - RELIGIOUS PEOPLE CAN BE PEOPLE WITH HARD HEARTS (SPIRITUAL SOIL).
  - RELIGIOUS PEOPLE CAN BE OBSTINANT, UNYIELDING, A REBELLIOUS SORT TOO.
- **WHY IS ALL OF THIS POSSIBLE???** BECAUSE YOU CAN SIT IN A CHURCH ALL YOU WANT!!! BUT IF YOU DON’T DO WHAT GOD SAYS YOU ARE WELL ON YOUR WAY TO BECOMING A HARD HEARTED, RELIGIOUS PERSON!!!
  - WHERE GOD CAN SPEAK -- BUT IT DOESN’T CHANGE YOUR LIFE!!!
  - WHERE GOD IS AT WORK IN OTHERS – BUT NOT IN YOUR OWN LIFE!!!
  - AMONG THE RELIGIOUS ARE ALOT OF PHONY’S
- **BUT, GOD!!!!**
  - THANKFULLY, GOD CAN RAISE TO LIFE **“A VALLEY OF DRY BONES”**
  - NICKNAMED THE **“CHOSEN FROZEN”** [[HA-HA-HA]]
  - NICKNAMED THE **“THE FROZEN CHOSEN”** {THAT WAS A JOKE}
  - **GOD IS THE AUTHOR OF LIFE / RESURRECTION / TRANSFORMATION!!!**
  - **THANK GOD, HE IS NOT DONE WITH US YET!!!**
  - **EPHESIANS 2:1: “AS WERE MANY OF YOU DEAD IN YOUR TRESPASSES & SINS.”**
- **SO, THERE IS “HOPE” FOR EVEN THE MOST HARDENED OF HEARTS!!!**
  - **ZECHARIAH 12:13: TALKS ABOUT IN THE END TIMES HOW ALL ISRAEL IN ONE SINGLE DAY WILL BE SAVED (AT THE TIME OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION).**

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**SERMON ILLUSTRATION OF MY PERSONAL STORY OF LIVING AMONG A PEOPLE**

**OF HARD, SHALLOW SOIL FOR ALMOST TWO DECADES (IN UTAH)!!!**

- **MY EXPERIENCE IN LOGAN, UTAH:**
  - DOING MINISTRY IS TOUGH. WE OUGHT TO ALWAYS PRAY FOR OUR PASTOR!
  - DO YOU WANT TO HEAR A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE ABOUT BIRDS

DEVOURING THE SEED ALONG THE HARD PATH???

- **MY EXPERIENCE IN PROVO, UT:**
  - SOMEONE CALLING AHEAD TO NEIGHBORS DOWN THE STREET
    - TO LOCK & SHUT THEIR DOORS!!!
    - TO CLOSE THEIR WINDOWS & DROP THEIR BLINDS!!!
    - WE HEARD THE PHONE RINGING AS WE APPROACH EACH HOME!!!

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**LUKE 8:6: "ON ROCKY SOIL": ON THE VERY SHALLOW GROUND: NO ROOM FOR GROWTH**

- **TRUE, BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP MATTERS TODAY!!!!**

IN OTHER WORDS, THOSE WHO BELIEVE WITH A NOMINAL, AND A NON-SAVING FAITH.

SEE NOTES ON MATTHEW 13:20.

- **HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE SAYING ABOUT:**
  - AN INCH DEEP & MILE WIDE?!?!?!?
  - THIS WOULD BE A GOOD SUMMATION OF THIS SOIL
  - THE VALUE OF SOLID EXPOSITORY PREACHING IS
    - VERSE BY VERSE
    - LINE BY LINE
    - BOOK BY BOOK
    - SOLID BIBLICAL TEACHING

**I WAS A JESUS LOVING CHRISTIAN, WHO AFTER TWO YEARS OF BEING ONE STILL DID NOT KNOW:**

- **WHO THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS???**
  - HE WROTE MOST OF THE NEW TESTAMENT
  - HE HELPED LUKE WITH GOSPEL OF LUKE
  - HE HELPED LUKE WITH THE BOOK OF ACTS
- **I HAD NO IDEA WHAT BEING A "SPIRITUAL LEADER" MEANT???**
  - I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANT???
  - MUCHLESS ABOUT "BEING" A "SPIRITUAL LEADER???

o ETC. ETC. ETC. ETC. ETC. I WAS SO IMMATURE

TYPICALLY, IN ISRAEL THIS “VERY SHALLOW SOIL” HAD A LAYER OF ROCK LYING JUST BELOW THE SURFACE (SEE NOTES MATTHEW 13:5, 20).

- IT WOULD PREVENT PLANT ROOTS FROM GROWING, DEVELOPING FURTHER
- IT WOULD PREVENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROOT SYSTEMS
- ROCKY SOIL WOULD STAUNT GROWTH, EXPANSION.
- SEEDLINGS WERE TRAPPED BETWEEN “A ROCK & A HARD PLACE” [NO PUN INTENDED”
- ROCKY SOIL PREVENTS MOISTURE GETTING INTO THE SOIL
- ROCKY SOIL HINDERS THE MOISTURE ALSO PROPERLY DRAINING & EVAPORATING WITHIN THE SOIL.

I GREW UP IN CANADA, WHERE WE HAVE THE SAME PROBLEM OF SHALLOW, ROCKY, UNPENETRABLE GROUND CALLED **“THE GREAT CANADIAN SHIELD.”**

- It is one of the world's largest geologic continental shields, centered on Hudson Bay & extending for **8 million square km (3 million square miles)** over eastern, central, northwestern Canada from the Great Lakes to the Canadian Arctic & into Greenland, with small extensions into northern Minnesota.
- **LET’S JUST SAY, “EH!!!” THAT FROM A CANADIAN PERSPECTIVE, “THE GREAT CANADIAN SHIELD” IS NOT WHERE WE CANADIANS DO THE MAJORITY BULK OF OUR AGRICULTURAL FARMING!!! HA. HA. HA. HA!!!**  
I DISTRESS...

SO, THIS COULD REFER TO THE “FICKLE MOB” THAT FOLLOWED JESUS ONLY FOR HIS MIRACLES / BENEFITS.

- OFTEN TIMES, “THE STONY PLACES” ARE WHERE VERY SHALLOW GROWTH OCCURS BECAUSE UNDERNEATH THE VERY SHALLOW SOIL ATOP IT ARE VERY THIN LAYERS OF BEDROCK.
- FROM ATOP THE SHALLOW SOIL, IT LOOKS FERTILE (SUITABLE TO SOW SEED) -- BUT THERE IS NO DEPTH TO SUSTAIN A ROOT SYSTEM OR REACH WATER (**MATTHEW 13:21: A VERY SHALLOW ROOT SYSTEM THAT CAN ONLY “-E-N-D-U-R-E-” FOR A SHORT WHILE**).
- INTERPRETATION MEANING: BASICALLY, WE MUST UNDERSTAND ABOUT “THE STONY PLACES” THAT SOME PEOPLE MAKE AN **EMOTIONAL, SUPERFICIAL COMMITMENT** TO SALVATION IN CHRIST, BUT IT IS **NOT REAL, NOT GENUINE, NOT EVER LASTING.**
- INTERPRETATION MEANING: **THEY REMAIN INTERESTED ONLY UNTIL THERE IS A SACRIFICIAL PRICE TO PAY, THEN [THEY] SUBSEQUENTLY ABANDON CHRIST – DEPART A CHURCH.**
- **1 JOHN 2:19: “THEY WENT OUT FROM US, BUT THEY WERE NOT OF US. FOR IF THEY HAD BEEN OF US; THEY WOULD HAVE CONTINUED WITH US. BUT THEY WENT OUT, THAT IT MIGHT BECOME PLAIN & CLEAR THAT THEY ALL ARE NOT OF US.”**
  - o WOW. WHAT A **“HEARTBREAKING”** SOBERING REMINDER TO US.
  - o GOING TO CHURCH... DOING GOOD THINGS... BELIEVING IN GOD... **DOES NOT** MAKE ANY SINGLE ONE OF US AUTHENTIC “CHRIST FOLLOWING CHRISTIANS.”

- o UNFORTUNATELY, ITS SYMBOLIC OF **FAITH THAT'S AN INCH DEEP & A MILE WIDE!!!**
- o EXAMPLE OF TORONTO B.G.E.A. CRUSADE IN JUNE 1995.
- o EXAMPLE OF SOME NORTH AMERICAN CHURCHES & YOUTH GROUPS
  - VERY FEW I WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL WITH ATTEND CHURCH TODAY
  - 80% OF PEOPLE WHO COME TO CHRIST – DO SO BEFORE 18 YEARS OLD.
- o TRUE BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP MATTERS TODAY!!!
- o EXAMPLE OF THE MANY CROWDS WHO ONCE FOLLOWED JESUS; DEPARTED HIM.
  - JOHN 6:67: ONE OF MY FAVORITE VERSES IN SCRIPTURE
  - JESUS ASKED DISCIPLES: WILL YOU ALSO DEPART FROM ME???
  - PETER SHOWS MATURITY / GROWTH:
  - “LORD, TO WHOM ELSE WILL WE GO?!?!?!”
  - “LORD, YOU ALONE HAVE THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE!!!”
- o THERE ARE MANY TODAY WHO DEPART CHRIST & CHURCHES FOR MANY SHALLOW & TRIVIAL REASONS.
- o EVENTUALLY, A TRUE YOUNG BABY CHRIST WILL MOVE BEYOND JUST MILK (SOFT FOODS)!!!
- o EVENTUALLY, A TRUE GROWING CHRISTIAN WILL BEGIN TO CRAVE SOLID FOODS (I.E. MEAT / STEAK)!!!
- o **“CANCEL CULTURE” WAS GOING ON AS FAR BACK AS THE OT & NT TESTAMENT!!!**

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**LUKE 8:7: “THORNS”: AN UNHEALTHY LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD!!!**

THIS COULD REFER TO “WORLDLY-MINDED” MATERIALISTS WHO VALUE EARTHLY WEALTH, MATERIALS, POSITIONS, APPROVAL, CURRENT TRENDS, GLOBAL MINDSETS -- **AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SPIRITUAL RICHES!!! OR, MAYBE EVEN AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT GOD ACTUALLY THINKS ABOUT US!!!**

- IS YOUR NAME FOUND IN “THE LAMBS BOOK OF LIFE”?????
- DO YOU CARE ABOUT THAT IMMINENT, ULTIMATE JUDGMENT TO COME???
- THIS WORLD IS NOT OUR HOME!!!
- THIS WORLD IS A GARBAGE CAN, A PLANET WASTING AWAY, IN COMPARISON TO WHAT IS YET TO COME!!!
- ONE BRIEF MOMENT IN HEAVEN, IN GLORY WILL ERASE A LIFETIME OF SUFFERING, ABUSE & PAIN.

**C.S. LEWIS QUOTE: ABOUT OUR BEING CREATED FOR ANOTHER WORLD:**

ONE OF MY FAVORITE QUOTES & REFLECTIONS OF ALL TIME... MY FRIENDS,

**“IF WE FIND OURSELVES WITH A DESIRE**

**THAT NOTHING IN THIS WORLD CAN SATISFY,**



## THE MOST PROBABLY EXPLANATION IS THAT

**– WE WERE MADE FOR ANOTHER WORLD.**

### COMPARE & CONSIDER: THE CURSE OF THE THORNS IN THE FALL IN GENESIS 3:

- **GENESIS 3:17-19:**
  - (V17) **“CURSED IS THE GROUND BECAUSE OF YOU; IN PAIN YOU SHALL CONSUME / EAT OF IT ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE;”**
  - (V18) **“THORNS & THISTLES IT SHALL BRING FORTH FOR YOU; AND YOU SHALL EAT THE PLANTS OF THE FIELD.”**
  - (V19) **“BY THE SWEAT OF YOUR FACE YOU SHALL EAT, TILL YOU RETURN TO THE GROUND, FOR OUT OF THE GROUND YOU WERE TAKEN; AND TO THE GROUND YOU SHALL RETURN; FOR YOU ARE DUST, AND TO DUST YOU SHALL RETURN TO SURELY TASTE DEATH.”**
- **OUTSIDE OF A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS -- “NOTHING OF THIS WORLD” WILL EVER FULLY, PERMANENTLY, COMPLETELY, SATISFY THE “GOD SHAPED HOLE” AND HUNGER FOR HIM IN OUR HEARTS!!!**
- **WE WILL NEVER FIND SATISFACTION IN THIS WORLD!!!**
- **THE THORNS ARE SYMBOLIC OF THE WORLDLY SYSTEM (PURSUIT) WE LIVE IN!!!**
- **AS CHRIST FOLLOWERS -- WE ARE IN THIS WORLD, BUT NOT TO BE OF THIS WORLD!!!**
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- **MATTHEW 13:7: TALKS ABOUT THE “THORNS” (WEEDS) SPRINGING UP! BECAUSE THE ROOTS SYSTEMS OF THESE THORNS, THISTLES, WEEDS ETC. WERE ALL “STILL” IN THE SOIL AFTER THE PLOWING HAD BEEN DONE.**
- **OUR FLESH, SIN CONDITION (NATURE) & THE WORLD WRECK HAVOCK ON OUR SOULS.**
- **BASICALLY, SOME PEOPLE MAKE SUPERFICIAL COMMITMENTS WITHOUT ANY TRUE OR REAL REPENTANCE, CONVERSION, OR FAITH MATURITY.**
  - **EXAMPLE OF CAIN IN GENESIS;**
  - **EXAMPLE OF JUDAS IN THE GOSPELS.**
- **INTERPRETATION MEANING: PEOPLE WHO ULTIMATELY “CANNOT BREAK AWAY FROM THEIR LOVE, PURSUIT OF MONEY & THE WORLD (JAMES 4:4; 1 JOHN 2:15-17; MATTHEW 19:16-21)**
  - **THERE WAS ONCE A RICH YOUNG RULER WHO COULD NOT GIVE UP HIS RICHES, WEALTH, STUFF – IN ORDER TO FOLLOW CHRIST (MARK 10:17-27).**
    - **THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH HAVING MONEY (STEWARDSHIP)!!!**
    - **THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WHEN DESIRES FOR MONEY HAVE YOU!!!**

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**MY PERSONAL INDIA TRAIN STORY EXPERIENCE:**

**MY PERSONAL JOURNAL ENTRY ON MAY 20, 1999!!!**

**((CAUGHT UP IN THE CARES & CONCERNS OF THIS WORLD!!!))**

**((BUT, SEEING THE POWER OF GOD ON FULL DISPLAY))**

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**MATTHEW 13:19: THE WICKED ONE (THE ENEMY – OUR ADVERSARY, THE DEVIL):**

- **1 JOHN 5:19: “WE KNOW THAT WE ARE FROM GOD, AND THE WHOLE WORLD LIES IN THE POWER OF THE EVIL ONE.”**
  - o **THERE ARE EXPERIENCES IN THIS LIFE THAT I SIMPLY WOULD LIKE TO “UNSEE”!!!**
  - o **HOW ABOUT YOU???**
  - o **JEREMIAH 17:9: “THE HEART IS DESPERATELY WICKED, WHO CAN KNOW IT?”**
  - o **MY GRANDMA USED TO SAY “YOU ARE NEVER MORE LIKE THE DEVIL -- THAN WHEN YOU LIE.”**
  - o **JOHN 10:10: “THE THIEF (ENEMY) COMES TO STEAL, KILL & DESTROY.”**
  - o **1 PETER 5:8: “YOUR ADVERSARY (ENEMY) THE DEVIL, PROWLs AROUND LIKE A ROARING LION – SEEKING WHO HE MAY DEVOUR.”**
- **ULTIMATELY, THE GOSPEL (“THE WORD” OF GOD SOWN) NEVER FULLY PENETRATES THE SOULS OF THESE PEOPLE,**
  - o **THE HARD PATHWAY SOIL**
  - o **THE SHALLOW ROCKY SOIL**
  - o **THE THORNS & THISTLES -- CHOKING OUT THE SEED SOWN**
  - o **THE BIRDS OF THE AIR -- CONSUMING THE SEED SOWN**
- **SO, “THE SEEDS SOWN” (DISPLAYS SMALL, TEMPORAL GROWTH ONLY) IT DISAPPEARS FROM THE SURFACE OF [THEIR] UNDERSTANDING – SEEN AS “THE ENEMY SNATCHING IT AWAY.”**

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**LUKE 8:8: THE GOOD SOIL OF OUR HUNDREDFOLD ETERNAL REWARD:**

**SO, LET’S DO “A POP QUIZ”:**

**LET’S “REFRESH” ON THE “MAIN DETAILS” IN THIS PARABLE**

**WITH “THUMBS UPS” AND OR “THUMBS DOWNS” SUNDAY MORNING CHURCH VOTE:**

- (1) GOD IS GOOD, LOVING, JUST, PATIENT (WILLING TO WORK WITH OUR SIN CONDITION):
  - THUMBS UP?
  - THUMBS DOWN?
- (2) JESUS IS PROVIDED AS A ONCE-FOR-ALL LOVING SACRIFICE TO SATISFY THE WRATH OF GOD ON OUR BEHALF, PAYING IN FINAL OUR SIN DEBT:
  - THUMBS UP?
  - THUMBS DOWN?
- (3) THE “GOOD NEWS” SEED IS GOOD, IMPERISHABLE, CANNOT RETURN VOID
  - THUMBS UP?

- THUMBS DOWN?
- (4) THE FAITHFUL SOWER OF THE SEED, DOES THEIR JOB, EMPTIES THEIR SEED BASKET, AND FAITHFULLY (WITH A LOT OF HARD WORK & DETERMINATION) “SOWS THE SEED”
  - THUMBS UP?
  - THUMBS DOWN?
- (5) THE GOOD SOIL THAT RECEIVES THE WORD SOWN TO PRODUCE FRUIT A HUNDRED FOLD
  - THUMBS UP?
  - THUMBS DOWN?
  - WOW, YOU ALL ARE REALLY GETTING GOOD AT THIS!!!
  -
- (6) THE HARD PATH RECEIVES THE SEED SOWN:
  - THUMBS UP?
  - THUMBS DOWN?
- (7) THE SHALLOW ROCKY SOIL RECEIVES THE SEED SOWN:
  - THUMBS UP?
  - THUMBS DOWN?
- (8) THE THORNY WORLDLY SOIL RECEIVES THE SEED SOWN:
  - THUMBS UP?
  - THUMBS DOWN?
- (9) THE BIRDS OF THE AIR; THE THIEF; THE ROARING LION COMES TO STEAL, KILL, DESTROY
  - THUMBS UP? THUMBS DOWN?
- (10) THE DEVIL IS A LIAR, AND A PUNK:
  - THUMBS UP? THUMBS DOWN?
  
- (DO YOU SEE IT???)
  - A LOVING GOD,
  - JESUS, A PERFECT, SINLESS, WILLING PROVISION (VESSEL),
  - THE GOOD EMPOWERED, FAITHFUL SOWER TO SOW SEED, AND
  - THE SEED THE SOWER SOWS ARE ALL GOOD (NOT A SINGLE THING IS WRONG WITH ANY OF IT) TO THIS POINT.
  - THE “GOOD NEWS” OF THE GOSPEL IS ALL GOOD “THUS FAR”

**SO, WHERE EXACTLY DO “THE WHEELS FALL OFF THE BUS,” SOMETIMES?????:**

- CAN I GET A WITNESS?!?!?!?
- RAISE YOUR HAND!!!
- 100% OF THE TIME -- WE’RE THE BAD SOIL!!!
- THE BAD SOIL IS US, OUR HEARTS.
- OUR ETERNAL PROBLEM COME FROM “WITHIN” OUR HEARTS!!!
- THIS IS “THE HEART OF THE MATTER” IS OUR HARDENED, SHALLOW, THORNY, WORLDLY HEARTS
- LET’S EACH ALL “SELF IDENTIFY”!!!

- I KNOW, I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE!!!
- EACH OF US, [[WE'RE THE BAD SOIL]], IF THERE IS ANYONE TO BLAME.

#####

**CONCLUSION:**

**"EE-TAOW EXCERPT" -- YOUTUBE VIDEO**

**NUEVA VIDA (NEW LIFE) MINISTRY**

**02/08/2021**

**1:24 MINS TOTAL DURATION**

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**SERMON CONCLUSION AND LIFE APPLICATIONS:**

**SO, "HOW CAN WE BE GOOD LISTENERS / HEARERS"???**

**FOUR (4) IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENER:**

- (1) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN OBEDIENTLY**
- (2) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN APPRECIATIVELY**
- (3) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN DEPENDANTLY**
- (4) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN CONFIDENTLY**

**THIS IS HOW TO LIVE OUT THESE FOUR LIFE APPLICATIONS IN CAREFUL PRACTICE:**

#####

(1) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN OBEDIENTLY**

- LISTENING OBEDIENTLY MEANS "WE ARE TO APPLY WHAT WE LEARN"
- TO DOING & PUTTING INTO PRACTICE
- TO RESPOND OBEDIENTLY IN ACTION, TO WHAT WE HEAR.
- **IF YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN THE SEED TO SOW!!! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SOW IT!!! SHARE IT!!!**
- **IF YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN THE LIGHT TO SHINE!!! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LET IT SHINE!!!**
- BECAUSE YOU & I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE LIGHT... WE'VE BEEN GIVEN THE SEEDS TO GROW HIS KINGDOM!!!
- **APPLICATION: NOBODY WOULD TAKE A LAMP & PUT IT UNDER A BASKET!!!**

- APPLICATION: NOBODY TAKES THE SEED & PLACES IT BACK IN STORAGE!!!
- DOING SO, DOESN'T MAKE A WHOLE LOT OF SENSE, DOES IT???
- WE HAVE "GOOD NEWS"!!! SO, SHARE IT WITH EVERYBODY!!!
- GOD'S PEOPLE ARE NOT TO BE ELIMINATORS OF GOD'S LIGHT. WE ARE CHILDREN OF LIGHT.
- GOD'S PEOPLE ARE NOT TO BE ELIMINATORS OF HIS SEED. WE ARE SOWERS OF HIS SEED.
- THE LAMP, LIGHT, SOWING OF SEED -- ARE METAPHORS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT FOR THE TRUTH OF GOD (REVELATION).
- PSALM 119:105: "THY WORD IS A – LAMP FOR MY FEET, A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH."
- IMPERATIVE TO BEING GIVEN HIS SEED IS THE APPLICATION OF PLANTING IN IN OUR OWN LIVES, AND AS IT GROWS, HARVESTING THAT SEED AND SCATTERING IT FAR & WIDE!!!
- IN OTHER WORDS, WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO OBEDIENTLY "SOW THE SEEDS OF THE GOSPEL" GENEROUSLY!!! NOT SPARINGLY!!!
- IN OTHER WORDS, WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO OBEDIENTLY "LET THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL SHINE" BRIGHTLY!!! NOT ASHAMEDLY!!!
- JUST LIKE THE MOON IN THE EVENING SKY, WE ARE TO REFLECT GOD'S DIVINE TRUTH (REVELATION)!!!
- THE SEEDS NEED TO BE SOWN!!! BECAUSE THAT IS "THE PLAN" FOR THE LIGHT TO SHINE & THE SEEDS WILL BE SOWN OBEDIENTLY!!!
- HOW MUCH DO WE HAVE TO HATE SOMEBODY – TO DISOBEDIENTLY NOT SHARE WITH THEM THE TRUTHS OF GOD'S WORD???
- **THE GOAL MY FRIENDS, IS "EMPTIED SEED BUCKETS"!!!**
- I PRAY THAT THIS CHALLENGES SOME OF US ANEW TO BE "SOUL WINNERS" TODAY
- **THE SEED IS TO BE SOWN; NOT STORED UP!!!**
- **SOW IT!!! THROW IT!!! LIGHT IT UP!!! SHINE IT!!! AMEN.**

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(2) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN APPRECIATIVELY**

- WE LISTEN APPRECIATIVELY!!!
- "IF ANYONE HAS EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR!!!" IS ADMONISHED 8X'S TIMES IN THE NT.
- THE WHOLE GLORIOUS POINT IS: "A PERSON WILL REAP WHAT YOU SOW" ((GALATIANS 6:7))
  - SOWING & REAPING IMAGERY
  - **SOW SPARINGLY, REAP SPARINGLY!!!**
  - **SOW BOUNTIFULLY, REAP BOUNTIFULLY!!!**
  - THE WHOLE POINT IS BLESSING!!!
  - THE PROMISE IS, THE LORD WILL BLESS THE SEED YOU SOW!!!
  - THE LORD WILL RETURN TO YOU BLESSING!!!
- IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT ALL THE SEED YOU SOW -- WILL BRING ABOUT SALVATION!!!
- **WHAT GOD'S WORD IS SAYING IS: AS YOU ARE FAITHFUL TO SOW THE SEED – GOD WILL BE FAITHFUL TO GIVE YOU IN RETURN!!!**

- EVEN WITH LAYING DOWN OUR VERY LIVES, BEING FAITHFUL TO THE POINT OF DEATH: **"HE IS NO FOOL WHO GIVES WHAT HE CANNOT KEEP TO GAIN WHAT HE CANNOT LOSE."** ((JIM ELLIOT QUOTE))
- IN A SENSE, WE GET OUT OF IT (AT MINIMUM), WHAT WE PUT INTO IT (AT MINIMUM).
- **APPLICATION: WE WILL RECEIVE FAR MORE IN MEASURE OF REWARD TO WHAT WE HAVE DONE FAITHFULLY, SO, SOW THE SEED!!!**
- **LUKE 6:38: "GIVE, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN UNTO YOU, PRESSED DOWN, SHAKEN TOGETHER, AND RUNNING OVER!!!"**
- GOD GIVES SPIRITUAL BLESSING, AND IN THE FUTURE ETERNAL BLESSING!!!
- **MATTHEW 13:12: SAYS "AND HE WILL HAVE AN ABUNDANCE... OF DIVINE BLESSING!!!"**
- AS A RESULT, WE **"LISTEN APPRECIATIVELY"** -- BECAUSE OF THE PROMISE OF REWARD IN THE LORD GIVEN TO US AS FAITHFUL LISTENERS WHO LET WHAT WE HEAR BE KNOWN TO OTHERS!!!
- **SO, WE THROW THE SEED OUT BOUNTIFULLY – BECAUSE GOD WILL INDIVIDUALLY REWARD THE INDIVIDUAL OPPORTUNITIES WE FAITHFULLY SOWED BOUNTIFULLY!!!**

(3) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN DEPENDANTLY**

- WE MUST LISTEN DEPENDANTLY FOR GOD'S VOICE
- THIS TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THAT **WE HAVE GOT TO UNDERSTAND OUR LIMITATIONS!**
- **ONE OF MY ABSOLUTE FAVORITE PARTS ABOUT STUDYING FOR THIS SERMON IS WHAT THE PARABLE SAYS IN MARK 4:26:**
  - **"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS LIKE A MAN WHO CASTS SEED UPON THE SOIL & HE GOES TO BED AT NIGHT!!!! AND GETS UP BY DAY, & THE SEED SPROUTS & GROWS..."**
  - **NOTICE WITH EMPHASIS THE SAYING: "HE GOES TO BED!!!"**
  - **THE SOWER DOESN'T LOSE SLEEP WORRYING ABOUT THE SOWING HE DID THAT DAY!!!**
  - **THE SOWER PLACES HIS CONFIDENCE IN GOD & GOES TO BED TO REST.**
  - **THE FARMER PLANTS, AND THEN HE SLEEPS IN A WARM COMFORTABLE BED!!! AMEN.**
  - **THERE REALLY ISN'T ANYTHING MUCH HE CAN DO AT THIS POINT**
    - **HE HAS CONSIDERED THE CONDITIONS OF THE SOIL**
    - **HE HAS AVOIDED SOWING ON THE HARD PATHWAYS**
    - **HE HAS PURPOSELY AVOIDED SOWING IN THE SHALLOW ROCKY AREAS**
    - **HE HAS BEEN DILIGENT TO NOT SOW SEED AMONG THE THORNS, THISTLES**
    - **HE HAS FAITHFULLY WATERED, FERTILIZED, PREPARED THE SOIL**
    - **ETC. ETC. ETC....**
  - **NOW, THE FARMER MUST SIMPLY WAIT TILL HARVEST, AND REST UP AND SLEEP.**
  - **THE FARMER [[PLAYS ABSOLUTELY NO ROLE]] IN THE GROWTH OF THE CROP!!!**
  - **AND, THAT'S THE WHOLE POINT!!!**
  - **WE ARE SO ABSOLUTELY DEPENDANT ON GOD FOR THE GROWTH, INCREASE!!!**
- WE CAN REST IN OUR GOD -- BECAUSE WE ARE DEPENDANT!!!
- **PSALM 127:1: "" UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE IT'S BUILDERS LABOR IN VAIN... UNLESS THE LORD WATCHES OVER THE CITY, THE WATCHMAN STAYS AWAKE IN VAIN.""**

- PSALM 20:7: *“SOME TRUST IN HORSES & CHARIOTS, BUT WE TRUST IN THE NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD!!!”*
- THIS IS THE ATTITUDE OF A BELIEVING HEART – A FEARLESS FAITH!!!
- BIBLICAL TRUST IS -- THE REIGN OF GOD OVER THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE!!!
- I LOVE IT!!! I NEED TO HEAR THIS!!!
- THE FARMER WHO PLANTS THE SEED – THEN GOES HOME AND GOES TO BED!!!
  - I LIKE THAT IDEA!!!
  - I REALLY LIKE THAT!!!
  - THE BURDEN’S & HEAVYNESS OF MINISTRY ARE ON JESUS SHOULDERS!!!
  - YOU & I DON’T NEED TO LIVE LIFE IN A PANIC!!!
  - YOU & I DON’T NEED TO STAY AWAKE 24 HRS A DAY!!!
  - OUR JOB IS TO GO TO BED – PLANT THE SEEDS – SHINE THE LIGHT!!!
- YOU & I ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENS!!!
- AND, THAT’S THE WHOLE WONDER OF IT ALL!!!
- MATTHEW 11:28-30: *“MY YOKE IS EASY; MY BURDEN IS LIGHT.”*
- CAN I GET AN “AMEN” FROM SOMEBODY!!!
- THIS GIVES MY OWN WEARY HEART ALOT OF PEACE!!!

(4) GOOD SPIRITUAL LISTENERS, **LISTEN CONFIDENTLY**

- WE CAN BE CONFIDENT IN THE FACT THAT EVERY SEED THAT GOES INTO THE GROUND DIES, AND OUT OF IT COMES LIFE!!!
- NO FARMER CAN MAKE THAT PROCESS HAPPEN!!!
- BUT, WE KNOW “W-H-O” CAN!!!
- OUT OF A SINGULAR DYING SEED COMES LIFE, AND A HUGE CROP!!!
- WE CAN BE CONFIDENT THAT WE CAN TRUST HIM & THE PROCESS!!!
- IT’S A WONDER – BUT WE CAN BE CONFIDENT -- TO KNOW “GOD GIVES THE INCREASE!!!”
- WHAT GOD BEGINS; HE COMPLETES!!! RIGHT?!?!?
- PHILIPPIANS 1:6: *“HE WHO BEGAN A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL BRING IT TO COMPLETION!!!”*
- TRUTH: NO HUMAN BEING, NO MATTER HOW PERSUASIVE, NO MATTER HOW CLEVER, SOPHISTICATED, TALENTED, HOW MUCH CHARISMA – CAN CHANGE HEARTS!!!
- NO HUMAN BEING CAN MAKE ANY CONTRIBUTION TO THE REGENERATION, CONVERSION, JUSTIFICATION OF ANOTHER BELIEVER / UNBELIEVER.
- BUT, GOD!!!!!!!!!!!!
- ALL WE CAN DO IS SOW THE TRUTH!!!
- WE CAN’T CHANGE HEARTS!!!
- AND WE CAN’T PRODUCE LIFE FROM SPIRITUALLY DEAD PEOPLE!!! GOD ALONE CAN DO THAT!!!
- THIS IS SOMETHING THE LORD ALONE DOES.
- JOHN 6:44: *“NO MAN COMES TO ME EXCEPT THE FATHER DRAWS HIM.”*
- COLOSSIANS 2:11: *“A CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART, NOT [PERFORMED] BY HUMAN HANDS...”*
  - WE CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE -- BECAUSE WE KNOW HE HAS CHOSEN US!!!

- o WE CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE -- BECAUSE HE HAS ADOPTED US & PLACED US INTO HIS FAMILY!!!
- o WE CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE BECAUSE HE SOUGHT US OUT FIRST: THE GREAT HOUNDDOG OF HEAVEN!!!
- WHAT WE CAN ALSO CONFIDENTLY KNOW IS... "GOD GIVES THE INCREASE"!!!
  - o 1 CORINTHIANS 3:
  - o "" I (PAUL) PLANTED THE SEED,""
  - o "" APOLLOS WATERED,""
  - o "" BUT GOD GAVE THE INCREASE""!!!
  - o "" GOD, MADE IT GROW""!!!
- WE HAVE BEEN "BORN AGAIN" -- AND CAN BE CONFIDENT ABOUT THIS!!!
  - o JOHN 3:3
  - o JOHN 1:12
  - o WE ARE NOT BORN OF THE WILL OF MAN;
  - o WE ARE NOT BORN OF THE WILL OF THE FLESH.
  - o WE HAVE BEEN BORN OF SPIRIT – FOR THOSE OF US "BORN AGAIN"
  - o THIS IS SORT OF WHY WE CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE IN BEING "THE CHOSEN"
- THE WHOLE PROCESS IS DIVINELY AUTOMATIC.
- WE CAN HAVE TREMENDOUS CONFIDENCE THAT:
  - o YOU & I CAN'T START IT!!! &
  - o YOU & I CAN'T STOP IT!!!
- AND, ONCE IT STARTS, IT GOES TO THE FULL!!!
- ALL YOU & I CAN DO IS BE THERE TO ENJOY THE HARVEST, LIKE IN 2 TIMOTHY 2:6:
  - o 2 TIMOTHY 2:6: ""IT IS THE HARDWORKING FARMER WHO OUGHT TO HAVE THE FIRST SHARE OF THE CROPS.""
- THE SUCCESS OF THE GOSPEL DOES NOT DEPEND ON OUR POWER TO CHANGE THE HEART!!!
- EVEN THE BEST HORTICULTURALISTS IN THE WORLD CANNOT MAKE A SEED DIE & SURRENDER ITSELF TO THE SOIL!!!

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**CONCLUSION OF THE SERMON TODAY:**

- THE POWER OF FAITH THE SIZE OF A MUSTARD SEED (MARK 4:30-32):
  - o WE LISTEN CONFIDENTLY BECAUSE OF THE INEVITABLE ((KINGDOM)) OUTCOME!!!
  - o THE ILLUSTRATION IS SIMPLE:
    - THE MUSTARD SEED WHEN SOWN IS SMALLER THAN ALL THE SEEDS
    - YET, WHEN IT IS SOWN, IT GROWS UP LARGER THAN ALL THE OTHER PLANTS
    - THE MUSTARD SEED -- TURNS INTO A MUSTARD TREE!!!
    - ESSENTIALLY, THERE IS NOTHING THAT THEY PLANTED IN ISRAEL THAT STARTED SO SMALL AND BECAME SO LARGE.
    - THE MUSTARD SEED WAS THE SMALLEST SEED THEY USED IN FARMING.



- YET, A MUSTARD SEED TREE HAS AN AVERAGE GROWTH OF 15 FEET HIGH – BY 6 FEET IN DIAMETER!!!
    - FROM THE PRODUCTION OF ONE SINGLE SEED, THERE WOULD BE MILLIONS & MILLIONS OF THEM.
  - AND SO, MY FRIENDS – WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD CONFIDENTLY!!!
- THEREFORE, HAVE FAITH!!! HAVE CONFIDENCE!!!
  - OLD TESTAMENT PATRIARCHS LIKE FATHER ABRAHAM, PROBABLY DIED COUNTING THE STARS THAT WOULD SOMEDAY NUMBER HIS DESCENDANTS / INHERITANCE.
  - JUST TWELVE (12) DISCIPLES IN THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY WOULD LATER CULMINATE IN BILLIONS OF WORSHIPPERS, FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST TODAY.
  - WE’VE SEEN THE KINGDOM EXPAND, HAVEN’T WE???
  - [[THEY]] DIDN’T SEE WHAT WE’VE SEEN – YET, WE’VE SEEN THE KINGDOM GO TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH!!!
  - THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS MASSIVELY OUT OF PROPORTION TO THE SIZE OF IT’S BEGINNINGS!!!
  - AND SO, IT IS SO, WITH THE KINGDOM OF GOD!!!
  - FROM ONE NATION (ISRAEL / THE CHURCH), ALL THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD ARE BEING BROUGHT INTO THIS HOLY, HALLOWED KINGDOM OF GOD!!!

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**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

**SOME EXTENDED “NOT IN THE SERMON” NOTES**

**[FOR SAKE OF 35 MINUTES SERMON EXPECTED "TIME FRAME" ALLOTMENT]: SEE THE BELOW**

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**(A) EXTENDED NOTES ON: LUKE 8:8: "HE WHO HAS EARS":**

ALL (3) THREE OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS OF MATTHEW. MARK & LUKE – INCLUDE THIS IMPORTANT ADMONITION (MATTHEW 13:9; MARK 4:9; LUKE 8:8).

JESUS WITH USE THIS PHRASE: **"HE WHO HAS EARS"**

- JESUS SAID THIS PHRASE OFTEN;
- JESUS SAID IT TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT THINGS HE HAD JUST SAID;
- JESUS SAID IT TO PEAK INTEREST AMONG HIS LISTENING AUDIENCE
- JESUS SAID IT AS A WARNING, TO BE ALERT;
- JESUS SAID TO BE HIGHLIGHT THE MYSTERY OF WHAT HE SAID (PARABLES).

COMPARE & CONTRAST: MATTHEW 11:15; MATTHEW 13:43; MARK 4:23.

**(B) EXTENDED NOTES ON: MATTHEW 13:11: "IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU"**

- HERE JESUS CLEARLY AFFIRMS THAT THE ABILITY (ENABLING / PROVISION OF THE SPIRIT) TO UNDERSTAND AND COMPREHEND SPIRITUAL TRUTHS IS A GRACIOUS GIFT OF GOD, SOVEREIGNLY BESTOWED ON THOSE WHO BELIEVE.
- THE UNBELIEVING HEART, "ARE PASSED OVER" -- [THEY] REAP THE NATURAL CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR OWN UNBELIEF, SPIRITUAL REBELLION, SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS.

**(C) EXTENDED NOTES ON: LUKE 8:10: THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY OF ISAIAH 6:9-10: VERSUS (VS). COMPARE AND CONTRAST TO MATTHEW 13:14-15:**

*(V14) "AND IN [THEM -- UNBELIEVING] THE PROPHECY OF ISAIAH IS FULFILLED, WHICH SAYS: "HEARING YOU WILL HEAR & SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND, AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE & NOT PERCEIVE; (V15) "FOR THE HEARTS OF [THIS - UNBELIEVING] PEOPLE HAVE GROWN DULL. THEIR [UNBELIEVING] EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, & THEIR [UNBELIEVING] EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY [UNBELIEVING] SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES & HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY [UNBELIEVING] SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS & TURN (REPENT!!!), SO THAT ! (THE LORD) SHOULD HEAL THEM."*

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**(D) EXTENDED NOTES ON: LUKE 8:9-15: THE "PURPOSE" OF THE PARABLE:**

- JESUS CLEARS UP FOR HIS DISCIPLES -- THE PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF THIS PARABLE
- JESUS DISCIPLES ASK HIM: "WHAT DOES THIS PARABLE MEAN???"
- JESUS WILL CAREFULLY "EXPOSIT" AND MAKE CLEAR THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF HIS PARABLE
- THIS IS THE TREMENDOUS VALUE AND PURPOSE OF "EXPOSITORY PREACHING" AND GOING VERSE BY VERSE THRU THE SCRIPTURES TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT SAYS!!!

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**(E) EXTENDED NOTES ON: LUKE 8:8: "A HUNDREDFOLD":**

LUKE SIMPLIFIED THIS PARABLE.

BOTH MATTHEW 13:8 AND MARK 4:8 DESCRIBED THE (3) THREE LEVELS OF FRUITFULNESS.

LUKE IN HIS GOSPEL SIMPLIFIES THIS FRUITFULNESS BY SAYING "A HUNDREDFOLD" SIMPLY SPEAKS OF INCONCEIVABLE ABUNDANCE (COMPARE GENESIS 26:12).

**(F) EXTENDED NOTES ON: MATTHEW 13:11: "THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN":**

MATTHEW ELABORATES IN DETAIL ABOUT THIS "A HUNDREDFOLD" THAT LUKE SIMPLIFIES.

- THE "MYSTERIES" ARE THOSE TRUTHS WHICH HAVE BEEN "HIDDEN" (DARKNESS) FROM ALL AGES OF TIME IN THE PAST AND SUBSEQUENTLY "REVEALED" (LIGHT) IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.
- 1 CORINTHIANS 2:7:
- EPHESIANS 3:4-5:
- IN FACT, MANY SPECIFIC CHRISTIAN "DOCTRINES" OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE IDENTIFIED AS "MYSTERIES" (EXAMPLES: ROMANS 11:25; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:51; EPHESIANS 5:32; EPHESIANS 6:19; COLOSSIANS 1:26-27; 2 THESSALONIANS 2:7; 1 TIMOTHY 3:9-16)

**(G) EXTENDED NOTES ON: LUKE 8:9: "MYSTERIES":**

SEE NOTES ON MATTHEW 13: V 11, 13.

**(H) EXTENDED NOTES ON: LUKE 8:10: "SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE":**

THIS QUOTATION IS FROM ISAIAH 6:9 WHICH DESCRIBES “GOD’S ACT OF JUDICIALLY BLINDING UNBELIEVERS.”

**(I) EXTENDED NOTES ON: LUKE 8:13: “WHO BELIEVE FOR A WHILE”: THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF “ROCKY SHALLOW SOIL”**

IN OTHER WORDS, THOSE WHO BELIEVE WITH A NOMINAL, AND A NON-SAVING FAITH.

SEE NOTES ON **MATTHEW 13:20**.

- **AS AN EXAMPLE: READ ((THE BOOK OF HEBREWS 6:4-8)):**
- **CAREFULLY NOTE: IT IS IMPORTANT WE UNDERSTAND THAT AN ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT BOOK OF THE BIBLE ((HEBREWS)) WAS POWERFULLY WRITTEN TO AN AUDIENCE OF PEOPLE WHO WERE EXACTLY LIKE THIS DESCRIPTION IN LUKE 8:13!!!**
  - **CAN ANYBODY GUESS WHICH NEW TESTAMENT BOOK OF THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN TO AN AUDIENCE OF PEOPLE WHO WERE NOMINAL, HAD NON-SAVING FAITH & HAD DEPARTED THE GOSPEL & GONE BACK TO THEIR PREVIOUS HERITAGE???**
- **TO THE NON-BELIEVING JEWS IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS WHO-WERE-ONCE AT-ONE-TIME ASSOCIATING AND FELLOWSHIPING WITH THE BELIEVING JEW IN THE CHURCH, TO WHOM “HEBREWS” WAS WRITTEN.**
- **HE SAYS TO THEM: ((HEBREWS 6:4-5)): ““YOU KNOW, YOU’VE TASTED THE HEAVENLY GIFT. YOU’VE TASTED THE POWERS OF THE AGE TO COME. YOU’VE BECOME ENLIGHTENED (MADE AWARE) ABOUT ALL THESE THINGS, BUT IT’S ALL SHORT OF SALVATION.””**
- **THE WRITER OF HEBREWS EVEN GOES ON TO SAY IN ((HEBREWS 6:7-8)): ““FOR THE LAND HAS RECEIVED ITS BLESSINGS OF THE RAIN THAT OFTEN FALLS ON IT... BUT YET, IT BEARS ONLY THORNS & THISTLES, IT IS WORTHLESS & NEAR TO BEING CURSED, AND ITS END IS TO BE BURNED.””**
- **H-E-L-L-O-!-!-!-!-! NOW THAT’S A BIBLE VERSE THAT OUGHT TO WAKE A PERSON UP!!!**
- **MATTHEW 7:21: SAYS IT ANOTHER WAY: ““LORD, LORD, WE DID THIS; WE DID THAT.””**
  - **BUT THE LORD SAYS: “I NEVER KNEW YOU ... DEPART FROM ME...”**
- **BELIEVING JESUS EXISTS – AND, “PLACING SAVING FAITH / TRUST IN HIM” ARE TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS...**
- **JAMES 2:19: ““YOU BELIEVE THAT GOD IS ONE; YOU DO WELL. BUT, EVEN THE DEMONS BELIEVE THAT – AND SHUDDER!!!””**
- **THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVE A TRUE, GENUINE, AUTHENTIC BIBLICAL SAVING FAITH IS SO VERY, VERY IMPORTANT!!! THIS SHOULD WITH THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE, BE SETTLED IN YOUR HEARTS TODAY, RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW!!!**

**(J) EXTENDED NOTES ON: MATTHEW 13:19: “THE WORDS OF THE KINGDOM”:**

THIS MYSTERIOUS, SACRED, GLORIOUS “GOOD NEWS” OF THE GOSPEL [MESSAGE] OF “HOW” TO ENTER GOD’S KINGDOM, THE SPHERE OF SALVATION, BY WAY OF PERSONAL RECONCILIATION, HIS PERFECT FINISHED WORK ON THE CROSS, AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORD IS WHAT THIS PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE IS DIRECTLY SPEAKING ABOUT AND MAKING CLEAR.

**(K) EXTENDED NOTES ON: LUKE 8:15: "HEARD...KEEP...BEAR FRUIT":**

THIS CONSTITUTES EVIDENCE OF TRUE SALVATION ("A SAVING FAITH).

- **"HEARD"**: IS A REFERENCE TO UNDERSTANDING & BELIEVING (JOHN 8:31, 47)
  - OUR **"JUSTIFICATION"**
  - **GOD'S DECLARATION OF OUR BEING RIGHTEOUS**
- **"KEEP"**: IS IN REFERENCE TO ONGOING OBEDIENCE (SEE NOTE ON 11:28; JOHN 14:21-24).
  - OUR PROGRESSIVE **"SANTIFICATION"**
  - **GOD'S MAKING US RIGHTEOUS** IN THE SANCTIFICATION PROCESS
- **"BEAR FRUIT"**: DOING GOOD WORKS IS VALIDATION (PROOF) OF OUR SAVING FAITH
  - MATTHEW 7:16-20; JAMES 2:14-26
  - PROOF & VALIDATION OF OUR JUSTIFICATION ("BEING JUSTIFIED")
  - PROOF & VALIDATION OF OUR SANTIFICATION ("BEING SANCTIFIED")
  - PROOF & VALIDATION OF OUR GLORIFICATION ("BEING GLORIFIED")

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**(L) EXTENDED NOTES ON: THE VARIOUS WORD STUDIES IN PREPARATION FOR THIS SERMON:**

THE SENSORY SENSES OF LISTENING, HEARING, SEEING ARE MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE OVER **4,600 TIMES** IN SCRIPTURE, REGARDING USE OF OUR EYES AND OUR EARS. SO, THE BIBLE SPEAKS ALOT INTO THE SUBJECT.

- HEARING / LISTENING – EARS (1750 X'S)
- SEEING / SIGHT – EYES (2,800 X'S)

THE BIBLE ALSO SPEAKS ALOT INTO THE AREA OF **TOPOGRAPHY / AGRICULTURE (ISRAEL IN THE LAND OF PROMISE)**, AND MENTIONS A MINIMUM OF **4,300 X'S** TIMES IN SCRIPTURE

- SEED(S) (360 X'S)
- EARTH / LAND (3,100 X'S)
- FARMING / SOIL / FIELDS (700 X'S)
- HARVEST(ING) (75 X'S)
- IN FACT, THE **"HARVEST" VERBAGE IN THE BIBLE IS SO POPULAR WITH CHRISTIANS** THAT I HAVE PASTORED AND SERVED AT TWO (2) DIFFERENT CHURCHES WITH THE WORD "HARVEST IN THE NAME" ((**NEW HARVEST COMMUNITY CHURCH & HARVEST BIBLE CHAPEL OGDEN**))

SO, THE LORD DOES ALOT IN SCRIPTURE TO MENTION HIS PEOPLE IN COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE LAND HE GAVE THEM, AND THE BLESSINGS (OBEDIENCE) AND CURSES (DISOBEDIENCE).

THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE OF **"SOWING"** (110 X'S) AND **"REAPING"** (55 X'S) IS ALSO A WIDE SPREAD IDEA IN SCRIPTURE TOO.

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**(M) EXTENDED NOTES ON: THIS PARABLE IS OFTEN CALLED AND REFERRED TO: “THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER,” OR (2) “THE PARABLE OF THE SOILS”:**

**LUKE 8:4: JESUS “SPOKE BY [USE OF] A PARABLE”:**

THIS IS GIVING INDICATION OF A MAJOR “SIGNIFICANT SHIFT” AND “TURNING POINT” IN JESUS’ MINISTRY (SEE NOTES ON MATTHEW 13: 3, 34).

“PARABLES” -- WERE A COMMON FORM OF TEACHING IN JUDAISM.

THE WORD “**PARABLE**” APPEARS **45 X’S TIMES** IN THE GREEK SEPTUAGINT (LXX), AKA THE GREEK TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES.

**A PARABLE IS A LONG ANALOGY, OFTEN CAST IN THE FORM OF A STORY.**

BY THIS TIME IN JESUS MINISTRY (LUKE 8), JESUS HAD TOLD A COUPLE OF PARABLES (ANALOGIES):

- **PARABLE # 1A: UNSHRUNK (NEW) CLOTH ON AN OLD GARMENT (LUKE 5:36)**
- **PARABLE # 1B: NEW WINE IN OLD WINESKINS (LUKE 5:37-38)**
- PARABLE # 2A: A WISE MAN BUILDS ON ROCK (LUKE 6:47-49)
- PARABLE # 2B: A FOOLISH MAN BUILDS ON SAND (LUKE 6:47-49)
- PARABLE # 3: THE CREDITOR AND TWO DEBTORS (LUKE 7:41-43)
- **PARABLE # 4: THE SOWER AND THE SOILS (LUKE 8:4-15)**

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**(N) EXTENDED NOTES ON: NOW, JESUS HAD VARIOUS REASONS FOR TELLING PARABLES:**

**(A) REASON # 1 FOR TELLING PARABLES: TO GIVE CLEAR, EASY, RELATABLE WAY(S) TO UNDERSTAND**

- IN JESUS PUBLIC MINISTRY, THE EXPRESS MEANINGS TO SOME PARABLES WERE “**FAIRLY CLEAR**” TO UNDERSTAND, INTERPRETATE HIS TEACHINGS.
- SO, JESUS TOLD MANY PARABLES BECAUSE THEY WERE EASY TO UNDERSTAND; EASY TO RELATE TOO, REMEMBER AND FIGURE OUT.
- TAKE THIS PARABLE (LUKE 8:4-15): JESUS EVEN TELLS US WHAT EVERYTHING IN THE PARABLE SPECIFICALLY MEANS

**(B) REASON # 2 FOR TELLING PARABLES: REQUIRES CAREFUL LISTENING SKILLS; FURTHER ADDITIONAL REFLECTION, MEDITATION & THOUGHT**

IN JESUS PUBLIC MINISTRY, JESUS TOLD **SOME PARABLES** REQUIRING “MORE EXPLANATION,” AND “FURTHER MEDITATION, FUTURE REFLECTION” FOR HIS AUDIENCES & FOLLOWERS TO CONTEMPLATE.

- A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THIS IS IN **MATTHEW 13:36**: ***“THEN JESUS SENT THE MULTITUDE AWAY AND WENT INTO THE HOUSE. AND HIS DISCIPLES CAME TO HIM, SAYING: “EXPLAIN TO US THE PARABLE OF THE TARES OF THE FIELD.”***
- WE ARE TO SEEK HIM.
- SEEK TO KNOW HIM.
- SEEKING TO (DILIGENTLY) STUDY & UNDERSTAND
- SEEKING TO KNOW HIS WORD
- SEEKING TO BE FAITHFUL “DOERS OF HIS WORD.”

**(C) REASON # 3 FOR TELLING PARABLES:**

IN JESUS PUBLIC MINISTRY, TOWARDS THE END OF HIS TIME ON EARTH, JESUS PURPOSELY USED PARABLES **“TO OBSCURE THE TRUTH AND MYSTERY FROM UNBELIEVERS WHILE MAKING IT CLEARER TO HIS DISCIPLES.”**

- AN EXAMPLE OF THIS IS IN **MATTHEW 13:11-12**: ***“HE (JESUS) ANSWERED AND SAID TO THEM, “BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU TO KNOW THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, BUT TO THEM WHO DO NOT BELIEVE IT HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN.”***

AS A RESULT, FROM THIS POINT ON, FOR THE REMAINDER OF JESUS GALILEAN MINISTRY, HE DID NOT SPEAK TO THE MULTITUDES IN PUBLIC EXCEPT IN PARABLES (V34).

- SEE MATTHEW 13:34: ALL THESE THINGS JESUS SPOKE TO THE MULTITUDE IN PARABLES; AND WITHOUT A PARABLE HE DID NOT SPEAK TO THEM, (V35) THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET (DAVID), SAYING (**PSALM 78:2**):
  - o ***“I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES; I WILL UTTER THINGS KEPT SECRET FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.”***

**CAREFULLY NOTE: JESUS VEILING THE TRUTH FROM UNBELIEVERS THIS WAY WAS BOTH AN ACT OF “DIVINE JUDGEMENT” AND AN ACT OF “DIVINE MERCY.”**

- IT WAS “**JUDGEMENT**” BECAUSE IT KEPT THEM IN THE DARKNESS THAT THEY LOVED (SEE JOHN 3:19)
- **“GOD IS PATIENT, NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH BUT THAT ALL WOULD COME TO REPENTENCE (2 PETER 3:9).”**
- ULTIMATELY, GOD LOVINGLY, JUSTLY GIVES US THE **“DESIRE OF OUR HEARTS” -- ETERNAL LIFE WITH HIM, AND AN ETERNAL LIFE WITHOUT HIM.**
- IT WAS “**MERCY**” BECAUSE (THEY) HAD ALREADY CHOSEN TO REJECT THE LIGHT; SO ANY EXPOSURE TO MORE TRUTH WOULD ONLY INCREASE THE EXTENT OF THEIR JUDGMENT AND CONDEMNATION
- EXAMPLE: LIKE WITH CONSIDERING AN ACCUSED PERSONS “INTENTIONS & MOTIVES” IN A COURT OF LAW WITH FIRST, SECOND, THIRD DEGREE MURDER.

IN **MATTHEW 13:13**: SAYS ***“BECAUSE SEEING THEY DO NOT SEE”*** SEEMS TO SUGGEST THAT FOR AN UNBELIEVER, ***“UNBELIEF” IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF [THEIR] SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS.***

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**THE END!!!**

**TO GOD BE THE GLORY!!!**

**TO JESUS, THE NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME!!!**

**FOREVER, AND EVER, AMEN.**