



A Friend of the Lost

Jesus: The Caring Friend - Part 5 of 8

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Big Idea: It is our divine assignment to sow the seeds of the gospel and to bring forth a harvest of character and converts.

Text: Luke 8:1-15

Massive crowds gathered from many towns to hear Jesus, and he taught them using metaphors and parables, such as this:

“A farmer went out to sow seeds for a harvest. As he scattered his seed, some of it fell on the hard pathway and was quickly trampled down and unable to grow and became nothing but bird seed. Some fell on the gravel, and though it sprouted it couldn’t take root; it withered for lack of moisture. Other seed fell where there was nothing but weeds. It too was unable to grow to full maturity, for it was choked out by the weeds. Yet some of the seed fell into good, fertile soil, and it grew and flourished until it produced more than a hundredfold harvest, a bumper crop.” Then Jesus added, shouting out to all who would hear, “Listen with your heart and you will understand!”

Later his disciples came to Jesus and asked him privately what deeper meaning was found in this parable.

He said, “You have been given a teachable heart to perceive the secret, hidden mysteries of God’s kingdom realm. But to those who don’t have a listening heart, my words are merely stories. Even though they have eyes, they are blind to the true meaning of what I say, and even though they listen, they won’t receive full revelation.

“Here, then, is the deeper meaning to my parable: The word of God is the seed that is sown into hearts. The hard pathway represents the hard hearts of men who hear the word of God but the slanderer quickly snatches away what was sown in their hearts to keep them from believing and experiencing salvation. The seed falling on the gravel represents those who initially respond to the word with joy, but soon afterward, when a season of harassment of the enemy and difficulty come to them, they wither and fall away, for they have no root in the truth and their faith is temporary. The seed that falls into the weeds represents the hearts of those who hear the word of God but their growth is quickly choked off by their own anxious cares, the riches of this world, and the fleeting pleasures of this life. This is why they never become mature and fruitful. The seed that fell into good, fertile soil represents those lovers of truth who hear it deep within their hearts. They respond by clinging to the word, keeping it dear as they endure all things in faith. This is the seed that will one day bear much fruit in their lives.”

- Luke 8:4-15 {TPT}

Ephesians 4:7-16, 1 Peter 3:15

For it is Christ's love that fuels our passion and motivates us, because we are absolutely convinced that he has given his life for all of us. This means all died with him, so that those who live should no longer live self-absorbed lives but lives that are poured out for him—the one who died for us and now lives again. So then, from now on, we have a new perspective that refuses to evaluate people merely by their outward appearances. For that's how we once viewed the Anointed One, but no longer do we see him with limited human insight.

Now, if anyone is enfolded into Christ, he has become an entirely new person. All that is related to the old order has vanished. Behold, everything is fresh and new. And God has made all things new, and reconciled us to himself, and given us the ministry of reconciling others to God. In other words, it was through the Anointed One that God was shepherding the world, not even keeping records of their transgressions, and he has entrusted to us the ministry of opening the door of reconciliation to God. We are ambassadors of the Anointed One who carry the message of Christ to the world, as though God were tenderly pleading with them directly through our lips. So we tenderly plead with you on Christ's behalf, "Turn back to God and be reconciled to him." For God made the only one who did not know sin to become sin for us, so that we who did not know righteousness might become the righteousness of God through our union with him.

– 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 {TPT}

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

*Good Father, thank You for trusting me with the ministry of reconciling others to You.
Please give me eyes to see and ears to hear. Help me to see people the way You see them.*

*God, I submit my calendar and schedule to Your divine appointments.
Please open my eyes to at least one opportunity each day this week to share
Your good news with someone who is far from You.*

*Father, I'm asking for this with confidence because I know reconciliation is
the desire of Your great heart. I'm asking for this so that You will be glorified.*

I pray in the name of Your Son, Jesus, our Savior. Amen.