

Keep On Sowing

Luke 8:4-10



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FOCAL Read Responsively **Luke 8:4-10** And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: (5) A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, **some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. (6) And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. (7) And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. (8) And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. (9) And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? (10) And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.**^{KJV}

ILLUSTRATE People today are looking for “purpose”. If I want to sell a book, if I put the word “purpose” in the title it is sure to sell. People have looked for purpose in their jobs, and have found the workplace to be just as fickle as anything else in life. People have looked for purpose in family, or in relationships, and are still not satisfied. I heard of the woman who looked for a husband for years but never found a man who would please her. She went to her pastor and asked for advice. The pastor said, “Well, you know about God's plan and purpose. He has planned that one man and one woman be together for one lifetime.” The woman broke in and said, “Pastor, I'm not here to go against God's plan – I just

want to *get in on it.*”

That's a worthy goal – to get in on God's Plan, to find His purpose for our lives. If you are *not* saved, then it is God's purpose that you receive the Lord Jesus Christ into your life. You are called to *repent* – to turn from your current way of life – and to turn to a life obedient to God for Christ's sake. Jesus made this plain when He said:

John 6:39-40 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (40) And **this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Every other purpose in your life is dwarfed to nothingness if you have not received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. If your life is not centered in Christ then nothing else matters.

But what if your life is in Christ? What if you have received Jesus as Savior and Lord – what now? The Bible makes it clear that your purpose has not ceased to be *in Christ* – but you are to *grow* and to *sow*. You are not saved just to stay in one place, ever marching in one place, over and over standing but never moving from that one place. You do not stay the same all the time in your *natural life* – why would you want to stay the same all the time in your *supernatural life*? Pardon me dear

Christian – if you are a Christian – but nature tells you that normal life requires growth. Look at **Abraham, the father of faith**. He did not find the Lord then stay where he was. The Lord told him, **grow and go, Abraham, and you will be blessed, go and grow**. Abraham had to grow in his faith until he went where the Lord told him. Then and only then was he blessed of God. And what of **Noah, righteous Noah**. Had he stayed in place never growing and never sowing he would have drowned with the rest of humanity in the Great Flood. How about **David** – did he stay among the sheep in the field? God planned that this young man grow up to be king – but first he had to **grow in faith so he could go where God led**. The Bible tells us of that old scoundrel **Jacob**:

“Fear not, thou worm Jacob ... I will make thee a threshing instrument with teeth..” (Isaiah 41:14-15)

If you will go from worm to threshing instrument with teeth, you must be willing to **grow and to sow**. What is God's plan for your life? First be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. Believe that He died for you, believe that He rose again and sits on the right hand of God the Father to make intercession for you and for me. But don't stop here. **Grow and sow**. Do that which you have been called to do. Grow in your faith by studying God's Word, by faithfully meeting the Father in prayer, by faithfully attending your local Church. Then as you grow, do that which you must do. **Sow the seed of the Gospel.**

1. The Local Church Exists To Sow The Seed

FOCAL Luke 8:5, 10-11 A **sower went out to**

sow¹ his seed ... {10} Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. ... {11} ... The seed is the word of God.

The seed is the Word of God, but only the disciples of Christ are to know the mysteries of the kingdom. God's people and only God's people have the ability to sow the seed – to spread the Word of God. In the Old Testament God sent His Word through the prophets and unto Israel. In the New Testament God sends His Word through the Apostles and unto the Church. The Church is the Sower of the seed, the carrier of the Gospel of Christ.

There In Only One Sower And One Seed

FOCAL Luke 8:5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed,

Please note that there is only one sower and one type of seed in this passage. ONE SOWER. The Church and the Christian must remember that our mission is to spread the Word of God, that Gospel of salvation. We must IN UNITY sow only ONE TYPE OF SEED.

I find myself frightened at how many local Churches

1 G4687, σπειρόω, *speirō, spi'-ro*, Probably strengthened from G4685 (through the idea of *extending*); to *scatter*, that is, *sow* (literally or figuratively): - sow (-er), receive seed.

want to fall away from their Commission in favor of other things. Our Lord Jesus Christ gave us the mandate of purpose when He said:

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

Jesus commanded us to sow the Word. What are we commanded to do? **Sow the Word!** We dishonor Christ if we become disharmonized, if we drift off course of our purpose. Listen Beloved: Every flag hanging in this Church hangs because there we have **sowed the Word**. The building that we are currently working to build exists so that we can **sow the Word. We must have nothing that does not have at its heart the purpose of sowing the Word of God.** Our Sunday School annex will be used for that. Our new Sanctuary will be used for that.

We sow the Word of God in one accord and for one purpose – to see souls saved and nourished. We do not exist to **sow discord among the brethren**, nor are we to **sow foolish questions and traditions that serve no**

purpose but to divide. I have read with fear the strange debates going on among Baptists who ought to know better about **foolish and vain questions** on things like **Calvinism and the like.** Listen to the Bible:

2 Timothy 2:23-26 But **foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. (24) And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all [men], apt to teach, patient, (25) In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;** (26) And [that] they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Someone asked me if I believed in *free will or in predestination* – to which I replied “Yes!” The Bible teaches both equally whether you like it or not. I've studied both sides of the question for thirty one years, and studied what learned men have said on both sides of the debate. I can guarantee you this – neither side has a clue as to how free will and the sovereignty of God work together – and neither do I! Quit debating and worrying over things you cannot understand. God is One, but God is Triune – quit worrying about it. We can no more understand the things of God than can an ant understand the intricacies of the internal combustion engine. But get this.

None of us understand how a dead thing like a seed can bring forth life. We are called to sow the seed, teach the Word of God, and lead others to Christ. Insofar as we maintain unity on this we will succeed.

We Are To Sow The Seed To Every Creature

FOCAL Luke 8:5 **A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed,**

The sower **must go out to sow his seed.** You do not sow seed in the barn. You go into the field to sow the seed. In the field God gives the harvest! Our Lord told us:

Mark 16:15 ... **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.**

The word “sow” by the way means “to broadcast or scatter”. We should be telling **every creature** about the Lord Jesus Christ. We don't analyze whether someone will receive it or not – we just sow. We go into the field and sow **to every creature.** We do not allow our witness to be impeded by racism or separatism. We as a Church and as individual members **sow the seed** and pray that the Lord will bless us with a harvest.

Our Method Of Sowing Is To Tell Others

FOCAL Luke 8:5 **A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed,**

Jesus said **a sower went out to sow his seed.** The seed

belongs to the sower. If you have not been benefited by the Gospel and by the Word of God, then you cannot sow the seed. If you have been saved by faith in Jesus Christ our Lord then, like the Apostle Paul, you can call it “**my seed**” or “**my Gospel**”. The Apostle said:

(Romans 2:16) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

(Romans 16:25) Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

(2 Timothy 2:8) Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

The Word of God belongs to the Christian, the Gospel found in that Word has been entrusted to us. We have been given the Seed – we *must sow or scatter that Seed*. Israel was given the Seed of the Word but failed to sow it. She *hoarded* the Word from the nations she passed through. The Church and the Christian *cannot – no Beloved we cannot – afford to hoard the Word*. We are called to sow the Seed. We are not graded on the results of our sowing – the harvest belongs to God – but we are graded on whether we sow the Word or not.

John 20:21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace [be]

unto you: as [my] Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

You have been sent by Him Who saved you – sow the seed of the Word!

The Seed Must Be Sowed In Power

FOCAL Luke 8:5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed,

We do not sow the seed of the Word of God in our own power – but in the very power of God. Jesus told His disciples:

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

You have the Divine Saving Word from God, and are indwelt by the God Who gave Himself for you. You are empowered, dear believer, if you are in Him. Trust Him. **Grow so you can sow!**

The late **Vance Havner** said that there was a Christian school that taught the first grade students the **Apostle's Creed**. This is an ancient text that says:

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:
Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He arose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty,
whence He shall come to judge the living and the
dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy *catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.**

Each student was assigned a part that they recited, section by section, until the whole was said. One day the class was reciting the Creed until they got to the part that said:

“I believe in the Holy Spirit”

There was nothing but silence. The teacher asked, “Why have we stopped” to which one small child replied, **“the little boy who believes in the Holy Spirit isn't here today”**.

Listen Beloved – we do not sow the Gospel in our own

power. We sow it in the power of God the Holy Spirit. He is in us, in our midst, and He empowers us to do the work of sowing.

Our purpose – every single Christian's purpose – is to sow the seed of the Gospel.

2. We Are Responsible To Sow Regardless Of Harvest

FOCAL Luke 8:5-7 ... and **as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. (6) And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. (7) And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.**

Jesus made it very clear that not everyone would be blessed by the sowing of the Word of God. In fact, if you look at this parable you will see that very few benefit from the sowing of the Word. **Some seed fell by the wayside, some fell upon a rock, and some fell among thorns.** Yet the sower must continue to sow.

The local Church, the assembled believers of Jesus Christ, is supposed to sow the Word of God. We are the Body of Christ on the earth. Though the local Church may have unbelievers in its midst, it is not composed of the lost and unbelieving. The sower must *understand what he or she sows – we must understand the Word of*

God. The sower is not the spiritually ignorant, but is the *spiritually regenerate*. The sower is not the worldly nor the unbelieving, but the sower is those *separated from the world by faith in Christ*. The Bible tells us:

To the world the things of God are unintelligible, foolish, ignorant. The Bible says:

1 Corinthians 2:14-16 But **the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned.** (15) But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. (16) For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But **we have the mind of Christ.**

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him. The Church is every believer, saved by faith in Christ, indwelt by the Spirit of God, working together to sow the seed of the Word of God in this present world.

ILLUSTRATE In the *Baptist and Reflector* a recent article entitled “**Lifeway Survey asks: Can the Church close the back door?**” I read how “Lifeway Research's newest study surveys the 'formerly churched' to better understand why people leave [the local Church]”. The article cited a number of things that the *formerly churched* complained about that caused them to leave. I

quote, “The formerly churched say church members 'seem hypocritical' (17 percent), were 'judgmental of others' (17 percent), or 'the church was run by a clique that discouraged involvement' (12 percent)”. With all due respect to the bureaucrats at Lifeway, rather than questioning the unchurched as to why they do not go to church, why not look to the Holy Scripture. Rather than asking a sinner who is actively disobeying the Lord's Command to fellowship in the assembly of the local Church...

Hebrews 10:25 **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some [is]; but exhorting [one another]:** and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

why not ask God why these people are leaving. If we **who are His have the mind of Christ** let's go to that mind and see what He has to say. The Bible tells us:

1 John 2:19 **They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would [no doubt] have continued with us: but [they went out], that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.**

Why did these “formerly churched” leave the Church? **Because they were never of us** – and their leaving made this manifest. Should we try and woo the unchurched back? No, we shouldn't.

The sower has one job, and that is to sow the Word. You will always have people who reject the Word of God – sow the Word anyway.

Some Will Fall By The Wayside

FOCAL Luke 8:5, 12 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, **some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. ... (12) Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.**

When you sow the Word, the **devil will take the Word out of some people's hearts lest they should believe and be saved.** The devil and his propaganda organizations are continually at work. The Word of God is preached:

“Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”

and the devil comes right behind the sower saying, “You're not that bad. After all, you're a nice person, a moral person. How could you be a sinner?” The Lord says:

Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by his

grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

to which the devil replies, “Why do you need to be declared innocent? What have you ever done?” The sower throws out the seed:

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

To which the devil replies, “We know that man evolved from an ape – there was no Adam and Eve. Science has proven the basic premise of the so called Word of God to be foolish!”

The devil will always be ready to take the Word of God out of the heart of the unbeliever. This is spiritual warfare we are engaged in – sow the Word anyway!

Some Fell Upon A Rock

FOCAL Luke 8:6, 13 ... And **some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. ... (13) They on the rock [are they], which, when they hear², receive the**

2 Aorist Active Subjunctive of G191, ἀκούω, akouō, ak-oo'-o, A primary verb; to *hear* (in various senses): - give (in the) audience (of), come (to

word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

Still others hear the Word joyfully, but because **they have no root** they fall away when **temptation** comes. What did Jesus mean by **these have no root**? In another Gospel we read a little more:

Matthew 13:20-21 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; (21) Yet **hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.**

Some receive the Word of God **but have no root in themselves**. Dr. A.T. Robertson said in his *Word Pictures In The Greek New Testament*:

...” Here the man has a mushroom growth and “endureth for a while” (proskairos), temporary, quick to sprout, quick to stumble (skandalizetai). What a picture of some converts in our modern revivals. They drop away overnight because they did not have the root of the matter in them. This man does not last or hold out.”

So many hear the sowing of the Word of God with good

the ears), ([shall]) hear (-er, -ken), be noised, be reported, understand.

intentions, but never grow in their faith. The Christian way of life is to be a *living faith*. Some converts to the faith do not sink their faith deeply into the Lord or into His Word. They spend no time with the Master on a daily basis. As Jesus said:

Luke 14:26-27, 33 If any [man] come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. (27) And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple ... (33) So likewise, **whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.**

How sad that many fall for lack of root in Jesus! The disciple of Christ must be willing to **forsake everything for Jesus**. If this is done you will be blessed with other things. **Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you”** (Matthew 6:33).

Some Will Fall Among The Thorns

FOCAL Luke 8:7, 14 And **some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. (14) And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of [this] life, and bring no fruit to perfection.**

The Word of God is received by some who may or may not receive it – but if they receive it, these are **choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life**. Because they spend so much time chasing after life's temporary pleasure they **bring no fruit to perfection**.

The Bible says:

Psalms 25:14 The secret of the LORD [is] with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Those who spend little or no time in the Lord will never benefit from the faith – neither will God be blessed by their lives. Those who desire the things of this world more than they fear the Lord live lives of quiet desperation.

Yet Some Will Hear

FOCAL Luke 8:8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Why do we keep on sowing when only about one quarter of our sowing brings forth a harvest? Because God commands us to sow, God is blessed when we sow – and we ourselves are blessed when our sowing brings forth a harvest. My heart is saddened by the number of people that I sowed the Word of God on who apparently

benefited not at all from that sowing. Yet my heart overflows with each person in which that Word brings forth a harvest. As I look over this crowd there are some not with us today who will never be with us. Oh, they will periodically come and throw a dollar in the offering plate. But they will never **bring forth fruit a hundredfold**. But others of you, I see your lives now and remember how your lives were back then. I see in some of you the beginning of a great harvest. Some of you may one day surrender to the ministry of the Word, dwarfing my feeble efforts in serving the Lord. Some of you have entered on the Way of Life with Jesus, and your children may be saved to be the next Billy Sunday or the next Billy Graham. Oh, how exciting to see harvest where before there was mediocrity!

We sow the seed because some will hear. The Lord will lead some to **bear fruit a hundredfold** if we do not give up. This Church – not the building but the people in the building – can **bear fruit a hundredfold**. Some of you fear that, wanting to keep things small lest we “lose that family feel” at Rock Hill. Someone told me the other day, “How sad that Rock Hill is changing”. What a foolish statement. The Lord is not honored by a winter garden, a tiny plot with just a few bearing fruit in it. The Lord is honored when the seed **fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold**. Sow the seed, dear Church, for His glory and His honor. Sow the seed ignoring all other things. The sower is judged by how he or she sows. Sow on – and God will bless.

May He touch your hearts with this Word!