



HEART CHECK

A SERMON SERIES ON LUKE 8:4-15

PART 3:

THE DANGER OF A DISTRACTED HEART

LUKE 8:4-15

BAPTISM SUNDAY

WE WILL BE BAPTIZING MANY!

NEW LIFE | PUBLIC FAITH | OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST | LIVES TRANSFORMED



Luke 8:4-15

⁴ And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable:

⁵ “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it.

⁶ Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture.

⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.

Luke 8:4-15

⁸ But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

⁹ Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?”

¹⁰ And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is given* in parables, that ‘*Seeing they may not see, And hearing they may not understand.*’

Luke 8:4-15

¹¹ “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

¹² Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

¹³ But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.

Luke 8:4-15

¹⁴ Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

¹⁵ But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with patience.

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THE TEXT: THE THORNS

“The thorns sprang up with it and choked it.”

LUKE 8:7 (NKJV)

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JESUS EXPLAINS THE DANGER

**“Choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life,
and bring no fruit to maturity.”**

LUKE 8:14 (NKJV)

THE BIG IDEA

- A distracted heart may hear the Word without allowing it to mature.
- The threat is not always open rejection.
- Sometimes competing interests slowly choke spiritual fruit.

DANGER 1: LOSING OUR FOCUS

- The thorns grow alongside the plant — Luke 8:7.
Competing priorities can consume our attention.
- We can be busy with life yet inattentive to Christ.
- Our Focus can begin changing to something that yields no fruit

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MARTHA: DISTRACTED BY SERVING

“Martha was distracted with much serving.”

LUKE 10:40 (NKJV)

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WHEN GOOD THINGS CROWD OUT THE BEST

- Work and family duties are important.
- Even ministry can become consuming.
- Ask: What repeatedly displaces prayer and the Word?

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THE PRIORITY JESUS COMMANDS

**“Seek first the kingdom of God and His
righteousness.”**

MATTHEW 6:33 (NKJV)

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DANGER 2: ANXIETY RULES THE HEART

- Jesus names the cares of life — Luke 8:14.
- Worry can dominate our thoughts and decisions.
- Concern becomes a thorn when it governs us.

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BRING CARES TO GOD

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication... let your requests be made known to God.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:6 (NKJV)

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DANGER 3: WEALTH REORDERS OUR LOVE

- Riches are a named thorn — Luke 8:14.
- Possessions can promise security they cannot give.
- The pursuit of more can displace eternal priorities.

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GUARD AGAINST GREED

“One’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

LUKE 12:15 (NKJV)

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DANGER 4: PLEASURE BECOMES MASTER

- Jesus names the pleasures of life — Luke 8:14.
- Good gifts become thorns when they control us.
- Entertainment, comfort, and approval can crowd out obedience.

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WHEN DESIRES COMPETE

“Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”

COLOSSIANS 3:2 (NKJV)

DANGER 5: DISTRACTION BY OUR OWN IDEAS

- Personal opinions can become more important than biblical correction.
- Pride can make us defend ourselves instead of learning.
- Ask: Am I studying Scripture to submit — or to win?

DANGER 6: UNPROFITABLE DOCTRINAL DEBATES

- Sound doctrine and apologetics matter — Titus 1:9.
- But speculation can displace love and godliness.
- Some arguments generate heat without producing fruit.

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THE GOAL OF SOUND TEACHING

“The purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart... and from sincere faith.”

1 TIMOTHY 1:5 (NKJV)

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THE HEART CHECK FOR APOLOGETICS

- Am I becoming more informed but less patient?
- Am I defending truth while neglecting humility?
- Does this discussion produce clarity, love, and obedience?

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DANGER 7: MISTAKING ACTIVITY FOR FRUIT

- The plant grows — but never matures.
- Religious activity is not the same as Christlikeness.
- Luke 8:14 warns: no fruit to maturity.

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WHAT FRUIT SHOULD WE SEEK?

“Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

GALATIANS 5:22–23 (NKJV)

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THE DANGER OF SPIRITUAL NEGLECT

- We can know Scripture yet fail to practice it.
- We can serve others yet neglect our own devotion.
- We can defend the faith yet fail to demonstrate love.

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LIFE APPLICATION: IDENTIFY THE THORNS

- What occupies my thoughts most often?
- What keeps pushing spiritual priorities aside?
- What am I feeding that competes with the Word?

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LIFE APPLICATION: CLEAR THE GROUND

- REORDER: seek the kingdom first — Matthew 6:33.
- RELEASE: bring anxieties to God — 1 Peter 5:7.
- REFUSE: avoid fruitless quarrels — Titus 3:9.

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LIFE APPLICATION: PRACTICE THE WORD

- Receive the Word with humility — James 1:21.
- Do what it says — James 1:22.
- Remain attentive to Christ — John 15:4–5.

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THE FINAL HEART CHECK

- The hard heart won't let the Word IN.
- The shallow heart won't let the Word DOWN.
- The crowded heart won't let the Word GROW.

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THE CALL: LET THE WORD GROW

“But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who... keep it and bear fruit with patience.”

LUKE 8:15 (NKJV)

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LORD, UNCROWD MY HEART

Make room for the Word to bear fruit

Expose my distractions.

Reorder my loves.

Grow mature fruit in me.