

Where Is Your Faith? Luke 8:1-25

We've been studying the Gospel of Luke. Today we will study the first half of cp. 8, from verse 1 to 25. The theme is "Where Is Your Faith?"

1. Unchanging mission of Jesus

1

¹ After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him,

Jesus' mission never changes. Wherever He went, he preached and brought the good news of the kingdom of God. Jesus knew that this was the very purpose He was sent. And He carried out his mission. (Luke 4:43, 5:32)

Not just Jesus, but His twelve disciples were also with Him. The twelve are the models for those who believe, trust in and follow Jesus. They are the examples for those who live a new life by faith in Jesus.

2-3

² and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; ³ Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

These women were also those who started to live a new life by faith in Jesus and followed him. There were some people who followed Jesus, because they thought as long as they were with Jesus, they could always eat bread and fish to the full. But these women were not like that. They were the people who "provided for Jesus from their substance, from their own means, income."

In Luke cp. 7, we read about a woman who wet Jesus' feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. She deeply realized that she was a sinner. And she received Jesus' forgiveness by faith. As she realized how much she was forgiven, she loved Jesus deeply. And her love naturally expressed itself in her action. I think it is the same for the women in cp. 8 v.2 and 3.

Matthew 6:21 says, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." They provided for Jesus from their substance, they supported Jesus financially. It shows us that their hearts were with Jesus, and with His disciples.

It is very difficult to work with people whose hearts are not with you, actually it is almost impossible. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul talks about his disciple, Timothy as one "like-minded". And Paul also wrote to Timothy, "You followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me... (2 Tim. 3:10-11, NAS)". It is joy and encouragement and it strengthens us to work with a person like this. For Jesus, these women and disciples must have been people like that.

Jesus' message is always the same. The good news of the kingdom of God which Jesus' preaches never changes.

Some people hear the message and love Jesus deeply. They follow and serve Jesus even if they have to sacrifice something. Some people, however, hear the same message, see the same miracle, but they criticize Him and complain against Him.

2. What is inside will come out

4-15

⁴ While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: ⁵ "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. ⁶ Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown." When he said this, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." ⁹ His disciples asked him what this parable meant. ¹⁰ He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, " 'though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.' ¹¹ "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. ¹² Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the

word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³ Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. ¹⁴ The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. ¹⁵ But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Jesus explains the meaning of the parable very clearly, so I'll not add to it. But I'd like to emphasize at one point, that is:

There were seed that was taken away, the seed that withered, and the seed that grew a little but didn't bear fruit. They are finished there. They won't bear fruit after that. To bear the fruit, new seed need to be sown. The new Word of God should be sown in his heart again. If there is no seed, there will be no fruit. What is inside will come out.

16

¹⁶ "No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light.

This verse also talks about what is inside will come out.

In Luke cp. 7, we looked at a woman who wet Jesus' feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. She received salvation through faith in Jesus. And her love for Jesus naturally came out in her action. It was not because she did something good to Jesus that Jesus forgave her. As we can see in the parable of the money-lender, forgiveness comes first. She received salvation through faith in Jesus. The joy and gratitude of forgiveness came out as love for Jesus. When she received the light, she didn't hide it, but showed it. What is inside will come out.

Before sin ruled her life, but now Jesus became her life and He gives her a new life. If Jesus lives in her, that will shine through her and come out as Jesus is the light of life (John 1:4-5). Before she was dead in sin, but now by grace of Jesus, she lives a new life. She could not hide this joy. What is inside will come out.

3. What is inside us?

17

¹⁷ For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open.

We cannot hide what is inside us. People may not notice what is inside us, but God knows it.

When we want to hide something, we may pretend to have something else. We can pretend to have God's Word within us, pretend to have joy within us, victory within us. We can pretend that we are free from worries of life. We can pretend that we are free from cravings for riches and pleasures, and are acting out of love for Jesus.

But, no matter how well we keep up appearances, we can't hide what is actually inside us. No matter how hard we try to hide it, it will come out.

I think that nothing grieves Jesus more than our pretending to have joy, victory and love. Because that is to lie to Jesus. And that is to say we don't need Jesus as our savior, and we are gently and politely rejecting Him.

18

¹⁸ Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him."

Here is a warning. If we don't have, though pretend to have, even what we appear to have will be taken from us. This is not my opinion, but the Bible says so. This is a warning against pretense. It is dangerous to pretend.

Then, what should we do? It's simple. If we don't have, we can honestly admit that we don't have and ask the Lord for it.

King David prayed "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Restore to me, the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me." (Ps 51:10, 12)

We also can pray a simple prayer.

"Jesus, I don't have joy within me. Please renew the joy of my salvation. Please fill me with your joy."

“Lord, I need your Word. Please speak to me and give me strength to live for today. “

“Father, I am weak. I need your encouragement and comfort. Please give me living faith, so that I can trust in you, hope in you, and wait for you in the midst of trials.”

“Please give me faith like you had in Father while you were on the earth. I’ll run the race till see your face.”

“Worries, riches and pleasures of life have entered me. Jesus, please remove everything that hinders me from loving you, so that I can love you with all my heart. And please fill me with your love.”

They are little simple prayers. But we must have faith to pray them. We need to have faith that Jesus accepts me as who I am and that he will sincerely listen to my prayer and answer me. When we draw near to him, he will come close to us and reveal himself to us. God will make our faith grow, and make us bear fruit. But if we pretend to have, when actually we don’t have, even what we appear to have will be taken from us.

4. Faith is to hear the Word of God and do it.

19-21

¹⁹ Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. ²⁰ Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." ²¹ He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."

It doesn't say “My mother and My brothers are those who come to hear the Word of God”, and full stop. But it says “My mother and My brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.”

Faith comes by hearing the message of Jesus (Rom. 10:17). The relationship with Jesus starts from calling Him “my Lord”. But, this is not the end. It doesn’t mean just hearing is good enough; just calling Jesus “my Lord” is good enough. And it is not about the outside, how pious, devout or earnest you look. The important thing is to surrender to His Word and act accordingly, like Mary, who said, “May it be to me as you have said.”

5. Where is your faith?

22

²² One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out.

Why did the disciples get into a boat to cross over to the other side of the lake? Because Jesus said so. They heard Jesus' Word and did it.

23

²³ As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger.

If we hear Jesus' Word and do it, does everything go well? Not always! If something doesn't go well, does it show that you're not following the Word of God? That's not always true. They followed Jesus' word, and Jesus was actually with them. But they faced a great danger.

24

²⁴ The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!"

They heard Jesus' Word, and did what He told them to do. And now they were in great danger, then they came to Jesus. They asked for His help. I imagine their hearts were filled with fear and uneasiness while they were asking for Jesus help.

25

²⁵ He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. "Where is your faith?" he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."

Jesus first quieted the winds and the water. And He said to his disciples, "Where is your faith?" Whom do you put your faith on?

The disciples were afraid and marveled, saying to one another, “Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!”

It was not the crowd who said this. Nor was it the Pharisees or teachers of the law. It was Jesus’ disciples who said this. What kind of people are they? They had faith to leave everything to follow Jesus. When they heard Jesus’ Word they did it immediately. They had seen Jesus’ great miracles.

But they only knew part of Jesus. Jesus is much more powerful, and much greater than they knew He was.

They experienced His amazing greatness, because they heard Jesus’ Word and did it. Their faith grew once again, because they obeyed the Word of God by faith. They came to know more about Jesus, because they came to Him. They came to know even more about Jesus, because they asked Him. The Word of God rooted in them, grew up and bear fruit in their life.

Jesus speaks to you and me this morning, “Where is your faith? You have faith in Me, right? Then, why do you hesitate to come to me and ask me? Do you forget I love you?”

“Where is your faith? You have faith in Me, right? Then, why do you stay being swamped by the thought “What if something bad happens because I obeyed the Word of God?” Why don’t you come to me and ask me? I have power to protect you and save you.”

“Where is your faith? You have faith in Me, right? Then, why do you choose to drown in fear, anxiety, bitterness and anger? You know you can come to me, right? I am your refuge, comfort and hope. And I’ll never leave you.”