



Father Joseph's Outline for the Sunday of the 7th Ecumenical Council

Luke 8:8-15 - Sunday 10/12/2008

“And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15)

- The Lord in this parable states very clearly that the seed here that is planted represents the word of God!
- The sower represents Jesus Himself. He is the one that came out to sow the seeds.
- The soil where the seed was thrown represents the hearts and the minds of the people.
- Jesus indicated that all people are capable of receiving His word, and all receive the same teaching or seed.
- While all receive and are treated equally, not all bring back the same amount of fruits.
- Jesus told us about four different types of receiving people. One becomes fruitful and three end up fruitless.
- The receiving end is what determines the quality of the fruits. The quality or the amount of the fruits depends on choices we make.

The different attitudes toward the Word of God:

1. The ones who are beside the road are those who have heard the word of God, but “then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved.” (Luke 8:12)
2. Those who are on the rocky soil are those who hear the word of God and receive it with joy, but they have no firm root. “They believe for a while, and in time of temptations fall away.” (Luke 6:13)
3. The seed which fell among the thorns represents the ones who hear the word of God and accept it, but as they go on their way, “they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.” (Luke 8:14)
4. Those who hear the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance are those in the good soil. (Luke 8:15)

Accredited Member Of:

Association of Independent Schools of Florida, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation & National Council for Private School Accreditation

How do some of these difficulties translate in our life today?

- ✓ How does the devil steal the word of God from people's hearts? One example is found in the book of Genesis in the conversation between the Eve and the serpent:

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field...he said to the woman, ‘Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?’ The woman said... ‘From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but...[we] must not eat from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden...’ The serpent said to the woman, ‘You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’” (Genesis 3:1-5)

- ✓ The temptations of the devil are countless. One of them is found in the attraction he offers Jesus in exchange for being loyal to him and his ways.

“The devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.’” (Matthew 4:8-9)

- ✓ The love for the riches of the world that enslaves the person where the person gives a priority in his life for the wealth over God is another factor that can choke the life of God from our hearts.

“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?” (Matthew 6:23-25)

- ✓ The good soil is the person who discovers that living a good life on earth as the *world* understands “good life” is the wrong way toward God. “Good life” in a Christian sense is giving up what looks glorious on the surface, and loving what it is glorious inside the heart of man.

“I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.(John 12:24-26)

Important Remarks:

- Nothing grows on the roadside because usually it is hard soil from being packed down continually. When our hearts are packed down continually by sin, they become fruitless soil where the divine seed of God does not grow.
- Nothing grows in the rocky soil as it does not have depth. People who have no depth will accomplish very little not only in their relation with God, but also in life in general.
- The soil filled with different kinds of wild plants or thorns will not have enough nutrition to sustain the good seed because the other plants consume all the nutrients. People whose lives are governed by different types of earthly cares that deplete the life of God out of them will have little chance to excel in their life with God.

Accredited Member Of:

Association of Independent Schools of Florida, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation & National Council for Private School Accreditation

- The good soil, in a sense, is not any different, other than that the person has good intentions to accept the word of God and persistence not to depart from it, thus bringing a lot of good fruits.

Prayer

Our Lord Jesus Christ, You are the creator of Life. You have come into the world for my salvation. Let not the seed of Your holy word die in my heart. O Lord, do not allow my sins to prevent Your word from being fruitful inside me. Give me the power of Your Holy Spirit so that the temptations of the Devil and the distractions of the world do not choke Your word inside me. Protect inside me the power of hope and love. Show me, O Lord, how to be a good soil for the rest of my life. Amen.

Accredited Member Of:

Association of Independent Schools of Florida, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation & National Council for Private School Accreditation