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Triumphant Tuesday
Wisdom Wednesday
September 22 - 23, 2026

Luke Chapter 8

The Importance and Power of Jesus' Word

Historical Context:

The Gospel of Luke was written by Luke the physician, a companion of Paul. It is believed to have been written around 60–62 AD, likely during Paul's imprisonment. Luke was not an eyewitness to Jesus' ministry but relied on careful research and interviews with those who were.

This time, period was marked by Roman occupation of Judea, tension between Jews and Gentiles, and the spread of the early church. The Gospel addresses both Jewish and Gentile audiences, showing that Jesus came for all people. Luke's writing reflects both historical precision and theological depth.

Luke 8 is a profound and multifaceted chapter in the Gospel that encapsulates a series of powerful teachings, vivid parables, miraculous healings, and astonishing displays of Jesus' authority over nature, demons, and death.

This Gospel presents Jesus as:

- the compassionate Savior who came to seek and save the lost.
- It builds upon the Old Testament promises and connects to the narratives of Matthew and Mark, with unique details.
- Luke emphasizes the humanity of Christ, His mercy toward the outcast, and His mission to bring salvation to all.
- The themes of healing, teaching, and restoring broken lives flow throughout the book.

The purpose of Luke's Gospel is to give certainty to what believers have been taught about Jesus. Luke writes in an orderly way to strengthen faith and to show that the life of Christ is trustworthy. His careful narrative includes eyewitness testimony and detailed accounts of Jesus' ministry. By doing so, he helps readers understand the authority of Jesus over both the natural and spiritual world.

Luke 8 stands out because it gathers, together parables and miracles that reveal the power of Christ. In this chapter:

- Jesus teaches with stories that pierce the heart and demonstrates His authority over storms, demons, sickness, and even death.
- This combination of teaching and miracles displays His identity as the Son of God.
- As we study, you will see yourself reflected in these accounts and be invited to trust Him more deeply.

We are not just reading history. We are being called to examine our own response to the Word of God and the power of Jesus.

- Luke 8 is a mirror and a guide for your faith.
- As we go through this study, we will discover truths that can shape our walk with Christ today.
- Are you ready to see yourself in the parables and miracles of Jesus?

Luke 8: 1-3 Women Accompanying Jesus

1. Not long afterwards he began a tour of the cities and villages of Galilee[a] to announce the coming of the Kingdom of God and took his twelve disciples with him. 2 Some women went along, from whom he had cast out demons or whom he had healed; among them were Mary Magdalene (Jesus had cast out seven demons from her), 3 Joanna, Chuza's wife (Chuza was King Herod's business manager and was in charge of his palace and domestic affairs), Susanna, and many others who were contributing from their private means to the support of Jesus and his disciples

Luke 8 presents a series of teachings and miracles that illustrate Jesus' ministry and the Kingdom of God. The chapter begins with Jesus traveling through towns and villages, preaching the good news, accompanied by His twelve disciples and several women who supported His ministry, including Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna, highlighting the inclusive nature of His mission (Luke 8:1-3)

This passage speaks to the inclusivity of Jesus' ministry. The presence and support of these women not only underscore their importance but also speaks to and breaks the conventional social norms where women's roles were often marginalized. Their mention here is a significant acknowledgment of their contributions, showing that the Kingdom of God is open to all, regardless of gender or status.

Luke 8: 4-15 - The Parable of the Sower

4 One day he gave this illustration to a large crowd that was gathering to hear him—while many others were still on the way, coming from other towns.

5 “A farmer went out to his field to sow grain. As he scattered the seed on the ground, some of it fell on a footpath and was trampled on; and the birds came and ate it as it lay exposed. 6 Other seed fell on shallow soil with rock beneath. This seed began to grow but soon withered and died for lack of moisture. 7 Other seed landed in thistle patches, and the young grain stalks were soon choked out. 8 Still other fell on fertile soil; this seed grew and produced a crop one hundred times as large as he had planted.” (As he was giving this illustration he said, “If anyone has listening ears, use them now!”)

9 His apostles asked him what the story meant.

10 He replied, “God has granted you to know the meaning of these parables, for they tell a great deal about the Kingdom of God. But

these crowds hear the words and do not understand, just as the ancient prophets predicted.

11 “This is its meaning: The seed is God’s message to men. 12 The hard path where some seed fell represents the hard hearts of those who hear the words of God, but then the devil comes and steals the words away and prevents people from believing and being saved. 13 The stony ground represents those who enjoy listening to sermons, but somehow the message never really gets through to them and doesn’t take root and grow. They know the message is true, and sort of believe for a while; but when the hot winds of persecution blow, they lose interest. 14 The seed among the thorns represents those who listen and believe God’s words, but whose faith afterwards is choked out by worry and riches and the responsibilities and pleasures of life. And so they are never able to help anyone else to believe the Good News.

15 “But the good soil represents honest, good-hearted people. They listen to God’s words and cling to them and steadily spread them to others who also soon believe.”

The Parable of the Sower is one of Jesus’ most famous parables, illustrating how different people respond to the word of God. In Luke 8:4-8, Jesus describes a Sower scattering seeds on different types of soil, which yield different results. Some seeds fall along the path, some on rocky ground, some among thorns, and some on good soil. Only the seed on the good soil produces a bountiful harvest.

When His disciples ask about the meaning, Jesus explains that the seed represents the word of God, and the different soils represent the varied responses of people (Luke 8:9-15). The path signifies those who hear the word, but the devil quickly snatches it away. The rocky soil depicts those who receive the word with joy but fall away in times of testing because they have no root. The thorny ground represents those who hear but are choked by life’s worries, riches, and pleasures, hence they do not mature.

Lastly, the good soil stands for those who retain the word with a noble heart and patiently produce a crop.

Jesus tells the Parable of the Sower to illustrate how people respond differently to God's word:

- **Seed along the path:** Represents those who hear the word but are quickly influenced by evil, preventing belief and salvation.
- **Seed on rocky ground:** Symbolizes those who initially receive the word with joy but fall away during trials due to lack of deep roots.
- **Seed among thorns:** Depicts those whose faith is choked by worldly worries, wealth, and pleasures, preventing spiritual growth.
- **Seed on good soil:** Represents those with a noble and receptive heart who hear, retain, and bear fruit through perseverance

This parable emphasizes the importance of **spiritual receptivity, perseverance, and the transformative power of God's word** and calls believers to examine the condition of their own hearts and challenges them to be good soil where the word of God can take root and yield abundant fruit.

Luke 8: 16 Another time he asked, ^[b] "Who ever heard of someone lighting a lamp and then covering it up to keep it from shining? No, lamps are mounted in the open where they can be seen. **17** This illustrates the fact that someday everything in men's hearts^[c] shall be brought to light and made plain to all. **18** So be careful how you listen; for whoever has, to him shall be given more; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.

Luke 8:16-18 - The Lamp Under a Jar

Jesus teaches that truth and light are meant to be shared, not hidden. Believers are called to **actively live out and spread the teachings of**

God, and careful attention to how one receives the word determines spiritual growth and fruitfulness.

This short teaching reiterates the importance of living out and sharing the word of God openly. Jesus points out that no one lights a lamp and hides it but puts it on a stand so those who enter may see the light. Similarly, the truth of God's word should not be concealed but proclaimed brightly for all to see.

Also, this passage emphasizes the responsibility of believers to bear witness to God's truth. The light of Jesus' teaching must shine forth in our lives, illuminating and guiding others. Furthermore, Jesus warns of the consequences of how we listen and respond to His word. Our receptivity determines whether we gain more understanding and spiritual growth or lose what little we think we possess.

Luke 8: 19-21 Jesus' True Family

19 Once when his mother and brothers came to see him, they couldn't get into the house where he was teaching because of the crowds. 20 When Jesus heard they were standing outside and wanted to see him, 21 he remarked, "My mother and my brothers are all those who hear the message of God and obey it."

Jesus' mother and brothers come to see Him, but they cannot reach Him because of the crowd. When someone informs Jesus, He responds by redefining familial bonds in spiritual terms.

This pronouncement shifts the focus from biological ties to spiritual kinship. Jesus asserts that true family transcends blood relations and is rooted in the obedience to God's word. This redefinition beckons all believers to envision themselves as part of God's broader family, united by faith and commitment to His teachings

Luke 8:22-39 Jesus' Authority Over Nature and Spiritual Forces

22 One day about that time, as he and his disciples were out in a boat, he suggested that they cross to the other side of the lake. **23** On the way across he lay down for a nap, and while he was sleeping the wind began to rise. A fierce storm developed that threatened to swamp them, and they were in real danger.

24 They rushed over and woke him up. "Master, Master, we are sinking!" they screamed.

So, he spoke to the storm: "Quiet down," he said, and the wind and waves subsided and all was calm! **25** Then he asked them, "Where is your faith?"

And they were filled with awe and fear of him and said to one another, "Who is this man, that even the winds and waves obey him?"

The narrative then transitions to a dramatic display of Jesus' divine authority over nature. Jesus and His disciples are crossing the lake when a fierce storm arises. The disciples, fearful for their lives, awaken Jesus. He rebukes the wind and the raging waters, restoring calm instantly.

- **Calming the storm:** Demonstrates Jesus' authority over nature, reinforcing His divine power and the need for faith in Him.

This miracle highlights Jesus' mastery over the natural world, reinforcing His divine identity. The disciples' awe and fear reflect their burgeoning understanding of Jesus' true nature. Jesus' query, "Where is your faith?" challenges them (and readers) to trust in His power and presence even amidst life's tempests. The calming of the storm serves as a metaphor for the peace Jesus brings into the chaos of human hearts.

Luke 8:26-39 - The Healing of the Demon-Possessed Man

26 So they arrived at the other side, in the Gerasene country across the lake from Galilee. **27** As he was climbing out of the boat a man

from the city of Gadara came to meet him, a man who had been demon-possessed for a long time. Homeless and naked, he lived in a cemetery among the tombs. 28 As soon as he saw Jesus, he shrieked and fell to the ground before him, screaming, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of God Most High? Please, I beg you, oh, don't torment me!"

29 For Jesus was already commanding the demon to leave him. This demon had often taken control of the man so that even when shackled with chains he simply broke them and rushed out into the desert, completely under the demon's power. 30 "What is your name?" Jesus asked the demon. "Legion," they replied—for the man was filled with thousands of them!^[d] 31 They kept begging Jesus not to order them into the Bottomless Pit.

32 A herd of pigs was feeding on the mountainside nearby, and the demons pled with him to let them enter into the pigs. And Jesus said they could. 33 So they left the man and went into the pigs, and immediately the whole herd rushed down the mountainside and fell over a cliff into the lake below, where they drowned. 34 The herdsmen rushed away to the nearby city, spreading the news as they ran.

35 Soon a crowd came out to see for themselves what had happened and saw the man who had been demon-possessed sitting quietly at Jesus' feet, clothed and sane! And the whole crowd was badly frightened. 36 Then those who had seen it happen told how the demon-possessed man had been healed. 37 And everyone begged Jesus to go away and leave them alone (for a deep wave of fear had swept over them). So he returned to the boat and left, crossing back to the other side of the lake.

38 The man who had been demon-possessed begged to go too, but Jesus said no.

39 "Go back to your family," he told him, "and tell them what a wonderful thing God has done for you."

So he went all through the city telling everyone about Jesus' mighty miracle.

- **Healing the demon-possessed man:** Shows His authority over spiritual forces, illustrating that Jesus brings liberation and restoration to those oppressed by evil

This desperate man, living among the tombs, was uncontrollable and often driven into solitary places by the demons. When he sees Jesus, he falls at His feet, and the demons beg not to be sent into the abyss. Jesus permits them to enter a herd of pigs, which then rush down a steep bank into the lake and drown.

This exorcism demonstrates Jesus' supreme authority over the spiritual realm. The transformation of the man, from a state of torment to sitting calmly at Jesus' feet clothed and in his right mind, showcases the restorative power of Jesus' intervention. The local people's fearful reaction and request for Jesus to leave contrasts sharply with the healed man's desire to follow Him. Jesus instructs him to return home and declare how much God has done for him, emphasizing the importance of personal testimony.

Luke 8:40-56 Healing Miracles

40 On the other side of the lake the crowds received him with open arms, for they had been waiting for him.

41 And now a man named Jairus, a leader of a Jewish synagogue, came and fell down at Jesus' feet and begged him to come home with him, 42 for his only child was dying, a little girl twelve years old. Jesus went with him, pushing through the crowds.

43-44 As they went a woman who wanted to be healed came up behind and touched him, for she had been slowly bleeding for twelve years, and could find no cure (though she had spent

everything she had on doctors^[e]). But the instant she touched the edge of his robe, the bleeding stopped.

45 “Who touched me?” Jesus asked.

Everyone denied it, and Peter said, “Master, so many are crowding against you. . . .”

46 But Jesus told him, “No, it was someone who deliberately touched me, for I felt healing power go out from me.”

47 When the woman realized that Jesus knew, she began to tremble and fell to her knees before him and told why she had touched him and that now she was well.

48 “Daughter,” he said to her, “your faith has healed you. Go in peace.”

49 While he was still speaking to her, a messenger arrived from the Jairus’s home with the news that the little girl was dead. “She’s gone,” he told her father; “there’s no use troubling the Teacher now.”

50 But when Jesus heard what had happened, he said to the father, “Don’t be afraid! Just trust me, and she’ll be all right.”

51 When they arrived at the house, Jesus wouldn’t let anyone into the room except Peter, James, John, and the little girl’s father and mother. 52 The home was filled with mourning people, but he said, “Stop the weeping! She isn’t dead; she is only asleep!” 53 This brought scoffing and laughter, for they all knew she was dead.

54 Then he took her by the hand and called, “Get up, little girl!” 55 And at that moment her life returned and she jumped up! “Give her something to eat!” he said. 56 Her parents were overcome with happiness, but Jesus insisted that they not tell anyone the details of what had happened.

- **Healing the woman with a flow of blood:** Highlights faith and the power of Jesus’ word and presence to bring healing.

- **Raising Jairus's daughter:** Demonstrates Jesus' authority over life and death, reinforcing His role as the Messiah and the source of ultimate restoration

The chapter concludes with two intertwined miracle stories— the healing of a woman suffering from chronic bleeding and the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead (Luke 8:40-56). These narratives, rich in contrast and complementarity, underscore Jesus' mercy and power.

Jairus, a synagogue leader, pleads with Jesus to heal his dying daughter. As Jesus goes with him, a large crowd presses around. Among them is a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years. She touches the fringe of Jesus' cloak, and immediately her bleeding stops. Sensing that power has gone from Him, Jesus inquires who touched Him. The woman, trembling, confesses, and Jesus affirms her faith has healed her, bringing her peace.

As this unfolds, news arrives that Jairus' daughter has died. Jesus reassures Jairus to believe and not fear. At Jairus' house, Jesus permits only Peter, John, James, and the girl's parents to enter. He declares the girl is not dead but asleep, and despite the mourners' ridicule, He takes her hand and calls her to arise. Her spirit returns, and she stands up, to the amazement of all present.

These accounts reveal Jesus' sensitivity and compassion. With the bleeding woman, we see His responsiveness to individual, often unnoticed, suffering. With Jairus' daughter, we witness His power over death, instilling hope amidst despair. Both miracles are acts of divine grace elicited by genuine faith, underscoring that Jesus is attuned to personal cries for help and possesses the authority to transcend human limitations.

In conclusion, Luke:

- We learned that the Luke builds on the earlier testimonies of the prophets and the writings of the apostles.
- We learned that Luke carefully records the life and ministry of Jesus so that believers may have certainty about their faith.
- Jesus' work continues the unfolding story of God's plan of salvation that began in Genesis and runs through the law, prophets, and psalms.

Luke also connects to the Gospel of Mark and the traditions preserved by eyewitnesses.

- He emphasizes details that highlight the compassion and humanity of Jesus.
- In Luke 8, this approach comes to life as parables and miracles recorded not only as events but as lessons of faith.
- These narratives are meant to deepen the reader's trust in Jesus as the Son of God.

Luke Chapter 8

- is a tapestry of profound teachings and extraordinary miracles that together illuminate the nature of Jesus' ministry,
- the breadth of His compassion, and the depth of His power.

From the inclusion of women in ministry to the calmed storm, the exorcised demoniac, the healed woman, and the resurrected girl, this chapter is a vivid display of the Kingdom of God breaking into the world. These stories collectively call believers to faith that is receptive, steadfast amidst trials, and confident in Jesus' unmatched authority and boundless mercy.

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