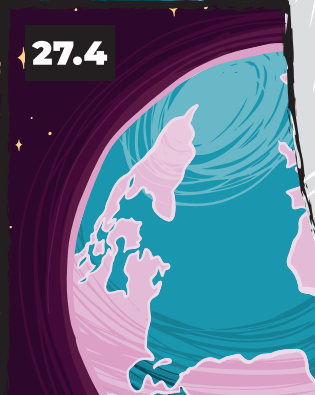


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THE SON HAS TRUTH

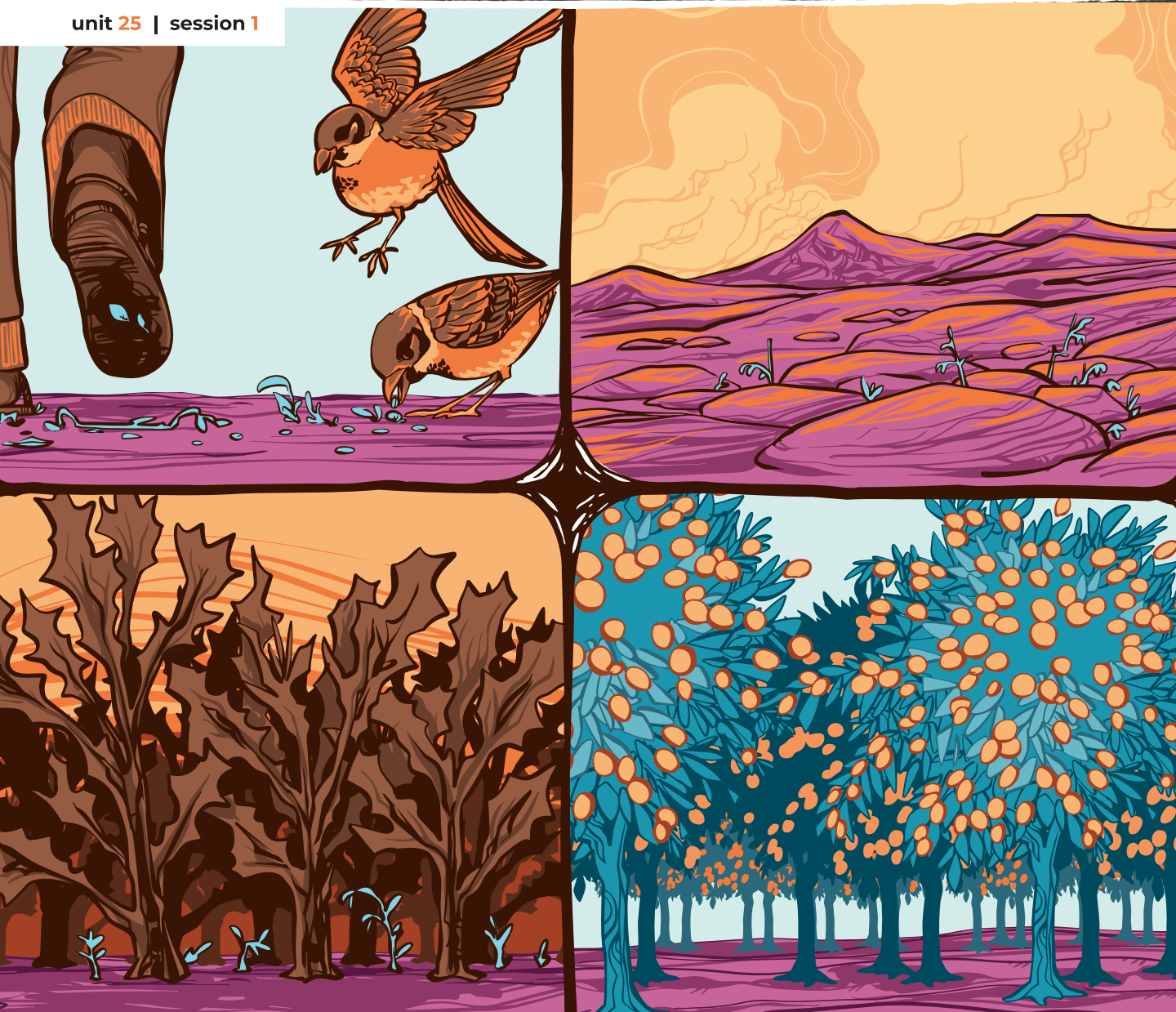


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|-------------|---------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 25.1 | SECRETS OF THE KINGDOM | 26.3 | THE CHILDREN'S CRUMBS |
| 25.2 | THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN | 26.4 | RESURRECTION AND LIFE |
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SECRETS OF *THE KINGDOM*

unit 25 | session 1



CHRIST CONNECTION

Jesus used parables to describe the nature of God's kingdom on earth. Word of the kingdom is spread widely but received differently based on the condition of one's heart. For those with hearts of fertile soil, the Word produces extraordinary fruitfulness, causing the kingdom to grow into all of the world. When Jesus returns, we will experience the fullness of God's kingdom.

PLANTING THE WORD

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

Luke 8

GOD'S WORD IS A SEED

LUKE 8:4-10

4 As a large crowd was gathering, and people were coming to Jesus from every town, he said in a parable, 5 "A sower went out to sow his seed. As he sowed, some seed fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the sky devoured it. 6 Other seed fell on the rock; when it grew up, it withered away, since it lacked moisture. 7 Other seed fell among thorns; the thorns grew up with it and choked it. 8 Still other seed fell on good ground; when it grew up, it produced fruit: a hundred times what was sown." As he said this, he called out, "Let anyone who has ears to hear listen." 9 Then his disciples asked him, "What does this parable mean?" 10 So he said, "The secrets of the kingdom of God have been given for you to know, but to the rest it is in parables, so that 'Looking they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'"

GOD'S WORD GROWS IN GOOD SOIL

LUKE 8:11-15

11 "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. 12 The seed along the path are those who have heard and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13 And the seed on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy. Having no root, these believe for a while and fall away in a time of testing. 14 As for the seed that fell among thorns, these are the ones who, when they have heard, go on their way and are choked with worries, riches, and pleasures of life, and produce no mature fruit. 15 But the seed in the good ground—these are the ones who, having heard the word with an honest and good heart, hold on to it and by enduring, produce fruit."

MAIN POINT.

We are changed when we allow the Word to take root in our heart.



THEOLOGY CONNECTION

THE GOSPEL

The Bible teaches that the gospel is both an event and a story. First, it is an event that took place at a specific point in history: the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the redemption of sinners (1 Cor. 15; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Second, the gospel is the story of redemption that God planned since “before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4), running through Scripture and culminating in a restored and redeemed creation—a new heaven and new earth where sin, death, and suffering will never again plague humanity and where God’s people will live with Him forever (Isa. 25:8; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21). The event and story do not exist apart from or in conflict with one another but together inspire us to a life of devotion and mission.

DISCUSSION

GOD’S WORD IS A SEED

LUKE 8:4-10

- What does a seed need to grow? How is God’s Word like a seed? Why don’t we always see growth?
- ✝ • What do you notice about where the sower scatters seeds? What does this show us about the Word?
- 📖 • Why do you think Jesus taught in parables? What does this help you understand about God’s character?

GOD’S WORD GROWS IN GOOD SOIL

LUKE 8:11-15

- 🧠 • Underline the four types of soil. Why do you think people respond so differently to the Word? Which soils do you relate to most?
- ♥ • What “thorns” keep our hearts from being good soil?
- Why is having a heart of “good soil” difficult? What does “good soil” look like in someone’s life?



WHAT HABITS CAN YOU BEGIN SO THAT YOUR HEART IS A PLACE FOR GOD’S WORD TO GROW AND PRODUCE FRUIT?

CULTURAL CONNECTION

Do you ever feel like you struggle to understand or apply the Bible? You aren’t alone. But many of us use these struggles as excuses and never try to understand Scripture. We’ll make strong efforts to improve in sports or hobbies, but we give up easily in the struggle to know and understand the Bible. Isn’t this what the enemy would want, though—to deter us from even trying? Maybe you understand the Word but struggle to allow God’s commands to affect the small and big pieces of your life. God’s Word is like a seed; it takes root in our hearts and completely transforms us. But we have to nurture it. God has given us the Holy Spirit to help us because He wants us to understand His Word! The Lord promised not to leave us unfinished; He continues to sanctify us, making us more like Jesus until we are with Him in eternity (Phil. 1:6). You can find hope in the truth that God will continue to help you grow. As you seek to obey God faithfully and make efforts to know His Word, the Holy Spirit will strengthen you from the inside out, helping you understand and transforming you in the process.



DAY ONE

LUKE 6:43-45



Has anyone ever tried to trick you or convince you of something you knew wasn't true? Imagine someone showing you an apple tree full of ripe apples and trying to convince you it was an orange tree. You'd take one look at the apples, clear evidence of the type of tree, and say, "Yeah right." In the same way that the fruit of a tree tells you exactly what kind of tree it is, your life reveals what's in your heart. Jesus said, "Each tree is known by its own fruit" (v. 44). He explained that a person is known by the good or evil that comes out of his or her life because those actions flow from the heart. In other words, since everything in our life flows from our heart, the way we live points not only to the condition of our heart but also to who or what has captured our heart's loyalty (Prov. 4:23).

In the book of James, he explains that saying Jesus is Lord of our life without any life transformation doesn't make sense: "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). That doesn't mean we will live a perfect life or never make mistakes, but it does mean that when we confess Jesus as Lord, something should begin to change inside of us and then flow outside as evidence of that change. When we make that decision to follow Jesus, we aren't just forgiven; we were made new. We bowed our knee to Jesus as the Master and the Ruler of our life. We became a new person who no longer lives according to our own passions and desires, but who submits our life to the words and ways of King Jesus. When that transformation happens at the heart level, the fruit of our life begins to change, and people will be able to see it.

- **WHAT KIND OF FRUIT IS YOUR LIFE PRODUCING RIGHT NOW? WHAT DOES THAT FRUIT REVEAL ABOUT WHO OR WHAT HAS YOUR HEART'S LOYALTY?**
- **WHAT IS ONE AREA OF YOUR LIFE THAT HAS CHANGED BECAUSE YOU FOLLOW JESUS? WHAT'S AN AREA OF YOUR LIFE THAT YOU'VE RESISTED LETTING GOD TRANSFORM?**

PRAY

**THANK YOU, JESUS, FOR SAVING ME AND
FOR MAKING ME NEW! PLEASE CONTINUE TO
TRANSFORM ME UNTIL THE FRUIT OF MY LIFE LOOKS
LIKE YOU IN EVERY WAY.**



DAY TWO

LUKE 8:5

When you want to grow a plant, you must have two things: seed and soil. You can't plant any kind of tree, flower, or grass without the right kind of seed, and that seed must have soil in which to grow. You need the right seed in the right soil to get the results you want.

Jesus used this picture to explain how spiritual growth happens in our lives. He illustrated that the seed for spiritual growth is the Word of God, and the soil where that seed is planted is our heart. If we want to grow in Christ, we must plant God's Word in our hearts. Reading and studying Scripture and listening to accurate Bible teaching are essential pieces. However, none of this produces spiritual growth if God's Word is just going "in one ear and out the other."

Did you know it's possible to read and hear God's Word and it not to change our lives? How? Because it's not only our physical ears that need to be open but our hearts also. In Jesus's illustration, He warned us about different conditions of the heart to watch out for. The first condition He described isn't really soil at all but is more like a hardened path. Jesus said that when the seed of His Word is sown in this kind of heart, it is trampled on and eaten by the birds. Why? Because it stays on the surface and has nowhere to go. The surface is like concrete, and nothing can penetrate it to put down roots. The first step in allowing God's Word to change and transform our lives is to open our hearts to it—to have hearts that are softened. When our hearts are open, God's Word can move beneath the surface, take root, and begin producing real change and transformation.

- **WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE IN HAVING EARS TO HEAR GOD'S WORD AND A HEART THAT IS OPEN TO RECEIVE GOD'S WORD?**
- **HOW CAN YOU OPEN YOUR HEART TO RECEIVE GOD'S WORD SO THAT IT DOESN'T GO "IN ONE EAR AND OUT THE OTHER"?**

PRAY

JESUS, I WANT TO BE CHANGED AND TRANSFORMED BY YOU. HELP ME TO OPEN BOTH MY EARS AND MY HEART SO THAT THE SEED OF YOUR WORD CAN GET BENEATH THE SURFACE.



DAY THREE

LUKE 8:6

Have you ever had a pop quiz, a test you weren't expecting? It almost feels unfair. You're minding your own business when, out of nowhere, a test shows up that you weren't ready for. Sometimes life can feel the same way. You're going along as normal, and suddenly something happens that you never saw coming. Although the tests and trials of life can feel like pop quizzes, they really aren't. Jesus wanted us to be prepared for them, and He warned us that they are a part of life (John 16:33). Jesus didn't warn us to scare us but to prepare us. An unprepared heart often can't withstand the tests and trials of life. One of the ways we prepare ourselves is by allowing God's Word to take root deep within our hearts.

In today's verse, Jesus pointed to the seed that fell on rock. This soil represents people who receive God's Word with joy but don't allow it to take root. When the tests and trials of life come, they fall away (Luke 8:13). You can probably think of friends who went to camp or another church event and came home excited about living for the Lord. But then they never progressed. They didn't continue to learn about God through His Word. They rode on emotions for a while, but when life got busy or difficult, they fell away. We can learn two important truths from Jesus's words. First, we must allow God's Word to move past the shallow parts of our hearts (emotional response) and take deep root. We do this not just by hearing or receiving God's Word, but by thinking deeply on it, spending time with it, and applying it to our lives. Next, tests and trials can tempt us to give in to what feels easier rather than holding on to truth. Pressure reveals how deeply rooted our faith really is. We must resist the temptation to walk away, trusting that God is using difficult seasons to help us grow spiritually mature.

- **HAVE YOU EVER GONE THROUGH SOMETHING UNEXPECTED AND DIFFICULT? DID YOU ENDURE OR FALL AWAY?**
- **HOW CAN YOU ALLOW GOD'S WORD TO MOVE PAST THE SHALLOW PARTS OF YOUR HEART TO TAKE DEEP ROOT?**

PRAY

THANK YOU, JESUS, FOR PREPARING ME FOR TESTS AND TRIALS. I WANT YOUR WORD TO GROW DEEPLY ROOTED IN MY HEART SO THAT I WILL ENDURE DURING DIFFICULT SEASONS.



DAY FOUR

LUKE 8:7

No matter how much you try to smash it shut, a suitcase that has been overpacked just won't zip all the way. You can step on it, sit on it, or even jump on it, but until you take something out, it won't close. Have you ever considered that our hearts might be like this: suitcases that can't function as they should because of how much we've overpacked them?

The world fights for our attention. School, hobbies, family, friends, jobs, social media, pressure, and expectations can feel like the most important parts of life. God becomes just another part of our schedule—if we can fit Him in. Could it be that part of the reason we aren't growing in Christ or feeling spiritually alive the way Jesus promised is because of a crowded heart? A heart that, like a jam-packed suitcase, has been filled with too many other things.

Jesus explained how spiritual growth happens. The third kind of soil is overcrowded soil. Jesus said the seed that falls there gets choked out by the worries of this life and the desire for the things of this world, like riches and pleasures (vv. 7,14). In other words, our hearts only have so much capacity, or room. When we allow everything that life has to offer to fill our hearts and to consume our time, the seed of God's Word is pushed aside. Our crowded hearts leave little room for spiritual growth. We struggle to mature, not because God isn't working, but because we're not giving Him room. What this teaches us is that we must be intentional about what we allow to fill our hearts and minds. When we make space for God's Word and for His work in our lives, He changes our hearts and we thrive spiritually.

- **WHY DO WE EASILY LET OUR HEARTS GET CROWDED? WHAT'S OVERCROWDING YOUR HEART, TAKING UP TOO MUCH ROOM?**
- **HOW CAN YOU MAKE ROOM IN YOUR HEART FOR GOD'S WORD AND GUARD AGAINST FILLING IT WITH THINGS OF THE WORLD?**

PRAY

**GOD, HELP ME TO SEE ANYTHING THAT IS CROWDING
YOUR WORD OUT OF MY HEART. I WANT MY LIFE AND
MY HEART TO HAVE ROOM FOR YOUR WORD BEFORE
ANYTHING ELSE.**



DAY FIVE

LUKE 8:8

Have you ever had someone say something like, “Wow, you have really grown”? Usually aunts and uncles or well-meaning people at church say this when they haven’t seen you in a long time. The last time you were around them, you were a few years younger and a few inches shorter, so in their eyes, you’ve changed. You may not always see how you’ve grown because you see yourself in the mirror every day.

Spiritual growth happens a lot like this—not all at once but little by little. One day at a time, one small step at a time, God quietly works in our lives, shaping us and helping us become more like Him. Sometimes, we don’t notice. But over time, the growth becomes obvious.

How does it happen? Spiritual growth happens as we come to Jesus daily, receive His words, and put them into practice in our lives. Spiritual growth doesn’t come just from hearing God’s Word occasionally but from daily receiving God’s Word and then faithfully living it out. In Jesus’s illustration, the fourth kind of soil is the good soil. The other three types of soil don’t allow the seed of His Word to take root and produce spiritual maturity. But the fourth type is good ground, where the seed of God’s Word grows and produces fruit in our lives. Jesus described this soil as a heart that hears His Word, receives it, and holds onto it with perseverance (Luke 8:15). If we want to grow and mature spiritually, we must nurture the soil in which God’s Word is planted. We nurture our hearts to be a place of growth when we spend time in prayer and in worship, when we surround ourselves with godly community and accountability, and when we keep the soil free from weeds that choke out growth.

- **WHAT ACTIONS CAN YOU TAKE TO NURTURE A HEART OF GOOD SOIL WHERE GOD’S WORD CAN GROW?**
- **WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST OBSTACLES TO YOU TAKING THESE STEPS ON A DAILY BASIS?**

PRAY

**GOD, I WANT MY HEART TO BE GOOD SOIL WHERE
YOUR WORD CAN GROW AND PRODUCE FRUIT IN
MY LIFE. HELP ME TO RECEIVE YOUR WORDS, HOLD
ONTO THEM, AND APPLY THEM TO MY LIFE.**