

**MONDAY 12.2.24 - Luke 8:11-15**

<sup>11</sup> "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> Those on the rocky ground 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. <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> 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.

I must admit that upon my first reading of this passage as a young Christian, I concluded that only the last example of "the seed on good soil" represented a true believer. Only after a visit with Larry Hummel did I come to understand what is truly necessary for salvation. We've heard it many times from the pulpit at Shiloh: Salvation is received by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. As you read the explanation of the parable here in Luke and the parallel passage in Matthew 13, you have to conclude that "the only thing that distinguishes the second, third, and fourth soils is not whether they receive/believe the word -they all do - but whether they produce fruit or not." Which begs the question, is 'fruit production' or 'works' what saves?

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**TUESDAY 12.3.24 - 2 Peter 3:17-18**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. <sup>18</sup> But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. We here at Shiloh believe that all truth is God's truth, and it is given to us through His Holy Word. We are committed to not only

preaching the truth, but also to living it out in the church body. In these times when we are continually bombarded by the lies of Satan, we must remain vigilant, being careful to never stray from the path of righteousness. How do we remain faithful? By growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Okay, but how do we do that? By sitting under good biblical preaching and teaching, and by regularly spending time in God's Word and in prayer. I want to encourage all who are reading this to spend time each morning putting on the armor of God through personal study and prayer so that you may stand firm against the schemes of the evil one.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**WEDNESDAY 12.4.24 - Luke 1:46-55**

Luke 1:46-55 records the words of Mary, the mother of Jesus. These verses are often referred to as *The Magnificat*. Magnificat is a Latin term which means "glorifies," and Mary's trust in God is gloriously expressed in the words of verse 47. "And Mary said: 'My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.'"

A person doesn't need a Savior unless they're a sinner, and Mary acknowledges that she is a sinner. Mary knew from her own experience and from Scripture that "there is no one who does not sin" (1 Kings 8:46). However, Mary wasn't trusting in the religious practices of Judaism or her good works to forgive her sins. She declared, "my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Mary trusted in God alone to forgive her sins and to give her eternal life. Each of us needs to do the same!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**THURSDAY 12.5.24 - Isaiah 26:3-4**

When I watch at my 2 ½ year old granddaughter looking up at her daddy, I see perfect trust. She has complete confidence that Daddy's strong arms will protect her from anything that might harm her, so she approaches the world fearlessly, running ahead and skipping joyfully, filled with enthusiasm and a zest for life. That's exactly how we are to be with the Lord. He is our rock, our shield, our deliverer, our protector, our fortress (Psalm 18:1-3), guiding and guarding us throughout all of life's adventures. Isaiah echoes and reinforces that concept, offering us "perfect peace" if we steadfastly trust our Savior. We, too, are to be filled with the joy of the Lord, looking ahead to each new day, eagerly anticipating seeing the Lord work in us and through us every step of the way. What a Wonderful and Mighty God we serve!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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**FRIDAY 12.6.24 - Psalm 56:3-4**

Times of deep despair and utter disappointment is when trust is most apparent. It may or may not show on the outside, but we know it on the inside. During our lifetime, each of us has experienced more than one time of great despair. There is nowhere to turn for help. There are no good solutions and there is seemingly no more strength. We become afraid. In the midst of those circumstances one should 'trust in God, whose word we praise.' We know there is more to life than the flesh. We know the Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit. Do not fear him who can only kill the flesh, the Word declares. We know we are more than dust. We are eternal and have an eternal Father who knows us and watches out for us. "What can flesh do to me?" Trust in God, in whose word I praise!

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

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## E2 GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

### SUNDAY MORNINGS - 9:40am

- Kids** CHILDREN'S CHURCH (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)  
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level  
NURSERY (through Age 3) \*9:40AM ONLY  
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
- Youth** E2 CLASS (5th – 12th Grade)  
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
- Adults** **WINTER QUARTER** - begins December 1<sup>st</sup>  
LOCATION: B8-10 - Gene Steinruck - begins Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>.  
**EXPLORE THE BIBLE - Exodus and Leviticus** remind us that imperfect people can depend on a perfect God to lead them through whatever wilderness they face.  
LOCATION: B11 - Teacher: TBA - begins Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>.  
**BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE**  
**Looking Forward to Christmas** Be reminded that Christmas is, first and foremost, a celebration of Christ's coming to earth.  
LOCATION: B1-2 - Joel Day - begins Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>  
**GOD NEVER GIVES UP ON YOU** - What Jacob's Story Teaches Us About Grace, Mercy, and God's Relentless Love.  
LOCATION: B11 - Shawn Devlin - Begins Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>  
**THE HEART OF WORSHIP** - Learn how Scripture tells us God is the One we are to worship, and it shows us the ways we are to engage in worship, so we are drawn into a deeper walk with Him.

### SUNDAY EVENINGS - 6:00pm

- Kids** MESSIAH KIDS (Kindergarten – 4th Grade)  
LOCATION: Camp Shiloh on the Lower Level
- Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)  
LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)  
**NO YOUTH GROUP ON DEC. 1<sup>ST</sup>**
- Adults** LOCATION: Worship Center

## WINTER E2 SMALL GROUPS

**WEDNESDAY EVENING STUDY** - Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>- 6:30pm- Room B8-10.  
**ADVENT 2024 - THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTMAS**  
Teaching from the Gospel of Luke in three sessions, bestselling author and pastor Rick Warren helps you see not one but three purposes of Christmas. Celebration, Salvation, and Reconciliation.  
Leader: Barry Wills.

TO SIGN UP OR REQUEST MORE INFORMATION FOR ANY OF THESE GROUPS OR CLASSES,  
USE THE CONNECTION CARD IN THE BULLETIN. THANK YOU.

## John 15:1-16 *Secrets of the Vine (part 1)*

In John chapter 15, Jesus shares with His followers the five secrets regarding abundant living.

1. The Secret of Living is \_\_\_\_\_ (vv 1-3)
  - True Vine = \_\_\_\_\_ (v 1)
  - Gardener = \_\_\_\_\_ (v 1)
  - Branches = \_\_\_\_\_ (v 5)

The phrase "cuts off" (v 2–NIV) is the Greek word *airo*. It can also mean to "lift up." In viticulture, the gardener would prop up branches from the ground so they could grow and bear fruit.


God desires to produce fruit in the life of every Christian. Jesus is not addressing super saints or a special class of elite Christians. God wants to produce fruit in your life as a believer in Jesus.

Notice the progression in the passage: no fruit—fruit—more fruit—much fruit (vv 2, 5).

According to verse six, unfruitful branches will be removed and thrown into the fire. This does not mean that a Christian loses his salvation and goes to hell. Rather, it refers to God's temporal discipline in the life of a believer presently on earth.

The New Testament describes several kinds of fruit.

- C \_\_\_\_\_
  - Galatians 5:22-23
- E \_\_\_\_\_
  - Romans 1:13
- S \_\_\_\_\_
  - Romans 15:28
- P \_\_\_\_\_
  - Hebrews 13:15

 Edifying and Equipping Every Day

TAKING OUR NEXT STEP TOGETHER IN THE WORD



## December 2 - December 6

### INTRODUCTION:

Part of our purpose and strategy as a church is to Edify and Equip (E2) every believer. We desire to see every person take their next step with God, both individually as well as with families and small groups (E2 Communities). This devotional is to aid us in just that. We invite you to join us in daily devotion.

### OVERVIEW:

Monday's and Tuesday's readings will be a follow up on Sunday's message from December 1<sup>st</sup>, "Secrets of the Vine", with Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for the message on December 8<sup>th</sup>, "The Songs of Christmas", with Pastor Doug Lyon.

### KEY/MEMORY VERSE:

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.  
John 10:10