

The Plow

May 13, 2026

Luke 9

No. 2

Last week we began a series entitled "Lessons From the Farm."

We learned that the seed sown is Good seed.

The sower is just a man.

The condition of the soil determines the health of the crop.

So the question is:

- Do I want to grow spiritually?
- Do I want an abundant harvest of joy in my life?

Then I have to have the right soil in my heart . It's the condition of the heart that makes the difference.

A hard heart; a superficial heart and a worried and materialistic heart will hinder the growth.

A prepared heart is good soil. That will insure an abundant harvest of joy in my life.

The next lesson I'd like us to learn from the farm is concerning the plow.

1. Make of the plow

The ancient plow was made of wood: It was made of two beams, joined together like a V. Another long pole connected to it made the handle.

Purpose: to break up the ground for planting seed
The farmer walked behind the plow pulled by an ox or donkey and sowed his seed.



Interestingly; God forbade linking up together two animals that were not equally yoked.



Ex. Ox and donkey; donkey and goat;

Spiritually; II Cor 6:14 *Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?*

Same problem – unjust suffering.

2. Use of the plow

The ancient plows were light and could be carried on the shoulder for some distance.



Yet, they would only dig into the ground about 3-4 inches. Just scratching the surface.

The farmer had to really concentrate when plowing and be on the lookout for stones, roots or any other obstacles that may ruin the plow.

Sometimes farmers would plow together, as a team, covering much more ground in less time.

3. Why plow

To insure a bountiful harvest.

Luke 9:62 Jesus talks about the seriousness of following Him in the Kingdom of God.

No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Remember;

If the farmer broke his concentration on what he was doing, his plow could hit a rock and break and he would lose a whole day of plowing until he either got it fixed or made a new one.

In an agricultural society, time is of the essence.

So;

Why did Jesus make this statement about who is fit for the kingdom of God?

He was responding to some men who said they wanted to follow Jesus.

v.57 *As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You go."*

Jesus' response – count the cost

v.58 *And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

Can you handle uncertainty and inconvenience?

v.59 *And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."*

Two possibilities here:

1. His father had not yet died
2. Funerals lasted for days and he wasn't ready to leave

v.60 *But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God."*

Jesus' response;

Work for those who are spiritually dead because they can be brought to life. (through the Gospel)

Do you want to live for natural or spiritual things?

Do you want to live for earthly or heavenly things?

v.61 *Another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home."*

v.62 *No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

There are some who live their lives looking back over their shoulder.
Their hearts are in the past.

They are distracted by:

- What was, or
- What could have been

Instead of what will be.

Another time Jesus said to "Remember Lot's wife."

Explain. (Gen 19:26)

Her sin was, she didn't want to let go of the past. She loved the world she was living in.

But the Christian life is a life of going forward, not staying where you are.

Paul the Apostle said;

Phi 3:13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

v.14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

"press" to run, flee, pursue

Let's look at this final answer from Jesus:

"No one" Everyone is included in this answer.

"putting his hand to the plow" this is the beginning

Perhaps it relates to one's salvation.

At salvation, you belong to God and He belongs to you.

It is a two way commitment.

"looking back" to where you came from,
to the world

"is fit" appropriate, has a mind

No one has a mind to plow when their eyes and mind is on something else.

You could say it like this.

Once you are saved, if you turn back to where you came from, you are not suited for the Kingdom of God.

So we ask ourselves.

What are my eyes on?

What is your mind on?

Where am I focused?

If it's not on plowing, after you have grabbed onto the plow, you're not going to plow very well; you may even break your plow.

So,

The plow is used to soften the soil so the seed can be planted and grow.

But sometimes the plow cannot get into the small spaces so the farmer brings out the mattock.

A hand tool, much like a hoe that gets into those small, hard to reach places.

Think of the plow as getting into those outward, overt places in your life that need to be addressed.



Think of the mattock getting into those secret places that are more difficult to reach.

Perhaps the ones we struggle with, hide or even deny.

You could say "God's Word is like a mattock, alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
Heb 4:12

Summary:

It is a noble thing to want to walk with Jesus Christ.

But we must be careful of excuses for not doing so.

1. Count the cost
2. Live for the heavenly, not the earthly
3. Don't look back – stay focused

The plow is important.

It is used to break up the ground so the seed can be planted.

If you want the Word of God to be planted in your heart, then protect your plow.

Stay focused and don't get distracted by:

1. the challenges of the Christian life
2. worldliness
3. non-essentials

And you will have a mind suited to the Kingdom of God.