

Luke 9:43-45

"Ears to Hear"

February 16, 2025

1. Intro

- a. Well last week we saw how Jesus healed a young demon-possessed boy, and how this incredible miracle caused all to be utterly astonished by the majesty of God
 - i. We heard the implied call from Jesus to NOT be a part of this faithless generation, but to instead surrender our whole hearts to him and to our Father in Heaven
 - ii. We also heard the call to NOT be a part of this twisted generation, but instead to hold fast to the Word of God...
 - 1. Standing firm upon EVERY SINGLE WORD found within the Scriptures,
 - a. For ALL Scripture is useful in our training toward righteousness, and moving us toward completeness in Christ
 - 2. This was the challenge from last week
 - a. And I pray that we would all LONG for the majesty of our great God to be seen in our own lives
- b. But here, in our passage for this week, Jesus once again brings the disciples back down to reality, as he reminds them of what awaits him at the end of his journey
 - i. We saw Jesus speak of this the first time just a few weeks ago, as we read in Luke 9:21-22,
 - 1. ²¹*And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, ²²saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."*
 - a. These words were not received well this first time, as we saw Peter actually rebuking Jesus in Matthew's gospel for saying such a thing
 - b. And as we'll see here in our passage today, it is not received any better the second time
 - i. Let's look at these verses together...

2. Luke 9:43-45

- a. ⁴³*But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples, ⁴⁴"Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men."*
⁴⁵*But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.*

3. So Jesus starts in verse 44,

- a. *"Let these words sink into your ears..."*
 - i. You can almost hear the plea in Jesus' words, can't you
 - 1. He already told them the first time that this was coming, and they couldn't fathom what he was saying
 - a. I wonder if Jesus, in his humanity, wanted to do what so many of us parents have done with our children when they were younger
 - i. Maybe you warned your son or daughter not to do something, but went off and did it anyways
 - 1. So you get ahold of them, and lovingly – but firmly – you put your hands on either side of their face, making sure they are looking directly at you
 - a. And you say to them, "Let this sink into your ears..."
 - i. Pay attention to what I am saying
 - ii. Think carefully and deeply about my words

- b. Jesus says to them, “Let these words sink into your ears”
 - i. What he is really saying here is “Let these words sink down into your hearts”
 - ii. For as we see in the coming verses, the disciples did indeed HEAR the words of Jesus
 - 1. But they did not UNDERSTAND the words of Jesus
 - a. We’ll get to that in just a moment, but Jesus goes on and says,
 - b. *“The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men...”*
 - i. This word that we read as “delivered” is the Greek word *paradidomai*
 - 1. Throughout the Gospels, it is mostly used in reference to Judas
 - a. Obviously, when it is attached to his name, there is an overwhelmingly negative connotation
 - i. Judas, one of the twelve, will be the one who will deliver Jesus into the hands of the Pharisees... for thirty pieces of silver
 - 1. Judas will be the one whom Satan will enter, and he will hand Jesus over to those who seek to end his life
 - 2. Judas will be the one who will betray the Son of Man in the Garden with a kiss
 - ii. When this word used for “delivered” is mentioned alongside the name of Jesus, there is nothing good in its meaning at all
 - 1. As Jesus himself will say in Matthew 26:24,
 - a. *²⁴“The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”*
 - b. So Jesus is likely referring to his coming betrayal in this verse
 - ii. But there is another sense in the Scriptures which this word, *paradidomai*, is used
 - 1. And that is when it is used to convey the sovereign hand of God over ALL things
 - a. In Matthew 11:25-27, Jesus is praying to his Father, and he says to Him,
 - i. *²⁵“I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”*
 - 1. ALL things have been handed over to me by my Father
 - a. ALL things have been DELIVERED to me by my Father
 - ii. That is an incredible statement, isn’t it?
 - 1. Jesus didn’t say that all things WILL be handed over to me by my Father...
 - a. Once I finish my mission, and accomplish what I have been sent for – THEN the Father will hand over everything to me
 - iii. No, he said, “All things HAVE BEEN HANDED over to me...”
 - 1. This is a past tense action
 - a. A COMPLETED action
 - 2. All things have been DELIVERED to me by my Father
 - a. INCLUDING Judas’ betrayal
 - i. We see this in John 17:11-12, as Jesus is again praying to his Father, and he says regarding his disciples,

1. ¹¹"Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. ¹²While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled."
- ii. Judas would indeed deliver Jesus over by his own free will and volition
 1. It was the sinfulness in Judas' own heart that allowed Satan to enter into him and lead him to commit this awful atrocity
- iii. BUT AT THE SAME TIME, the Scriptures are clear...
 1. God the Father had given ALL things over to His Son, including all twelve Apostles
 2. But Jesus only guarded ELEVEN of them from being lost
 - a. Jesus ALLOWED Judas to be lost to destruction, because that was what HAD TO HAPPEN in order that the Scriptures would be fulfilled
3. So was Jesus delivered into the hands of men by Judas?
 - a. He was, and Judas bore the full weight and responsibility of his actions
4. But we cannot say that without ALSO saying that God was sovereign over it all
 - a. Peter affirms this for us in Acts 2:23, when he says to the people of Israel,
 - i. ²³*This Jesus, DELIVERED UP (same Greek root word as in Luke 9:44) according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.*
 1. The Son of man was about to be delivered into the hands of men by Judas
 2. The Son of man was about to be delivered into the hands of men by his Father
 - a. BOTH are true... and both MATTER
- iii. But at this point, the disciples didn't understand any of it
- c. For as verse 45 says,
 - i. *"They did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it."*
 1. I want us to take this verse and break it up into three sections, because I believe they all build upon each other
4. The first section is that they did not understand this saying
 - a. The Greek word for "did not understand" in this passage is the word *agnoeo*
 - i. It is where we get our word for agnostic
 1. In modern-day terminology, when someone says that they are an agnostic, specifically towards Christianity or religion in general...
 - a. What they are saying is that they believe in the POSSIBILITY of a God, but there is no way that we can ever know for certain
 - i. If there is a God, He is beyond our comprehension... He is beyond our understanding
 - b. Sydney Harris, a syndicated columnist for the Chicago Daily News in the 1960's, wrote these words about it...
 - i. "Agnosticism is a perfectly respectable and tenable philosophical position; it is not dogmatic and makes no pronouncements about the ultimate truths of the universe. It remains open to evidence and persuasion; lacking faith, it nevertheless does not deride faith."

- c. And so, in the case of a modern-day agnostic, they would make the claim that they are taking the road of humility
 - i. We're not discounting your faith – we're just saying that there's no way you can REALLY know
 - d. But as followers of Christ and of His Word, we would say that they have chosen a path of WILFULL ignorance toward God
 - i. The Bible tells us that we CAN know God, through the wonders of Creation, and even from the conscience of our own heart
 - 1. But, because of our sinful condition, we reject him as "unknowable" at best, but at worst, as nonexistent
 - ii. In other words, the Bible does not allow for agnosticism to be an acceptable view about God
 - ii. And so, in the days when Luke wrote his Gospel, this word *agnoeo* could be used to convey a willful ignorance...
 - 1. It could also be used to say that a person was simply ignorant due to a lack of information, or a lack of having all the facts
 - a. Now, one could argue that the ignorance of the disciples was a WILLFULL ignorance
 - i. I think we see that in Peter's response to Jesus the first time Jesus told them of his coming death
 - 1. Peter had a preconceived notion in his head of what the Messiah would come to accomplish
 - a. And he wasn't willing to accept the fact that things may not look AT ALL like what he wanted
 - 2. So there was a bit of a willful ignorance at play here
 - b. But you could also argue that they simply didn't have all the facts yet, and that was the reason for their lack of understanding
 - i. They didn't have the benefit that we do, of having the Holy Spirit inspired Word of God to explain all that Jesus was going to accomplish in his death and resurrection
 - 1. They were living these things out in real time, so how could they have understood?
 - ii. And so, we would be fairly comfortable at leaving it there, as Jesus was unravelling all their preconceived ideas, and they couldn't yet see God's plan in full
 - 1. But Luke doesn't let us stay comfortable there
- 5. For the second section of this verse says that their lack of understanding came from the fact that it was CONCEALED from them
 - a. Literally, this word used for concealed means that it was VEILED from them
 - i. The truth, or the meaning, of what Jesus was saying to them, was HIDDEN
 - 1. We see this same word in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, as Paul is talking about how he has labored to proclaim the Gospel clearly and correctly, without any ulterior motives, and yet some will still not believe
 - a. And the reason Paul gives for WHY they don't believe is this:
 - i. *³Even if our gospel is veiled – even if our gospel is concealed – it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

- b. So, one might look at our verse here in Luke 9 in light of Paul's words here in 2 Corinthians 4, and they might conclude,
 - i. "Ah, there you go... the disciples could not understand what Jesus was saying, because Satan, the god of this world, had veiled it from them"
 - 1. HE is the one who was keeping them blinded and in the dark"
 - ii. I think that is an entirely valid argument – that it is possible that Satan had his hand in this
 - 1. As the god of this world, there's no doubt that he would have been shaping and manipulating circumstances all around Jesus and the disciples
 - a. If he could keep the idea alive that the TRUE Messiah would be some political ruler, a king who would defy the tyranny of Rome...
 - i. Well, then it is possible that he might be partly to blame for the disciples hearts being blinded
 - ii. But we need to keep reading Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 4
 - 1. Yes, it was Satan, the god of this world, who was blinding the minds of unbelievers
 - a. But then Paul goes on to say in verse 6,
 - i. *"For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*
 - iii. My friends, this is the multifaceted reality that the Scriptures give us
 - 1. Yes, Satan, the god of this age, is able to veil the truth from being seen in its full
 - 2. Yes, our own sinful flesh often causes us to be blind to the things of God
 - a. But, ULTIMATELY, it is GOD who shines into the darkness and brings the light of knowledge into our hearts
 - i. It is GOD who opens our eyes to behold wondrous things out of His Law
 - ii. And it is GOD who unstops our ears to be able to hear – and to UNDERSTAND – all that He is doing in this world!
 - b. We already heard this passage once this morning, but it bears repeating the words of Jesus in Matthew 11:25-26,
 - i. *"I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; ²⁶yes, Father, for such was your gracious will."*
 - 3. According to the will of God, the truth is hidden from some, and revealed to others
 - a. And Jesus praised his Father in heaven for this reality
 - i. And so, in the first section we saw that the disciples were ignorant in their understanding
 - ii. In the second section, we saw that, ultimately, this was because God had chosen to conceal the truth from them, according to His divine will
- 0. And third, we see that the meaning of Jesus words was concealed from the disciples SO THAT they might not PERCEIVE it
 - a. This word used for PERCEIVE is a deeply philosophical term
 - i. It conveys a holistic understanding of a concept, as you first take it in through the physical senses of your body
 - 1. As you take in this concept through your senses, you then seek to apply all of your intellect to this concept

- a. You study it, you read books about it, you enter into conversations with others about it
 - i. You engage your brain into fully seeking to understand what is being taught
 - b. But it then has to go beyond just your intellect, and down deep into your spirit
 - i. For the Jewish people that Jesus was moving amongst and interacting with and teaching in these days, they would have understood that this kind of spiritual insight could only come from God
- ii. This kind of holistic, spiritual perception is best seen in the example of King Solomon, when the Lord appeared to him in a dream in 1 Kings, chapter 3
 - 1. In verse 5, the Lord appears to Solomon, and He simply says to him, "Ask what I shall give you."
 - a. And just listen to Solomon's response...
 - i. *⁶"You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. ⁷And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?"*
 - b. Solomon used his physical senses to observe all that he had been given in his kingship over Israel
 - i. He had seen the steadfast love that God had shown to his father, David
 - ii. He had heard the great promises that God had given to his dad
 - iii. He had walked in the favor that God had poured out upon the people of Israel, because of David's uprightness of heart
 - c. He took in all of these things, he applied his wisdom and intellect to the idea that HE was now King in in his father's place,
 - i. And he asked of the Lord, "Give me YOUR wisdom, for without it I can NEVER hope to govern this great people!"
 - 1. This holistic, spiritual perception was given to Solomon by God, and his wisdom was unsurpassed by any others throughout ALL of history
- iii. But, here in Luke chapter 9, God conceals the meaning of Jesus' words...
 - 1. He hides the understanding of them
 - 2. And the disciples are not able to perceive what Jesus is saying
 - a. They hear his words that he is speaking
 - i. But they do not truly have ears to hear
 - 1. For this is the gracious will of God
 - 3. So WHY did He not want them to perceive the truth of what Jesus was saying?
 - a. Some commentaries argue that this is a consequence of the disciples' own stubborn ignorance

- i. This is God giving them up to their own stubborn ideas about who they wanted Jesus to be
 - b. Others argue that God hid these things from the disciples out of mercy toward them
 - i. That if they were to TRULY understand what was going to happen, then it would break their hearts, and they would not be able to continue on
 - c. But the fact is, the Scriptures simply do not tell us why God did not want them to fully perceive and understand all that Jesus was saying
 - i. And we need to be OK with that
 - iv. There is a great verse tucked in to the end of Deuteronomy chapter 29 that speaks directly to these questions
 - 1. In verse 29, Moses writes these all-important words,
 - a. *²⁹The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*
 - i. We don't know WHY God didn't want the disciples to have understanding at this point
 - 1. That is a secret thing that belongs to Him
 - a. According to the counsel of His own will, that is what HE purposed
 - 2. And I believe the lesson for us today, is, don't respond as the disciples did!
 - b. For we read at the end of the passage that...
 - i. Because they did not understand Jesus' words
 - ii. Because the meaning had been concealed from them
 - iii. Because perception was not granted to them
 - 1. They were afraid, and they did not ask him any more about it
7. Friends, we must acknowledge that we walk in the same world as the disciples were walking some two thousand years ago
 - a. And in this world, there are two hard and fast realities
 - i. The first is that God is sovereign over ALL things
 - 1. We've already established that in the passage from Matthew 11...
 - a. In order for ALL things to be given to Jesus by his Father, His Father must first possess all things
 - i. This is a truth that runs throughout all of the Scriptures
 - 1. God is the Potter, and we, and all the rest of His creation, are simply clay in His hands
 - ii. But we must actually go even further that saying that God is sovereign over all things – that nothing happens outside of His control
 - b. That is TRUE, but we must ALSO say that nothing happens outside of His PLAN
 - i. And His plan has been "written" since before the foundations of the world
 - 1. Nowhere is this stated more clearly than in Isaiah 46:8-10, as God says,
 - a. ⁸"Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, ⁹remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, ¹⁰declaring the end from the beginning

and from ancient times things not yet done, saying,
'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my
purpose.'"

- c. This is the first reality that we must acknowledge, that God has counseled with Himself, and He will accomplish ALL His purposes
 - i. He is God, and there is no other
- ii. But the second reality is this... while God is ALWAYS accomplishing His purposes in and through our lives, He will not always reveal to us the "WHY" behind the things that He is doing
 - 1. I think we'd all agree that we wished that the Holy Spirit operated like a two-way radio straight to God, don't we?
 - a. When you are driving in to work on Monday morning, and you get a flat tire on the side of the highway, and you're stuck in the rain, waiting for help, knowing that you're going to get a lecture from your boss
 - i. Wouldn't it be great if you could use the Holy Spirit to call God up and say, "God, WHY are you allowing all of this to happen to me?"
 - 1. And then, even better, God answers by saying, "Well, you see, if you didn't get that flat tire, you would have ended up in a wreck two miles down the road. You would have then had to go to the hospital... you would have been laid up for months... and you would have lost that job, instead of having to come in to an angry boss. So I saved you from all that mess by giving you a flat tire. You're welcome."
 - ii. Wouldn't it be great if God filled in all the little details for us when we run into all the trials and hardships of this life?
 - b. Wouldn't that be great if, when you get that bad report from the doctor, you could call God up and ask him, "Lord, WHY?"
 - i. And He would tell you exactly how its all going to play out, and what each day was going to look like, and here are the exact steps you need to take to get better...
 - 1. Wouldn't that be great if He revealed those things to us?
 - c. Or what if a loved one dies, and you're not even sure if they truly knew Him or not?
 - i. Wouldn't it be great to get to speak directly to God, and He says to you, "Yes, they are indeed in heaven with me, and here is a list of all the things I spared them from by bringing them home when I did..."
 - 1. Wouldn't that be great?
- b. But that's not the way God works, is it?
 - i. I would say more often than not, we hardly ever understand all that He is doing in the trials and hardships of this life
 - 1. And it is in those moments, when the details are hidden from us and we lack understanding, that we must then decide what we are going to believe about God
 - a. In the midst of our uncertainty, do we still believe God is sovereign?
 - b. In the midst of the clouds that surround us, do we still believe that God's counsel and purposes are wise?
 - c. In the midst of all the trials that we must endure, do we still believe that God is GOOD?
 - 2. When the disciples were veiled in their understanding, they responded in fear
 - a. Will we respond in the same way?

- i. Maybe God ISN'T as sovereign as I thought He was
 - ii. Maybe God's plan ISN'T as wise as the Scriptures say it is
 - iii. Maybe God isn't nearly as good as everyone says He is
 - 1. And in our fear, like the disciples did with Jesus, we stop bringing our questions to Him
 - 2. In our fear, we turn away from the one true fount of love and wisdom and goodness
 - a. And we retreat into solitude
 - c. My friends, what will you choose to believe about God when He does not tell you the WHY behind your pain?
 - i. Again, I would say that the answer for us lies in Deuteronomy 29:29...
 - 1. *²⁹The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*
 - a. In this lifetime, God will choose to veil MANY of the reasons why we go through certain trials
 - i. The secret things belong to Him
 - 2. But what HAS He given to us?
 - a. He's given to us the things revealed... He's given to us THE WORD!
 - ii. And in His Word He reveals things like this...
 - 1. When you get that flat tire on the side of the road and you know you're going to get chewed out for being late, then James 1:2-4 says,
 - a. *²Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*
 - 2. When you fall on hard times financially, and you don't know how you're going to make it to the end of the month, then Hebrews 13:5-6 says,
 - a. *⁵Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for God has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." ⁶So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"*
 - 3. When you or a loved one who is in Christ is facing possible death, and you don't understand why this is happening NOW, then Job 19:25-26 says,
 - a. *²⁵For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. ²⁶And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God.*
 - iii. We will never in this lifetime understand WHY God does all that He does, or why He allows all that He allows... these are the secret things of God
 - 1. And they belong to Him
 - a. But what we do know is what He has chosen to reveal to us... and in Romans 8:28-30, God reveals this:
 - i. *²⁸And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to HIS purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

2. Brothers and sisters in Christ, God has predestined you to be conformed to the image of His Son
 - a. But in order for us to be conformed to the image of Jesus, we MUST go through the refining fires of our God
 - i. These fires will often come through trials... they will often come through hardships... they will often come through suffering
 1. And in response to our question of "WHY, God?"
 - a. God speaks to us from His Word and says, "I am working ALL of this for your GOOD... all of it is intended to shape you more into the image of my Son... all if it is moving you closer and closer to your ultimate glorification"
- d. Friends, there will be many times in your life when you do not understand why you are going through the things you are facing
 - i. According to the counsel of His own will, God will conceal the "WHY" from you
 1. In those times, may you remember these three simple truths about the God who has called you
 - a. He is SOVEREIGN
 - b. He is WISE
 - c. And He is GOOD
 2. The secret things belong to Him
 - a. But in His gracious love for His children, He has revealed to us His Word, and it belongs to us and to our children, FOREVER!
- e. We'll close today by looking at the passage that Adrienne read for us earlier this morning, Isaiah, chapter 35...
 - i. *¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;*
 1. There will come a day, friends, when we will see everything in full, with eyes that are no longer veiled
 2. There will come a day, when we will hear God's voice loud and clear, with ears no longer stopped up
 - a. May this be our great hope, as we continue here in this life, and long for Christ's return!