

Luke 8:16-18

"Shine Your Light"

November 17, 2024

1. Intro

- a. Last week we introduced the first of Jesus' major parables in Luke, the Parable of the Sower
 - i. We saw how Jesus spoke of four different kinds of soils, and a sower who would sow his seed into each one of them
 1. The sower, as we saw, represents every follower of Christ
 - a. For we ALL have been given the role of God's ambassadors of reconciliation to a lost and dying world
 2. The seed that we have been given to sow is the Word of God
 - a. But even more specifically, it is the Word of God as the Gospel
 - i. The message that we are ALL in Adam, and therefore we are ALL fully deserving of God's wrath and condemnation
 - ii. But because God so loved the world, He sent His only Son into the world
 1. Jesus, the Son of God, took on our humanity, lived a life of perfect obedience to His Father's commands, and joyfully went to the cross on our behalf
 2. And God took him who knew no sin, and he placed OUR sin upon his shoulders, and Christ himself bore the punishment that we ALL deserved
 - a. The spotless Lamb of God became the ONLY sacrifice that could ever fully atone for our sin
 - iii. Christ died on the cross in our place, he was buried in the tomb, but on the third day God raised him from the dead, making him the firstfruits of the resurrection
 1. Christ ascended to the right hand of God
 2. The Holy Spirit came down to dwell in the hearts of all of Jesus' disciples
 3. And the Church was born on the Day of Pentecost
 - iv. And this Church has been entrusted with ONE message throughout the centuries...
 1. The promise of salvation is for ALL who would surrender to Christ, and put their faith FULLY in him as Lord and Savior
 - a. For all who place their faith IN HIM, they will dwell with him for all eternity, when Christ returns and makes all things new
 - b. But for all who refuse to surrender everything to him, the only promise they have is a promise of death, and judgement, and eternal condemnation before God
 - b. Friends, this is the Gospel we have been given
 - i. And this is the Gospel we have been entrusted to share with the world
 1. Tragically, however, as we saw last week, many will hear our message, and yet will still refuse to surrender
 - a. This was the lesson of the four soils

- i. The first soil is those whose hearts are fully hardened against the Word of God
 1. As soon as they hear the Word of God proclaimed, Satan immediately snatches the Word away from them, and they do not believe
 - ii. The second soil is those who receive the Word, even initially receiving the Word with joy, but when trials and hardships arise, they fall away in their faith
 1. For their stony heart had never truly been removed through the power of the Holy Spirit
 - iii. The third soil is those who also initially receive the Word, but any fruit that they might have is soon choked out by the weeds of this world
 1. Riches... titles... pleasures... more and more trinkets and shiny things
 - a. These people are enticed by the cares of this world, and all of their fruit dies before it does anyone any good
 - b. And because they do not bear fruit, they prove that they are not Christ's disciples
2. It is only the fourth soil in Jesus' parable that actually bears the fruit that his disciples are called to bear
 - a. These are those who hear the Word of God proclaimed, and they HOLD FAST to the Word, with honest and good hearts
 - i. When Satan comes and tries to snatch the Word away, they stand firm upon that Word, and they continue to bear fruit, WITH PATIENCE
 - ii. When the trials and tribulations of this world come against them, and they face sorrow or hardships or even persecution, they stand firm upon the Word, and they continue to bear fruit, WITH PATIENCE
 - iii. When they are faced with all sorts of treasures and pleasures, all sorts of temptations that would seek to entice them and lure them into sin and away from the Lord, they stand firm upon the Word, and they continue to bear fruit, WITH PATIENCE
 - b. It is these who endure to the end, faithfully standing firm upon on the promises of God that are found in Christ Jesus
 - i. It is these, and these alone, who bear much fruit, and prove to be his disciples
- ii. This was the message of the Parable of the Sower
 1. It was a message that was hidden from the great masses of people that followed Jesus for his signs and wonders
 - a. It was a message that was only revealed to the disciples
 - i. For, as Jesus said back in verse 10,
 1. *"To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'*
 - b. To YOU, Church, it has been given to know the secrets of the Kingdom of God
 - i. To YOU, Church, it has been given to know the mysteries that had been hidden throughout the ages
 - ii. To YOU, Church, it has been given to know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God

1. Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you
 - a. This knowledge was given to you by God alone
 - b. This knowledge was given to you because God chose to be gracious to you
 - c. When you stand before God on the Day of Judgment, with your heart fully exposed and laid bare before Him
 - i. And every deed you ever did is brought forward
 - ii. And every careless word you ever uttered is examined
 - iii. And every thought you ever had is brought up as evidence against you
 1. When you stand before him with NOTHING between Him and your sinful flesh
 - a. If He were to ask you, "Why should I let you into my Kingdom, and NOT your neighbor down the street?"
 2. Would ANY OF US be bold enough to say, "Because I chose to follow Jesus...
 - a. Because I was wise enough to see him for who he is...
 - b. Because I made the decision to follow him?
 - i. We will not!
 3. The only answer we will have, should God ask us that question, is, "I am here because of Your grace!"
 - a. I am here because YOU gave me the faith to believe in Your Son
 - b. I am here because YOU sent your Holy Spirit to dwell in me as a seal of the inheritance that has been promised
 - c. I am here, only because YOU have kept me firmly in your grasp
 - i. Despite all my wanderings
 - ii. Despite all my doubts
 - iii. Despite all my lusting after this world
 - d. YOU have saved me, and you have KEPT me, to the very end of my days
 4. My friends, if you are in Christ, then you are in Christ by the grace of God. Period.
- iii. So this immediately presents before us a question of MASSIVE importance, doesn't it?
 1. If we are only saved by God's grace... if HE is the one who reveals to us the truths of the Gospel... if HE is the one who gives us the very faith that saves us...
 - a. Then why even bother with sharing the Gospel?
 - i. Why bother with going out into our community and praying for our neighbors?
 - ii. Why bother with praying for the unreached people groups like the Mongaltese Arabs in South Sudan?
 - iii. Why bother with sending our money to organizations like the International Missions Board, or Radical?
 1. If God is going to save all those whom HE chooses to show His grace, then what's the point of ANY of it?
 2. Sadly, this is the error that far too many churches have fallen into over the centuries
 - a. In an effort to stand against the man-centered Gospel that tends to prevail in the church...

- i. This idea that it is all about me and my decisions and my works and my faithfulness
 - 1. In an effort to combat this theological error, many churches shift all of their focus BACK to the sovereignty of God in all things, including our salvation
 - a. But the problem is, humans are sinful people
 - b. And as sinful people, we tend to swing from one extreme to another
 - 2. And so, these churches RIGHTLY return to affirming the sovereignty of God
 - a. But they also keep swinging past that, until man's responsibility is completely erased from the picture
 - b. And in this error, which is typically known as HYPER-Calvinism
 - i. All outreach programs are ended
 - ii. Evangelism is no longer encouraged, but it is discouraged
 - iii. And all missions work becomes unnecessary
- b. In the late 1700's, a young Baptist preacher named William Carey began to get a heart to take the message of the Gospel to the Heathens out in the world
 - i. As he brought forward his ideas of forming a missions organization to send the Gospel to places like Africa and India, he was told by the older and "wiser" pastors in his area...
 - 1. "Sit down, young man. When God wants to reach the nations, he'll do it without your help."
 - a. Carey had to stand firm against the errors of hyper-Calvinism in his day
 - i. And we can praise God that he did
 - ii. For his work would cause him to be known as the "Father of Modern Missions," and he has inspired countless thousands of missionaries who have followed in his footsteps
 - c. We must always be on our guard, Church, about falling into the errors of extremes
 - i. We must teach the WHOLE counsel of the Word of God
 - 1. Proclaiming that it is God and God alone who saves, according to His sovereign will and purpose and plan
 - 2. But ALSO proclaiming that we are called to GO into all the world and make disciples of every nation, calling EVERYONE to surrender their lives and place their faith in Christ
- iv. We see this very clearly in our passage from last week and our passage for this week
 - 1. Again, in verse 10, Jesus said,
 - a. *"To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.'*
 - 2. But in Luke 8, verses 16-18, we read these words...
 - a. ¹⁶*"No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. ¹⁷For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor*

is anything secret that will not be known and come to light. ¹⁸Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away."

- i. Christians, you have been given the secrets of the incredible mystery hidden for the ages
 1. These secrets were hidden from the great Greek and Roman philosophers
 2. These secrets were hidden even from the Pharisees and the religious rulers in Israel
 - ii. These secrets have been revealed to YOU, and YOU have been called to proclaim this mystery for all to hear
 1. It does no good to light a lamp and then stick it under your bed
 2. In the same way, it does no good to give a man or woman the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and then hide it away in the church building
 - a. It does no good to hold such a high view of the sovereignty of God that we erase all of man's responsibility
 - b. It does no good to say to those who are zealous to take the Gospel to the lost, "Sit down, young man, or young woman. When God wants to reach the nations, he'll do it without your help."
 - i. We have been given the Gospel
 - ii. And we are to sow the seeds of this Gospel far and wide, regardless of whether or not people receive it
3. This was Paul's heart in Colossians 1, verses 24-29, when he said,
- a. *²⁴Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. ²⁷To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.*
 - i. Paul was willing to suffer IMMENSELY to make the Word of God fully known
 1. He was imprisoned on multiple occasions
 2. Five times he received at the hands of the Jews 39 lashes of the whip
 3. Three times he was beaten with rods
 4. Once he was stoned, nearly to death
 5. Three times he was shipwrecked, and he spent a night and a day adrift at sea
 6. He was in danger from robbers, in danger from his own people, in danger from the Gentiles... in danger EVERYWHERE
 - ii. And yet he says here in Colossians that he REJOICED in his sufferings
 1. He embraced all the trials
 2. He embraced all the toil
 3. He embraced all the struggles
 - a. For it had been given to him to know the mysteries of God
 - i. It had been given to him to know the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in us, the hope of glory
 - ii. Paul had been given the light, and he held it up for ALL to see
 1. He proclaimed Christ
 - a. He warned everyone
 - b. He taught everyone with all wisdom
 - c. All so he might present the saints before God, MATURE in Christ

1. Why would we ever want to keep this light hidden from ANYONE?!
- c. Well, Jesus reminds us in verse 16 that we are called to shine this light for all to see
- i. Again, this is our assignment as sowers of the Gospel
 1. We are called to be faithful in sowing the Gospel EVERYWHERE
 - a. The results are in God's hands
 - i. We cast the seed to all who will hear
 - ii. But it is ultimately God who gives the growth
 - b. And Jesus assures us in verse 17 that God WILL give the growth
 - i. For nothing that is hidden will not be made manifest
 - ii. Nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light
 - c. The Gospel WILL go out into all the nations
 - i. This is the great promise of Matthew 24:14, where Jesus says,
 1. *¹⁴And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*
 - ii. Before Christ returns to judge the world, before the earth is burned up in fire, before the New Heavens and the New Earth are formed,
 1. This Gospel of the Kingdom must go to every tribe, every tongue, every nation, every people group of the world
 - a. What was once hidden will be made manifest
 - b. What was once secret will come to the light
 - iii. When the church is FAITHFUL in holding this light for ALL to see, THEN the end will come
 2. Jesus assures us of the success of our mission in verse 17
5. But then he ends with a warning in verse 18
- a. ¹⁸Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away.
 - i. That's kind of an odd exhortation, isn't it?
 1. You would think that Jesus would say, "Take care then how you live," or "Take care then how you act," or "Take care then in the things you do"
 - a. But instead, he says, "Take care then HOW YOU HEAR"
 - i. This points us right back to the Parable, doesn't it?
 2. The two common factors in this parable are
 - a. One, that the same seed is sown to everyone
 - b. And two, that everyone hears
 - i. The one with the hardened heart HEARS the Word of God proclaimed
 - ii. The one with the stony heart HEARS the Word of God proclaimed
 - iii. The one that gets choked out by the weeds of this world HEARS the Word of God proclaimed
 1. They ALL hear the Gospel sown by the sower
 - a. But only the one with the good soil HEARS the Word of God, and HOLDS FAST to the Word of God in an honest and good heart, bearing fruit with patience
6. So take care how you HEAR, brothers and sisters
- a. Take care that when you hear the Word of God proclaimed, your hearts are not hardened
 - i. In Hebrews 3:12-15, we read,
 1. *¹²Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. ¹³But exhort one another every day, as long as it*

is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. ¹⁵As it is said, "Today, if you HEAR his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

- ii. Take care how you hear, that your hearts do not become hard
- b. Take care that when you hear the Word of God proclaimed, that you do not hear it in such a way that you fall away in a time of testing
 - i. We are not called to be joyful UNTIL the time of testing comes
 - 1. We are called to be joyful IN the time of testing
 - a. As James says in James 1:2-4,
 - i. 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.
 - ii. Take care how you hear, that your hearts do not lose their joy when the testing comes, for God is using the testing to make you perfect and complete
- c. Take care that when you hear the Word of God proclaimed, that you do not hear it in such a way that Christ somehow seems insufficient when compared to the riches and pleasures of this world
 - i. As Jesus said in Luke 9:23-25,
 - 1. ²³And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?
 - a. The Scriptures do not allow for us to serve two masters
 - i. You can either lose the world in exchange for Christ
 - ii. Or you can lose your soul in exchange for the world
 - 2. Take care how you hear the Word of God proclaimed, brothers and sisters
 - a. Satan himself tried to tempt Jesus using the Scriptures, bending them and twisting them to meet his own desires
 - b. Have no doubt, he will do the same to you
 - ii. So take care how you hear
 - 1. For to the one who has, more will be given
 - 2. But from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away
- 7. This last sentence points us to another parable that Jesus gives later on in his ministry
 - a. In Matthew 25, Jesus is speaking to his disciples about his return and the end of this age
 - i. And he uses a series of parables to illustrate his teachings
 - 1. We'll close this morning by looking at his Parable of the Talents, starting in verse 14
- 8. Matthew 25:14-30
 - a. ¹⁴For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' ²²And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' ²³His master said to him, 'Well

