

# THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

*A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God*

## *Listen Closely*

Luke 8: 16-25

Luke begins the narrative in Chapter 8 with the story of the sower, obviously focusing on the Word of God and how different people react to it. Hearing and applying the Word becomes the theme of the following incidents which Luke reports; it is the unifying factor in the events through v.21 and establishes the context for understanding the particular meaning and application of some otherwise very difficult statements.

### I. Shining Light and Bearing Fruit

- A. The parable of the soils ends with Jesus speaking of those who have noble and good hearts who become fruit bearers well beyond the seed that is sown.
- B. The metaphor shifts, however, to bearers of light: those who bear fruit are the same who shine the light that both reveals and illuminates.
- C. Reminiscent of the writer of Hebrews recorded years later, Jesus expresses the ability of the Word to pierce the heart, discern the motives and thoughts, and expose the truth. (Heb 4:12-13)

### II. More or Less

- A. The key to understanding this hard saying is the introduction: *So take care how you listen...* it is crucial that we maintain hearts ready to receive the Word, that we allow it always to fall on good soil.
- B. For those who hear and apply the Word, growth will be continuous and more and more will be given; God is delighted to share His heart (Word) with those who listen attentively and apply all they hear.
- C. When the Word falls upon those who have hardened and stony hearts, even what they do receive...*initially*...will soon be forgotten and the little they had will be lost.

### III. In the Family

- A. At some point in His teaching, Jesus family arrives and word is brought to Him; it is an opportunity to drive home a warmly familial invitation:
- B. YOU are My mother and My brothers if you hear what I have to say and apply it to your lives; it is not family that makes relationship, but relationship makes the family.
- C. Note that the statement is not framed in the negative: "Those people are not My mother and brothers!" but in the positive, "You are My family if you hear My words and do what I say."

What kind of hearer are you? In all of these statements Jesus' expresses the essence of James' admonition much later (all the more poignant since he was apparently there to hear this first hand): But prove yourselves doers of the Word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves! (Jam 1:22). It isn't enough merely to hear the Word, as this could be said of all four types of soil, but to receive it, to allow it to take root, to be changed by its power, to obey . . . Bearing fruit! Shining the Light! Growing more and more! In the Family!

"Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."

And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. And it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You." But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. In what way does the Word shine into the hearts of people discerning hidden things? Is this your intentional doing or the Holy Spirit's application?
2. Along those lines, what usually happens when you quote the Scripture with the intent of exposing someone else's faults?
3. Why does what people have vanish away if they fail to apply and practice it?
4. Is this an intentional consequence (intended by the individual) or a gradual erosion?
5. How can you be sure you will receive more of what God's wants to give you?

**NOTES**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Now on one of those days Jesus and His disciples got into a boat, and He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." So they launched out. But as they were sailing along He fell asleep; and a fierce gale of wind descended on the lake, and they began to be swamped and to be in danger. They came to Jesus and woke Him up, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And He got up and rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped, and it became calm. And He said to them, "Where is your faith?" They were fearful and amazed, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?"

**Luke 8: 16-25**

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

**Hebrews 11:6**