

Luke put Jesus' teaching on the parable of the sower right before the lamp on a lampstand teaching. In Matthew the lamp on a lampstand came as part of the Sermon on the Mount. Luke probably places one telling of it here to emphasize that the light is the Word that is sown on the good soil, which means hearts that receive the Word and let it bear fruit in their lives. That fruit can't be hidden, as it will result in God's goodness expressed in our daily lives. Nor will we want to hide the Word that was the origin of the fruit.

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. Luke 8:16 The purpose of lighting the lamp is to be able to see when it is dark. You don't light it and then hide it. Matthew's gospel explains that Jesus is speaking of the light of good works (Matthew 5:16ⁱ). We were meant to shine with the light of Jesus by our deeds of service and love that are the result of the Word in our hearts. That demonstrates the heart of God (which is glory) to the world. That is why Jesus said both "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12ⁱⁱ) and "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14ⁱⁱⁱ). We should not hide the fact that we are Christians, nor should we go out of our way to let our good works go unseen. While we don't do the deeds to be seen, like the Pharisees (Matthew 23:5^{iv}), we don't hide them either. We want people to see Jesus in us. We should be aware that people are watching us to see if our faith is real (1 Peter 2:12^v). The ever-changing morality of this world needs to see the light of the Word expressed in love. God never changes!

¹⁷ For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light. Luke 8:17 If Jesus is truly indwelling us and is the Lord of our lives, there should be nothing about our lives that we are ashamed for others to see. One time I got a message on my phone that it had been hacked and the hacker had all my pictures. I laughed. Did they want to try to extort money from me so as not to expose pictures of my grandchildren, or sunsets, or rainbows? Post away my friend. When you have nothing to hide you have nothing to fear. In fact, you are looking forward to the day that what you did in secret for Jesus will come to light. That expression brings chills of fear to some and a smile on the face of others. There was a time in my life when I was in the first category, but by the grace of God I can now look forward to that day. Thank God that the old is gone and the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17^{vi}).

This exposure of our secret lives can come to some degree in this lifetime. We just had a whole string of powerful people lose their reputation when the "me too" movement brought to light what had been hidden. Then came the revelation that wealthy people were bribing university officials to get their children into good schools. These once respected people now have their faces in the public news as disgraced individuals.

¹⁸ Take 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." Luke 8:18 The Matthew account concludes with letting people see your good deeds so that God will be glorified. Luke is probably recording the same saying in a different setting when Jesus connected the illustration with receiving God's Word.

Because our light needs to shine, and because the hidden things will be exposed, be careful to hold fast to the Word of God that we hear. It is the Word that transforms our lives and brings the good fruit others will see and for which they will glorify God (James 1:21^{vii}).

The more you hold fast to the Word, the more Word you will be given, the more you will understand it, and the more the Holy Spirit will bring it to your mind to direct you. That results in having more of the mind of Christ which sees things as they truly are and not as the world distorts them to be (1 Corinthians 2:16^{viii}). Then you will bear more fruit. Clinging to the Word is living in Jesus (John 15:7,8^{ix}). The effect is that from the fruit of your life people will see Jesus in you and be drawn to Him.

If you do not hear and take hold of God's Word, letting it live in you, the little you have heard will be plucked away by the evil one (8:12^x). That leaves you with nothing but a distorted view of life that is short-sighted and destructive. That is walking in darkness. The Gospel of John puts this in slightly different terms but with the same implications. *If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.* John 15:6

The next account appears to take place as Jesus was teaching. ¹⁹ *Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd.* ²⁰ *And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you."* Luke 8:19,20 This is one of the few times we read about Jesus' mother and brothers during His three years of ministry. The brothers are the natural children of Joseph and Mary (though the Catholic church teaches that they are Joseph's children from a previous marriage or cousins to maintain that Mary was a perpetual virgin) (Matthew 13:55,56^{xi}). The crowds were so thick they could not get through. Word of their presence was passed forward to Jesus. Jesus knew that His brothers did not believe that He was the Messiah (John 7:5^{xii}). Jews considered one's birth family as very important. Look at the twelve sons of Israel. They each became the head of a tribe. Moses' brother was the high priest. But with the coming of the kingdom things were different and Jesus needed His followers to understand that. In chapter 12 He will teach that families will be divided over faith in Him (Luke 12:52,53^{xiii}).

²¹ *But he answered them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."* Luke 8:21 Jesus explained that our spiritual family is more important than our physical family. The Word of Jesus brings division between the humble hearts who receive the Word and those whose hearts are hard and reject it. Jesus made this statement that those of us who value an independent spirit need to hear. *"My mother and my brothers are those who hear the Word of God and do it."*

Is that our mindset? I am blessed in that my family are also my spiritual family, but I'm often tempted to put them above the rest of my spiritual family. You might say, "That is natural." Yes, it is the nature of unredeemed man. "Blood is thicker than water," we say. But remember that we have been bought with the blood of Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:20^{xiv}). Believers, especially in our culture, need to be reminded of these words from Jesus. It is not just a concept; it must be lived out. Hear and do! James warned us to be doers of the Word and not hearers only (James 1:22^{xv}). He tells us that we can be like a

man who looks at his face in a mirror and immediately goes away and forgets (James 1:24^{xvi}). The Word is a mirror to show us the beauty or ugliness in our souls. I can say you are my spiritual family but if I never spend time with you, study the Word together, value your input, or build you up, am I doing what I say I believe? **Love for one another is evidence of being a follower of Jesus** (John 13:35^{xvii}). Is there enough evidence of your love for your spiritual family that you would be convicted if tried for being a Christian?

In a large body of believers, we can't spend time with everyone, but we should be spending time with some and have concern for all. We should be watching out for those in need and those who are hurting. We should take prayer requests seriously and join with one another in our joys and pains.

This does not mean that Jesus no longer cared for His natural family. Honor your father and mother is a command (Exodus 20:12^{xviii}), but the Father sent Jesus on a mission to save the world. On the cross He cared for His mother (John 19:26,27^{xix}) and His brother James took the lead in the Jerusalem church. Jesus is speaking of priorities. The family of God that hears and does what Jesus teaches are eternal family.

Luke has told us the importance of clinging to the Word and acting on what we have received. Kent Hughes comments, "Concerning listening to preaching, the example of the martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer has helped me personally. Bonhoeffer ran an underground seminary for theological students during the oppressive years of Nazi Germany. He was a very intelligent man who possessed immense critical capabilities. But in his homiletics classes as he listened to his students preaching, he always set aside his pencil and listened intently with his Bible open before him—no matter how poor the sermon was. He believed that the preaching of God's Word ought to be attended as if he were listening to the very voice of God."^{xx} I have personally been encouraged by our elders' discussing Sunday's passage during the week. They are clinging to the Word.

Now we move to a passage that seems unrelated, but I have learned that Luke arranges his accounts to build on his emphasis. ²² *One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, ²³ and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger.* Luke 8:22,23 The Lord is taking the disciples by night (Mark 4:35^{xxi}) to the eastern side of the lake where they are more likely to meet Gentiles. On the way, a powerful windstorm that is common in the area pounded the sea. Luke's literal wording is a "hurricane of wind." Waves quickly grew. Mark tells us Jesus was asleep on a cushion (Mark 4:38^{xxii}). That was a ballast bag that was stored under the quarter deck on the stern. Jesus was so exhausted that He slept through the pounding of the waves against the boat. This informs us of His humanity and how tiring the constant demands of ministry had become.

Water was washing over the sides and beginning to fill the boat and lowering it even more in the water. The disciples were probably bailing the water as fast as they could but not keeping up. And there under the quarter deck lying on the nets with His head on the ballast lay Jesus, dry and sound asleep despite the pounding of the boat on the waves. The LORD gives His beloved sleep (Psalm 127:2^{xxiii}).

I believe this was an attack from Satan to attempt to drown Jesus before He started reaching out to the Gentiles. Satan is referred to as the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2^{xxiv}). But whatever Satan does is seen by our sovereign, omnipresent God.

The disciples are about to learn a lesson they will never forget and will record in all four gospels. What the enemy means for evil, God will use for good (Genesis 50:20^{xxv}). *Storms are God's way of bringing us into deeper grace. Without adversity, we would be insufferably self-centered, proud, flat-dimensional, empty people.*^{xxvi}

²⁴ *And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm.* Luke 8:24 Finally, fearing their lives would be lost, they woke Jesus. Mark records them saying, "Don't you care that we are perishing" (Mark 4:38)? The storm didn't wake Jesus, but the unbelief of the disciples did. Wait a second, He was asleep! How can you blame a sleeping man of not caring when He was unaware of the danger?

Jesus awoke out of that deep sleep, rose up, and rebuked the wind. The raging waves ceased, and there was a sudden calm. BAM! Mark tells us that Jesus said to the waves, "Be still!" The Greek literally means to "be muzzled". Do you realize the power it would take to calm a body of water like that when it was so stirred up? The language of the gospels tells us that the lake immediately went flat.

Jesus rebuked the wind and waves, and another translation of the same word is charged or ordered. He ordered the wind and waves to cease. Creation obeys. All creation exists from His Word (Psalm 33:6^{xxvii}). It must obey His Word. The boat was rising and falling on the waves and suddenly, flop, the lake was like glass! Wouldn't you love to have seen the look on the disciples faces!

^{25a} *He said to them, "Where is your faith?"* Luke 8:25a The disciples had to be awestruck. They'd been on the lake most of their lives and never seen anything like this. One minute weary Jesus is asleep from exhaustion and the next He shows power like they had never witnessed before. What a mixture of humanity and divinity!

Jesus asked, "Where is your faith?" They just witnessed His faith. Where is our faith? If Jesus is the Messiah whom God sent to save the world, then how could they drown? I have wondered if Jesus was asking them why they didn't command the waves, or perhaps more likely He was saying that they should not have feared just because of His presence in the boat. I tend to think the latter because they will face a similar situation and it will be Jesus who calms the storm again (Matthew 14:32,33^{xxviii}).

Where is our faith in Him and His plan for our lives? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ (Romans 10:17^{xxix}). If they had received His Words on good soil of a plowed hearts then their faith in Him would have been greater. Their assurance that He was in control would have kept them from doubt and fear. They should have had the faith of the Centurion who suggested that Jesus only need speak the word and it would be done (7:7^{xxx}). They should have understood that He is the Messenger of the New Covenant predicted in Malachi 3:1^{xxxi} and could not die until it was inaugurated. They should have remembered that a house built on Jesus as a foundation, which is to hear His words and do them, could not be destroyed by the storms of life (6:48^{xxxii}). All of this was recorded earlier in Luke.

25b And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?" Luke 8:25b The disciples were afraid of such a display of power and asked who Jesus could be that even the wind and the waves obey Him. They surely knew some of the Psalms that address being in a storm on the sea. Psalm 107:25-30^{xxxiii} tells us they cried to the LORD in their distress when the seas were rough; and verse 29 tells us *29 He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed.* He is YHWH! Jesus did what the eternal God of Israel does (Psalm 89:9^{xxxiv}; 106:9^{xxxv}).

The storms will come even when Jesus is in your boat, but never doubt Him. He will see you through and you'll be more like Him because of them. You may be tempted to think He doesn't care, but He cares more than you can imagine. We will all face storms in life. They are allowed by our sovereign God who loves us and wants us to grow spiritually. Is your faith placed in His presence with you or in your ability to bail water? He is in His glorified state and no longer needs to sleep (Psalm 121:4^{xxxvi}). Nothing will take Him by surprise. He knows your predicament and is with you in it.

Where is your faith? Is it in bailing on your own? You'll never keep up with the waves because the prince of the power of the air is mighty. But never forget, the One who is in your boat is infinitely more powerful. One word from Him and it is over. If you call out to Him in trust, you can be sure it will end in the perfect time.

Who is this they asked? He is the Alpha and Omega! He was and is and is to come (Revelation 4:8^{xxxvii}). He is the I Am! He is the Almighty. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16^{xxxviii}). No one can counsel Him for His understanding knows no limits (Isaiah 40:3^{xxxix}). He sees the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10^{xl}). And dear brothers and sisters, He is love; He is holy; He is righteous; and He is good!

The disciples grew in faith and did become lights to a dark world. They became a growing family of believers filled with the Spirit. Eventually got the message that God was with them, and they would go forward not fearing even unto their deaths. Why should we ever fear or worry if we truly believe He is who He proven Himself to be? Take hold of His Word (Proverbs 4:4^{xli}). Grow in faith and bear fruit. Believe He is who has shown Himself to be, our gracious, all-powerful Lord!

Questions

- 1 What is our light?
- 2 What are we to do with it? How?
- 3 Who are part of the family of God?
- 4 Why is this a challenge to live out?
- 5 How should you treat the Word?
- 6 What was Bonhoeffer's example?
- 7 How do storms affect our lives?
- 8 What did Jesus sleep show us?
- 9 What should the disciples have known?
- 10 Why can we trust God in all situations?

i Matthew 5:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

ii John 8:12 (ESV)

¹² Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

iii Matthew 5:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

iv Matthew 23:5 (ESV)

⁵ They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long,

v 1 Peter 2:12 (ESV)

¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

vi 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

vii James 1:21 (ESV)

²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

viii 1 Corinthians 2:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

ix John 15:7-8 (ESV)

⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

x Luke 8:12 (ESV)

¹² The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.

xi Matthew 13:55-56 (ESV)

⁵⁵ Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

xii John 7:5 (ESV)

⁵ For not even his brothers believed in him.

xiii Luke 12:52-53 (NIV)

⁵² From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. ⁵³ They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

xiv 1 Corinthians 6:20 (ESV)

²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

xv James 1:22 (ESV)

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

xvi James 1:24 (ESV)

²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

xvii John 13:35 (ESV)

³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

xviii Exodus 20:12 (ESV)

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

^{xix} **John 19:26-27 (ESV)**

²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!"

²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

^{xx} Hughes, Kent- Preaching the Word – Luke, Volume I: That You May Know the Truth.

^{xxi} **Mark 4:35 (ESV)**

³⁵ On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."

^{xxii} **Mark 4:38 (ESV)**

³⁸ But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

^{xxiii} **Psalms 127:2 (ESV)**

² It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep.

^{xxiv} **Ephesians 2:2 (ESV)**

² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

^{xxv} **Genesis 50:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

^{xxvi} Hughes, Kent- Preaching the Word – Luke, Volume I: That You May Know the Truth.

^{xxvii} **Psalms 33:6 (ESV)**

⁶ By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

^{xxviii} **Matthew 14:32-33 (ESV)**

³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

^{xxix} **Romans 10:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

^{xxx} **Luke 7:7 (ESV)**

⁷ Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed.

^{xxxi} **Malachi 3:1 (ESV)**

¹ "Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

^{xxxii} **Luke 6:48 (ESV)**

⁴⁸ he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

^{xxxiii} **Psalms 107:25-30 (ESV)**

²⁵ For he commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea. ²⁶ They mounted up to heaven; they went down to the depths; their courage melted away in their evil plight;

²⁷ they reeled and staggered like drunken men and were at their wits' end. ²⁸ Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. ²⁹ He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed. ³⁰ Then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven.

^{xxxiv} **Psalms 89:9 (ESV)**

⁹ You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them.

^{xxxv} **Psalms 106:9 (ESV)**

⁹ He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry, and he led them through the deep as through a desert.

^{xxxvi} **Psalms 121:4 (ESV)**

⁴ Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

^{xxxvii} **Revelation 4:8 (ESV)**

⁸ And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and

day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

^{xxxviii} **Revelation 19:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

^{xxxix} **Isaiah 40:13 (ESV)**

¹³ Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel?

^{xl} **Isaiah 46:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ declaring 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,'

^{xli} **Proverbs 4:4 (ESV)**

⁴ he taught me and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live.