



GRACE

Reformed Baptist Church

Soli † Deo † Gloria

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Let the Light Shine

Sermon Notes

Luke 8:16-21

May 20, 2012

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.”

¹⁹Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. ²⁰And he was told, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you.” ²¹But he answered them, “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.”

- The Gospel is, without a doubt, the most powerful truth the world will ever know.
- The Gospel, according to the Apostle Paul, is the very power of God for salvation. No other truth can rightfully make this claim.
- Yet, it appears that in the church today, we believe that the Gospel’s only purpose is to save, and this is simply not the case.
- For, it is the Gospel that exposes and convicts us of our sin. It is the Gospel that declares that apart from Christ, we are hopeless.
- And it is the Gospel of Christ that judges and condemns all who reject the Person and Work of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Yet, we can be sure of one thing regarding the Gospel: it will accomplish exactly what God intends for it to, each and every time it is proclaimed.

- This was, certainly the point of the Parable of the Sower. The role of the Sower was simply to cast the seed. God determines what type of soil on which it falls.

Isaiah 55:11 states: ¹¹“so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

- And so, this morning, Christ continues along the same line and theme of the Parable of the Sower, now speaking, not in terms of the seed of the Word of God, but the Light of the Gospel.

- I. **The Light of the Gospel will Shine Forth**
- II. **The Light of the Gospel Illuminates and Strengthens**
- III. **The Light of the Gospel Exposes and Judges**
- IV. **The Gospel Unites the Family of God**

I. The Light of the Gospel will Shine Forth
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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.”*

- The words of Jesus, here, come just after the Parable of the Sower. The context here is critical, for the words of our Lord here could have various meanings depending on the setting in which they are stated.
- Again, one must remember that the Parable of Sower focused on the various types of soils in which the seed, or the Word of God, fell. The Sower (originally, Christ), casts the seed and it falls on various types of soil. Only one soil, however, is considered “good,” allowing the word to penetrate and bear fruit.
- Furthermore, **the individuals characterized by this soil are those who “have ears to hear.”**
 - Therefore, the focus of the parable was on God’s sovereign work of grace in the lives of believers, whereby He enables them to hear the word of God by giving them “ears to hear.”
 - In fact, our Lord even states: “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.’” (Verse 10).
 - **In other words, the message of Christ – the Gospel message – will enlighten some and “blind” others. To put it another way: the purpose of the Gospel is not just to save people, but to accomplish all that God wills for it to, and this includes judgment.**

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- Therefore, when we come to the words of Jesus, here, the question is: What does our Lord mean here?
 - Some believe that here the Lord is calling His disciples to go out and shine the light of the Gospel into the world in an evangelistic sense.
 - This would, indeed, be consistent with the words of Jesus elsewhere in the Gospels, such as in a parallel account in Matthew.

Matthew 5:14-16: “¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 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.”

- However, the focus in this part of Luke does not appear to be on evangelism, per se. Rather, it is on the effectiveness of Christ’s Gospel to accomplish what exactly what God intends – salvation and judgment.
- Therefore, I am confident that here, the light is the Gospel message proclaimed by Christ. This is the “light” spoken of here. This is also consistent with the theme of Luke’s Gospel.

Luke 1:79: “⁷⁹ [Christ came] to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Luke 2:32: “³² [Christ will be] a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.”

- And so, the Gospel of Christ will shine forth, and will not be hidden.
- This was the theme of the Life of Christ. He was public in all His ways, hiding nothing, for He came to be the Light of the World.
- Furthermore, **Christ’s work accomplish all that the LORD intended.**
- **And this is the focus of the next two Verses:**

“ ¹⁷ For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light. 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.”
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II. The Light of the Gospel Illuminates and Strengthens

¹⁷ *For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light.* 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.*

- Here, we see what is obviously one of the great truths concerning the light of the Gospel:

It illuminates and strengthens God's people.

- Christ states, "For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest..."
- The Gospel of Christ reveals God's will and is truly a revelation for His people.
- One of the greatest questions of young people today is, "What is God's will for my life?" But, in His revelation, that is, His Word, and supremely in Christ, God has revealed His will for His people.
- In fact, we read in Micah 6:8: "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"
 - Unfortunately, in a world so focus on the individual, this is simply not enough for most of us. We want a personal revelation just for us. But, in God's infinite wisdom, He has not given that to us, but **we must stand confidently on the truth that He has given us His will.**
 - Furthermore, in Christ we see God's will – which had been kept secret – supremely manifested.
 - Consider how the Apostle Paul closes His Epistle to the Romans:

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen." Romans 16:25-27

- Therefore, in the Gospel of Christ, the will of God is manifested and revealed.
- Yet, **the Gospel also strengthens and empowers us.**
 - We read that our Lord states, ¹⁸ *Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given...*
 - Here, Christ returns to the importance of *hearing*.

- To His followers He is saying, essentially, “Listen well, for those who have received and understand the truth of the Gospel, will be given more (i.e., greater understanding).”
- In a world – and church – that is so obsessed with signs and wonders, we must never forget that the greatest gift, as believers in Christ, that we can ever receive is **understanding of God’s will as revealed in His Word.**
- Recall the words of the Apostle Paul:

“⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” **Philippians 3:8-11**

- And the words of Christ Himself:

“³ And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” **John 17:3**

- And, it is only through the Gospel of Christ that these truths are realized in the life of the believer.

III. The Light of the Gospel Exposes and Judges

¹⁷ *For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light.* 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.*

- It is here that we see the other function of the Gospel: **to expose and judge.**
- This is certainly not a “popular” way of viewing the Gospel, but it is biblical.
- Eventually, the Gospel of Christ will expose the true state of the hearts of man.
 - Many people are gifted in being able to appear “good” and “righteous” but the Gospel will expose those who have either trusted in Christ or themselves for their salvation and righteousness.

Michael Wilcock writes, “It is impossible anyway permanently to hide where one stands in relation to the gospel. What is hidden will come out sooner or later – that is, it will if it is really there. The danger is...that the man who thinks he has received the gospel, and keeps it hidden

and never lets the fact be known, may find one of these days, when he comes to look for the reality of the gospel within him, that it is not in fact there – and never was.”

Last year, one of our students at NCA suddenly became very ill. Basically, one day she woke up vomiting and with a severe headache. Over the course of two days, she lay in her bed, with the conditions only getting worse. Eventually, she was admitted into the hospital, where, over the course of several days, she slowly became better. The doctors could not determine what the cause was at the time, but all the tests showed that she was fine, so they released her to go home, and rest in her own bed for a couple of days. Within two days of being home, even in the comfort of her own bed, the symptoms returned. The parents then took their daughter back to the hospital. The doctors were once again baffled. Until a day or two later, the girl’s father was in her room investigating a leak problem with the family’s water heater, located in a closet in their daughter’s room. One thought led to another, and then the father went online, and came to a startling conclusion: their daughter was experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning in her own room. The very place they sent her to rest and get better had almost killed her.

- And so it is with those who trust in their own strength and in their own resources to be their salvation. The very thing they take comfort in (that which *they* have done), will be taken away from them.
- This is what Christ means when He said, 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.*”
- Imagine in the Exodus, Pharaoh’s army chasing after the Hebrew people. They trusted in their horses and chariots, in their weapons and wisdom. They even followed the people into the Red Sea. Yet, when the walls of water collapsed, the very things in which they trusted were completely destroyed.
- And so it will be for those who do not take heed of the words of the Gospel of Christ.

Ecclesiastes 12:14: ¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

Romans 2:16: ¹⁶ on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.”

IV. The Gospel Unites the Family of God

- Finally, we read of a story that, at first, does not appear to relate to the previous one, yet it does.

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.” ²¹ But he answered them, “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.”

- This is, in fact, a fitting conclusion to this particular section of Luke.
- Through the Parable of the Sower and the analogy of the light/lamp, Jesus has been emphasizing the importance of hearing and bearing good fruit.
- And finally, here, He declares His intimacy with those who do such things (i.e., hear and bear fruit).
- We read that Mary, the mother of Christ, and His brothers, had come to him and could not reach him because of the crowd.
 - When Christ was told they would standing outside, our Lord used this as an opportunity to affirm a powerful truth, saying, “**My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.**”

NOTE: Roman Catholic theologians maintain that Christ had no biological siblings, and that she was a perpetual virgin. However, that explanation is simply not consistent with the most plain and clear reading of texts such as this one.

- It is important for us to understand that Jesus is not showing disrespect for His biological family, He is simply declaring the importance of His **true family**.
 - For this was the entire point of Christ’s incarnation: to redeem the people of God, uniting them into God’s family through adoption as sons (and daughters).
 - This is, indeed, one of the primary functions of the Gospel.

1 John 3:1: “¹ See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.”

John 1:12-13: “¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God..”

Ephesians 1:5: “⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Galatians 4:4-5: “⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”

Philip Ryken writes, “They say that blood is thicker than water, but we are tied to the family of God by the person and work of the Holy Spirit – a bond that is even thicker than blood.”

- We must not forget that biblically, “DNA ties”, whether it is questions of family, ethnicity or race are of no eternal value. It does not matter if one is Jew or Gentile, what matters is simply this: **do they hear the word of God and do it.**
- For, those who do, are members of God’s household, and that is the only thing that matters.
- And, so the challenge of Christ here for “all who have ears to hear” is: be not only hearers of the Word, but doers.

J.C. Ryle said, “the Gospel which we possess was not given to us only to be admired, talked of, and professed, - but to be practiced. It was not meant merely to reside in our intellect, and memories, and tongues, - but to be seen in our lives.”

- As Reformed believers, one of the greatest struggles we have is theological arrogance, and GRBC is in no way immune from this.

Philip Ryken writes, “We make use of the doctrine of election by living with humility, remembering that there is nothing in us to deserve God’s grace. We make use of the doctrine of justification by living free from any attempt to improve our standing with God, resting instead in the finished work of Jesus Christ. We make use of the doctrine of sanctification by growing in practical holiness – learning to live with the charity, purity, and generosity that Jesus showed us by his example. We make use of the doctrine of perseverance by remaining steadfast under trial. We make use of the doctrine of glorification by waiting in hope for Christ’s return.”

- And may I add that **we make use of the doctrine of God’s irresistible and efficacious grace by extending to others a small portion of the infinite grace God has given to us.**
- May our lives, indeed, reflect the grace of God that has called us out of darkness and into the light of the Gospel of Christ.