

*The unfolding of your words gives light.*

## To Seek and to Save

### *An Exposition of the Gospel of Luke*

<sup>16</sup>“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<sup>a</sup>. <sup>17</sup>For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor *anything* secret that will not be known and come to light<sup>b</sup>. <sup>18</sup>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<sup>c</sup>.”

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<sup>a</sup> 8:16 **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.** Light is a metaphor all through the Scriptures. It has stood for all that is true from the time God created it (Genesis 1:3-4) to the incarnation of Messiah (John 1:4-5). It pictures the opportunity to experience transformation (John 12:35-36) as well as the fellowship of those who have been transformed (1 John 1:5-7)

This illustration is similar to the one Jesus gave in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:14-16), but with a different emphasis. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said:

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:14-16

Here in Luke Jesus is talking about the message itself rather than the people who have been changed by the message. A. T. Robertson quips (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*) that this parable “throws light on the parable of the sower.”

<sup>b</sup> 8:17 **nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light.** The word translated is “hidden” is the source of our word “crypt” or “encryption.” I don’t think the Lord had coffins or electronic security in mind, but the modern uses illustrate that there are some things we want to keep others from seeing.

There is a double negative here. Rather than simply saying, “Everything will become evident,” the language here reinforces the reality that there is no way any secret will escape the light of God’s kingdom rule. The word of God reveals what is inside us (Hebrews 4:12). Paul described the effects on an unbeliever entering an assembly where a clear message from God is preached:

the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you. 1 Corinthians 14:25

When you connect this with the parable of the sower it becomes clear that Jesus is saying what you are will eventually become known. God’s word has a way of shining light into our darkest corners of sinful thinking and behavior.

<sup>c</sup> 8:18 **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.** J.C. Ryle points out that for most of history people relied on oral teaching. You have to listen carefully if you cannot read. While we are very proud of our literacy, we should take this warning very seriously. He uses visual and audio words here, literally saying “See how you hear.”

Notice that Jesus says that the something some people “think” they have will be taken away. It’s like someone saying, “All hope of getting my candidate into office is gone now that I have learned of his death last year.” The person only had a subjective hope for his candidate, but the election was never a possibility.

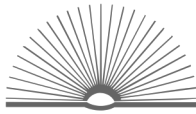
Comparing this to the parable of the seed, some willingly stay in the darkness and have snatched away what little light they had.

The Gospel of Luke  
Steven Svendsen, Sr.

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<sup>19</sup> And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd<sup>a</sup>. <sup>20</sup> And it was reported to Him, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You<sup>b</sup>.” <sup>21</sup> But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it<sup>c</sup>.”<sup>d</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> 8:19 **His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd.** Another time when something similar happened, Jesus’ family apparently thought His hectic schedule had become dangerous and tried to take Him into custody (Mark 3:21). Jesus’ family may have been very doubtful at this point, although their support came and went (John 2:12; 7:5).

<sup>b</sup> 8:20 **it was reported to Him, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You.”** Because of the crowd, Mary and her other sons (or possibly extended family) had to communicate their desire to see Him through someone else. It was as if Mary said, “If you see my Son, tell Him I want to speak with Him.”

<sup>c</sup> 8:21 **He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”** This was not an attack on His family. It was a reinforcement of His call to listen to the word. Jesus said in John 15:14: “You are My friends if you do what I command you.”

<sup>d</sup> 8:16-21 What would you think of a parent with two children, each having a piece of candy, who took the candy from one child and gave it to the other? That sounds like cruel parenting, right? But you think that based on the information you have. What if you knew that each time the “wronged” child received candy he threw it on the ground and refused to thank the one who gave it to him? Does that help you understand the actions of the parent?

Jesus appears to exhibit a harshness in a couple of places in this text that makes the reader read more closely. Rather than an attack on His family or a slam on people those who have no chance to believe, this text exposes our rebellious refusal to listen that makes us all worthy of judgment. There are two primary applications of this text that show us how to respond to God’s word:

1. It is powerful, so you need to pay attention to it. J.C. Ryle urges faith, reverence and prayer be our three companions every Sunday morning, as opposed to rushing into God’s presence “careless, reckless and unprepared.”
2. It connects you with others who live by it, so you need to fellowship with the company of other learners. We are family. We share a family resemblance in our name as well as our appetites as well as our activity.

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