

## **Luke 8:16-21 – Hearing God's Word**

Last time in Luke, we heard Jesus' story about the sower and the seed. He was teaching about what happens when God's word is preached. The good seed is sown – but the harvest varies. The difference is in the hearts of the hearers. What kind of hearer are you? Now Jesus continues to teach about listening to God's word. We do not have preaching just because we like it. We have it because of what Jesus himself taught, in places like here in Luke.

### **1. Let the light shine (v16)**

Why does God send his word into the world? Why does a man light a lamp in his house? He lights it to shine out – not to hide. He wants to light up the whole house. God sends his word to bring light to the nations. He gave it to have results in our lives: so that we can become light. First of all, for the light to shine in us, we must be converted. We must come to be sorry for our sins, and to confess them to God. We must come to believe in Jesus who died on the cross for sins, as the only Saviour. We must come to understand that Jesus is now Lord of all. If we have become light, then we must now shine to others. God's word is not just to make us clever, or to talk about. It is to bring blessing to others. We have a big responsibility from God. On the day of judgment, he will look at what we did with this light. Very many people in East Africa are still lost in darkness. We are the light to guide others into the way. By our example and by our words, we must point them to Jesus.

### **2. Listen with care (v17-18)**

God saves and changes people through his Word. His Word makes the difference. So, we must be very careful how we listen. If you go on a long journey with no map, then you will get lost. Some people are worse after preaching; God judges them for their failure to listen properly, and their spiritual eyes grow darker (v18). We must then be very careful. We should listen with faith, believing what God tells us. We should listen with godly fear, knowing that it is the voice of our Maker and Judge. We should listen with prayer, asking for help to follow the Word carefully. God's word searches out all things. We cannot remain hidden. So, we should bring ourselves into the light and let God's Word search us out and change us. Confess your sins and ask for God to make you completely new in everything.

### **3. Loved by Jesus (v19-21)**

There are great blessings for those who obey God's Word. Jesus calls them his family! They become closer than his earthly mother or brothers. When the earthly family came to call him away from his disciples, he would not go. He would stay with those who were hungry for the Word. God's Word always came first for Jesus; and it must for us also. Even our earthly families must come second (Matthew 10:37-39). The church is a family too – a heavenly family, that will last beyond death. We also must love those who belong to Jesus even above our own flesh and blood. Jesus loves and gave his own blood for the salvation of those who obey him in repentance and faith. To obey the Word means to say no to sin – not only on Sunday, but every day; at work, at home, in the community. It means to follow him not just in our words, but in the difficult situations that come day by day. That is how we must let the light shine and bring him honour. For such people, Jesus in his mercy has the greatest love and care.