

Be Careful How You Listen

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- [0 : 0 0] Found your place there in your copy of God's Word, Luke chapter 8, verse number 16. We're going to begin reading. We'll read down through verse number 21. The Bible says this. No man, when he hath lighted a candle, cover it with a vessel or put it under a bed and setteth it on a candlestick that they which enter in may see the light.
- For nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, neither anything hid that shall not be known and come abroad. Verse 18. Take heed, therefore, how you hear.
- For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and whosoever hath not, from him it shall be taken, even that which he seemeth to have. Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.
- And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it.
- This morning I want to preach a message entitled this. Be careful how you listen. Anybody here bad at listening? You're probably not listening right now, so that doesn't really work. That's what Jesus is telling us in verse 18.
- [1 : 1 7] He said, be careful how you listen. Because how we listen is going to determine how we live when it comes to the word of God. Because you can be here this morning and you can hear it, but here's what Jesus says.
- Do it. Live it. Let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. Let's have a jump into a word of prayer and then we'll get right into the message.
- Father, thank you for the wonderful day you've given us. Thank you for the Spirit this morning just in the songs. We're reminded of who you are and what you've done for us.
- And Lord, I pray that if there's someone here today that has never come to that realization that that rugged cross was their cross, but you took their place. You took our place.
- You paid a debt that we could not pay, Lord. That you were buried for us and risen again. That we might have hope and we might have life eternal. We might have purpose.
- [2 : 1 4] And Lord, I pray that today would be that day. Lord, I pray that you would be with all of us, those that do know you as their Savior. That we wouldn't just be here just to listen, but we'd be here to hear and to obey your word.
- Lord, I pray you'd be with me now. You would empty me of self, cleanse me of sin. Lord, fill me with your Spirit that I might be a help to these people this morning. And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. Thank you so much for standing. You may be seated. Has anybody ever had a fight with their GPS?
- Like you have to put it in because you don't know where you're going. You know, and I changed mine to a guy's voice because I'm tired of my wife always telling me what to do. I don't need a GPS telling me what to do as well.

You know? And if you're like me, you know, I'm pretty good with directions. I feel like I can get there. If I've been there one time, I can get there. But mainly I put it in because I'm trying to avoid construction is really what I'm trying to avoid.

But you know, you put it in, especially if you don't know where you're going. And I heard about a man that was going to visit some friends a few hours away. So he punched the GPS, punched the address into his phone. And everything seemed to be going smoothly.

[3 : 19] But like most men, he thought, you know what? I think I know a better way. This just doesn't feel right. This just doesn't seem right. So lo and behold, he takes an exit. And he gets off the road and just kind of doing his own thing.

And a few minutes later, the GPS calmly says, recalculating. Anybody ever heard that? Yeah? Yeah. You think, well, I'm just going to keep going. Again, it says, recalculating.

And then finally they just get real mad at you and they say, please make a legal U-turn as soon as possible. I just, it frustrates me. Well, this man, he finally does it.

After he kind of gets lost and he finally decides to listen. And he arrives at his friend's house. He's late and he's frustrated and he's full of excuses. None of us have ever been there. Here's the point, though.

The directions were clear. He punched the address in. It was going to take him to the right place. The instructions were accurate. The problem wasn't the voice speaking.

[4 : 20] It was how he heard it. It's what he did with what he heard. He had heard it plainly. He heard it clearly. He listened, but he didn't trust.

He said, this GPS has no idea where I want to go. I know a better way. I know a shortcut. That never works out. See, he listened, but he didn't trust. He heard, but he didn't obey.

And friend, that's exactly what Jesus is talking about here in our text in Luke 8. Many times we hear, the instructions are clear. They're plain, but we don't choose to trust.

We don't choose to obey. We sing the old hymn, trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus. We think, you know what?

I can live my life. I can listen, and if it works for me, and it fits my plan, and it fits my schedule, then I'll obey. But, you know, if it doesn't really fit me in my stage of life, then I don't really have to pay attention to that.

[5 : 18] And I think we've all been down that road where we realize, I should have listened the first time. I should have trusted the Lord the first time he told me that. And see, this passage, it comes right after the parable of the sower, the parable of the soils that we looked at last week, where Jesus teaches that how we receive the word of God depends on the soil or our heart, how receptive it is.

And so that comes off, these verses we read come off the heels of that, and really what he's doing is he's kind of pressing even deeper. He's digging in a little bit, and he wanted those that heard the parable of the sower to understand what he's really talking about, what he's really speaking about.

And he wants us to see this, that you've been given the light. You've been given the truth of the gospel. We aren't given that to hide it. He's going to dig in a little bit deeper, and he's going to remind us that you've heard it.

If you've heard the word, don't waste it. Jesus didn't give you the truth so you can say, eh, I'll get around to it when I do. That's like your honey-do list, you know. My wife gives me this list, I'm like, don't pay attention.

Eh, I'll get around to it when I do. Listen, that's not how we treat the word of God. But sometimes that is how we treat the word of God. And if you want to be part of the family of God, if you're in the family, you've got to do more than just listen.

[6 : 42] You've got to live it. And Jesus shows us these things. He reminds us that lights are meant to shine, and hearing requires humility. And obedience really kind of reveals what family you're in.

That's what he's going to teach us in this text this morning. Because when it comes to the word of God, it's not just whether you hear it. It's how you hear it and what you do with it. So Jesus starts it off with a simple truth that we read there in verse number 16.

That no man, when he lighteth a candle, cover it with a vessel. Or put it under a bed, but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter may see the light. Jesus used illustrations often in his preaching.

Things they would understand. But we know, and as we've kind of fleshed it out, that Jesus wasn't giving the crowd last week a farming lesson. He wasn't saying, gather around here, I'm going to tell you how to farm right now.

And this morning, he's not giving a TED talk about which lamps they should use in their house. And which lamps give off the most light. It's not what Jesus is doing. He's using very common things.

[7 : 45] Things they would have been very familiar with. It was an agricultural society. And they would have understood what sowing and how it worked. And they would picture in their mind the seeds that fall just by the wayside and are stomped on.

They would have pictured that very clearly. But now Jesus is talking about light. He's talking about a lamp. And you know what, this just is a good time to pause and thank the Lord for electricity.

If you ever just thought this, this is just how my brain works. I'm so glad the Lord knew I couldn't live in a time where he had to have candles. You know, I would be the one that burns my house down. You know, that's just, that's where I would be.

But it still relates to us. Because what exactly is this light that he's talking about if it's not candles? Here's what it is. It's his truth. It's the message.

It's the gospel. And what Jesus is doing is he's digging in deep and he's showing those and reminding those that with good soil, with those with hearts that receive the word of God, that he did not give the truth so it would be hidden.

[8 : 46] He didn't give you the gospel. He didn't give you the truth that he loves you, but you're a sinner and you need a savior so you could hide it and keep it and hoard it. That's not why he gave it.

He gave it to you so it could be seen and it could be shared and it could be lived out in a world that needs to see it so desperately. See, don't miss this.

The candle here is not your personal talents. It's not your platform that God has given you. It is the revelation of God's truth. That's what the candle is. That's what the light is.

And we have been entrusted with it. Listen, you're not the owner of truth. You know what Jesus is? He is the way, the truth, and the life.

Jesus has given us the truth and here's what we're supposed to do. Share it. We are stewards of the truth. Paul tells the Philippians in Philippians 3, I believe, that we are to hold forth the word of truth.

[9 : 46] It doesn't mean we have to walk around and preach the Bible every day to somebody like, hey, listen here. Our life should do that. We should look for opportunities to share the gospel because that's what God has called us to do.

That is our number one job as Christian people. See, God gives his light not for secret storage but for spiritual visibility.

That's exactly what he taught in the Sermon on the Mount. I love the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is showing kind of the upside down way of thinking, which is really the right side up. He's laying out how a Christian is supposed to live.

And here's what he says. I'm sure you may be familiar with these verses. Matthew 5, verse 14. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel but on a candlestick, and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men. That's Jesus' intention.

[10 : 48] We're not the truth. We're just image bearers of the truth, that we have received the truth, and God has changed us if we know him as our Savior. And here's what Jesus is telling us.

Show somebody. You know, we talked about this, and I'm getting pumped up for college football. I thought I'd get a lot more amens than that. You know, and we see it.

We see all our loyalties here, and I'm trying to be very kind because last time I said something, a whole burnt orange row showed up, and it's just, mmm. But I would like to, man, I see some maroon out here today.

God bless you. You know, but when it comes that time, we're going to let people know what team we're on. What team we're on, like we play for them, you know. I'm going to come with a helmet.

But, you know, we're excited about things. We let them know, hey, this is my team. This is who I'm rooting for, and everybody knows it. Does everybody know that you've received the truth, that Jesus Christ changed your life, that he's your Savior?

[11 : 52] Because we've received that light, and Jesus is saying, listen, people should see that. Listen, does your family see it? Because it's easy on a Sunday morning when we're all singing about it and we're all praising the Lord about it, but how do we live it at home?

I know it's a sore subject, but school's starting back. You know what your friends need to see at school? The light. They need to see that Jesus Christ changed you, that Jesus Christ loves you, and he can do the same for them.

Listen, and it doesn't just apply to teenagers. Your coworkers need to see it, too. We're called to share the light. Listen, it's easy inside these walls, but here's what we're supposed to do. Take it outside the doors with us, and take it into our workplace, and take it into our world.

Listen, does our speech reflect the gospel? Did Jesus Christ change us, or is our speech just full of opinions? Listen, the world doesn't need your opinion. Your friends don't need certain opinions.

You know what they need? The truth of the Word of God. Because opinions didn't change your life. Jesus Christ did. And that's what he's teaching. He's reminding. Listen, he's saying, you didn't get the truth so you can just stash it away so nobody can see it.

[13 : 01] The truth was given to you to share it. I mean, you think of a lighthouse. It doesn't exist to look pretty. They're not going to say, let's just make this the prettiest lighthouse, but it doesn't really need a light.

Actually, it does. It's a lighthouse. The entire point of a lighthouse is to warn ships of the rocks and the danger ahead, and to safely guide them to port.

And the same is true in our life, that if you cover the light of a lighthouse, the ships are going to crash. And we look around at our world, and we think, why does it keep crashing into the rocks? Because maybe the lights aren't shining like they're supposed to.

That's what God has called us to do. That's what he's reminded us. That's exactly what happens when Christians cover their faith. The world remains in darkness. But they need to see.

Even if it's just a little light, you think, what's one light? Well, when it's real dark, one light makes a big difference. And that's really what Jesus is fleshing out there in the Sermon on the Mount. That as light, we should point others to Christ, and we're the salt of the earth.

[14 : 05] Here's what salt does. It preserves. It seasons life. We talk about it. You can't eat french fries without salt on it. Or especially mashed potatoes. It brings a seasoning to life.

You know what your life should do? It should bring a seasoning to others. It should make them thirsty for the things of God. Hey, why is your light so different? It doesn't seem like mine.

Here's what's the difference. Jesus Christ. But here's the thing. Your light only shines when the lamp is lit. I know this is real deep this morning. I don't hear any Aggie jokes, by the way.

But the way that your lamp stays lit is if you're truly hearing the Word of God. Because you can't just hear something one time and then just live off of it the rest of your life.

Now you can. You're saved one time. But that's not what I'm talking about. We need to constantly be in the Word of God. It needs to be part of who we are. If we love the Lord, then here's how we talk to Him right here.

[15 : 08] We can talk to Him in prayer. But this is God's Word. It's alive. It's quick. It's powerful. It's sharper than any two-edged sword. This is not some book that just gathers dust that you can read every once in a while. No. This book knows you.

It reads you. And it knows what we need. That's why sometimes when you're reading it or you hear a message, you think, man, that preacher's reading my mail. Nope, the preacher's not reading your mail. It's the Holy Spirit of God that shows us what we need.

Listen, He knows your workplace. He knows your friends. He knows your family. He knows all the situations you're going to face, and He's going to bring something to you that you can take with you. And that's why Jesus moves from light, showing us, hey, if you've received the Word, you need to share it.

But here's how you keep it going. Listen. Verse 18. Take heed, therefore, how ye hear. Here's what Jesus is saying when it says take heed.

Here's what He says. Pay attention. You know, sometimes with my son, because I passed this ADD on to him, I just have to grab his face, and I say, are you listening?

[16 : 10] And he's like, you know what the Lord's doing right here? He's grabbing us by the face and saying, hey, are you listening? Hey, pay attention. Pay attention how you're hearing.

He's reminding his true hearers, these true disciples, it's not just what you hear, it's how you hear it. Because sometimes we can hear things, and we kind of take it our own way, and we put our own spin on it.

No, but Jesus is saying, I want you to hear what I'm saying. Because why is it so important? Because how you hear determines whether your spiritual life moves forward or backward.

See, Jesus intends for us to move forward. Really, it's a principle throughout Scripture. God intends for His children to move forward. He doesn't intend for us to say, hey, find a place where you're comfortable, and then just kind of hang out there.

That's not anywhere in Scripture. God, we are continually growing in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We cannot come to a place in our Christian life and say, you know what?

[17 : 17] I like it here. It's pretty comfortable. Let me just pull the lazy boy back and just hang out right there. That's not what Jesus calls us to do. Anybody here have bad posture?

You ever been walking by a bunch of windows, and you're like, that's what I'm... You feel like, man, I'm not sure I've got the greatest posture.

I know Miss Nina gives me a hard time. She's like, you need to straighten up and put your... I'm trying. Like, I know it's bad. But you kind of straighten up and you... Because it makes a difference. Jesus is kind of wanting us to check our spiritual posture.

Kind of how we're listening. Because, you know, sometimes when you ask your kids, are you listening? And they're like this. They're probably not listening well. But sometimes we come into church, and that's how we're listening.

We're here on the outside, but on the inside, we're like, again? We sang this song three weeks ago. We've been in Luke for 25 years. Ugh. Yeah, I'm reading your mail.

[18 : 24] But is that not how we think sometimes? And we can say all the right things, and we can say amen, and we can do all the things we're supposed to. But Jesus is saying, listen, I need you to be real careful how you listen. I need you to check your ears.

Because sometimes we come in and look and all right, but spiritually we're like this. I mean, I'm not sure I want this. And the question Jesus is asking is, how are you hearing the word of God?

Because if you listen humbly and respond obediently, here's what God's going to do. He's going to give you more truth. He's going to give you more grace. He's going to give you more light. We all need that.

How are we going to keep moving forward? How are we going to keep growing? Not just by remembering one thing from the past, but learning new things and learning more about Christ. Because the more that we learn about him, the more that we're going to love him.

And the more that we love him, the more we're going to live for him. But if we come in and we think, I've already heard this. I mean, I know all these things. Because if we tune out or we coast spiritually, what we think we have is going to slip away.

[19 : 27] Because we're not in it. We're not living it. It's just how it goes. So many things in life are like that. Hebrews 2, 1 reminds us, Therefore, we ought to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

Listen, we should always be growing. We should always be moving forward. But we have to be careful how we're doing that. And here's a simple question, a way to think about it. How do you approach the Word of God?

How do you approach it? How many of you go home and just turn on TV just to have background noise? Yeah. Don't, I mean, you are not that spiritual. You're probably going to go home and turn it on and just walk away.

I mean, sometimes we do that. We just need a little bit of noise in our life. But the Word of God is not just background noise. You know, you say, well, I read my Bible every day. How intently are you reading your Bible?

Well, I need to check this box off real quick. No, no, no, no, no, no. What is that? Are you come to it as a life-giving truth? That's how you should come to the Word of God.

[20 : 35] Why? Because it is. It didn't just save you and change your eternal destiny. No, the Gospel is not just a one-time thing. It's how it shapes us for the rest of our life.

Yes, it changes your eternal destiny, but it can change your parenting. It can change how you treat others. It can change how you look at the world and how you look at other people. That's exactly what it's supposed to do. The Word of God is to change how we think.

And when you change how you think, you change how you live. Maybe this week you need to step up to the Word of God and look at it as the life-giving truth that it is.

Not just something on a to-do list. Listen, I'd rather you read one verse and meditate on it than read five chapters and get nothing out of it. How are we approaching the Word of God?

Is it a Sunday habit or a personal calling? You know, I'm glad you're here. I'm glad you come to church. Because if not, I'd just yell at my wife while I'm up here preaching the whole time.

[21 : 41] Like, I'm going to preach. But are you here just because it's Sunday and we go to lunch after? Don't act like you're not bad, dude.

I'm not going to eat today. I'm sure on the way here, you've had the conversation, what are we having afterwards? Yeah, you can look at it. I know.

I mean, that was the first thing you thought of. My son wakes up and goes, what are we eating? I mean, that's just like, it's just the first thing that comes to his mind. But sometimes we can come.

Even the pastor can come. You know what? I'm supposed to be here on Sunday. I'm going to come do my thing. That's not why we should be here. It shouldn't just be some habit in our life. It should be a habit where you are here, but not in that way.

It should be a calling because you realize this. I need the Word of God. I need to be around people that need the Word of God. That we're growing together. That it's not just, hey, no man's an island.

[22 : 37] We need each other. And you can come and be reminded. There's other families that are trying to parent biblically. There's other people that are trying to do the right thing. I need that in my life.

See, many times the difference between a fruitful Christian and a fruitless often comes down to this. How you hear the Word of God. Are you going to it with seriousness?

I mean, think of about two cups outside in a rainstorm. One is turned right side up. The other one's turned down. Guess which one's going to fill up? That's how it is.

How are you coming here? How do you come to the Word of God in your personal devotions? See, the Word of God is pouring out every Sunday. It's pouring out every time you open it up. But how is your heart hearing it?

Willing and ready to obey? See, Jesus closes out with one more powerful truth here. And it kind of seems weird. It kind of seems like, what is Jesus talking about?

[23 : 35] He's saying, listen, if you want to know if you're truly part of the family, it's not about background. It's not about bloodlines. It's not about Bible knowledge.

Here's what it's about. Obedience. Obedience shows. It's an outward manifestation that God has changed our heart. See, before you knew Christ as your Savior, yeah, who cares?

But the more you know Him, the more you love Him, the more you do for Him. We do not do things so the Lord will love us more. We do not do things so that we'll have more grace in our life.

Listen, God can't love you any more than He already does. Jeremiah tells us that He loves us with an everlasting love. Listen, how do we know that He loves us? Just look at the cross of Calvary. While we were His enemies, Christ died for us.

So we don't do things so God would love us more. No, He already loves us more, but it's a picture. It's a good example because Jesus says, by their fruit, you shall know them.

[24 : 40] We should be producing things in our life. And we see this lastly, that hearing and obeying makes you family. Now, understand this, salvation is what makes you family.

But this is the picture of, and kind of the evidence that you're in the family. Notice what takes place here in verse number 19. Then came to Him His mother and His brethren, and could not come at Him for the press.

So here we see Jesus' biological family. And they're here, and at this time, His brothers don't believe that He's the Messiah. Like, other instances when they come, in Mark chapter 3, I believe it is, they come because they think He's lost His mind.

Like, this guy's crazy. He's saying all these things, he's preaching all these things. Hey, I grew up with this kid. Who does he think he is? Now, if you really study it out, you know what changed their mind?

And it should change everybody's mind? The resurrection. It changes everything. Because dead people don't come back to life. But Jesus did. And it really changed them, and it brought them forward.

[25 : 44] But they come, and they're trying to find Him. They're trying to get Him to say, we've got to get Him home, man. He's making our family look real weird. Anybody got family members like that? You're like, hey, don't tell Him I'm in your family.

That's kind of how His brothers felt. Now, His mother, not so much. Most likely by this time, Joseph is passed off the scene. They can't get there. They get in, and it's packed.

Because at this time, Jesus' ministry is exploding, and people just want to be around Him. They don't want to miss something. Maybe they missed the last miracle. They weren't necessarily looking for the message many times. They were looking for that supernatural.

They were looking for that truth. And they said, we've got to be there. And so the crowd is kind of pressed in. So in verse number 20, And it was told Him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without.

So they're in the crowd, and they're maybe tapping and saying, Hey, can you pass a message up to Jesus? We need to talk to Him. Tell Him His mama's out here. You know, that's just what you say to get anything happening.

[26 : 40] And, you know, if mama's there, you've got to respond to mama. Tell them mom's here. I mean, don't tell them we're here, the brothers. But just tell them mom wants to talk to them. So they passed the message up.

Look at Jesus' response when the message gets to Him. And He answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it.

I mean, honestly, on the surface, to me, it seems a little insensitive. Like, ouch. He's like, that's not my family. I'll tell you who my family is. I mean, that's kind of how we look at it sometimes.

But don't misunderstand. Jesus is not rejecting His mother. He's not rejecting His brothers. He loved them. But He is defining what it looks like to be in the family of God.

Because there's a lot of people, and it wasn't that He was taking a shot at them, but there would be a lot of people in this crowd that thought, You know what? I'm a follower of Christ because I'm here. Because of their proximity to Jesus.

[27 : 43] Hey, I'm for Jesus. Man, I clapped when He did the miracles. I definitely ate the bread when He passed it to me. I'm for Jesus. That was their mindset. Because that's kind of how the Pharisees looked at it.

Their proximity to religion, their proximity to the law, they just said, Listen, we got everything we need. We got the land. We got the law. We got all this stuff. And they thought, because we're so close to everything, I mean, we're Jews after all.

We have to be in the family. And that's not what Jesus is saying. What He's reminding us in these verses is the true people of God aren't marked by proximity to religion.

I know this is hard to hear, but there's going to be people that spend every Sunday in a church that don't know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. I know that's not a popular message, but it's one that Jesus teaches.

The true people of God are marked by obedience to the revelation of His truth. That's what makes the difference. James says it like this in James 1, verse 22.

[28 : 46] But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. Because we can hear and hear and hear, but Jesus says, what are you doing with the truth?

Because here's the truth. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And you know what? A lot of Americans would say, I agree with that. What are you doing with it? Because there's a debt that must be paid.

A price that we can't pay. And that's why Jesus came and died on the cross of Calvary, to pay our sin debt. And the wages that we owe, the payment that we owe, it's death.

But the gift of God is eternal life. But you don't get that by coming to church and being a good person and doing Christian things. You get that by calling upon the name of the Lord. By placing your faith and trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary.

That's what makes the difference. And Jesus is saying, listen, yes, this is my mom and my brothers. But if you want to be in the family of God, how are you responding to those truths? How are you responding to it?

[29 : 51] Listen, don't deceive yourself by being a professional sermon listener. It can be easy. We're very used to it. We come in and we've heard that. And we got, I mean, you may even have things underlined in your Bible.

Like, man, I highlighted my Bible. I'm definitely listening. What are you doing? That's what Jesus wants us to know. Your life should reflect the truth of the Word of God.

That if any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. That doesn't mean you just say, I love Jesus and continue to do everything you used to do. No, when Jesus comes in, things change.

It doesn't mean we're perfect, but there should be some growth in your life. There should be some things that you used to not think twice about, but now God's got a hold of your heart and you realize, I probably shouldn't do that because I love the Lord and He's forgiven me of that.

I need to move forward on that. Maybe ask yourself, am I obeying what I already know? That's a good way to look at it. There's some truth in the Word of God.

[30 : 53] You think, well, what am I supposed to do? I would imagine many of you here this morning already know some things. Are you doing it? Are you obeying it? Do you see spiritual fruit in your life?

We should all see spiritual fruit. Now, sometimes it feels like we're in a season and sometimes we begin to struggle. But listen, you should be able to look back at your life and see, well, God is working here and God is doing this. And I can see God moving in my life and my family.

Listen, am I living as part of Jesus' family or am I just visiting on a Sunday? There should be a noticeable difference. You ever met somebody that likes to name drop?

And it doesn't matter who you say, oh, yeah, I know them. Yeah, my great-great-grandpa, he was friends. He was best friends with Abraham Lincoln. Yeah. I mean, no matter who it is.

Like Ramses, oh, yeah, Ramses the Pharaoh. Yeah, my great-great-great-aunt's cousin's nephew's former roommate was friends with Pharaoh. We all know somebody like that, don't you know what I mean?

[31 : 55] But you think, preacher, what in the world are you saying? Listen, the truth is, many times that person doesn't know them from Adam. And this is just a disclaimer. Just because you're friends on Facebook doesn't mean you're friends.

Just wanted to say that. Where are you going, preacher? Some people try to name drop Jesus. Oh, I go to church.

They'll quote the Scripture. I mean, they'll quote the Romans wrote to you. They know all about it. Oh, I know Jesus. Here's what Jesus says in Matthew 7, 21. That's tough.

But you know why Jesus said that? Because he loves us. Because we can't convince ourselves just because we name drop Jesus. And just because, hey, I go to church and I put a little in the offering plate and I've been dipped in the water.

That everything's good. No, how have you responded to the truth? Your life should show it. Your light should be shining.

[33 : 18] You should be hearing with the intention to obey. And as you obey, it gives evidence. It gives the fruit that you're in the family. That you're not just close.

And it's not just some proximity thing. It's not just being a good person. You see, remember the man at the beginning? The one who ignored his GPS? And he ended up lost and late and frustrated.

The directions were clear. They were, the voice was accurate. And the only reason he got off track is because he thought he knew better.

Listen, my prayer that is if anybody here that's ever walked through the doors of Central Baptist Church, when they get to heaven, they're not going to say, well, I didn't hear that.

No, no, the voice is clear. It's not my voice. It's not my truth. I'm just a steward of the truth. As you are. The question is, how do you respond to it?

[34 : 18] See, so many people treat the word of God like that. They hear it, but they think, you know what? I know a better way. I know a shortcut. You know, I can still do these things.

They listen, but they refuse to follow. And they may sit in service and nod their heads. But every once in a while they say, you know what? I think I'll take that exit. Narrow is the gate that leads to life.

Listen, it's not what we do. You can't say, well, I'll just, I'll pick and choose what I like. Listen, the word of God is not a buffet. That's not how we are to treat it. So let me ask you just a couple questions and we'll close.

Has God turned on the light in your heart? Listen, do you know Jesus Christ as your Savior? Then don't hide the light.

Is it shining? Sometimes we know the Lord as our Savior and we still try to hide it. It's easy to let it shine right here. But what about tomorrow? What about at school where it's not the most popular thing to do?

[35 : 22] What about at work where it's not the most popular thing to do? What about in some of the things you do as a parent? Say, well, we're not going to do that because of this, this, and that. Listen, it's hard sometimes to live in this world.

But we're not living for this world. We're living for our Savior. Maybe you're just listening week after week after week. Don't just listen. Obey.

Take it and apply it to your life. Do you know that you truly belong to Jesus? It's not a name drop thing. It's not a claim it and name it.

It's repent and believe. That's what Jesus calls us to. Because in the end, it's not just enough to be near the word. You got to hear it. You got to heed it.

And you got to obey it. That's exactly what he tells us here. So today, if God's been speaking to you through his word, don't delay. Don't put it off.

[36 : 21] Don't walk out of these doors unchanged. Don't ignore the voice that is guiding you home. Maybe you know him as your Savior, but here's what he's telling you today.

Recalculating. Hey, why don't you make a U-turn? Why don't you do something? You're on the wrong path. This is not going to help your family. This decision is not going to help your life. And sometimes we think, well, I know what the word of God says, but I think I can handle this.

Recalculating. Recalculating. Instead, say in your heart today, Lord, I hear you. And I'm ready to follow.

Would you stand with your heads bowed and with your eyes closed? Today, Jesus is calling.

Not for better listeners, but for wholehearted followers. That's what he's looking for. You know what Jesus wants you to do? Go all in.

[37 : 22] You can't ride the fence. You can't come here and feel good and, man, I love God. I love the church. I love these things. But then just go live however you want. We said it last week.

We need to let our Sundays touch our Mondays. And Tuesdays and Wednesdays and Thursdays. That it should affect how we live our life. Maybe you've sat in church for years, but never truly surrendered.

You know him as Savior, but what are you doing? How are you building his kingdom? How are you serving him? Maybe you're here and you've heard countless sermons, but never truly responded in repentance and faith.

That's where it starts. And in a matter of it's your first time here, or you're the longest term member that we have, here's what we would do. Celebrate.

The Bible says there's rejoicing in heaven over one center. One center that comes to repentance. Listen, if that's you, I'd love to meet you down here at this old-fashioned altar.

[38 : 31] You say, I don't feel comfortable coming to a preacher. Grab me on the way out. Do not leave this premise if you don't know the Lord as your Savior. Maybe you've been walking your own way.

You know him as your Savior, but the Holy Spirit is whispering right now. It's knocking on your heart saying, make a U-turn. Recalculate. I don't know where you are, but lights are meant to shine.

We're to hear his voice and walk in his word. Father, thank you for this opportunity. Thank you for your word. Lord, I pray you would use it. You promise that it will not return.

Amen. Amen. Amen.