# "Hearers and Doers"

**(Luke 8:16-21)**

## Introduction

➢I want to begin this message with a rhetorical question: "What makes a good sermon?" My guess is, if you asked ten random people this question you would likely get ten different answers. Sermons are like meals, and just as everyone does not like the same food, so everyone does not like the same sermon.

✓Illust: I often think of comparing a preacher to a baseball player. If, in a game, the baseball player hits four-out-of-four everyone would agree that he played well. And they expect him to play well again in the next game (if he goes 0-4 next game people will grumble, and if he goes 0-4 too many times people will want him benched or off the team). Likewise, if a preacher preaches a "good sermon" – even the "best sermon ever!" – the expectation is for him to preach another good sermon next time. Too many "bad" sermons will result in people going to church somewhere else, or the preacher having to find a new church.

But there is one particular glaring difference between the baseball player and the preacher. The player's success is largely objective, while the preacher's success is largely subjective. That is, the same sermon can be viewed as good by some people and bad by others – it can be too simple for one person and too complicated for another, it can be "review" for one person and "brand new" for someone else, it can "life changing" for one and "boring" for another, it can be pleasing to one and displeasing (offensive) to others.

➢People often tell preachers, "Preach a 'good one' today!" or "I hope you have a 'good one' for us today!" or "I brought a visitor today, so you better preach a 'good one'"! (I often think, "This is a little late notice, if you wanted me to preach a 'good' sermon you should have told me before Sunday morning!).

I think we can all agree that Jesus is the greatest preacher to ever live – and yet, some people hated His preaching. The apostle Paul was one of the greatest preachers to ever live, and yet people hated his preaching. One of my heroes is John MacArthur, a world renown Christian pastor, author, and preacher (1939-2025), and yet I have talked to some "Christians" who cannot stand to listen his sermons.

➢It is imperative to understand that the preaching of a sermon is not one-dimensional. That is, it is not just the preacher's job to preach a good sermon. A good sermon requires both the preacher and the listener to fulfill their God-given responsibilities.

Simply put, a sermon is the proclamation of God's Word (2Tim.4:2; 1Pet.4:11). A sermon is "successful" when the preacher faithfully proclaims the Word of God. But sermons are not preached to no one. People can hate good sermons and love bad sermons (Lk.4:28-29; Acts 7:54-60), and sermons can be preached to believers and unbelievers alike (Lk.8:4-15; 1Cor.2:14-16). For a sermon to be soul-saving, spiritually edifying, or sanctifying the listener must respond favorably to the Word of God.

➢With this in mind, I want to take some time pastorally to talk about how to listen to a sermon.

<u>How to listen to a sermon</u>:

1) Remember the ultimate goal of a sermon is to accurately proclaim the Word of God, to edify the people of God, and to glorify the name of God (Ps.138:2; 1Cor.10:31; Eph.4:11-12; 2Tim.2:15).

The ultimate goal of a sermon is not to amuse or entertain the listeners – to scratch their *"itching ears"* (2Tim.4:3). The preacher is not an actor, entertainer, comedian, politician, or therapist. He is to be a prophetic messenger of God's Word.

✓<u>Illust</u>: The preacher is like a waiter. He is not the one who cooks the meal, but the one who is supposed to deliver the meal. The waiter's job is to take the meal from the kitchen to the table without messing it up. The preacher's job is to take the truth of God, from the Word of God, to the people of God, without messing it up!

**Ps 138:2** ~ "I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word."

**1 Cor 10:31** ~ "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

**Eph 4:11-12** ~ "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12]to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ"

**2 Tim 2:15** ~ "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

The faithful preacher does not expect, after a sermon, to hear "What a great preacher!" or even "What a great sermon!" but "What a great God!"

2) Come prepared to encounter the holy and authoritative Word of God (Jn.17:17; Heb.4:12; 1Thess.2:13; 2Tim.3:16-17).

Many Christians spend very little time and effort (or thought), if any, on preparing themselves to hear from God's Word (and many of those do not even consider that to be part of their responsibility). They come to church frantically, or complacently, thinking that just getting (being) there is enough. Some, having spent the whole week in worldly pursuits and pleasures, are utterly unprepared to encounter the holy and authoritative Word of God.

✓Illust: I remember when a guy came up to me before the sermon on a particular Sunday, explaining that he had only slept for a few hours because he went to a college football game on Saturday night. He then told me, "Preach a good one, and keep me awake, for I am exhausted." I simply replied, "That's not my job."

**John 17:17** ~ "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth."

**Heb 4:12** ~ "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

**1 Thess 2:13** ~ "And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers."

**2 Tim 3:16-17** ~ "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17]that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

3) Pray for the preacher and the listeners – including yourself (Eph.6:18-20; Col.4:3-4; 2Thess.3:1).

People often pray for the preacher, which is good, but fail to pray for the listeners. As we saw in "The Parable of the Soils" (Lk.8:4-15), the soils represent different "hearers" – different responses to God's Word. In each case, the sower is the same, the sowing method is the same, and the seed is the same. The difference is in how each one hears the message – the differences are the hearers receptivity to *"the Word of God"* (Lk.8:11).

**Eph 6:18-20** ~ "praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, [19]and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, [20]for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak."

**Col 4:3-4** ~ "At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison – [4]that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak."

**2 Thess 3:1** ~ "Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you"

4) Be an active listener (have Bible open, take notes, minimize distractions, etc.).

As the saying goes, "You get out of something what you put into it." Putting little to no effort into listening to a sermon typically leads to getting nothing out of a sermon. At the very least, you should have a Bible open (and not just staring at the back of the person's head in front of you, or checking your phone for emails/texts, social media/news/sports updates). Listening to a sermon without a Bible is like going to war without a weapon (i.e., *"sword"*; Eph.6:17; Heb.4:12). The more you put into a sermon, the more you will get out of the sermon.

**Ps 1:1-2** ~ "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; [2]but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night." (Ps.119:47-48, 97, 113, 119, 127, 159, 163, 167)

**1 Peter 2:2** ~ "Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation"

5) Be submissive to the Word of God (Jn.17:17; Heb.4:12).

It is good to be reminded of the fact that the Word of God, the Bible, is not a collection of spiritual sayings or religious opinions. The Bible is not a religious relic or spiritual "good luck charm." It contains the "inspired" (lit. God-breathed; 2Tim.3:16), and living (1Pet.1:23), Word of Almighty God. The authority of a sermon comes not from the preacher but from the Word of God that is preached. We need to be reverent toward (2Pet.2:21) and obedient to the Word of God (Lk.6:46-49).

**John 17:17** ~ "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth."

**Heb 4:12** ~ "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

6) Expect to be instructed, encouraged, reminded, warned, and/or convicted (2Tim.3:15-4:2).

Our chief expectation, when truly listening to a sermon, is not to be entertained but to be changed. When someone says, "I got nothing out of the sermon" it says something about the preacher but a lot more about the listener. Expectant listeners can get something out of every sermon, even a bad sermon – especially if they have their Bible open! Every Christian who truly wants to "get fed" will find spiritual food in the Word of God (even if the preacher isn't).

**2 Tim 3:15-4:2** ~ "and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16]All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17]that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

[1]I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: [2]preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching."

7) Don't look for something "new" look for what is true (Acts 17:11, 21).

The relentless pursuit of something new eventually leads to unbiblical teaching and even heresy. The primary goal of a sermon is not to present something new but to proclaim that which is true. Christians need to be repeatedly reminded of God's truth. We live in a culture drowning in lies and idolatry. We need to be reminded of God's truth so that we are not led astray – deceived or self-deceived. The Bible is filled with commands to "remember."

The apostle Peter wrote: *"… I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, [2]that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles"* (2Pet.1:1-2). Train yourself to rejoice in the truth (1Cor.13:6) and not to be seduced by what is novel.

✓Illust: "Preach the Gospel to yourself every day" (Jerry Bridges, *Respectable Sins*, p.36).

**Acts 17:11** ~ "Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so."

**Acts 17:21** ~ "Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new."

8) Focus on the substance of the message, not the style of the messenger (Rom.1:16; 1Cor.2:1-5; 2Cor.11:6).

To be sure, "a boring preacher" is a contradiction in terms. A preacher should be eager and passionate about preaching the Word of God. But boredom is a subjective reality and often says more about the bored person than the reason for their boredom.

The apostle Paul is arguably the greatest missionary to ever live, and yet he often downplayed his personality and style (methods/techniques) in preaching. He knew that *"the power of God for salvation"* was in the Gospel message and not in the messenger of the Gospel.

**Rom 1:16** ~ "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

**1 Cor 2:1-5** ~ "And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. [2]For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. [3]And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, [4]and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, [5]so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

**2 Cor 11:6** ~ "Even if I am unskilled in speaking, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way we have made this plain to you in all things."

Jonah is also a great (negative) example. God used him to save 120,000 people with a terribly simple message: *"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"* (Jon.3:4) – and a prophet who did not want to see the Ninevites saved (Jon.4:1-3)! Clearly, it's God's message that saves, and sanctifies, not the messenger.

9) Be discerning not critical (Acts 17:11; Heb.5:11-14; 1Thess.5:21).

There is a subtle, yet significant, difference between being a critical thinker and being a critical person. A critical thinker is discerning and wise, while a critical person is arrogant and judgmental. A critical thinker wants to differentiate between truth and error, and a critical person wants to find fault and exalt self. We are called to be discerning, not judgmental or faultfinding.

**Acts 17:11** ~ "Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so."

**Heb 5:11-14** ~ "About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. [12]For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, [13]for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. [14]But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil."

**1 Thess 5:21** ~ "… test everything; hold fast what is good." (1Jn.4:1)

10) Remember that not everyone thinks like you or is going through what you are going through.

Even if a sermon does not "hit you where you are at", you can prayerfully rejoice that it did for others. Again, what may be "old news" to you may be brand new for someone else. We must listen to a sermon with the humility that comes from knowing that the sermon is not just for us (or people like us). The fact is the first time we heard a Gospel sermon may have been the umpteenth time someone else heard a Gospel sermon. Every sermon will not be specifically tailored to you.

✓Illust: "Many years ago, a person came up to me after church and said, "You need to preach a sermon on parenting." I said, "I did just a few weeks ago." He said, with a smile, "Can you preach it again because we missed it?" The truth is, not everyone needs or wants to hear a sermon on parenting (especially twice in one month!).

**Phil 2:3-4** ~ "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. [4]Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

**1 Cor 13:5** ~ "[Love] … does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful"

11) Look for personal implications as well as applications – apply it to yourself first (Lk.6:46-49; Rom.2:13; Jms.1:22).

We must not relegate the "application" of a sermon to the pragmatic points a preacher makes at the conclusion of the message. Applications can be made throughout the sermon, and you might find applications to your life that are not explicitly stated by the preacher. Every biblical truth has a built-in implication or application. For example, when we read that Jesus *"frequently withdrew to the wilderness and prayed"* (Lk.5:16; NET) we can readily make the application that we too should be faithful in prayer.

We must not reduce the Bible to a spiritual handbook or "Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth" (B.I.B.L.E.). The Word of God is much more than an instructional manual for the Christian life, and a sermon needs to be much more than a laundry list of applications (especially without interpretation). The Bible is the story of God's redemptive plan for mankind through His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer.

**Luke 6:46-49** ~ "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? [47]Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: [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. [49]But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

**Rom 2:13** ~ "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified."

**James 1:22** ~ "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

- There is a powerful – spiritual and supernatural – synergy at work when the preacher faithful preaches and the Word of God and the listeners faithfully listen to the Word of God. This is in stark contrast to the performative preacher and the inattentive listener.
- As the passage before us this morning makes clear, there is a great difference between hearing and listening – between passively hearing and actively listening. Those who truly listen to the Word of God are changed by it and submissive to it. For true believers, have *"ears to hear"* (Lk.8:8) God's Word (Jn.10:27) – their hearts are not hard (as seed sown on the path; Lk.8:12); their hearts are not shallow (as seed sown on the rock; Lk.8:13); their hearts are not worldly (as seed sown among the thorns; Lk.8:14). Their hearts are receptive to God's Word, and they respond with faithful and fruitful obedience (Lk.8:15).

➢In Luke's Gospel, immediately following His "Parable of the Sower (or soils)", Jesus gives two more examples of what it means to truly hear (listen to) the Word of God.

**Luke 8:16-21** ~ "'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. [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.'

[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 passage contains a short parable (or proverb) and a short narrative which both illustrate the importance of being a hearer and a doer of God's Word.

## A. The Parable of the Lamp (vs.16-18)

➢As we have seen, parables are typically easy to understand but difficult (if not impossible) to rightly apply without the right interpretation. They are a simple story to highlight a spiritual truth. Thankfully, Jesus explained the meaning of the parable (or proverb) of the lamp. From these verses we can discover three truth regarding the revelation of God's Word.

### 1. The purpose of revelation (vs.16)

➢First, we see the purpose of God's revelation. Jesus said, *"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"* (vs.16; see Lk.11:33). The image is clear – the purpose of light is to illuminate. It is irrational, and wasteful, to light a lamp if you are only going to cover it up (or turn on a light when you leave the room).

➢In this context, the *"light"* (*phōs*) refers to God's revelation of truth. Just as light illuminates, revelation reveals. The purpose of God's revelation is to reveal His truth. This applies to Christians in two ways. First, we are to listen to the revelation of God's Word (Lk.8:8, 15, 18). Second, we are to proclaim the revelation of God's Word.

**Ps 119:105** ~ "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

**Matt 5:14-16** ~ "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."

➢Therefore, as Christians, we must be diligent to hear God's Word for ourselves, and faithful to teach God's Word to others. Failure to do either of these is tantamount to lighting a lamp and putting it under a bed. It's foolish and dangerous.

### 2. The inevitability of revelation (vs.17)

➢Second, we see the inevitability of God's revelation. In a sense, this is where the analogy breaks down. While we can conceal light (by covering it with a jar, or putting it under a bed or basket), we cannot truly (or ultimately) conceal God's revelation. The light of God's truth is inevitable. It will accomplish all of God's purposes (Is.46:10; 55:11).

Jesus put it this way: *"For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light"* (vs.17). The light of God's Word, His revelation, not only

illuminates but it also exposes. That is, it reveals God's truth and exposes that which is evil (sinful). Nothing is truly hidden from God – not even one's attitudes and motives.

**Heb 4:13** ~ "And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account."

**1 Cor 4:5** ~ "Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes [*boulē*; motives, intentions] of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God."

➢Jesus' teaching revealed hidden truths and exposed hidden sins. The truth of God cannot be extinguished by the sin or evil in this world. Darkness will not (cannot) prevail over light (Jn.1:5). Rather, light illuminates the darkness and exposes what is concealed in darkness.

Therefore, the light of God's revelation is a grace of God to those who believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior, and a judgment from God to those who reject Him as Lord and Savior.

**John 3:19-21** ~ "And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. [20]For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. [21]But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

**John 8:12** ~ "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.'"

➢Unbelievers walk in the darkness of sin and, if unrepentant, are destined to the darkness of hell (see Matt.8:12; Eph.5:8; Col.1:13; 2Thess.1:9; Jd.1:13). True believers, however, walk in the light of Jesus Christ (see Rom.13:12; 2Cor.4:4-6; 1Pet.2:9) and are destined to heaven where there is no darkness at all (1Jn.1:5; Rev.22:5).

### 3. The reality of revelation (vs.18)

➢Third, we see the reality of God's revelation. Jesus said, *"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"* (vs.18).

The phrase *"Take care then how you hear"* (vs.18) is a central theme in this entire section (Lk.8:8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21). This is a easy, yet serious, admonition – translated "beware how you listen" (LSB), "Listen carefully" (NET), "take care how you listen" (NAS), "take heed how you hear" (KJV).

✓Illust: "This command is also a very clear note of warning. We take heed what we eat and what we drink. Every person who desires to have health does that, and shall we be careless of what we hear? May we not, by hearing error and falsehood, engender disease in our spirit and bring our soul into sin, and sorrow, and eternal ruin? Time is too short for us to be listening to every babbler. Heaven and earth are too important for us to be running any risk concerning our eternal state by giving heed to the speculations of evil men!" (Charles Spurgeon; sermon: "Hearing with Heed"; August 8, 1885).

➢This simple but stern warning has both a positive and negative reality. Positively, *"to the one who has, more will be given"* (vs.18). The Bible tells us that *"faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ"* (Rom.10:17). Those who, by faith (Rom.5:1), receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will receive, by God's grace (Eph.2:5, 8-9), infinite and eternal blessings from God.

Negatively, those who reject Jesus as Lord and Savior will lose everything: *"from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away"* (vs.18). For the unbeliever, all their "righteous works" are "filthy rags" (Is.64:6) which amount to nothing. Their Christless religion and morality are a total loss (Phil.3:7; see Lk.6:49; 12:20-21; 16:25; 19:26).

✓Illust: "In the end, the false disciples lose everything. All of their self-righteous works that they had counted on to bring them salvation will turn out to be nothing but rubbish (Phil.3:8), vain things that cannot save (Acts 14:15). Like the wicked, lazy, unfaithful slave in the parable of the talents (Matt.25:14-30), they will be cast 'into the outer darkness … [where] there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth' (v.30)" (John MacArthur; *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Luke*; 8:18).

➢Those who truly receive the Word of God will be blessed with immeasurable and eternal spiritual blessings. Those who reject the Word of God will be cursed with incomprehensible and eternal condemnation.

## B. The Family of the Lord (vs.19-21)

➢In Luke's Gospel, the short parable is followed by a short narrative:

**Luke 8:19-21** ~ "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 brief (seemingly inconsequential) account is recorded in all three synoptic Gospels (Matt.12:46-50; Mk.3:31-35).

### 1. The Illustration (vs.19-20)

➢Jesus' family become a real-life illustration of the parable Jesus had just taught. At this point in Jesus' ministry, and until His resurrection (Acts 1:14), Jesus' brothers did not believe that He was the Christ (Jn.7:5) and thought He was *"out of His mind"* (Mk.3:21).

Jesus' mother and brothers were looking for Jesus (Mk.3:32), with intent on *"seizing Him"* (Mk.3:21), but they could not get to Him *"because of the crowd"* (vs.19). That is, because the crowd was so massive in size (see Lk.8:4). So, they sent a message, through the crowd, to Jesus (Matt.12:46-47). The message came to Jesus: *"Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you"* (vs.20).

➢They, it seems, expected Jesus to stop teaching and come with them. But Jesus had other plans.

### 2. The application (vs.21)

➢When Jesus said, *"My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it'"* (vs.21), He was not condemning His family as heretics or unbelievers. He was using this situation to emphasize His point that truly believers are not merely those who hear the Word of God but those who hear and obey the Word of God.

**Rom 2:13** ~ "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified."

**James 1:22-25** ~ "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. [23]For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. [24]For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. [25]But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing."

**Luke 6:46-49** ~ "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? [47]Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: [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.

[49]But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."

- A true relationship with Jesus is not physical (biological or familial) but spiritual. True salvation does not come from human worth or merit, nor from ancestry or ethnicity (Gal.3:26-29). Those who are truly saved are adopted into God's family by God's grace through faith (see Jn.1:12; Rom.8:14-17; 1Jn.3:1-2). And those who are truly God's children seek not only to be hearers of God's Word but also doers of God's Word.

  **John 14:15** ~ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

  **John 15:14** ~ "You are my friends if you do what I command you."

  **John 14:21-24** ~ "Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. … [24]Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me."

  **1 John 2:3-4** ~ "And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. [4]Whoever says 'I know him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him"

  **1 John 5:2-3** ~ "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. [3]For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome."

- This is not teaching a salvation by works but works as the evidence of true salvation (see Rom.3:20; Gal.2:16; Eph.2:45, 8-10; 2Tim.1:9; Tit.3:5).

## Conclusion

- Jesus commands us to *"Take care … how you hear"* (Lk.8:18). There were many in His day, as there are today, who refused to listen to His words (Jn.6:60; 9:27; 10:20). But those who truly belong to Him will listen and obey His words (Jn.10:16, 27). May we be among those who truly hear the Word of God and obey the Word of God.

  **John 8:47** ~ "Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."

  **Luke 9:35** [at Jesus' transfiguration] ~ "And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!'" (Matt.17:5; Mk.9:7)