

26. Jesus Taught About Family Relationships

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that the hearts of people will cause them to have different responses as we share the Word of God with them. God looks on the hearts and He knows whether the heart of each person is like the hard road, the rocks, has thorns and thistles or is like the good ground. We are to be faithful to share the Word of God with all people and God will cause our lives to bear spiritual fruit. God will cause the Word of God that we share to take root in the hearts of those who are like the good soil and their lives will bear fruit too. In our topic today, we are going to see that Jesus taught His disciples in three different ways.

First, we see that Jesus taught that He is the One that is Light and gives light. Luke 8:16-18 says, “No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts *it* under a bed, but sets *it* on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor *anything* hidden that will not be known and come to light. Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him *more* will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.” In this parable, we see that Jesus compares Himself to a lamp. He wants to give light to all.

In John 8:12, we read, “Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.’” Jesus had just pointed out the fact that He spoke in parables because the crowds were not seeking spiritual light. Instead, they just enjoyed the entertainment that they received by listening to interesting stories or parables. Today, many people have a similar attitude. Jesus is the Light. He wants all people to learn to walk in that light. As a result, Jesus does not try to hide His light in a box. He does not try to hide His light under a bed. Instead, Jesus wants His Light to shine to the end of the world. He wants that light to be available to every person. However, each person must look to that Light to receive light.

Jesus and His Word reveal the secrets of the heart. This is why 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 say, “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on *his* face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.” When we share what the Word of God says, the Word reveals the secrets of the heart. Either on this earth or at the final judgment, the secrets of every heart will be revealed. In addition, as we share the Word with others, God will use His Word to draw others to Jesus. That is why Jesus said that every person must pay attention to how he or she hears the Word of God. Those who hear the Word of God and obey it will be given more light so that they can grow in their understanding. In contrast, those who reject the Word of God are actually rejecting the light that would lead them to know and understand what Jesus taught. As a result, even the light that they have seemed to have will be taken from them. Jesus had just spoken about three kinds of ground that are like those who hear the Word of God but do nothing about it. We see that those whose hearts are like the road, those whose hearts are like the stony ground and those whose hearts are like the thorny ground never bear any fruit because other things have taken away the Word of God from their thoughts and minds before it

could bear fruit.

Second, we see that Jesus taught about family relationships. Luke 8:19-21 says, “Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. And it was told Him *by some*, who said, ‘Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.’ But He answered and said to them, ‘My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.’” One day, the mother and brothers of Jesus came to talk to Him. They could not even get into the building where Jesus was teaching because there was such a large crowd of people gathered around Jesus trying to hear Him as He taught.

Some of those close to Jesus recognized that the mother and brothers of Jesus were trying to get through the crowd to talk to Jesus. As a result, those people told Jesus that His mother and brothers were standing outside. The word translated “desiring” means *to purpose or to determine*. The people told Jesus that His mother and brothers were determined to see Him. Instead of stopping His teaching to go and talk to His mother and brothers, Jesus used the opportunity to teach a very important lesson.

Jesus used this opportunity to teach about the new relationship that His followers had with Him. Jesus said, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.” We see that the mother of Jesus and the brothers of Jesus chose to repent of their sin and place their faith in Jesus so this is not a rejection of His mother and brothers. Instead, it shows that all those who follow Jesus had the blessing of becoming a part of His family. Romans 8:16-17 says, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.” Here, we see that as Christians we become joint heirs with Jesus.

However, there are two key words that we need to understand in this statement about the new relationship that the followers of Christ have with Jesus. The word translated “hear” means *to hear so that there is understanding*. We saw in the earlier verses of this chapter that Jesus spoke in parables to the crowds because there was no spiritual understanding by the crowds. The crowd just heard the interesting story about a planter sowing seed in a field. In contrast, Jesus explained to His disciples what that parable taught about the kingdom of God. The word translated “do” means *to carry out the actions that Word of God teaches us to do*. We can only be obedient to the Word of God as we depend on the Holy Spirit to give us His strength. True followers of Jesus will hear His Word with understanding and will carry out the actions that Jesus commands.

Those actions are summarized by three commands. In Matthew 22:37-40, we read, “Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is *the* first and great commandment. And *the* second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Then, John 13:34-35 says, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” Jesus said that these three commandments summarize both the Old and New Testaments.

Third, we see that Jesus taught through the experiences of life. Luke 8:22-25 says, “Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, ‘Let us cross over to the other side of the lake.’ And they launched out. But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling *with water*, and were in jeopardy. And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, ‘Master, Master, we are perishing!’ Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. But He said to them, ‘Where is your faith?’ And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, ‘Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!’” Jesus chose the disciples so that they could be with Him. As they were with Him, they had the opportunity to learn many lessons.

One day, Jesus got into a boat with His disciples to cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Since part of the disciples had been fishermen, they had spent much time on this body of water. Those disciples did not realize that Jesus was preparing to use that lake to teach them a very important lesson. The disciples did not think anything about the fact that Jesus fell asleep as they were crossing the water until there was a severe windstorm. Windstorms on the Sea of Galilee can cause large waves. That was what happened that day. The waves were so high that the boat started to fill with water. Suddenly, these former fishermen went to Jesus, woke Him up and said, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” They were used to high waves but not like those waves.

Jesus just got up and spoke to the wind and the waves. He told the wind to stop and the waves to become calm. Immediately, the windstorm was over and the waves became calm. Jesus then asked one question, “Where is your faith?” Mark 4:39-40 says, “Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace, be still!’ And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, ‘Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?’” The disciples suddenly realized that Jesus had total power over the wind and the waves. Here, we see that the disciples were growing in their understanding of the fact that Jesus is God.

The disciples were so amazed that they said, “Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!” Each time Jesus did a new miracle that the disciples had not seen before they learned a new thing about the greatness of Jesus. They would not have learned these lessons if they had not spent time traveling with Jesus. That same thing is true in the lives of our physical and spiritual children. It is only as they spend time with us and see how God works in our lives that they grow in their understanding of the greatness of God. Jesus chose to train the disciples by His example. In the same way, we will train our children as we take them with us so that they can see the Lord work in our lives and through our lives. May the Lord richly bless you as you take your children with you so that they can see how the Lord works through the experiences that you have in your life as you serve Him.