

How You Hear

Introduction

In Cory's message from last week, we looked at true and false conversion. I want to draw your attention to a phrase Cory highlighted in his sermon: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The hearing of God's word is crucial to the text about the sower.

¹² The ones along the path are **those who have heard**; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.

¹³ And the ones on the rock are those who, **when they hear the word**, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away.

¹⁴ And as for what fell among the thorns, **they are those who hear**, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.

¹⁵ As for that in the good soil, they are **those who, hearing the word**, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

Luke 8:16-21 ^{is} are connected to this parable through the idea of hearing. There is a hearing which is true, but there is also a hearing which is false. Or, there is an authentic hearer and a counterfeit hearer. When it comes to Jesus, to his teaching, to God's word, we need to take care how we hear.

Luke 8:16-21 ESV

¹⁶ "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."

Main Idea: Authentic hearing of Jesus' teaching/God's word entails an appropriate response. Therefore, we must affirm that we are authentic hearers by responding appropriately to Jesus' teaching and God's word.

Lighting a Lamp – v16-18

- Jesus uses a proverb to communicate his point
- Jesus uses this same proverb elsewhere to prove different points ~~in~~ ^{Mark} ~~4:21~~, Matthew 5:15 (witness)
- We need to determine his meaning by the context of this use ^{of the proverb}
- Image = the purpose in lighting a lamp is not to conceal the light but rather it is to illumine a room
- Thus, nobody puts a lamp under a bed or covers it with a jar
- A lamp is put on an elevated platform—a lampstand—so that it's light is helpful to people
- **“so that those who enter may see the light”**
 - It is interesting that Luke does not say the purpose of the lampstand + lamp is to better illumine the room
 - He says the purpose of the lampstand—and not covering the lamp—is so that people can see the light and experience the benefits of that light
 - I take “see the light” to mean come to the light, understand the light, and experience all the benefits of illumination: safety, security, fellowship, industry, warmth
- A light not only illumines but it also exposes – this is clearly a warning
- **“nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light”**
- What is the light? What does the light illumine? What does the light expose?
- The next line helps us answer those questions: “Take care then how you hear”

- The issue at hand is that of authentic hearing versus counterfeit hearing and authentic hearers versus counterfeit hearers. Or to use Cory's *McKenna's* descriptors from the parable of the sower and seeds, true hearing versus false hearing *and true hearers vs. false hearers*
- In light of Jesus' warning to take care how you hear, the light in this story refers to Jesus, and to Jesus' teaching. *- we need to authentically hear Jesus and hear Jesus' teaching*
- I'm reminded of:

- **Isaiah 9:2 ESV**

The people who walked in darkness
 have seen a great light;
 those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
 on them has light shone.

"I am the light of
 the world"

- Jesus' teaching = God's word = God's will
- Authentic hearing of Jesus' teaching is coming to the lamp and experiencing the benefits of the light. Authentic hearers see the light, come to the light, and will reap the benefits of the light.
- Inherent in the light is not only benefits for those who come to it but also the power to expose things; Jesus' teaching is authoritative and evaluative.
- The light—Jesus' teaching—will expose people's hearts, minds, and deeds and the light will demonstrate whether their hearing has been authentic or counterfeit and thus whether they themselves are true or false, authentic or counterfeit.
- An authentic hearer is the good soil from the previous parable. The counterfeit hearer is the trampled path, the stony ^{earth} ~~ground~~, or the thorny ~~earth~~ ~~ground~~
- Jesus' teaching—thus God's word—is the light
- Jesus' teaching—thus God's will—illuminates the way to salvation, security, safety ... the very way to God
- Jesus' teaching—thus the gospel—exposes those who claim to hear but are only counterfeit hearers
- How you hear raises the question of response. Authentic hearing entails an appropriate response.

Mom + Dad: "clean the TV room"

Again: "We asked you to clean the TV room!"

Kid: "I heard you!"

Parents: "I don't think you did hear us!"

- If you hear well, **“more will be given”**
 - **Ephesians 1:3-14 ESV** — *Paul describes the authentic-hearer-of-the-gospel's "MORE"*

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.
- To the authentic hearer, more will be given!
- If you do not take care how you hear, **“even what [you] think that [you] have will be taken away.”**
 - **Matthew 21:42-44 ESV**

⁴² Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”

⁴³ Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. ⁴⁴ And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.”

- This is a call to hear Jesus' teaching in a manner that is authentic. It is authentic if, as the light of Jesus' teaching exposes you, you are found to really have his teaching and not just think you have it. *Have you grasped Jesus' teaching? Or do you just think you've grasped it?*
- The next episode sheds light on the point Jesus is making.

Mothers and Brothers – v19-21

- In this episode Jesus proclaims his super-familial allegiance to those who authentically hear—that is, hear and respond properly—to God's word. Jesus is closer than a brother or son to those who are authentic hearers.
- Jesus is in a situation in which his biological family; his mother and brothers, are not able to access him.
- Since they are "outside" we can assume that Jesus is inside a home that is full of disciples, followers, and crowds listening to Jesus.
- Somebody informs Jesus of the predicament his mother and brothers are in: they desired to see him but "they could not reach him."
- Jesus uses the situation to teach those who are within earshot: "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."
- Jesus is not repudiating or disrespecting family. God's Word, which Jesus indicates is a very positive thing, is full of admonitions to honour and love your family members. *that must be obeyed*
 - **Ephesians 6:1-4 ESV** ¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²"Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³"that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land."⁴Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
 - **Ephesians 5:25 ESV** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,
 - **Proverbs 6:20 ESV** My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching.
- Rather than dissing his family, Jesus is making an emphatic point about authentically hearing God's word—his teaching. Those who are authentic hearers share a bond with Christ that surpasses the strongest family bonds.

- Luke brings clarity to the light on a lampstand proverb by sharing Jesus' exhortation. Authentic hearing is more than mental recognition, and it's more than intellectual acceptance or agreement. Authentic hearing expresses itself and authenticates itself in action.
 - **James 1:22-25 ESV** ²² 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.
 - **James 1:22-27 NASB** ²² But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. ²⁵ But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.
- Authentic hearers are effectual doers!
- Jesus identifies most closely with those who demonstrate by their actions that they have truly heard Jesus as he teaches God's will and word.

How You Hear

Authentic hearing is, first and foremost, coming to faith.

John 3:16-21 ESV ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ 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.”

- God loved the world – he created it and all that is in it.
- However, humankind find themselves in a position whereby they are going to perish because they have been condemned due to the wicked things we have done.
- Nevertheless, God gave his Son that ~~none should~~ *mankind need not* perish but have eternal life.
- Who is eternal life for? For those who love the Son. For those who come to the light. For those who believe in the Son.
- Believing in the Son is turning from our wicked ways and trusting in the Son and in what the Son has done to save us.
- The Son lived a perfect life of obedience to God. The Son died a death for the forgiveness of sins. The son rose from the dead conquering sin, death, and the devil. Be an authentic hearer of Jesus’ teaching of salvation by repenting of your sin and turning to God.
- If you hear this teaching this morning, and do not believe in Jesus Christ, you are showing yourself to be a counterfeit hearer and you face judgment and eternal punishment.
- Will you be an authentic hearer and come to the light? To Christ? *Will you do it today? Will you do it right now?*

Authentic hearing is confirmed by appropriate responses.

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

- What areas of God’s Word are you hearing but not doing?
- What has the Spirit convicted you of when you hear his word preached that, despite the conviction of the Holy Spirit, you insist on continuing to walk in disobedience?
- What has God put on your heart to do that you continue to neglect?
- “We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone.” — Martin Luther

- You give evidence of yourself as an authentic hearer and a true convert by your obedience to Jesus' teaching and God's Word. This starts with obedience to the teaching of the gospel of salvation but is demonstrated to be legitimate through growing in godliness through obedience to God's Word.
- Where are you being disobedient? → prioritizing God
 → disciplining relationships → doubting God in different circumstances
 → issues with social media

There is a family of God.

Jesus clearly implies that there is a family for all believers which is found in union with Christ. Those who are authentic hearers who demonstrate their authenticity by obeying God—those who are true converts—have a bond with Christ and each other that surpasses the genetic connection we have with our family (this does not make our family less important!).

Though we do not always demonstrate this perfectly, this is true of West London Alliance Church.

One of the ways you avail yourself of this Christian family ^{at WLA} is through small groups. I asked one of our small groups' leadership couple to list what they had walked through as a life group—together—over the past couple of years. Here are some of the things:

"Significant things"

- chronic pain
- infertility
- anxiety/depression
- cancer
- aging parents
- parenting struggles
- accountability and prayer over sin

"Everyday community things"

- Moving residences
- baby/bridal showers
- making meals for others/running errands

- cleaning houses/yard work/building projects
- lending cars/household items
- celebrating birthdays/holidays
- sharing meals/babysitting

There is a family of God!

Perhaps connect with Graham to see how you might connect with the church family.

Communion

One of the ways we identify ourselves as the family of God is through the sharing of a family meal.

1 Corinthians 10:16-17 ESV ¹⁶The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

We are one body, connected to each other by our union with Christ. Let us celebrate together the work of our elder brother to save us, forgive us, reconcile us, and redeem us.

Communion: The Lord's Table

Fence the Table

Open Communion = for those who are followers of Christ

Unbelievers: Participate through observation and consideration

Instructions on Distribution

As necessary

Prayer of Humble Access

We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness but in your abundant and great mercies. We are not worthy even to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord who delights in showing mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat this bread and drink this ^{cup} wine that our bodies and souls may be made clean by Christ's body and blood and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen

Distribution of Emblems

Prayer of Thanksgiving Pre-Communion

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we thank you that in your tender mercy you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; he made there a full atonement for the sins of the world, offering once for all his one sacrifice of himself; he instituted, and in his holy gospel commanded us to continue, a perpetual memory of his precious death until he comes again. Amen.

Take the Bread

In the same night that he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

THE Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith, with thanksgiving.

Take the Cup

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." Amen

THE Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

Prayer of Thanksgiving Post-Communion

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, we most heartily thank you, for ^{you have} ~~that you~~ graciously given us the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of ~~your~~ Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and you assure us thereby of your favour and goodness towards us; and that we are members in the mystical body of your Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of your everlasting kingdom, by the merits of Christ's most precious death and passion. And we humbly ask you, O heavenly Father, to assist us with your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as you have prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*