

# HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

**Luke 7<sup>1</sup> – 8<sup>21</sup>**  
**Leader's Guide**



# HEARING THE WORD Luke 7<sup>1</sup>-8<sup>21</sup> Leader's Guide

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*Nigel Barge, August 2014*

**Scripture Quotations** taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

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## ***Resources***

*The New Bible Dictionary* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, published by Inter Varsity Press  
*The New Bible Commentary* 21<sup>st</sup> century edition. A commentary on every Bible book, IVP

[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)

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# *Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading*



## **LOOK** – What does it *say*?

- 1) The Text
  - a) What questions does it raise - *Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?*
  - b) What surprises you?
- 2) The Context?
  - a) the surrounding text
  - b) the Book of the Bible
  - c) the whole Bible
  - d) the place in the Bible Story



## **LEARN** – What does it *mean*?

- 1) What type of writing is it?
- 2) Answer the questions
- 3) Summarise the passage



## **LISTEN** – What is the *message*?

- 1) Which is the main point?
- 2) Which is the key verse?



## **LIVE** – How should we *respond*?

- 1) What does it show about God, (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) :
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace\*
  - c) Jesus / his salvation\*\*
- 2) What should I do?

\* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and it is perfectly expressed in Jesus.

\*\* The Bible, from 'the fall' onwards, describes God's plan of salvation through his Son. Thus, *all* the Scriptures speak in some way of Jesus (Luke 24:27).

# Reading Narrative

In seeking to hear the Word of God throughout the Bible, we need to take into account the *type of literature* in which each part is written. Exodus is mainly narrative (story), the most common type. To approach narrative correctly we need to keep in mind the following principles.

## 1 In General: It is *God's story*

The whole Bible recounts the story of God's dealings with humankind. After creation and the fall in Genesis, the rest describes how God works out his unfolding plan of salvation for humanity in Jesus. The OT prepares for the arrival, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The NT recounts these and looks forwards to his return at the end of time. It is *all* about Jesus. Therefore:

- a) Every part relates to Him (Luke 24:27; John 5:39).

So as we read, we should be asking – ‘what does this show about Jesus; what is He doing?’

- b) Everything is relevant.

In a film every scene plays some part in the overall story. Often we are shown things in the early stages that make no sense until later. The Bible is the same. So as we read Bible narrative – knowing how it ends – we should be asking ‘what relevance has *this* part of the story to the *main* story?’

## 2 In particular: ‘Follow the camera angle’

A film director focuses the viewer’s attention on particular shots to tell ‘his story’. In the same way each narrator in the Bible is selective about what to tell us. They leave out much general detail, only giving us what is relevant to what they are trying to convey.

As we read we should therefore be asking the question, ‘Why is he telling me this and in this particular way?’

## 3 Warts and all

Human beings often get things wrong. The Bible narrative faithfully records errors, even by people who are elsewhere commended. For instance, Moses murdered a man, King David committed adultery, and Peter, who was praised for realising Jesus was the Christ, was minutes later roundly scolded when he tried to stop Jesus being the Christ through suffering! (Exodus 2:12; 2 Samuel 11; Matthew 16:16-23)

So we can’t treat every thought or action in a narrative as something to copy, just because ‘it’s in the Bible’. We must ask the Holy Spirit to use the rest of Scripture to discern good examples to follow, and bad ones to avoid.

# Background to Luke's Gospel

## The Author

Luke was a doctor and friend of the apostle Paul, who calls him 'the beloved physician' and 'fellow worker' (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24). He began to travel with Paul at Troas (Acts 16:10). He was close to Paul near the end of his life (2 Timothy 4:11).

He may have come from Antioch in Syria, or Troas, or Philippi in Macedonia. He was a Gentile (i.e. not a Jew). Indeed he is the only non-Jewish writer in the New Testament.

He had carried out careful research (see Luke 1:3, 2:51). He also wrote the story of the early church in the 5<sup>th</sup> book of the New Testament, whose full title is: 'The Acts of the Apostles'. It takes us up to Paul's imprisonment in Rome but not his trial, suggesting Luke finished writing it before that event

## The Date of writing

Luke wrote his gospel before he wrote Acts (see Acts 1:1), probably before 63AD.

## The structure

A	The introduction	(1: 1 - 4)
B	The birth of Jesus	(1:5 - 2:52)
C	The start of Jesus' ministry	(3:1 - 4:13)
D	Jesus in Galilee	(4:14 - 9:50)
E	From Galilee to Jerusalem	(9:51 - 19:44)
F	Jesus in Jerusalem	(19:45 – 21:38)
G	The death of Jesus	(22:1 – 23:56)
H	The resurrection of Jesus	(24:1 - 5)

## Its purpose

Matthew and Mark probably wrote their gospels before Luke. Unlike them Luke had not himself witnessed Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection, but he had personal contact with many eyewitnesses who had. He addresses both his Gospel and Acts to someone called Theophilus. This may have been a real individual: could he have been an official in Roman government?... Someone who wanted details of Christianity before Paul's trial in Rome?... Someone who paid Luke's expenses while writing? Actually, the name means, 'friend of God', so it might refer to anyone, in any time or place, who *wanted to know the Gospel and be a friend of God*.

## The Themes

Five themes keep re-occurring in Luke's Gospel:

### 1 Salvation

a) a historical event

Jesus Christ's coming to earth as a man is the centre point of history. Luke points out the exact time and situation of Jesus' birth. (Luke 2). Jesus sets his face towards Jerusalem (9:51) where he completes his work, commits his Spirit to the Father, and dies (23:46). On the third day he rises from death. Forty days later, having promised to return, he ascends to heaven (Acts 1:9-11). Meantime, the Good News of this salvation is offered to all by the power of the Spirit (Acts 2:38,39).

b) for all mankind

From the announcement by the angels of 'good news ... for all people' (2:10) to the genealogy of Jesus stretching back to Adam (3:38), it is clear the non-Jews are included too. This does not deny the importance of Israel. Luke begins and ends his Gospel with people in Jerusalem and shows it to be the ultimate destination of Jesus' earthly ministry (1:8; 2:22, 36; 9:51-53; 13:22; 17:11; 18:31; 19:28).

## 2 The 'outsiders'

Luke shows that people seen as 'weak' are equally welcome in the Kingdom of God, by recording Jesus' interaction with them. This includes:

a) Women

Women are central to the story. At the beginning, the angelic announcement of His birth was to Mary (1:26-38) and at end, the truth of His resurrection was given first to the women at the tomb (24:1-11). He ministered to women in various settings (7:11; 7:37; 13:11; 21:1-4) and it was women who helped finance Him and His apostles (8:2-3).

b) Children

The accounts of Jesus' birth show the importance and value of a child from the womb (1:41!). At various times he intervenes to heal the child of a distraught parent (7:12; 8:42; 9:38)

c) The poor

Jesus himself was from Nazareth (4:16) – a poor, insignificant town (John 1:46). His birth was to an unmarried girl and witnessed by the 'outcasts' of society, the shepherds (2:8-20). The offering at His birth was that of the poor (2:24; Leviticus 12:8) and the message he preached was for the poor (4:18; 7:22). He died with common criminals (23:32,41).

d) Gentiles

Luke, himself a Gentile, is writing to another Gentile, Theophilus (1:3). He records the faith of a Gentile Roman Centurion: of him, Jesus says he had 'not found such great faith in Israel' (7:9). Possibly out of deference to his non-Jewish readership, Luke seldom quotes the Old Testament.

### 3 The Holy Spirit

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is explicit throughout the Gospel, in:

- a)** the birth of John the Baptist (1:15,41,57) **b)** the conception of Jesus (1:35)
- c)** Simeon's prophecy about Jesus (2:25-27) **d)** John's promise that Jesus would 'baptise with the Holy Spirit' (3:16) **e)** the baptism of Jesus (3:22) **f)** the temptations of Jesus (4:1) **g)** the power of Jesus' ministry (4:18) **h)** the joy of the Spirit (10:21) **i)** the promise of the Spirit for His followers (11:13; 12:10-12; 24:49), fulfilled at Pentecost, as Luke records in Acts 2.

### 4 The humanity of Jesus

There is no clearer way of demonstrating Jesus' humanity than noting his recourse to prayer. Through this he shows:

- a) his own dependence on the Father through prayer (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28, 29; 10:21; 11:1; 22:39-46; 23:34, 46).
- b) his identification with his disciples, as He similarly instructs them in prayer through
  - i) parables - the friend at midnight (11:5-13) the unjust judge (18:1-8); the Pharisee and the tax collector (18:10-14)
  - ii) teaching on prayer (6:28; 11:2; 22:40, 46)

### 5 The deity of Jesus

Luke presents Jesus as God in an *oblique* way. This fact was not acknowledged at that time. This is the key theme of the first 5 chapters:

1:17 John prepares for the Lord	4:41 the Son of God
1:32 called Son of the Most High	5:8 the Holy presence
1:43 Mary mother of 'my Lord'	5:13 able to cleanse an individual
2:11 Saviour who is Christ the Lord	5:20 a forgiver of sin
2:49 in 'His Father's house'	5:32 (righteous one) calling sinners to repentance
3:22 God says 'you are my Son';	5:34 the bridegroom
4:34 The Holy one of God	

## The faith of the Centurion

### Background information

Capernaum, a village on the NW shores of the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 4:13), was three miles West of where the river Jordan fed into the Lake from the north. It was near a political border, so that a customs post (Mark 2:14) and military detachment were necessary (Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10).

The area (*Tell Hum*) has been very extensively excavated and gives a vivid picture of what life was like in the 1st century AD. The ruins of a 5<sup>th</sup> century church stand round the ruins of what may have been Peter's house. To protect it, a visitor centre has been built on stilts above the site, in effect a huge roof.

### Word List

1	<i>Capernaum</i>	village on NW shore of Sea of Galilee a place with a strong Roman presence and garrison
	<i>Servant</i>	(gk <i>doulos</i> – a slave) – a ‘living tool’ over which the owner had the right of life or death.
2	<i>centurion</i>	Roman army captain (original meaning ‘in charge of 100 soldiers’ but over time the number varied). (gk <i>entimos</i> ) honoured, esteemed (not monetary)
3	<i>elders</i>	local Jewish religious leaders
5	<i>love our nation</i>	Romans were generally anti-Semitic – Jews a ‘filthy race’. Judaism a ‘barbarous superstition’. Jews ‘hated mankind’. Annually ‘sacrificed a stranger to their God’. (W Barclay)
6	<i>under my roof</i>	Jews were forbidden to enter gentile houses (Acts 10:26)
7	‘Servant’	(gk <i>pais</i> – a child)

### Bible connections

See also Matthew 8:5-131

3	‘deserves (greek <i>agios</i> = <i>Holy</i> )	consecrated Luke 2:23
6	‘deserves’ (greek <i>axious</i> = <i>equal value</i> )	in keeping with Luke 3:8
7	<i>the effect of God’s word</i>	<i>see</i> Psalm 107:20; John 1:1-3
9	<i>those who don’t see and yet believe</i> <i>faith out-with Israel</i>	<i>see</i> John 20:29 Luke 4:25-27; 10:33-37; 17:16; 24:45-47

### LOOK

#### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 1 *What was he saying?*  
*What is special about Capernaum?*
- 2 *Why doesn't it give his nationality (Jew or non-Jew)?*  
*What does he mean 'valued'?*
- 3 *Why did He send 'elders'?*  
*What does 'heard of' Jesus imply?*
- 4 *What does the 'earnest pleading' show?*
- 5 *What does 'love our nation' imply?*  
*Why does he cite 'love our nation' and 'built our synagogue' as reason for Jesus' intervention?*
- 6 *What does 'not far from the house' show?*  
*Why the second thoughts?*  
*Why 'friends'?*
- 7 *Why did he think he didn't 'deserve' to have Jesus come to him?*  
*What did he imply by 'just say the word'?*
- 8 *How did he justify his request?*
- 9 *What was it that so amazed Jesus?*  
*What is significant about not finding such faith in Israel?*
- 10 *Why does the story ends with the messengers not with the centurion?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 3 *Why does it say elders of the 'Jews' (i.e. from Judah in the South)?*
- 7 *Jesus didn't 'say the Word' but he was still healed?*

## 2) The Context

### a) surrounding passage,

- 1 *'saying these things' – 'Looking at His disciples He said....' (6:20)*  
*'The people' - a general descriptive term +<sup>ve</sup> and -<sup>ve</sup> (4:28,31,36)*

### b) individual book,

- 1 *Capernaum had been at the very start of ministry. (Luke 4:31)*  
*'And you Capernaum, will you be lifted up?' (10:15)*
- 2 *Centurion - 'surely this was a righteous man'. (23:47)*
- 3 *'King of the Jews' (23:3,37,38)*
- 6 *'Lord' (4:18; 5:8)*
- 8 *authority (4:36; 5:24; 9:1)*
- 9 *Jesus was 'amazed'. In the rest of Luke, the people are amazed at Him. (4:36; 5:26 etc)*  
*Faith - — sins forgiven, ..has saved you (5:20; 7:50)*

### c) whole bible,

- 3 *elders of the Jews (only in Ezra 5:5; 6:8, 14; Acts 25:15)*

4 *doing for the least of His equals doing it for Jesus (Matthew 25:40)*  
 8 *All authority belongs to Jesus. (Matthew 28:18)*  
 9 *His own people did not recognise Him. (John 1:11)*  
*Jesus amazed at unbelief - only other reference of His being amazed in other Gospels, (Mk 6:6)*

d) The Bible Story

*God and humanity have been separated by sin.*  
*God's requirements of the Law have been given but not met.*  
*God's solution is about to happen as He sends His Son, Jesus.*

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

What questions does the passage raise?

1 *He had just said that from the overflow of a man's heart his mouth speaks' but it is possible to use the words 'Lord, Lord' unfaithfully.*  
*Capernaum is a place with a strong roman Garrison*

2 *It assumes 'non-Jew hence 'he loves our nation' 'found in Israel'. (6,9)*  
*'Valued' is not monetary. It means honoured or dear.*

3 *He send 'elders' because he felt unworthy / they were 'superior'?*  
*It implies he heard the news of what Jesus was doing and saying, and believed?*

4 *'Earnest pleading' shows the regard they had for the centurion.*

5 *It implies the whole people and their God?*  
*They cite these things to show that he merits Jesus' favour'.*

6 *It shows the issue was the coming under his roof and not the bother of travel.*  
*He had second thoughts – something happened in the interim. (vs3 –vs6)*  
*'Friends' were folk like him – 'unworthy ones'?*

7 *He thought it because he recognised Jesus' divinity. (c.f. 5:8)*  
*He understood that Jesus controlled all things by His Word.*

8 *Under his authority, servants obeyed. Under Jesus, sickness and everything else obeys.*

9 *Jesus was amazed by his recognition of who He was / His authority.*  
*In Israel, among His own people, He was not recognised.*

10 *The focus is on Jesus / his action, and not the man's faith.*

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

3 *It says 'Jews' to show that this Roman was relating to the whole (real?) Israel.*

## 7 ‘The Word’ is of God – it doesn’t need to be heard by human ears.

- 3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

*Having spoken of genuine disciples, Jesus is approached by representatives of a senior roman soldier to heal his servant. Jesus agrees. The centurion, humble before Jesus, confesses his belief in His power (and His person). Jesus acknowledged his faith and the servant is healed.*

### LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *Real faith in Jesus is open to all and acknowledges His worthiness and our own unworthiness of Him and his absolute power over all things*

- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage?

**KV** *‘... I did not consider myself worthy, but say the Word and my servant will be healed’ (7b)*

### LIVE

- 1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

- a) His nature and character?

**7** *God controls all things - sickness etc., etc., by His powerful Word*

- b) His grace?

**6** *True faith depends on having no rights before God*

**7** *God graciously gives to the unworthy*

- c) Jesus and His salvation?

**1** *Jesus is not afraid to be in worldly / ‘compromising’ places!*

**6** *Jesus hears our earnest appeals and goes with us when we approach Him humbly.*

**8** *All authority belongs to Jesus.*

**10** *Jesus is willing to heal folk on the request of the faithful.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

- 2) What should I do?

**3** *Note - Faith comes by hearing of Jesus (the Word of God)*

**4** *Note – favour comes to those who treat God’s people well.*

7 Be humble about your own unworthiness before God

9 Note - It is possible to amaze God!  
Recognise real faith in Jesus.  
Acknowledge the faith of the 'gentiles' in Jesus' community / the Church.

10 When you have asked Jesus for something, 'return to the house' and see what He has done!

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Jesus raises a widow's son

### Background information

In Nain, Jesus meets a funeral procession. The body, wrapped in a shroud, would have been lying on a bier being carried. The mother would have been walking ahead of it. When Jesus touched the bier he became ritually unclean, according to the ceremonial laws; but where human need was concerned, he never worried about ceremonial trifles.

### Word List

11 <i>Nain</i>	probably the modern Nein, 6 miles SE of Nazareth and a day's journey from Capernaum  It is situated on north side of Hill of Moreh. {A couple of miles away, on the south side was Shunem where Elisha raised another boy (2 Kings 4:32-37)}
13 <i>the Lord</i>	This is the first time Luke himself uses this term for Jesus.
14 <i>coffin</i>	better translated 'bier', perhaps a long, wicker-work basket

### Bible connections

Other raising-from-the-dead events in Scripture: *see* 1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:32-37; Matthew 9:18-24; Mark 5:21-24; John 11:1-44

16 <i>God has come to help his people.</i>	<i>see also</i> Ruth 1:6; 1 Samuel 2:21
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# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

11 *What was it ‘soon after’?*

*What is the significance of Nain.*

*Who were ‘His disciples’ and the ‘large crowd’ who accompanied Him?*

12 *Where were they going with the dead person?*

*What is the significance of ‘the only son of a widow’?*

*What does the ‘large crowd’ accompanying the widow mean?*

13 *Why did ‘his heart go out to her’?*

*What did he mean by ‘don’t cry’?*

14 *Why did he touch the coffin?*

*Why did the bearers stand still?*

*How did he know he was a ‘young man’?*

*Why does he speak to a dead body?*

*Why did he say to him, ‘I say to you’?*

15 *What does it mean - to ‘give him back to his mother’?*

16 *Why did the crowd ‘praise God’?*

*What did they mean ‘a great prophet’?*

*How had God come to ‘help His people’?*

*What was the news about Him?*

‘What surprises or confuses you?

*He was in Galilee but the news is recorded as spreading through ‘the land of the Jews’*

## 2) The Context

a) Surrounding passage,

11 *large crowd and disciples (large crowd of disciples (6:17b)*

b) Individual book,

11 *His disciples – the twelve? (8:22; 11:14)*

12 *widow (2:37; 4:26; 18:3; 21:3)*

13 *had compassion (10:33; 15:20)*

14 *touched the coffin (5:13; 22:51)*

*‘I say to you’ (11:9) is unusual and emphatic?!*

15 *gave him back (9:42)*

*The dead are separated. (16:25ff)*

*Filled with awe (1:65; 5:26)*

*The good news spreading (4:14; 37; 5:15)*

*Not sure of who Jesus is (9:19)*

17 Judea – including Galilee? (23:5; Acts 10:37; 11:1,29)

c) whole bible,

12 town gate where elders sat (Deuteronomy 25:7)

only son (c.f. John 3:16)

widow – weak and foolish (1 Corinthians 1:27,28)

13 Elisha raised the Shunnamite's son to life. (2 Kings 4:32-37)

Don't cry/ be anxious about anything (Philippians 4:6)

14 touching a dead body = unclean (Numbers 19:11)

control by His Word (Hebrews 1:3)

not ashamed to be our God (Hebrews 11:16)

15 While we were dead ... Christ made us alive (Ephesians 2:1,4)

a chasm between living and dead ((Luke 16:25ff))

16 Jesus, 'the great prophet' (Deuteronomy 18:15; Luke 24:19)

d) Bible story

See study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

11 It was 'soon after' the incident when Jesus saw faith greater than any he had seen in Israel.

Nain is close to Shunem, where a great OT prophet raised a dead child.

His disciples were the Twelve (9:14 ff) and the 'large crowd' were the people (7:1).

12 They were going to bury him.

The widow had no man to speak up for her – in effect, no rights.

The 'large crowd' may mean she was well known or well thought of.

13 'His heart went out to her' because she was alone, mourning her son.

Jesus saying 'Don't cry' meant he was going to address the situation / raise her son.

14 He touched the coffin/bier to show that he had raised the boy?

The bearers stand still because they were expecting something.

Jesus knew he was a 'young man' because ... the coffin was open/ mother leading the mourners/size of funeral?

He speaks to the dead body since He had power over death.

'I say to you' was so the people knew he was addressing the corpse.

15 To 'give him back to his mother' implied she had lost him to death.

16 They praised God because they recognised God must have done this.

*It was 800 years since the last ‘great prophet’ (Elisha) – this was a new era?*

*God had come to ‘help His people’ by sending this prophet to speak God’s Word to them.*

*The news was that a man spoke the Word and God vindicated him with acts of power.*

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

*The ‘land of the Jews’ shows that Galilee was included, along with Jerusalem the capital..*

3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

*Having just saved from death the slave of a very rich influential gentile, Jesus now raises the dead son of a very poor, insignificant Jewish woman. This fuels the message that God is at work: His Prophet has come!*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *The Word of Jesus raises the dead.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage?

**KV** *He said, “Young man I say to you, get up”! The young man sat up and began to talk. (14b, 15a)*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

**11** *God is / His work is attractive.*

**13** *God is compassionate – He feels our pain*

**14** *God is not afraid to touch us / associate Himself with us.*  
*God’s Word is life giving.*

b) His grace?

**13/14** *God raises the dead (who cannot contribute in any way).*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

*11 Jesus is unpredictable where He will go / work.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

*11 Hang around Jesus and you will see great things!*

14 Remember – when you were dead in your trespasses and sin God made you alive in Christ.

*15 Acknowledge that He has the power of life and death.*

*16 Note - Awe is a good response to the work of God.*

*Note - We may recognise that God is at work, without acknowledging Him, Himself.*

*17 Note - Genuine news about Jesus spreads.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

# Jesus and John the Baptist

## Background information

At this point, John the Baptist was in prison (Luke 3:20 Matthew 11:2). Presumably he was expecting Jesus to do something dramatic. When nothing seemed to be happening, he sent men to Jesus to find out why – and possibly to provoke some action? Jesus gave them a surprising answer.

## Word List

22 <i>leprosy</i>	the Greek word covers various skin diseases
24 <i>prophet</i>	a person who spoke God's word
24 <i>fine clothes</i>	lit 'soft' clothes (c.f. Matthew 3:4 – camel hair!)

## Bible connections

*See also* Matthew 11:2-19

18 <i>John was Jesus' cousin – aware of the His promise.</i>	Luke 1:35-66
19 <i>One coming 'will baptise with the Holy Spirit.....'</i>	Luke 3:16ff
22 <i>fulfilment of prophecy</i>	<i>see</i> Isaiah 29:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1-2; Luke 4:18
24 <i>John's desert ministry</i>	<i>see</i> Luke 3:1-20; Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 1:4-7; John 1:15-28
27 <i>John's ministry foretold</i>	<i>see</i> Malachi 3:1
28 <i>tax collectors believing</i>	<i>see</i> Luke 3:12; Matthew 21:32; Mark 1:5
33 <i>eating locust and wild honey</i>	Mark 1:3

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 18 *What were 'all these things'?*
- 19 *What was he expecting?*
- 21 *Why the emphasis – 'at that very time'?*
- 22 *Why was that proof?*  
What was 'the good news' that was proclaimed
- 23 *What did he mean 'fall away/ take offense'?*  
What does he mean 'on account of me'?
- 26 *Why did folk go into the desert to see John?*
- 27 *What was Jesus saying / claiming about John?*
- 28 *Who are in the Kingdom of God?*
- 29 *What was 'God's way'?*
- 30 *What was 'God's purpose' that they rejected?*  
What did 'John's baptism' mean?
- 31 *Who are 'the people of this generation'?*
- 32 *What does the children's behaviour mean?*
- 35 *What does wisdom being proved right by her children mean?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 46 *Why did John the Baptist doubt Jesus?*

## 2) The Context

a) Surrounding passage,

- 18 *'these things' - Healed Centurion slave; acknowledged the faith of the Centurion is greater than any in Israel. (7:1-10)*  
- Raised the widow of Nain's son. (7:11-17)

b) Individual book,

- 18 *two of them (10:1)*
- 19 *'one who is to come' (3:16; 13:35; 19:38)*
- 22 *'preach good news to the poor...etc' (4:18ff)*
- 30 *John's baptism for repentance for sin (3:3)*
- 34 *tax collectors in Apostles (5:29)*  
*tax collectors and sinners (15:1,2)*
- 35 *The Lord full of wisdom / grew in wisdom (2:40; 5:52)*

c) Whole bible,

- 18 *John pointed to Jesus (Mt3:13; Jn 1:29,35f; 10:41 Act 18:25; 19:40*

Two witnesses (Deut. 19:15)

19 the one to come (Heb. 10:37)

20 Jesus not to judge but to save the world (John 12:47)

22 blind (Isaiah 35:5) lame (Isaiah 35:6), lepers, the deaf (Isaiah 35:5), the dead and the poor (Isaiah 61:1)

27 the messenger – Elijah (Malachi 3:1; 4:5)

28 Death with Jesus –repentance; life through resurrection-Holy Spirit (Romans 6:4, Acts 2:38)

31 c.f. aliens and strangers in the world (1 Peter 2:11)

35 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. (Proverbs 9:10)

d) Bible story

See study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

18 ‘all these things’ were the healing of centurions slave and the acknowledgement of his faith and the raising of the dead son of the widow of Nain.

19 He was expecting fire and judgement.

21 ‘At that very time’ is a contrast to the question – the answer is already apparent.

22 It is proof because it fulfilled Scripture.  
The good news’ that the poor were included.

23 By ‘fall away/ take offense’ he meant rejecting him and therefore being rejected.  
‘On account of me’ means believing/not believing in Him.

26 They went because God was at work – there can have been no human reason.

27 John was preparing the way for the Lord / for Him.

28 Those in the Kingdom are those who acknowledge the King, Jesus.

29 ‘God’s way’ was John the Baptist as the forerunner of Jesus.

30 ‘God’s purpose’ was that people repent of their sin and look to the Saviour  
‘John’s baptism’ meant repentance for forgiveness of sin.

31 ‘The people of this generation’ are the non-believers in Jesus.

32 The behaviour is fickle – never satisfied.

35 This means that God is not in a hurry and His way will be seen to be true in time.

2) What surprises or confuses you?

46 *John the Baptist doubted Jesus because he was expecting fire and judgement, now. Whereas Jesus had not come to judge but to save.*

3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

*John is unsure of Jesus and questions His mission. Jesus replies by noting that He is doing what scripture says the Messiah will do.*

*Turning to the crowd he recognises John as the prophet forerunner of the Messiah/king but says that the least in the kingdom is greater than he. Those who believed John, believed Jesus.*

*Those who didn't were never satisfied. But Jesus will be vindicated in time.*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *Only those who have repented (Johns baptism) can receive the Kingdom of God ( Jesus as Lord / King)*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 29**

**KV** *'All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus word's, acknowledged that God's way was right (lit. justified God) because they had been baptised by John.'*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

24 *God is not impressed by the outer form.*

35 *God will be proved right.*

b) His grace?

29 *God chooses the unsuspecting/ ‘unworthy’ to reveal Himself to.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

21 *Jesus purposes to heal.*

23 *Jesus is the key - (Blessed is he who does not fall away on account of me).*

28 *Jesus brings in the Kingdom of God.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

- 19 Note - *it is not sinful to ask Jesus sincere and direct question.*
- 20 Be faithful to what questions are genuinely being asked.
- 22 Look at the evidence of Jesus.
- 23 Hold onto Jesus even (like John) when you don't understand
- 24f Note with God, the reality is more important than appearances
- 28 Note the greatest thing of all is to be a child of God / His Kingdom
- 29 Note - Even / especially the tax collectors acknowledged that God's way is right.
- 33 Beware of those who will not be satisfied with any answer.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Jesus anointed by a sinful woman

### Background information and Word List

In the Middle East, houses of well-to-do people were built round an open courtyard. Weather permitting, meals were eaten there, at tables in three sides of a square, with diners round the outside. It was the custom that when a Rabbi (Jewish teacher) was present at a meal, all kinds of people were free to come in and listen to the pearls of wisdom which fell from his mouth.

When a guest entered such a house three things were done: the host gave them a kiss of peace, a servant poured cold water over dusty feet, and a drop of oil or perfume was placed on the guest's head.

Matthew (26:6-13), Mark (14:3-9) and John (12:1-8) also record a woman anointing Jesus. There are good reasons for thinking those three refer to one, common incident but Luke to another: eg Luke's story occurs early in Jesus' ministry while the others refer to the last week of his life; besides, the dialogue is about money for the poor etc, not forgiveness as in Luke.

36	<i>Pharisees</i>	Jewish leaders who interpreted the law very rigourously; their emphasis was ethical rather than theological; known as the 'separated ones'.
	<i>reclined</i>	The tables were low, so diners reclined on cushions, leaning on left hand or elbow with feet stretched out behind.
37	<i>alabaster jar</i>	Gk <i>alabastros</i> means a globular container for perfumes; it had no handle; the long neck was broken off when the contents were needed.
	<i>perfume</i>	ie perfumed oil, rare and expensive
38	<i>her hair</i>	Jewish ladies did not unbind their hair in public.
41	<i>denarii</i>	one denarius was a day's pay for a labourer.
46	<i>oil</i>	olive oil, plentiful and cheap
50	<i>go in peace</i>	The Greek is literally 'go <i>into</i> peace'.

### Bible connections

44	<i>water for guest's feet</i>	<i>c.f.</i> Genesis 18:4; Judges 19:21
	<i>kiss of welcome</i>	<i>c.f.</i> Genesis 29:13; 45:15
	<i>anointing guest's head</i>	<i>c.f.</i> Psalm 23:5; 141:5
47	<i>saving faith</i>	<i>see</i> Ephesians 2:8-9

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

36 *Which Pharisees?*

*Where were His disciples?*

*Why does it tell you that He reclined at the table?*

37 *Why does it say 'in that town'?*

*Why does it specify 'an alabaster jar' of perfume?*

38 *Why was she weeping?*

*Why was she giving such attention to his feet?*

39 *How did Jesus know this is what he was thinking?*

40 *Why did he say 'tell' instead of 'ask'?*

*Why did Simon call him 'teacher'?*

42 *Why the use of 'agape' (meaning love i.e. selfless giving).*

43 *Why does he 'suppose'?*

44f *What was Jesus' point in the comparison of the welcomes?*

47 *What does 'therefore' mean?*

*Who has been forgiven 'little'?*

48 *Why did he tell her – 'your sins are forgiven?*

49 *What did they mean – 'who is this who even forgives sins?'*

50 *Why did He say this – was it not enough to say 'Your sins are forgiven'?*

*When were her sins forgiven?*

What surprises or confuses you?

37 *Expect Jesus to pronounce salvation and then woman to respond – wrong way round?!*

50 *Why does Jesus not make it clear that Simon is not saved? (cf 5:31)*

## 2) The Context

a) Surrounding passage,

36 *Pharisees –not been baptised by John (7:30)*

b) Individual book

36 *Pharisees - not all bad (13:31)*

*previously he had dined with a tax collector (5:29)*

47 *no-one has a little sin / is healthy (5:31)*

48 *forgiver of sins (5:20 ff)*

49 *Who is this? (8:25)*

*The forgiver of sins is God. alone. (5:21, 24)*

*Your faith has healed (saved) you. Go in peace' woman bleeding for*

12 years (8:48)  
50 Peace (Luke 10:5)

c) Whole bible,

36 *It is possible to diligently study the Scriptures but to miss Jesus. (John 5:39) not all Pharisees bad c.f. Nicodemus (John 3:1ff; 7:50; 19:39)*

38 *anointing Jesus feet questioned by Judas (John 12:5) Jesus washed his disciples' feet. (John 13:1)*

47 *no difference - All have fallen short of God's glory (Romans 3:23)*

49 *forgives sin (Ps 103:3; Micah 7:8) the chief of sinners (1 Timothy 1:16)*

50 *he saved us not because of the righteous things we have done but because of His mercy (Titus 3:5) Save by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8,9)*

d) Bible story

See study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

36 *The Pharisees who 'rejected the purposes of God for themselves because they had not been baptised by John' (7:30) His disciples were not official guests (reclining) but would have been there in background? It tells you he was reclining to explain why he had access to Jesus' feet.*

37 *It says 'in that town' to show she was known by the people. It says 'an alabaster jar' to show that breaking its neck was an all or nothing gesture*

38 *She was weeping because before Jesus she felt so bad about herself – i.e. conviction. She was giving such attention to his feet as it was the only part she could reach / it showed her recognition of His superiority.*

39 *Jesus knew what he was thinking as a gift of the Spirit?*

40 *He said 'tell' as Jesus wanted to make a statement not teach a point. 'teacher' (Greek *didaskalos*) was a general term not 'teacher' (Rabbi) implying recognition and submission.*

42 *He uses 'agape' to ask which would you expect to be more devoted / self-giving.*

43 *He 'supposes' his answer, that was expected, but he was wary of the implications?*

44f *Simon had not even given the minimum; the woman gave all she had!*

47 *It implies that her many sins were forgiven through her recognition of Jesus as Lord.*  
*No one only has a ‘little’ sin*

48 *He could tell her – ‘your sins are forgiven’ because he was God . (5:21)*

49 *‘Who is this who even forgives sins’ means that they understood the nature of the claim.*

50 *He wanted her to know not only what had happened – ‘forgiven’, but how it had happened, ‘through faith’.*  
*Her sins were forgiven when she had faith i.e. before she anointed his feet!!!*

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

37 *The woman must have had faith (salvation) when she approached*

50 *Jesus focus is on those, like the woman, in whom the Spirit of God is at work.*

3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

*Jesus is invited to dinner at a Pharisee’s house, courteously. A local woman of loose morals accords his feet the honour and respect and more that his host denied Him. Simon, seeing this, questioned Jesus authenticity to himself.*

*Jesus answered that, unlike him, this woman treated Him with royal gratitude thus showing her many sins had been forgiven.*

*He sends the woman on her way acknowledging that it is her faith in Him that has saved her.*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *Faith in Jesus, evidenced in our action, is what brings peace with God.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage?

**KV** *‘Your faith has saved you; go in peace’ (50)*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

40 *God knows what we are thinking*

44ff *God notices (and enjoys) our natural expression of devotion to him*

b) His grace

42 *God cancels debt*

50 *God saves us through faith, by grace.*

c) Jesus and His salvation

48 *Jesus forgives sin.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

36 *Just ask Jesus – whoever you are?*

*Be prepared to follow Jesus into any situation (c.f. 5:27)*

37 *Don't be constrained in response to Jesus as to what other think.*

42 *Use your minds when God deals you.*

47 *Note - An expression of loves shows our appreciation of forgiveness of sins*

50 *Note – Peace with God is evidence that our many sins are forgiven.*

*Note - Salvation is for anyone, whatever the past.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## The parable of the sower

### Background information

Jesus is on a preaching tour, speaking in the open air, perhaps because of increasing hostility on the part of the synagogue leaders. Some women are accompanying him and his twelve disciples. Rabbis refused to teach women and generally assigned them a very inferior place but Jesus freely admitted them into fellowship and depended on their service.

The Palestinian farmer sowed first and ploughed afterwards (as he still does) and then the nature of the soil was seen as the ground sprouted.

### Word List

2	<i>Magdalene</i>	someone who came from Magdala (meaning 'The Tower'), a village near Capernaum.
	<i>seven demons</i>	Seven is the divine Jewish number meaning 'complete'.
	<i>susanna</i>	means 'lily'
3	<i>Chuza</i>	A non-Jew, Nabatean, descendent of Abraham's half-brother, Ishmael (Gen 25:13)
4	<i>parable</i>	Manager – right-hand man, chancellor of his exchequer short descriptive story, usually designed to show a single truth or answer a single question
10	<i>secrets</i>	<i>mysteria</i> , spiritual truths only God can reveal
15	<i>Noble and good Heart</i>	both words similar meaning - 'good' and 'productive' the place of Jewish mind / thinking

### Bible connections

		<i>see also</i> Matthew 13:2; Mark 4:1-20
1	<i>the Twelve</i>	the twelve men Jesus appointed 'apostles' (6:13)- 'to be with Him, to preach and to cast out demons'. (Mark 3:14f)
2	<i>Susanna</i> means <i>Lily</i>	Song of Solomon 2:16;4:5;5:13;6:2,3; 7:2 possibly the 'woman of the city' (7:36ff)??
3	<i>Mary Magdalene</i>	watched crucifixion (Mt 27:55f; Mk15:40; John 19:25) saw where he was laid, (Mt 27:61; Mk15:47); Lk 23:55 went to anoint Jesus body (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:1; Lk24:10)
10	<i>...seeing, they may not see...</i>	<i>see</i> Isaiah 6:9-13
11	<i>the Word of God</i> <i>God gives the growth</i>	<i>see</i> Hebrews 4:12 1 Corinthians 3:7

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 1    *After what?*  
      *Why didn't Jesus stay in one place – the crowds were coming?*  
      *What is the 'good news of the kingdom of God'?*
- 2    *What has happened to the large crowd of disciples' (6:17)?*
- 2/3    *Why were these three women named?*
- 3    *Why were there no men to support them?*  
      *What were 'their own means' mean?*
- 9    *Who had 'ears to hear'?*
- 10    *What are the 'secrets of the Kingdom of God'?*
- 11    *Why did he intend some to hear and others to understand?*
- 12    *Who is to blame if the Devil takes the seed and one doesn't believe?*
- 15    *Why does all good fruit have to 'persevere'?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 10    *Why does God want some to be saved (believe) and yet He allows the Devil to stop others from believing?*

## 2) The Context

- a) Surrounding passage,
- 4    *Crowds (7:11,24; 8:4,19,40,45) (c.f. in the synagogues (4:15,44)*

- b) Individual book,
- 1    *Preaching the good news of the Kingdom was Jesus' purpose. (4:43)*
- 2    *Women from Galilee who would witness His burial and resurrection (23:49, 55; 24:1)*
- 3    *Mary Magdalene and Joanna - witness of resurrection (24:6,10)*
- 8    *Ears to hear (14:35)*
- 10    *Knowledge received but could not understand his death (18:34)*
- 11    *Word of God John the Baptist (3:2) Jesus (5:1)*

- c) Whole bible,
- 2    *Some women – surprising choice to have around! (John 4:27)*
- 4    *Crowds (Acts 2:24)*
- 6    *Shallow ground – liked to listen (Ez33:32; Mk6:20)*
- 10    *The Holy Spirit convicts (John 16:8-11)*  
      *God wants all men to be saved (1 Tim 2:3f)*
- 11    *In the Word is life (John 1:4)*
- 12    *The devil as a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8)*

*The devil blinds the eyes of unbelievers. (2 Corinthians 4:4)*

**15 The Word multiplies. (Acts 6:7; 12:24; 13:49; 19:20)**

d) Bible story

See study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

*I After the incident with the anointing by the ‘sinful’ woman Jesus moved because the message was for all even those who couldn’t move*

*The good news of the Kingdom is that God reigns and we can be part of it.*

*2 The large crowd of disciples (6:17) are part of the large crowd assembling. (8:4)*

*2/3 They are named because they are significant ; Mary Magdalene - seriously demonised, Joanna - married to a non-Jew, political elite, Susannah, ‘Lily’, cf song of Solomon, - a woman of ill repute? (7:36ff)*

*3 Jesus chose the women to support Him.  
‘Their own means’ indicates financial wealth.*

*9 Those who had ‘ears to hear’ were those God had given understanding to.*

*10 The secrets of the Kingdom of God’ are things known only to God and those whom He choose to reveal them to.*

*11 He intends some to hear and not to understand because the Spirit had not yet come.*

*12 Both the Devil and the unbeliever are to blame.*

*15 A noble and good heart is one who ‘believes in Jesus’. All good fruit have to ‘persevere’ to produce other fruit.*

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

*God was revealing Himself to some folk at that time; the Devil had blinded the minds of unbelievers.*

3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

*Jesus travelled around with his twelve apostles supported by a very dubious group of women. To a large crowd he told the parable of the Sower without the explanation as yet.*

He told the disciples it showed the response to the Word of God – some rejected, some received and some fell away because of persecution or ‘worldliness’. However some persevered and the Word was multiplied greatly.

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *The growth of the Word depends not on the preacher but the Word itself and on the way it is received.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 15**

**KV** *But the seed on good soil stand for those with a good and productive heart who hear the Word, retain it and by persevering produce a crop.*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

1 *God's Kingdom is good news.*

*God wants good news to be spread.*

2 *God purposes all sorts to share in His ministry of the Word.*

b) His grace?

10 *God reveals His secrets when and to whom He chooses.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

3 *Jesus lets others support Him and, depends on them.*

15 *Jesus will reproduce the Word of God in those who persevere.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

1 *Note - the Word is to be offered to all.*

4 *Note - The person /the message of Jesus is attractive.*

8 *Note - Not everyone who hears Jesus speak, listens to Him.*

11 *Sow the seed - Proclaim the Word of God.*

12 *Beware - The devil stops the ears of hearers of the Word.*

13/14 *Some respond to the Word but do not reproduce it.*

15 *Note Good soil is a noble and a good heart good.*

*Believing in Jesus means persevering with and sharing God's Word*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## A lamp on a stand

### Background information

Here we have three short sayings of Jesus, each with its own warning for life. The third one (v18) seems to link up directly with the foregoing parable of the sower and also that of the pounds (19:26) It is important to hear rightly.

### Word List

16	<i>lamp</i>	a round pottery bowl to hold the oil; with what looked like a spout where the wick projected.
17	<i>into the open</i>	meaning 'seen' (lit 'into the light' cf vs 16)
18a	<i>consider carefully</i>	Greek 'blepete' - same word as 'watch out' (21:8)
	<i>Listen</i>	Greek 'akouete' - same word as 'hear' (8:8)

### Bible connections

*see also* Matthew 5:15; Mark 4:21-22; Luke 12:2

16	<i>light</i>	A light on its stand	Luke 11:33
		Jesus is the Light of the world	John 9:5
		The Word of God is a lamp	Psalm 119:105
17	<i>nothing concealed</i>	REPEATED in	Luke 12:2
18	' <i>whoever</i> ' (same words in Greek – "os gar an")		Luke 9:26
	' <i>what he thinks he has will be taken away</i> ' REPEATED in		Luke 19:26

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

16 *Why is there no intro to vs 16?*

*What does the light represent?*

*Who will come in?*

17 *What is hidden that will be disclosed?*

*Why the 'for..'?*

*Why the double negative and repetition?*

*When will it be brought into the open?*

*Why does it repeat itself – '...hidden ..... concealed'?*

18 *Why 'therefore'?*

*What does 'listen carefully' imply?*

*What are they given more of?*

*How can it be taken from you if you don't have it?*

*Who takes it away?*

*When is it taken?*

What surprises or confuses you?

*its abruptness and apparent change of direction (16)*

## 2) The Context

What other parts of the Bible – s

a) Surrounding passage,

18 *'Listen carefully' refers to those who hear the Word of God (8:8ff)*

b) Individual book,

16 *People of the light (16:8)*

17 *Awareness of Jesus exposes sin (5:8)*

*On the day the Son of man is revealed. (17:30)*

c) Whole bible,

16 *Light of mankind (John 1:4-9)*

*Let your light so shine before men (Matthew 5:16)*

*Nations will come to your light (Isaiah 60:3)*

*Shine like stars (Philippians 2:15)*

17 *You are the God who sees me (Genesis 16:13)*

*The books are opened (Revelation 20:12b)*

18 *Even loosing that which you have (Matthew 25:24-30)*

d) Bible story

See study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

16 *There is no introduction to it because it follows on directly.*

*Light represents the Word of God / Jesus.*

*Others who we witness to, will 'come in' and believe.*

17 *Us, our actions, our sin will be exposed by the light / Jesus.*

*'For' because it is the light that discloses.*

*The double negative is emphatic - everything will be completely uncovered/  
Our faithfulness as sowers will be brought into the open?*

18 *'Therefore' –because everything will be brought into the open*

*It is possible to listen but not 'hear'*

*They are given more light / more knowledge of Jesus.*

*It stresses the absolute and finality of judgement.*

*The judge / God takes it away.*

*It is taken away at the day of judgement.*

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

*The fact that it has no introduction must mean that it is said 'in the same breath' as the preceding passage / related to it.*

*It seems unconnected to the types of soil but the one with the light is connected to the sower.*

*The parable is for the disciples (9) – the 12, and the women about sharing the Gospel*

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

*We are meant by God to make the Word of God known. Our actions in this regard will be seen by God / by all at Judgement. So be careful and aware that your faithfulness in sowing /shedding the light will be rewarded. Without that concern, your religion may be in vain.*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *Because sharing His Word is the Lord's intent for those who listen, believers must do it seriously as on that they will be judged.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage?

**KV** *Therefore, consider carefully how you listen (18a)*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

**16** *God intends His Word to be shared by believers.*

b) His grace?

**16** *Jesus is the light (John 1:4-9) GIVEN to men (John 3:16)*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

**18** *In responding to the light (Jesus) and sharing Him – more will be given.*

*Note - Those who don't respond / share – go out / the light is removed.*

*Listen carefully to the Lord and shine for the Him.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

**16** *Note - non-believers are intended to hear (see) the Word from a believer.*

*Receive and share the light (Jesus) with the world around.*

**17** *Note - everything will be known on the day of Judgement.*

**18** *Because all will be revealed on the day of judgment, be serious about the Lord's command to shine.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Jesus' mother and brothers

### Background information and word list

The most natural understanding of the phrase, 'Jesus' brothers', is that they were children of Joseph and Mary, younger than Jesus. Mark (6:3) gives the names of four, and also mentions sisters.

21 lit - 'hearing and doing the Word of God'

### Bible connections

*see also* Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:21,31-35

19 *now* (Greek 'de') – a link word *c.f.* 7:36; 8:40 (in the other Gospels this event is set before the parable of the sower)

*Jesus' care for his mother*

*see* John 19:26

*Jesus' brothers*

*see* Matthew 13:55

*Jesus' brother James*

*see* 1 Corinthians 15:7; Galatians 1:19; Acts 12:17

19,20,21 *Jesus' 'mother and brothers'* – mentioned three times

This is the last mention of Jesus' mother / family in Luke's Gospel.

21 *putting God's word into practice* *see* Luke 6:47; 11:28; John 14:21

# LOOK

## 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

19 Why is 'now' there?

*Why was His mother there and not his sisters?*

*Why were His family not with Him?*

*Why did they want to see Him?*

*Where was Joseph?*

*Who were 'the crowd'?*

20 Who was it that told Him?

*What were they standing outside?*

*How did the announcer know?*

*What did they want to see Him for?*

21 Who was His reply for?

*Who 'hear Gods Word'?*

*What does 'put into practice' involve?*

What surprises or confuses you?

*It seems very harsh, abrupt and dismissive of His family?*

## 2) The Context

a) Surrounding passage,

19 Crowd (8:4,40)

21 'Hear' - same word as '...ears to hear' (8:9b), '...having heard the Word' (8:15), 'Watch out how you hear'. (8:18)

b) Individual book,

19 Unable to find a way in because of the crowd (5:19)

*Hate his father and mother (14:25f)*

*Seek and you will find. (9:11)*

21 Eyewitnesses and servants of the Word (1:2)

*The Word of God came to John. (3:2)*

*Jesus spoke the Word of God. (5:1)*

*Let me say goodbye to my family. (9:59-61)*

c) Whole bible,

19 Honour your father and your mother. (Exodus 20:12)

*Jesus' mother (John 2:1)*

*Finding God by seeking (Jeremiah 29:13)*

20 Humble before God (Daniel 10:12)

*Humble yourselves before God and in due time he will lift you up.*

(I Peter 5:6)

21 *Mother and brothers believe later. (Acts 1:14)*  
‘....love me more than father and mother’ (Matt 10:37)  
*Children of God through the Spirit (Romans 8:14-17)*  
*The Word was God. (John 1:1)*  
*The Word became flesh in Jesus. (John 1:14)*

d) Bible story

See study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

19 *Now’ is there to show continuity.*  
*Daughters did not count in society.*  
*His family were not with Him because they did not yet believe in Him?*  
*They wanted to see Him to ‘protect’ Him. (Mark 3:21)*  
*There is no mention of Joseph after. (2:41ff)*  
*‘The crowd’ were those who had come together from town to town (8:4)*  
20 *‘Who told Him?’ is not an important detail.*  
*They were standing outside a house - i.e. on the peripheries.*  
*The announcer knew by word of mouth.*  
*They wanted to reprimand Him?*  
21 *His reply was for the announcer, the hearers, us.*  
*Those who have ears to hear(8c), ‘hear Gods Word’?*  
*‘Putting into practice’ involves hearing and doing.*

2) How do you resolve the issues that surprised or confused you?

*Earthly family is important (c.f. Exodus 20:12) but God / His family are supremely important.*

3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

*Jesus’ immediate family sought to ‘protect Him’ from the crowds. Jesus ignored this saying that His family were those who heard and obeyed God’s Word.*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *Jesus closest relationships / His family are with those who obey God's Word.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage?

**v 21**

**KV** *My mother and brothers are those 'hearing and doing' the Word of God.*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

**19** *God is to be found when you seek Him.*

b) His grace?

**21** *God speaks to us by His Word.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

**21** *Hearing and obeying God's Word / Jesus is how you become part of His family.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

**19** *Don't assume that your relatives will be 'with you' in God's work.*

*Don't let 'the crowd' put you off pursuing Jesus.*

**20** *Be ready to intercede for others.*

**21** *Hear and obey Jesus' Word.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

# Sharing the Word

## Use

*'Hearing the Word'* can be used alone, with one other person, or in a group

## Preparing for a group

Time put in alone beforehand will greatly benefit time spent together.

Work through the stages - LOOK, LEARN, LISTEN, LIVE.

Write down your own questions and answers. \*

## Format

- a. LOOK - Any questions? (If answer is known or not!)  
Relevant cross references in rest of the Bible?
- b. LEARN - Answers to questions?
- c. LISTEN - Key verse and Main Point?
- d. LIVE - What does it show about God /His grace/ Jesus?  
What should I do

**n.b.** Leave plenty of time for the LIVE section!

By also eating together and a time of prayer, you will have shared something of the life of the early church! (Acts 2:42-47)

## Remember!

As we gather round God's Word -

- a) Listen to the views of others.
- b) Make room for the novice. (They can join in too when you start by listing 'Any questions'.)
- c) Don't let the 'knowledgeable' dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
- d) Try to include others, especially 'seekers', in your time together.

\* The **process** is explained and practiced in a four-hour course, suitable for all, called '**An Introduction to 'Hearing the Word'**

<https://hearingtheword.org.uk>



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