

THE SIGN OF JONAH

Luke 11:27-36

SELECTIVE HEARING/SELECTIVE SEEING

Humans have an incredible capacity for "selective hearing"

We can listen to a conversation and hear only what we want to hear.

Tongue in cheek: Nannette Lowe

Snow shovel- "I want my husband to come learn from your example"

"My ability to shovel snow disappears when I get home at night"

"I chose to edit that out!"

More serious:

Message for parents- one mother of three adult daughters listened.

Leaving she said: "I am so glad that I'm through that."

Not counting the 2 teenagers still living at home.

Grandpa's hearing aid: "I hear too much already!"

Telephone call: "I didn't hear it 'til the second time it rang!"

Counseling or preaching- people remember what you said to the other guy, but not to them.

Sometimes able to quote long passages, when it's convenient to use against the other person. - Can't remember the briefest parts of what you say to me- that which speaks to my problem.

THIS IS NOT A NEW CHARACTERISTIC!

Our Lord saw it.

He referred to it as "**selective seeing**".

His trip to Jerusalem to die => REJECTION

THEY SAW WHAT THEY WANTED TO SEE!

Jesus tries to convince Israel to receive the blessing He came to give and to avoid the coming judgment. That blessing is based on trusting Him.

Consequences of rejection 11:14-54

Their accusation 11:14-16

Jesus' defense 11:17-36

Answer to the challenge that he cast out demons by Satanic power. 11:17-26 [11:15]

Answer to the challenge that he give them a sign from heaven 11:27-36 [11:16]

THE BLESSED ONES 11:27-28 - "HEAR"

Jesus uses the blessing a woman directed to His mother to teach that those who receive His message and practice His teachings enjoy a better relationship to Him than those whose relationship is based on physical descent.

He doesn't deny her statement;—He affirmed it.—But He did clarify—

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT; but not MOST important. THEY ARE BASED ON PHYSICAL BIRTH and physical descendance. [with Messiah (or Abraham)]

**SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE MORE IMPORTANT
v—THEY ARE BASED ON HEARING GOD'S WORD AND DOING IT!**

The spiritual relationship counts—comes from HEARING His Word and doing it.

SPEAKS TO THE ISSUE OF SELECTIVE HEARING:

The blessed ones are those who *HEAR* His Word and do it; NOT those who are related to Him by blood.

THE SIGN OF JONAH 11:29-32 — "*HEAR*"

This discourse is the answer to their request in 11:16: "Others tested Him by asking for a sign from heaven."

Because of the seriousness of the rejection of their Messiah, the only sign that generation will be given is the death and resurrection of Jesus which will serve as a warning of impending destruction.

An evil generation keeps asking for a sign but then is not persuaded—they're not impressed!

The final proof—The resurrection would be God's final confirmation of the person and word of Christ.

Death, burial, resurrection

Matthew's report makes clear that the resurrection is the sign of Jonah.

Even when confronted with that sign, they aren't willing to pay attention. They don't WANT to HEAR the truth!

THEY ARE SUFFERING FROM "*SELECTIVE SEEING*" AGAIN!

In Luke the sign may have a slightly different significance:

The contrast with Nineveh: OR, [some suggest that] the only sign Jonah gave to the Ninevites, to convince those "PAGANS" of his authority was his preaching. That was all THEY needed. How much do God's people demand before they will recognize and pay attention to His voice?

THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH 11:31 – 1 Ki. 10:1-15

She, a pagan woman (queen), travelled many miles, a tedious hard journey, to hear Solomon's words of wisdom.

They, the religious leaders of God's own people, had the Son of God right in their midst and wouldn't hear him.

THE MEN OF NINEVEH 11:32

Nineveh: Jonah's preaching was enough for them.

Israel: They had a far greater preacher going here and wouldn't listen.

These *pagan cities* HEARD Him, Jerusalem will be judged because they should have known better, and **DIDN'T WANT TO HEAR HIM**.

They have had a greater revelation than those cities had.

Therefore they are more deserving of judgment–the *pagans* testify against them!

THE RESPONSE TO THE LIGHT 11:33-36 – The appeal to Israel

Reception or rejection of the light revealed in Jesus' ministry will be the basis for judging their spiritual condition.

THE ISSUE IS RECEPTIVITY TO THE LIGHT.

Everything you see is really only a light reflection off the original.

It's the light that enters your eye; not the sight.

Thus it is appropriate to talk about the eye as the means by which the light enters your body.

A light is lit: You don't light a light in order to "stuff it" somewhere you won't see it!

Spurgeon: "Our Lord Jesus Christ is the light He was meant to be observed; even as a lamp is intended to be seen. . . . If you do not see Jesus, it is not because He has hidden Himself in the darkness, but because your eyes are blinded."

The only way the body has of receiving light: is through the eye!

Ironside: "When my eye is . . . healthy, the whole body is full of light. My feet do not have any eyes, but my feet know where to go if I have sound eyes; my hands do not have eyes, but my hands know how to perform aright if I have sound eyes. If I have sound eyes my whole body is full of light. On the other hand, . . . when my eye is diseased I cannot see where to go, and I do not know how to use my hands; I need someone to direct me all the time.

. . . Give attention to God's Word; cultivate the desire to read the Word of God. . . . People say, 'I read my Bible, but I do not get much out of it.' The reason is that the eye is not sound; it has become dull, partially blinded and occupied with things that are opposed to the truth of God and the Holy Spirit who dwells within you. . . . So our blessed Lord stresses firmly the importance of walking in the light He gives."

The light is shining, but THEY are obstructing it.
They don't want to see the light.

The light has been revealed.

They have seen it. – But it must *enter* before it can do any good.

They are hiding it away where it won't cause them to see it.

"Cellar" is derived from *krupto* – hide, conceal => "a hidden place"

It comes in through the eyes

Good eyes admit light
Bad eyes do not.

The eye is a "lamp" in the sense that it admits light to the body.

Be careful how you see – what you do with the light you have received.

If you reject the light you have received, it will come back to you as shadows.

That's all the good it will do you.

If you don't respond appropriately to the light you have received, even what you have will be taken from you and you will be left with only darkness. 11:35

If we think we can generate our own light, we must beware, lest that inner "light" prove to be darkness.

They ought to receive the light and reflect it to others.

Martin: "Being receptive to Jesus' teachings would show that they were full of light (34,36) and were benefiting from His teachings."

That generation didn't recognize the light of the world present among them.

I am concerned about that kind of eye disease and there are undoubtedly some here today who suffer from that eye problem. They can't see the light.

BUT I AM ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT ANOTHER KIND OF EYE PROBLEM.

"The entrance of Thy Word Gives light"

What are you doing with the light YOU have received?

"Selective hearing" ==> "Selective seeing"

We see what we want to see!

Israel's leaders only saw what they wanted to see.

We sometimes only see what we want to see in God's Word.

Filter out Sunglasses Our window film

Ex. -a house with a closed up room- you can't see the dust, cob webs, bugs, etc. When you open it up fully to the light you can see just how much work needs to be done to get it back in shape.

When we "open the blinds" to let the full light shine in, we can see the true condition of things and realize what needs to be cleaned up.

The light of God shines on our motives, it shows up our attitudes, it reveals the secret heart of all our actions.

Spurgeon: "in the dark chambers of the imagination the heart commits adulteries, murders, thefts, and all manner of infamies. When the light shines here, the man shudders as he learns that as he thinketh in his heart so is he. . . . Let in the light of Christ's love on it and the vile thing will be made to die. . . . From garret to cellar may the whole house of our humanity be lighted up! This is the true work of Grace, when the whole man is brought into the light, and

no part is left to pine in the darkness. Then are we the children of light, when we abide in the light and have no fellowship with darkness."

Israel didn't "see" the signs, because they didn't want to see them.

**WE SOMETIMES DON'T SEE THE LIGHT GOD WANTS US TO SEE,
BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT TO SEE IT!**

"NO ONE SO BLIND AS ONE WHO WILL NOT SEE!"

What are some of the ways we respond to physical light?

What are some of the ways we respond to spiritual light?

How should we respond to that light? What does God want you to do about it?