

What Do You See

by Anton Bosch

This sermon delves into Luke chapter 11, emphasizing the importance of our response to Jesus and His message. It highlights the various reactions people have to Jesus, from marveling to worshiping, and the ultimate call to hear and obey the Word of God. The passage connects the significance of Jonah's sign to the Son of Man's ultimate sign of resurrection. It also contrasts the Queen of the South's journey to see Solomon with the rejection of Jesus, stressing the need to see things through God's perspective. The sermon concludes with a call to allow the light of God's Word to penetrate every area of our being, bringing illumination and obedience.

Scripture: Luke 11:28, Luke 11:29, Luke 11:31, Luke 11:32, Luke 11:36, Titus 1:15, Luke 8:18, Matthew 5:15

Topics: "Response to Jesus", "Obedience to God's Word"

Description

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Transcript

So we're in Luke chapter 11, Luke chapter 11, and we'll read from 27 through 36. Luke chapter 11, 27 through 36. And it happened as he spoke these things that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to him blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts which nursed you.

But he said more than that blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it. And while the crowds were thickly gathered together he began to say this is an evil generation it seeks a sign and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.

The Queen of the South will rise up in judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them. For she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon and indeed a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will rise up in judgment with this generation and condemn it.

For they repented at the preaching of Jonah and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. No one when he has lit a lamp puts it in a secret place under a basket but on a lampstand that those who come in may see the light. The lamp of the body is the eye therefore when your eye is good your whole body is also full of light.

But when your eye is bad your body also is full of darkness. Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. If then your whole body is full of light having no part dark the whole body will be full of light as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light.

Now we have to again remember the context. Remember that one of the things about Luke is that he strings together various accounts that give us a complete picture. The problem is that we tend to read these independently.

For example the casting out of the dumb spirit of the man. We read that as a separate message or a separate section and in fact preachers will preach that as a separate message. And then the story or the statements about the lamp and the eye being the lamp or the light of the of the human.

That's a separate section again and we see those are separate and yet what Luke does is he is connecting things together and there is a message that flows through all of them and we need to put these things together and when we read these little sections at a time or preach little sections at a time we miss out on the whole message. And so today is a continuation of last week. Now remember that what happened last week, well it didn't happen last week, it happened 2,000 years ago, but in our lesson last week Jesus casts out a spirit, a demon, out of a man who was dumb and the man is able to speak and there is a reaction.

The reaction of the crowd is that they marveled. Then there were others who said show us a sign and then there were others who said this man has a demon or he's casting out the demons by Beelzebub the prince of demons. So there were three responses.

In fact there are five responses and we're going to look at two more today and that is the point of this whole passage is it deals with our response to Jesus and our response to the message that he preaches. So some people marvel, some people will blaspheme, and others will say well show us a sign. And so Jesus deals with the issue of saying that he was casting out demons by Beelzebub by proving or trying to prove to them that he in fact was doing it by what he calls the finger of God, by the hand of God.

Then this woman rises and it seems to be out of place and yet it is very much at the very heart of this passage. And again you if you read the passage and you don't think about what's going on, you read this little section three verses or two verses of this woman and you say well you know that what is that has nothing to do with the rest. And in fact this it has very much to do with the rest and it is at the very heart of the entire passage.

So in verse 27 then and it happened as he spoke these things notice that as he spoke these things in other words this is in the context this is not a separate section. And let me remind you again that we need to be careful of the headings in modern translations and I don't have a problem with modern translations as such but they have these little headings and and and in this here it has a heading about an unclean spirit returning from 24 to 26, 27 to 28 keeping the word, 29 seeking a sign. And we tend to read those as separate subjects and while they are not they're all part of one message one subject.

There are obviously times when the whole message changes and we will next week deal with the Pharisees and clearly there's a change. Jesus is not speaking in the context of what he was speaking about but he is now moving on and speaking about the Pharisees and his relationship with them. So as it happened as he spoke and it happened as he spoke these things that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to him blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts which nursed you.

This is the fourth response. Her response is to worship and we would say that is a good response and in fact it is a good response. It's certainly much better than blaspheming and saying that he cast out demons by the Prince of Demons.

It's far better than those who were just looking for a sign and yet it's it's not the ultimate response. Now what she said was right. What she said was prophetic in a sense because she was quoting something that she did not know she was quoting and what she was quoting was both Elizabeth remember Elizabeth that Mary was pregnant with Jesus went to visit Elizabeth and Elizabeth says in Luke chapter 1 verse 42 then she spoke out with a loud voice and said blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

Blessed are you among women. This other woman let's go back again blessed is the womb that bore you in other words blessed is your mother and the breast which nursed you. So this this woman who stood there she wasn't there when Elizabeth said these words and yet she is she is saying the right words and and in fact the words of Mary herself in her in her praise song what we call the Magnificat in Luke chapter 1 verse 48 for he has regarded the lowliest state of his maidservant and behold for behold hence forth all generations will call me blessed.

So this woman who was speaking in Jesus's audience was quoting both Elizabeth and Mary. Remember at this stage the New Testament hadn't been written yet so she couldn't look it up and say well you know this is what they said. This was revealed to her by the Holy Spirit so she had a revelation she had an understanding which did not necessarily come from which did not come from human understanding.

This is as Jesus said to Peter flesh and blood is not revealed this to you but my father in heaven and so this woman had a revelation of who Jesus is and she says that your mother is blessed to have to have given birth to you and we would say well this is this is great and it is great but you know Jesus has a different take because we have that famous certainly my famous three-letter word but but he said more than that blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it. So here's the first response and folk every time we hear the Word of God whether we Christians or non-Christians we respond probably in one of these five ways at the at the very lowest level there is blasphemy this is this is Christian nonsense Jesus is fake whatever this is the the lowest level of response the the next level of response could be and certainly a little better but not good enough is well show us a sign and we're Jesus deals with the signs in the next verse we're going to come to that the third level would be to marvel as the multitude did and say well this is this is amazing that this is this is wonderful this man was couldn't speak and now he can speak he was demon possessed he's been delivered this is this is great so so the third level from the bottom is to marvel but in fact there is a higher level of response and that higher level is to worship but there's still a higher level and the higher level is to obey the Word of God and so I think that every time we hear the Word of God we fall into one of those and hopefully we fall into the top two where there's worship and we we love God we love his word and we we love the preaching of his word but there is nothing that compares with obeying the Word blessed are those who hear the Word of God in other words what Jesus is saying is Mary is blessed because she gave birth to the Messiah to the Savior but those who hear and

obey are more blessed than she is just think about that in some circles Mary is at the highest level of worship and yet Jesus is saying that if you obey the Word of God you are more than that more than that blessed are those who hear the word and keep it and so those who worship not sorry those who obey are more blessed than Mary is now that's that's quite something that's quite something because clearly Mary is blessed the Lord declares that all generations will declare her blessed and God blesses her and yet he blesses those who obey him and obey his word even more now we're going to come back to to this because this is this is at the heart of the whole passage it's it's not about marveling it's not about blaspheming it's not just about worshipping it's about hearing and obeying so now he deals with the with the signs and so while the crowds were thickly gathered together so obviously he performed this miracle of casting out this demon and people are flocking and the crowd is increasing and there's more people and and what did they come to do they've come to see the miracles and he began to say this is an evil generation not not speaking generation in terms of age but speaking about people in general these people are evil now can you imagine now I know that I am a straight preacher and I know I say things that upset people and people don't come back because they've been confronted by the truth or by the word but can you imagine if I got up one Sunday morning and said you are an evil lot of people I think that we would empty the church out pretty fast in fact another preacher contacted me this this weekend he was invited to speak somewhere and he said some very very strong things and the the response wasn't very very good but at no stage did he get anywhere near saying this is an evil church this is an evil lot but Jesus says that straight out and why because and and in fact in Matthew it says that this is an evil and a perverse generation Luke just focuses on the evil it seeks a sign it seeks a sign so what was wrong with seeking a sign because they were not seeking the giver of the sign they just wanted the sign they just wanted the miracle and the time in which we're living we're back in those days again there's a whole generation is a whole group of people in the Christianity today that are just after miracles and there are entire churches built around this idea of miracles I think I mentioned I was in Reading California earlier this year and I was absolutely amazed by the the presence of Bethel Church when you look online to find a hotel to stay in or a motel or Airbnb every one of them will write not how far they are from the airport or how far they are from Denny's but everyone will say how far they are from Bethel Church because that's what people go to Reading for that is the prime industry of that town and it and it seriously is they own that city and why because of the so-called miracles and they are so called there's a fake miracles they're not real and get people from all over the world flock to Bethel Reading to come and see the miracles they have a Bible College well it's not a Bible College because it's called the school of miracles you don't go there to learn the Bible as you would in our schools in England and in in Zimbabwe you don't go there to find out more about Jesus you go there to learn how to perform miracles you can't learn to perform miracles God performs the miracles yes he uses individuals who are in the right place at the right time but we can't learn you can't go to a school to learn miracles but you see the emphasis on miracles that's what that's what it's all about and Jesus says this is an evil generation these are evil people who are looking for signs are looking for miracles why do they want the miracles for the entertainment what else obviously some people have needs and they want those needs met some people are this man was mute he couldn't speak and and he needed to be delivered of that demon but that wasn't what it was about they weren't rejoicing about the fact that he couldn't speak and now he can speak that he was demon possessed now he's free they were rejoicing over the fact that they saw an amazing thing happen and so sadly we've got to a stage where if something amazing doesn't happen in the church every Sunday people are not interested and I on purpose don't chase those kinds of things because I don't want people here who are just here for the spectacular who are just here because something's going to happen let me tell you nothing is going to happen until something happens in your heart that's where it's got to happen remember Jesus doesn't

until Jesus says that that they're looking for signs and for miracles is not a good thing and folk we can go on and on and on talking about this and I don't want to spend time on that because I want us to get the message of the passage it's so easy to get hung up and I've heard endless messages on this on this passage on an evil generation seeking for a sign and I can probably preach three or four messages just on those verses all those words but that doesn't help us because that's not what this is all about this is not what the passage is all about the passage is about my and your response to the Word of God that's what it's about not about the miracles or anything else but now Jesus turns this around and he says it seeks a sign and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet now you know what happened to Jonah Jonah was eaten by the fish and after three days he was spat out again now that was quite that was quite something that was quite a miracle and Jonah goes into the city and he preaches into Nineveh and the whole city repents but they only they only had his testimony they didn't see the miracle they didn't see it actually happen but presumably he spoke about it maybe there was evidence in his body of the experience but that's all they had and Jesus is saying this is the ultimate sign which led to the Ninevites repenting and remember who the Ninevites were they were they were people from Syria they were vicious people they were their army from Assyria their army was the most vicious of the time they would lead Israel the ten northern tribes into captivity and that's why Jonah didn't want to preach there because he hated them they were terrible people and yet the whole city repents because of Jonah's message and so Jesus goes on and he says for as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites so also the Son of Man will be to this generation notice he doesn't say he will give signs but he will be the sign what sign is Jesus well the same sign as Jonah three days in the heart of the earth and on the third day he rose again there's obviously a big difference between Jonah and Jesus Jonah didn't actually die he was alive during that time and of course that that in itself was a miracle how that God preserved him in the belly of the fish but Jonah speaks about the fact that he was down there at the at the at the foundations of the mountains down in the depths of the sea and he was crying out to God so he was alive all the time Jesus died and rose again on the third day this is the ultimate sign to Christians we coming up to Easter time again where we remember the death burial resurrection of course we do that every time we come to the Lord's table but that is the ultimate sign now here's the problem if you don't believe in the miracle of the resurrection then what will convince you you see this is that's the problem we have the miracle of the resurrection remember it's not just a story it is it is attested to by history it is proven through scripture that Jesus died and rose again it is at the heart of the gospel remember Paul's definition of the gospel in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and if you reject that then what other miracle do you need what other sign do you need and that's the problem so so you can perform as many miracles as you like those who will not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ will not believe on him the city one it's going to come back to Jonah but now he swings to the Queen of the South Queen Sheba she comes from what is modern Yemen today down an Arab area the Queen of the South will rise up in judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon and indeed a greater than Solomon is here she was very powerful she was very wealthy and yet she travels a long way not in business class not even in coach on camels weeks maybe months to get to see Solomon to hear his wisdom to see his riches and his power and Jesus is saying someone indeed greater than Solomon is here Solomon had wise words but Jesus has the words of eternal life Solomon ended up in debauchery and in idolatry Jesus is risen and is glorified and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high now I don't I want to be careful about saying this but at the same time I want us to get the picture Solomon was a loser in the end he didn't do well and yet she comes from the ends of the earth to see Solomon and yet yet here is Jesus he is not a loser but he is the conqueror he is the winner he is the King of Kings the Lord of Lords the God of the universe made into human form and they look him up and down and they say well he's got a demon perform another miracle

for us entertain us speak words that will make us marvel but there's no obedience to him now notice what Jesus says he says that the Queen Queen Queen Sheba Queen of the South will on the day of judgment witness against Israel who were living at that time because what she came to see was a mere man what they had was God in the flesh she hung on every word that he spoke she was a royal she was royalty herself and yet she sat at his feet as it were she listens to Solomon's word she she watches how he deals with things and yet here comes Jesus and they just reject him crucify him away with him give us Barabbas and folk we have exactly the same thing today people will hang on every word of of movie stars of pop stars of musicians of politicians but when Jesus speaks through his word we just reject we pay no attention to it it's nothing the Queen of the South will stand in testimony against Israel and folk I believe that she will stand in testimony against many Christians who sit in churches today and hear the word of God and are not are not all by the word of God who are not all by the Lord Jesus Christ and who do not bow in obedience to him and to his word because if that was her response to Solomon what would her response have been to Jesus then he says the same thing in fact if you look at these two verses they're almost identical just the names that change verse 32 the men of Nineveh will rise up in judgment with this generation and condemn it for they repented at the preaching of Jonah and indeed a greater than Jonah is here same message folk I wonder what it's going to look like on that day of judgment particularly for Christians so-called Christians and Christians who treated lightly the Word of God who treated Jesus as just a commodity it's just something just an add-on to my life I have my perfect life and I just need a little bit of religion so rather than Buddhism I'll choose Jesus no repentance and yet the people of Nineveh will rise up against this generation our people our time when there seems to be a disregard for the Word of God more than ever before they will stand in judgment against us and I pray not against us but against many others so you can see that he is talking here about hearing about our response remember that the woman the two verses about the woman who worships Mary or says blessed is Mary and Jesus is blessed are they that hear and obey now he's amplifying that he's dealing with that and then verse 33 now again we we put this into a different section and and I think in my Bible yes it's in a different there's a different heading the heading is the lamp of the body but it's all part of the same message so no one when he has lit a lamp puts it in a secret place or under a basket but on a lamp stand that those who come in may see the light just a very simple analogy simple story remember they they had candles and lamps oil oil lamps that maybe gave you a hundredth of the power of the modern electric bulb it was really just good enough and I grew up with with lamps and candles you can you can read if you singe your hair as you hold it close by to be able to read but that's the for the rest of it it's really just prevents you from bumping into things but you don't take that lamp and put it under as Matthew says under a bushel under a basket but you put it in a place where it is able to illuminate the whole place we do the same today most houses have electric all houses have electric lights but in most houses the electric light is where in the middle of the ceiling so that is able to illuminate the whole place in fact when we did these buildings we did in complicated calculations to figure out how much light and how far the lights will spread to make sure we had even light and so you don't take a lamp and put it under a under a basket now Jesus is the lamp of the body is the eye now he's not speaking about the physical eye obviously it's my spiritual I so my I gives light he says to my body in other words what is inside of me is illuminated by what I see and so the lamp of the body is the I therefore when your I is good your whole body also is full of light but when your eyes bad your body is full of darkness in other words the state of your being how you are inside is determined by how you see things very important how you see things now remember the context again some people saw Jesus and they saw him as an entertainer performing miracles others looked at the same Jesus and said he's he's casting out demons by the prince of demons others marveled and said his mother is blessed how can you look at the same thing at the same Jesus at the same words at the same miracle and come to such different

conclusions and yet that's the fact of life I keep being amazed and I'm really making a good progress just a personal report I'm making good progress listening less and less to the news but I'm absolutely amazed how that one news station can listen to the same speech and as another one and the one says the speech is black and the other one says the speech was white how can you possibly look at the same thing and come to so different a conclusion and of course that's at the heart of the division in the country today it's not that we have different facts it's how we look at those facts and this is the problem with the gospel this is the problem with the Word of God if you come to the Word of God with the wrong mindset with the wrong I you will come to the wrong conclusion but if you come with the right mindset with the right eye with an ability or a desire to see and to know you will come to the light and so it's all in the eye it's all in how you see it and that's the point that Jesus is making so Jesus is saying that the Queen of Sheba saw something the people of Israel are seeing something greater and yet her conclusion was different to theirs some listened to to Jonah and they came to a conclusion we must repent others listen to Jesus a greater authority speaking the very words of God and yet they reject him because of how they saw him how they perceived him and so it's important Jesus is saying it's not it's not about the miracles it's not about even about how powerful this preacher is it's about your willingness to see what God is trying to show you and if your eye is bad if you have what we in colloquial language call a jaundiced eye then everything you're going to see is going to be that way we speak about people have rose tinted glasses what does that mean well they have pink lenses and so everything they see is pretty and that's just a fact of life now in Titus chapter 1 verse 15 we have a similar verse to the pure all things are pure but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure but even their mind and conscience are defiled what does he mean if your eye is bad it doesn't matter what you look at it's going to be bad if your eyes right it doesn't matter what you look at it will be right doesn't make wrong right but it means that you're able to see things correctly and so those people and Jesus is sorry Paul writing to Titus is writing about legalism and he's saying you can try and keep the rules but if you're if the way you see things is wrong it's going to be wrong doesn't matter what how good you try and be therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness think about that how can light be darkness surely these things are a contradiction light is not darkness and darkness is not light and yet Jesus says be careful that your light is not darkness in other words people say I have the light I know stuff I know the Bible but in fact you know nothing because it is in fact darkness so it's not that you have light you think you have light but in its darkness and he's saying if you claim to have the light now the next section we gonna deal with next week is about the Pharisees the Pharisees said we see we know we understand but in fact they understood nothing their illumination their light their intellectual light was darkness the world today's claims that they know stuff they know stuff about the fact that there is no God they know stuff about there is no creation they know stuff that the Bible isn't true their light is darkness there are Christians who say we have light but in fact they don't have like all they have is darkness and so it's important that we see correctly now you're gonna see that this is this is a theme and here's the here's the thing that I'm emphasizing also this morning is the need for us to read in context and in Luke chapter 8 three chapters ago now I know it's been months since we were in Luke chapter 8 but three chapters ago he says therefore take heed how you hear verse 18 take heed how you hear what does Luke 11 say and I'm paraphrasing take heed how you see but three chapters ago he said take heed how you hear same message just as coming at it from a different angle we need to pay attention how not what we hear how we hear it's not what we see it's how we see and when we don't see things from God's perspective we see nothing when we don't see things through the lens of Scripture because that's the problem is that we we say well I think it's a good thing I think it's a bad thing you know the whole world right now is talking about Harry and Megan it's it's the top story on every news broadcast it takes up I don't know 10 20 percent of every news broadcast everybody has an opinion but how does God see it it is nothing it's foolishness it's

stupidity and yet we will we will engross ourselves Christians will reach out to other Christians say well what do you think no I think nothing because God thinks nothing of that kind of nonsense and yet those are the things that we fill our hearts and our minds and our eyes with and our ears with folk we need to have a heavenly perspective we need to see things the way God sees them take heed how you hear remember here's the principle for I know I'm not going to preach on this because we're out of time but whoever has to him more will be given other words if you don't hold on to truth you will not get any more basically and whoever does not have even what he seems to have will be taken from him do we have the same idea what he seems to have the light that you have is darkness can you see the connection between these these two verses so let's go back to that last verse Luke 11 36 and then your whole body is let me get the context again take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness if then your whole body full of light having no part dark the whole body will be full of light as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light now here's my final point he's now moving from the light coming through the eye to how much light is in my body so he's saying if my whole body is full of light in other words is it possible to have areas of my body that have light and obviously it's got nothing to do with my human body is talking about the soul is talking about the mind is it possible for some areas of my mind to be enlightened and for some areas of my mind to be dark yes it is and why is it dark because I won't allow the light of God's Word to shine into those areas when it comes to certain things in our lives we don't want to know because we don't like what we're going to see and so when we open certain rooms as it were in our mind we turn the light off because we know what's there and we don't want to see what's there but he says not only must you let the light come in but you must allow the light of God's Word to penetrate to every area of your being every corner of your mind every every aspect of your emotions every a part of your thinking there must be nothing that is hidden from the light of God's Word God's Word needs to penetrate into those dark crevices and to bring light to the whole body and so of course here's the question which of those people are you those who blaspheme those who want to sign those who are amazed but do nothing those who worship and don't obey or those who hear and obey father we thank you for your word Lord we thank you for and and Lord I personally am amazed by your word I'm amazed by the intricacy of it I'm amazed by the by the the the way things connect together by the way that things confirm one another and Lord indeed these are miraculous and supernatural things that you've done through the inspiration of your Holy Spirit and yet Lord we come to your word and we treat it as though it is nothing as though it's just a novel just a story help us Lord to to understand that what we have as we hold your word is far greater than Solomon but Lord it's not just about your word it's about you and you are greater than your word and Lord I pray that you would help us to not just be worshipers but Lord to be obedient to be doers of your word Lord we pray that you'd help us to to have the scales fall off our eyes that we might be able to see things in the world they were the way they are but that we may see things in our own lives the way they really are Lord we pray that you'd help us to open those dark corners in our lives that we don't want anybody to know about and we even shut them from our own consciousness but Lord help us to open our hearts and minds to you and to your word Lord that you might shine into us and Lord that we might have that light which leads to eternal life so father I pray that you'd help us to have a right response help us Lord not to when we drive out of here just forget what we've heard but Lord that the light of your word may shine into our lives and be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our paths we ask this in Jesus name go with us now we pray keep us protect us bring us together again safely on Thursday we pray in Jesus name amen you

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