

I. Introduction

Good morning! The Bible teaches us that God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth and the Lord of all, came to Israel 2,000 years ago in the person of Jesus Christ. This is the Christmas story; the story of God coming to the people He created in the form of a man. Some ask, "Why Israel? Why not my own country? Why 2,000 years ago? Why not now?" But if God came as a man once and only once, as the Bible teaches, then He would have to do it in a particular time and place. And the Bible tells us that God, in His wisdom and according to His plan, came to Israel 2,000 years ago, as the baby Jesus, born in Bethlehem, born of the Virgin Mary.



The Lord came to Israel. But in coming to Israel, He came to us all - seeking a relationship with all men and women everywhere and in all of history. He is not visible to our eyes now, but the same Jesus that came 2,000 years ago is here today, seeking a relationship with each person. With this in mind, let's read Luke 8:16-25. This passage begins with Jesus teaching by the shore of Lake Galilee.

II. Scripture Luke 8:16-25 (NIV)

[16] "No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light. [17] For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open. [18] Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him." [19] Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. [20] Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." [21] He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice." [22] One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out. [23] As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. [24] The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!" He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. [25] "Where is your faith?" he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."

III. Teaching

Light can speak symbolically of knowledge, wisdom, purity, and righteousness. The symbolic image of lighting a lamp represents the effort to share such things with others. **Luke 8:16a** tells us, "No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed." Certainly this is true, if you are trying to share with others, you do not hide the thing that you are sharing. This is especially true of the Good News of Jesus. If the Gospel light is burning brightly in your heart, do not hide it; let it shine so that the world can see Jesus.



Luke 8:17, "For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open." Last week we saw how Jesus taught using parables. But the meaning was hidden from the crowds; Jesus explained the meaning only to His disciples. Yet, anyone who wanted to become a disciple was welcome, so everyone actually had an equal chance to hear the explanation. Now we see that whatever was being hidden was being hidden only temporarily. At the proper time the full truth will be made known. This is a comfort, because the salvation Jesus has prepared will be fully revealed. But it is also a bit frightening, because our sins will also be revealed. We need to prepare for that day by

trusting in Jesus and the forgiveness of sins that He provided for us through His death on the cross.

Jesus continues with the words of **Luke 8:18**, **“Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him.”** Those who have a good understanding of the Kingdom of God and the Good News of the gospel will grow in their faith and understanding. But those who think they understand, but who have instead misunderstood the message will lose even what they thought they had. To make sure that this does not happen to us, we need to listen carefully to Jesus and make sure that we understand the gospel. We need to understand that we are sinners and confess our sins; we need to receive forgiveness and the free gift of eternal life from Jesus. We need to trust in Him for our salvation.

We need to make sure that we are not relying on our own works or ideas. The cross of Christ alone is sufficient to meet our needs. We can get the understanding we need through the Word of God. Through the Scriptures we can see Jesus and in Him we can enjoy a loving relationship with God.



When Jesus and the disciples were caught in the storm, the disciples were frightened. They were afraid that they were going to die. But Jesus was not afraid; Jesus was taking a nap. **Luke 8:24**, **“The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we're going to drown!” He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm.”**

Can you imagine the scene? The high waves, the violent wind, the small boat being thrown this way and that. Can you see the disciples, with fear on their faces, working with all their strength to handle the boat? And, can you see Jesus sound asleep, taking a nap? Finally the disciples reached the limits of their strength and courage and they woke Jesus up, pleading for help. And Jesus scolded the sea and told it to be calm. And it was calm.



Jesus scolded the disciples also. **Luke 8:25**, **““Where is your faith?” he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.””** In effect, Jesus tells them that if they had faith, the storm would not frighten them. But to be effective, faith must be placed in someone or something that has power. Who has power over the storm and over all things? Jesus. If Jesus is with you, then you don’t need to be frightened by the storms and troubles of life, because He loves you and He has power over all. The disciples asked, **“Who is this?”**

“Who is this?” This is Jesus, God come to save us. Jesus who healed the sick, calmed the sea, and raised the dead. Jesus, who died on the cross for our sins, rose from the grave and is alive forever. Jesus, who is here now, ready to forgive our sins and restore us to fellowship with God, the moment we place our faith in Him.



IV. Conclusion

God, the Creator of the universe, wants to have a loving relationship with you, a relationship closer than the bonds of family, closer than the love of a mother for her children. God made you for that very reason, so that He might love you and so that you might love Him also. Take a look at **Luke 8:20-21**, **“Someone told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.” He replied, “My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.””** What is Jesus saying here? Is Jesus being rude to His mother and brothers? No, I don’t think so. We know that Mary, Jesus’ mother, believed in God and was obedient to His word. Jesus is not rejecting her. Rather, Jesus is lifting up all who follow Him. Jesus is inviting all who trust in God and obey His Word to have a close and loving family relationship with Him. When you place your faith in Jesus and in His finished work on the cross, then you are adopted into the family of God. The invitation is for all. Come and trust in Jesus and your sins will be forgiven. Believe in Jesus and you will receive the free gift of eternal life. Place your faith in Jesus and He will welcome you into His family.

V. Closing Prayer