

# Responding to the word of grace

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Preacher: Kelvin Jawa

[ 0 : 00 ] A very good morning, brothers, sisters in Christ. It's truly a pleasure to be with you this morning. I must say it is a bit nerve-wracking because I think this would be my first time sharing in a church outside of the Anglican Diocese or an Anglican Communion.

So forgive me if I seem a bit nervous. I think it's biological. But it's a great pleasure to be with you this morning.

Brian basically asked me to help him out this being the Chinese New Year. And so I said it would be a pleasure for me to be sharing the pulpit with him in this church.

My son, Titus, is here with me. I'm very glad here to be with you. And I bring you the warmest greetings from my church, Tabuan Jaya Anglican Church.

I think some of you may be familiar with it. If you want to look for it, you just drive down this road, past City 1, past Taman Sahabat, and turn to the right, Taman Heights, Phase 1.

[ 1 : 23 ] And we are stuck in the middle of a housing development. And if you don't pay attention, you will miss it. It's that secretive, you know.

That's our church. Just so that you know, we are celebrating our 10th anniversary this year.

Last Friday was the exact date 10 years ago when the Bishop of Kuching, Datuk Boli, consecrated the church. And what used to be the St. Faith Extension Center above Thompson Corner in Tabuan Jaya became a parish in that church.

And so we are celebrating it this whole year. We began by a prayer and fasting on Friday, a 24-hour prayer chain. And then we'll be also doing other things.

It's an exciting time for the church as well as for myself because this would be the first parish that I am vicar of. Being probably one of the youngest, you might not think that I am the youngest.

[ 2 : 35 ] But if you look at my brother priest, I am probably one of the youngest priests within the diocese of the Anglican Church. So, it's a great pleasure once again to be with you and to share.

Maybe some of you have attended Anglican churches before. We don't preach a huge chunk of scripture like you do here.

And so it has taken me, I think, a few months just to sit down and come out with a sermon. One thing you must understand, Brian was saying to me that we first met when I did my practical in St. Mary's KL.

And I had to stay with him because they did not have accommodations on site. So I met him at his, I think it was an apartment. And from there, I attended the contemporary service of the cathedral because I said I don't have to attend the traditional because I get that here in Kuching.

But when I'm there, I want to see the contemporary. And I have been very blessed by Brian and his preaching. Now, I will tell you that we met in 2011, I think, if not 2012.

[ 4 : 01 ] It's the final year of my seminary studies there. I will tell you that period of time that I was in St. Mary's KL will be the, how do I call this, the pivot of my Christian life.

I became a Christian in 2000. I think you could say that I developed very slowly. It was a very nominal faith that I had.

But in 2012, in my time in St. Mary's KL, listening to people like Brian sharing the word, you know, encouraging us to be very deep in our conviction, in our faith, in Scripture.

It really made a difference and impacted my life where I would, I think, I became a proper Christian. I understood my faith.

I grasped Jesus. Now, there's a thin line between listening to a sermon and being rooted in the word versus listening to a sermon and enjoying it.

[ 5 : 25 ] When you enjoy, when you listen to a preaching, when you listen to the word being read, somehow, sometimes, you will be like, wow, this is a sermon that really I am very impacted by.

I really enjoy it. I find it worth my time listening and worth my fight against that desire to close my eyes and take a nap.

Wonderful it is. But then there's that thing that brings us forward. That word that we listen to, that we hear, if it does not, if we do not hold fast to it or retain, it will just go away.

And then the euphoria, the enjoyment of listening to that word being read and taught to us will dissipate. And then we'll be back to where we were in the beginning.

Now, look at it from another perspective. We listen to the word. We hear it.

[ 6 : 40 ] We are impacted by it. It lights up something in our dark minds and soul and heart. And it affects us so much that we are prepared to change.

This is something that we want to experience. Not just experience. This is something that we want to happen to us. A life that is changed by the word.

Now, as I said, I'm not very good at exposing a huge chunk of scripture at one time.

But I'm going to try my best this morning. And so I'd like you to pray with me as I begin my exposition of Luke chapter 8, verse 1 to 21.

Let us pray. O gracious heavenly father, we come before you in humility, knowing our weaknesses. We pray father that even in our weaknesses, you are there faithful with us, working in us, helping us and leading and guiding us.

[ 7 : 53 ] Especially in this morning, we are gathered together to listen to you speak to us. O heavenly father, prepare our hearts that it may receive this word.

That it may hold fast to it. To meditate. To learn. To allow it to affect our lives. That our lives be changed.

That what results in it is that we produce a good crop. Good fruit. Worthy of our calling. We pray father that your holy spirit that is within us.

Allow us to discern what is right. Allow us and empower us to act out. What we have heard. To practice.

What we have learned. That we become light. Yes. Put. To lead up. Dark world. We give you thanks. We give you thanks. Heavenly father.

[ 8 : 57 ] We ask this in Jesus name. Amen. Now. Last week. If I'm not mistaken. You listen.

To. I think it's Massimo. Is it? Was it Massimo? Yes. Guide you. Guide you. Through that.

Part of the passage. Before this passage. And he was speaking about. Approaches. That we. We. We take. To. To Jesus.

The. How one leads us away. And the other leads us. To have. A meaningful relationship. With him. One that allows. Jesus to envelop. Every part of.

Our life. We saw how. He. He. Described. And led us. Into the world. Of that woman. That sinful woman. How she gave everything.

[ 9 : 56 ] How she. Wanted to have. A clear. And meaningful. Relationship. With Jesus. Compared that. To the.

I think it's the. Pharisee. If I'm not mistaken. Who just wanted to. To have. A discussion. Wanted to have.

That. Life hack. I think that is what. Massimo used. Well. This morning. We. Go. Move.

Forward. Into a new phase. We find. That. Luke writes. And tells us. That Jesus. Is. Is. Is. Traveling on.

And going forward. From one town. And village. To another. But he's never alone. I'm a. I'm a. Manchester United fan. So. It really.

[ 10 : 52 ] You know. I cringe. When I say. That. Jesus never walked alone. Very rarely. Does he walk alone. He walks.

With his. His disciples. We are told. By Luke. That the twelve. Are there with him. But they're not alone. Either. We are told. That. Women.

Some women. Are with. Them. Going from. One village. One town. To another. To another. And to another. And never. Alone. And these women.

We. Luke names. Three of them. Have Mary. Called Magdalene. We have Joanna. The wife of Chusa. And we have Susanna. And we are told. That there are many others. Now.

These women. Are there. With Jesus. With the disciples. Going from town. To town. City. To city. Village. To village. And they're there.

[11:48] To provide. Support. To Jesus. To the disciples. In their ministry. And then. We are told. Even more. That this.

Assistance. That they. Afford. To Jesus. And the disciples. Comes from their own. Means. Coming out. From their own. Means.

I. We learn. In seminary. That. That it is. Typical. Of. How it was. In the past. Where. Where. You had.

Patrons. Patrons. Who would. Support. A teacher. Or a rabbi. A philosopher. Who would support. Or sponsor. A person.

In their endeavor. To teach. To encourage. And so. It's not. Not. Not. Untypical. For this to happen. But there.

[12:42] Is a reason. I think. Why Luke. Puts that there. In the beginning. Of the narration. We'll. We'll come back. To that later. As he goes.

Into a village. Or a town. And. And. As he. Goes about. He is. Met by large. Crowds.

And. I must say. From. A village. Or a town. To another town. In one village. He would have done. Something amazing. News travels.

And people. Will come out. And say. Hey. This Jesus. He's coming. Come out. Let's go and see. What he's going to do next. You know. It's like. A traveling circus. If you would like.

To say that. Something very interesting. Coming into town. And everybody. In that town. Would like to see. It happening. Would like to see. This person. Perform something.

[13:37] And so. I think. That is the. The. The. Expectations. Of people. When they go out. They want. To sing something. Amazing. And so. They will gather.

Around Jesus. And his disciples. They would come. To see. Him. To listen to him. To experience him. And then.

Jesus. Knowing. That he has. Now. Gathered. A large. Crowd. Of people. And knowing. Knowing. That there is.

A need. For them. To not just. Come to listen. But come. To be affected. By his word. So he begins. In this passage. To share. A parable. To tell a parable. Which to us. Is very familiar. Parable. Here. Jesus tells.

[14:32] Of this farmer. Who. Sows the seeds. In. I am a very. I am a niiban. But I was born. And raised. Urban.

Never rural. My parents. Came out. From. Long houses. This would be. Very familiar. To them. This parable. To me.

I don't understand. But. I went to school. We learn. Geography. We learn. History. And we also learn. Science. And I know. That you plow.

Your land. Before you. Scatter your seeds. Or plant your seeds. Right. So this to me. Looks very. You know. Out of sync.

Why would you scatter. And then plow. But then. That is how. They did it. In those days. They would have. A piece of land. Right. And then.

[15:27] They would just scatter. The seeds first. And then. They would plow. Through it. So that the. Seeds mix. With the earth. You ask me. I also don't know. I'm not an agriculture man.

But this is what. Happens. And so you have. This man. This farmer. Who has a. Bag of seeds. And goes to his farm. The patch of land.

That he is in. And he scatters it. He scatters it. All over the farm. And we are told. In this parable. That some of the seeds. Fall on the path.

Now this path. This path. May be the bun. If you go to a place. Called Skudu. In about 24 miles. 25 miles. Down the road. To Srian.

You will find a village. A wonderful. Nice village. I really love that place. You have. You know. Sawah Padi. Right. Paddy fields. With buns.

[16:22] And. And. And. It's the. The kind. The swampy one. The paya. Padi sawah. Sawah Padi. And we see buns there. And so you can imagine.

The man. The farmer. Throwing the seeds around. Some of the seeds land. On the path. And this path. This bun. Is used for people to. Walk on. And the seeds will be.

Get trampled. It doesn't go into the earth. And birds will come in. And. Taken away. Then some of the seeds. Go on. On.

On. On. On. On. On. On. As. A ground. And no. Fluid. Not enough fluid. Not enough death. Right. And we are told that they. They. They. They do germinate.

They have roots. But they're not deep enough. And they die. And some of the seeds. Fall in the thorns. In the thickets. In the bushes. And then.

[17:17] They do grow. But the bushes grow together with them. They're swamped. And they wither and die. But some do fall on the soil. Soil that is fertile.

The seeds germinate. And they grow up nicely. And they barefoot. A crop. Imagine that sawah padi setting. Right.

Now. Jesus. Tells parables. Because he wants. People to listen.

To learn. You know. We. When we were young. We. We learn. In bahasa Malaysia. Of. What do you call.

Peribahasa. I don't know how. I forgot already. What you call. Peribahasa. Peribahasa. Words of wisdom lah. That's what I would call them. This peribahasa.

[18:14] Will be taught to us. And then. Within that. Wonderful. Peribahasa. We will be taught. The lesson behind it. You know.

It is. It's. One story. On top of the other. And. I'm sure. You are familiar. With parable. Where. There is a story. Which is told.

And beneath that. There is another story. Which is the one. That we want. To learn from. To. To. To. To. To affect our life. And so.

Jesus. Wanted to tell this. So that people. Would learn. But. Sometimes. We don't get. What the parable means. And it needs to be.

Explained to us. Some of these. Peribahasa. In Malay. They are very. Old. And for.

[19:12] For an Iban. Or a daya. Or a Chinese. We might not. Understand. Because. It comes out. From the Malay society. Where it's. Where. With it's.

Different. Culture. And nuances. And so. We need it. To be explained to us. And so. We learn it. In school. And so. I think. It's the same.

Thing here. Some of the disciples. You might say. You might say. Why would the disciples. Not understand. They've been with Jesus.

All this while. They should have known. But you must remember. Some of the disciples. Were not farmers. We know that they were. Fishermen.

And tax collectors. People who don't do farming. Who might not be familiar. With farm. Terms. And concepts. And so. They ask.

[20:08] But Jesus comes back. At them. When they ask. You know. I tell parables. Because. Some things. Are left.

To be mysterious. Secret. For some people. But for you. He said. You are given. The explanation. The insight. Into these parables. Because you. Are chosen. Now. There is an injunction.

Whoever has ears to hear. Let them hear. Who have ears to hear. Let them hear. Most of us here. Have ears. Most of us here. Can hear. Varying degrees. But we can hear. We hear.

[21:05] The song. We sing along. We hear. The scriptures being read. Listen. And. Meditate on it. I hope.

I preach. I share. We listen. We think about it. We might disagree. We might agree.

But we hear. So let those. Have ears. Hear. Jesus say. Now. The people. The crowd. Around Jesus.

That time. They all heard. But you can imagine. The various. Responses. That Jesus gets. From these people. Some will say.

Wow. So wonderful. The story. I like. Some will say. Why is he doing this. And why is that. The farmer. Not careful enough. Why is he scattering.

[21:59] All over the place. You should scatter carefully. Responses. Various. And then you have the disciples. Who.

Are with him. Who knows that he is teaching something. And they. They. They missed it. So they went. To him. And asked him.

And explained to him. Because they heard it. But they don't. Understand it. And so Jesus. In verse 9.

And 10. Tells them. You know. What it meant. But he goes on. To explain. What. Why. Parables are used.

Why he uses parables. Then he goes on. To verse 11. Where he. Explains. The parable. And now we see. That the seed.

[ 22 : 54 ] Is the word of God. It is spread. All across the world. And then those. The word that falls. Along the path. For those who hear.

But. You know. Does not get a chance. To get it. Does not get a chance. To digest it. It's trampled on.

It's taken away. And. And. And. Jesus. Outrightly. Names. The devil. Now.

Now. Referring to the devil. Nowadays. Is something that you. We don't hear much. We might hear it. In horror movies.

You know. Last year. Was a very. Tremendous year. Because during that. Period of time.

November. October. November. The west. Would.

[ 23 : 50 ] Come to that. Movie. Season. Where. A lot of. Horror movie. Comes out. Halloween. This. And Halloween. That. And. And. My son. Affected.

By YouTube. Know what Pennywise is. And it. And all this. It's a really. Really. Dark. Period of time. For myself. Because I don't like.

Horror movies. I don't like to be surprised. I don't like to be scared. Enough life. Already. Scare me. I don't need a movie. To make it even worse.

So I avoid. Horror movies. But. The world. Nowadays. Takes the devil. Evil. As a.

Entertainment. You know. I think you would agree. With me. How the world. Depicts. Satan. The devil. Evil. They make it look.

[ 24 : 44 ] Cool. Don't they? There's one movie. Where. The son of the devil. Becomes. The main. Protagonist. Of the movie.

The main character. And we are. As. People who watch the movie. Are rooting. For this. The son of the devil. Hell doesn't look so bad.

You know. There's a. I don't know. Is it DC or Marvel. Ghost Rider. This skeleton. You know. Bike. Big biker. Who's on flames. And he's doing the bidding for Satan. What? The devil is depicted as cool.

No wonder. No wonder. What's going on. I mean. Your church is. I'm sure. Not going. Along this path.

[ 25 : 41 ] But my church. We're really going through. A bad patch of time now. What we've. Evil. And sin.

Being diluted. So much. And the word. Love. Is used. Too much. In order to.

Justify. Sinful things. It's hard to be an Anglican. Nowadays. I tell you that I'm an Anglican priest. You would.

You would conjure images of. Of Gene Robinson. In the States. And of the UK. Where our. Our brothers. They are somehow.

Preparing. A liturgy. To accept. Transgender people. It's hard. To be an Anglican. Why not. When.

[ 26 : 37 ] The world. And the church. That I come from. Dilutes. Sin. Dilutes. Evil. And the devil. Evil. So don't go along that path.

Come back to what Jesus is saying. In the scriptures. He identifies the devil. As the one who comes. And takes away the seed. The word of God.

And that. There would be no crop. From there at all. Second. We go to the rocky road. Where the seed germinates.

But. There's no root. It's not deep enough. So it doesn't. Get moisture. No. Nutrients. And.

The plant. Just withers. And dies. Now. Jesus tells us. That these are those people. Who. Who at first. Receive gladly.

[ 27 : 36 ] But then. They're not deep enough. When. When. When. Suffering comes. Persecution comes. When. Their faith is threatened.

They. They. They wither. They. They. They. Retreat. And. They. They. They. They. Leave. The faith. Now. A very good.

Illustration for this. In our setting. In Sarawak. Is how mission was done. Not your church. But my church. Mission was done. In the old days. Where we would go.

To long houses. And kampongs. We would have. The angmo. The. The. Westerner. The western. Missionary.

And they would go. Into long houses. Where. The. The dayags. The ibans especially. Would. Look. At this. White. Tall. Missionary.

[ 28 : 34 ] In. White. Kesok. And they would equate. What they were taught. In the Bible. About Jesus. With. That. Image. And.

Nothing. Can go wrong. With. This. Western. Missionary. Who comes. Bearing the good news. And so. They become. Christians. The.

The missionaries. The way. The mission was done. That. You go. Into a setting. Into a long house. And then you bring. The gospel. And then you give. Out of your. Compassion.

All nice. All good. The problem is. And this is a problem. That affects. My church. Instead.

There is no follow up. And then there is no follow up. When persecution comes. When their faith is threatened. They wither. And fall away. And backslide.

[ 29 : 31 ] You see. The understanding. Of this faith. That they receive.

Is that. If you become a Christian. You will be blessed. You will become like. That missionary. You will have this. And that.

And what not. Material needs. Justifiable. But it doesn't go. Even deeper. Than that. It only.

Is on the surface. That faith. It's very dangerous. My own. Long house. When there were. When my parents.

Retired. About 10 years. No. Now it's about 15 years ago. They retired. And. They went back home. And.

[ 30 : 24 ] And. Shared the gospel. And. And asked them. If they wanted to be Christians. And they did. And the bishop came. And confirmed. And baptized. And what not. Then. Within a few years.

They were very good. But. After a while. They. Slowly. Back. Slowly. Went back. To the old religion. And out of the. Around about 30 people. That. Who were baptized. And confirmed that day. I think only a handful. Are left now. To me.

That. That is. A sad. Sad situation. Where that faith. Does not grow deep. Does not reach the nutrients. That's when.

When. When they fall sick. And you must understand. I think. I'm not sure. The composition. Of your. Of this. Church. But. When the.

[ 31 : 23 ] Ibans. Or the long house. You get sick. You are really tempted. To. To go back. To the bomo. The manang. You know. To get. A fix.

And when. Then that. You know. You don't have to think about it. Your neighbor. Your brother. Your sister. Who lives with you. Will say. You see. You become Christian. That's why you're like this. Better go back to.

So and so manang. And they do the. All the. You know. Healing and whatnot. And somehow. The devil. Heals them. And then they say.

Yeah. You try it. Why should I be a Christian. When this can be done. And that can be done. And. You know. The. The. The thing about.

Their faith. Is that. They think. About. The blessings. That come along. With. Being a Christian. But they forget. That the blessings.

[ 32 : 20 ] Are also in. The things. That happen to them. The bad things. That happen to them. In the sickness.

The poverty. There is a blessing. There from God. Yet. Because. It is being. Glossed. Over. By missionaries.

Who come in. Because they feel that. If you tell them. The bad news. Not the bad news. If you tell them. The bad things. They might not want. To become Christian. So. We.

We hide that little bit. And just tell them. About all these wonderful things. Follow up. Doesn't come. Tells about. Suffering. Then.

That's it. And so. Those are those. People who are like. The seed. That falls on rocky road. Now. The other ones.

[ 33 : 15 ] Is very familiar to us. The third one. To all of us. Who are in this urban setting. Where the word falls. Within the thorn bushes.

People who listen. Who hear the word. But because of the busyness. Of life.

That word doesn't. You know. Just doesn't. Hold fast. I think this resonates with us. Very much.

As a pastor. As a lay person. As a person. Who works in the government. In the private sector. As a person. Who is in school.

As a housewife. Who takes care of children. Or grandchildren. We can all identify. To people. Who are like this. We are.

[ 34 : 14 ] Too engaged. In the world. In. In. In. In. Prospering. Which is nothing wrong with that. We are too worried about the needs of our family, of our work, our responsibilities, to the point that the word that we hear just doesn't affect our lives.

We have that wonderful thing that we say when we are invited to say, for example, let's come to a prayer meeting on Wednesday.

I got dinner, cannot. I got meeting until 6 o'clock. We have that, I don't have time, that excuse that we use.

I don't know about you, but we have faced a challenge to get our members to read the Bible. Imagine that. We are challenged to encourage our people to have a Bible, which they do, to take it from their shelves and from over their heads in their beds, and to open it on a regular basis, on a consistent basis, to read through.

[ 35 : 54 ] Because most of the time they would say, Ayoh, no timer. I'm too busy. I'm too tired.

Now, it is a big challenge for us to bring back our people, not to be ritualistic, religious, but to be grounded in Scripture.

I'm very encouraged by your core values, where you want to be grounded in Scripture. That is something that is a challenge for us, to get our people to be grounded in Scripture if they do not read their Bible, they do not open up their Scripture, they do not dwell into it.

Tabonjaya Anglican Church began earnestly wanting to be a cell church. But because the Anglican Church does not allow this, so it becomes a church with a cell.

With cells, right? The idea for the cell is where you have nurture, where you go deeper into Scripture, where you are encouraged through the reading and through the study of Scripture.

[ 37 : 20 ] Not everyone subscribes to this. It's a challenge for us to go deeper, but not be drowned out by all the thorns, all the busyness.

You know, thorns are very painful. The thorns that go into your skin, all of us, I think, have at least in our lifetime felt how painful thorns are.

They really are a nuisance. Sometimes, in my case, because I had skin allergies, cactus, prick, and it took me a few years just to heal from it.

It's really a nuisance. We know how painful thorns are. Yes, it requires us to heal, to take medicine, to eat properly, but it should not stop us from living.

It's a skim case here. The Word of God needs to grow in us, despite of all the pain that we suffer in this world, in our busyness.

[ 38 : 34 ] It needs to grow. It needs to bear fruit, despite of how heavy our life is, how busy our life is.

Boils down to how much we allow it to grow. Finally, we hear of the seed that falls on good soil.

Now, this one is wonderful.

This is what we want to be. Good soil. Seed is dropped. It germinates. Roots. Takes nutrients. Grows wonderfully.

And there bears a good crop. Good fruit. I think some of you have orchards where you plant durian, rambutan.

We've just gone past by that season of so much fruit to the point that you can't even eat it. Let the birds eat it. Let the topai eat it. Wonderful.

[ 39 : 37 ] Wonderful. We want that to be us. To be really bearing so much fruit that becomes abundant.

abundance is the one that blesses others. That's how I believe it. That's how I believe it. We are cups which are filled not up to the rim only, but overflowing so that the whole place is wet.

everything is blessed by the overflowing. That's what we want to be. A tree, a fruit, a plant that bears so much crop, so wonderful crop that it blesses others.

That's what we want. That's what we want. That's what we want. That's what we want. That's what we want. That's what we want. And we are that plant that needs to persevere. You know, it took me a while to understand this particular part of the passage where it says, And by persevering, produce a crop.

Why persevere? Because in order to produce proper crop, the plant needs to strain itself. Needs to really make an effort.

[ 41 : 06 ] As disciples of Christ, each and every one of us must strain forward, must reach out and move forward.

Not backwards, not downwards. Forward, upwards, heavenwards. There is effort in it. As we move, as a car moves forward, there will be friction that tries to stop it.

We all know this. We must go through that, persevere through that, in order that we move forward. Now, there is a part in our life where once we have received the word, it really affects change in our life.

We become a light to the world. We are lit up. When you become Christians, I hope you do not become hermits and hide away and shy away from the world.

I hope that you go out into the world bright and lit so that people can see not you, but the light within you.

[ 42 : 33 ] Now, this light shines because the darkness inside of us is no longer there. This is the hardest part for me to explain and also something that I am challenged to understand.

when we receive the word, the darkness within lives because that word sinks in.

We meditate on it. We hold fast to it. We are affected by it tremendously that we no longer want to be dark inside. We don't no longer want to be unlit.

We want to be cleansed. We want to be lightened up, illuminated. Now, when you go into a cave or a dark place, you lit it up, you see all the things within that room, for example, within that space.

And you see the good and the bad. The word goes into our lives, our dark lives. And it lits it up and shows to us, points to us, this is good, that is bad.

[ 43 : 52 ] I'm a big fan of the letter Paul wrote to the Colossians. And this particular sermon series in St. Mary's really helped me because at the end of the day, it says, if you have Christ in you, if you have the word of God in you, you can no longer be the old self.

You must be a new creation. And this new creation needs to do a lot of maintenance work, a lot of renovation.

It cannot look or operate like it used to be because it's a new creation. And so you have, if you go through Colossians chapter 3, the five things that you need to kill, the five things that you need to throw away, and the five things that you need to put on.

Those come from scripture. Those come from a meaningful relationship which Massimo pointed out and highlighted to us.

the effect of the word of God is that it leads us from within, cleanses us, allows us to identify this I cannot have anymore, this I must take throw away, and this I must put on.

[ 45 : 18 ] So that we become lit like a lamp, a candle, a torchlight, LED. you know, when we were singing just now, that red lamp went off, my son's attention straight away looked there, no longer paying attention to the praise song.

You know, that's how light is. It's attractive. It takes away our attention. We need, brothers and sisters in Christ, to be like that.

Come into a room, people will see that we are not a normal person. Not that we are abnormal like that, but we are not a person whom they are familiar with.

We are one who comes in bringing grace and mercy and love. Our actions, the things that we say, the thoughts, the things that we see, needs to be different.

Lighting up the whole room. becoming attractive to people. You look at how Jesus is. You know the story, the passage before, concerning the sinful woman and how Jesus came into the house of Pharisees, and this woman came in among the crowd and started to, it attracts.

[ 46 : 45 ] Here we also see how Jesus attracts because it's different. It's different from the rabbis, from the Pharisees, from the Sadducees, and from all the other religious people.

This Jesus was different. Why was he different? Because of the word. He was the word. And so it should be to us, for us to.

The word must go within, light us up, cleanse us, and allow us to be the light to the world. In the Anglican church, we have a post-communion prayer which we say, and part of it is wonderful.

As we have become light, so shall we become light to the world. As we have received light, so shall we become light to everybody else. As we receive that light, which is the word of God, we must become light to others.

Not that they attracted us, not that they glorify us, but they see, they glorify the word, Logos, Jesus.

[ 48 : 04 ] Finally, brothers and sisters in Christ, we come to the part of the passage which I think most of us think might not be appropriate. You know, it seems to be out of place.

the story about Jesus, his mother, and the brothers. He was in another town, he was in that town, they came, they wanted to see him but could not because the crowd was very thick, so they told others and the others told Jesus, and they said, your mother and your brothers are standing outside.

You know, if you go back to the other synoptic Gospels, they will give you even more detail. But look here, he doesn't tell you so much, he tells you what is enough.

He tells you that the mother and the brothers were trying to see him, could not, and they told him.

His reply was short. He said, my mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.

this to me sounds out of place. Some would agree with that. But I think there is a reason for this.

[ 49 : 23 ] At the end of the parable teaching about what should be our response to the word of God, the word of grace, the word that comes from Jesus, is that our response to it.

how and what should we do once we hear. It must go into our hearts and minds and soul and spirit to change us, as I said, to lead, to cleanse, to allow us to become light.

But more important than that, and this is something that becomes a struggle for many, is that we must put it into practice. that word must be put into practice.

We are all human beings. We have our weaknesses. But it should not stop us from putting His word into practice.

Now, the word of God again, comes from for us, comes from scripture. When I was, I know that this is being recorded, and probably will be posted, but when I was challenged as a 16-year-old in MRSM where I studied, one of the biggest challenge was that that would say that this word is the Bible that we have, the scripture that we have, the word of God that we read, does not tell us how to live our life, does not tell us what we should do in this situation or that situation.

[ 51 : 20 ] The Bible is not specific. And so as a 16-year-old with not much foundation in faith, I agreed with them because the Bible does not come out and tell us this is that unclean and that is this you should not touch or this is, you know, all that.

Yes, the Old Testament does touch on that but beyond that the New Testament does not. There is not much, you know, specific teaching and so for us humans, we have no, we want a manual that tells us what to do.

And so as a 16-year-old we've got much foundation in faith. I agreed. Now, now, I disagree and I would say, if you really dwell into your scripture, if you really go deep into your Bible reading, not just read but internalize, hold, meditate on it, learn it, you will find out that the Bible does teach us what to do, tell us what to do with our life.

Again, I go back to collusion, you know, Ephesians and Philippians, the things that are to be done by people of righteousness, the righteous acts of the righteous.

It does. Now, in the Anglican Church, in the Diocese of Kuchik, at the moment, we are emphasizing on providing and equipping our young people with apologetics, which basically means not apologizing for your faith, but defending your faith, defending your faith against threats, questions that are asked.

[ 53 : 20 ] Our young people need to be equipped in Scripture, need to be helped in order that when they go off, away from family, and into the world alone, they won't fall behind.

A huge problem for the church, especially for our, my church. Emphasis now goes back to the Bible, Scripture.

The Bible does teach us how we lead our life. Now, putting it into practice, that is another thing.

That's why I want to end by bringing us back to the first part of the passage, where we find Jesus moving from town to town, village to village.

We are told that he is joined by the twelve disciples, and by some women. I want to emphasize that when Jesus, in the last verse of the passage that we read, says that, you know, my mother and my brothers are those who put my words into action.

I'm reminded of the women who are there with Jesus. Now, we are told that they have been cured of evil spirits and diseases, they have experienced and received blessing from Jesus firsthand, they had faith in him, it affected them, and now they are there as part of his group, traveling with him, providing for him and his disciples, helping, assisting, and that last verse that tells us that they are

supporting them out of their own means.

[ 55 : 32 ] Isn't that putting the word of God into practice? Now, we might say, but I would say Luke putting that in at the beginning of this passage is wonderful.

Here you have women which at that time were not considered to be on par with men. We always, we know that Jesus was counter cultural, he used even, he mingled with women, he mingled with sinners, it was something that a rabbi would not have done, and he did.

He used these women, he brought them in, they assisted him and helped him. To me, that looks like putting the word of God into action, and putting Jesus into their life, and imitating him in everything that they do.

now, I think you would agree with me, that assisting them out of their own means, involves sacrifice.

These women gave from their own means, means their sacrifice from what they have. Sacrificial giving, isn't that what Jesus is all about?

[ 57 : 09 ] Isn't that what Jesus showed? Yes, they became, they came into faith because of what Jesus did for them, which was to heal them from diseases and all these evil spirits.

But beyond that, Jesus would, I mean, could have, could not, could, could, how do you call this, he could easily say no to helping them.

But he did. Jesus helped them, healed them, ministered to them when he did not have to.

Isn't that giving graciously? And so, brothers and sisters in Christ, to me, Luke putting that passage, that verse there in the beginning, emphasize what the parable is trying to teach.

That the word goes in, you must hear. The word must be held fast, must be learned and meditated on and affecting our lives.

[ 58 : 23 ] And it must affect us that we act on our faith on the word that we have received and heard.

And so, I pray, brothers and sisters in Christ, that as you go back to your homes, as you go and have your home fellowship, as you go into your Bible study, don't just read and for enjoyment, but read and listen and hear the word, dwell in it deeply and allow God to affect change in your life.

Let us be a church that is lit up, lights up the room. Let us be a church that draws people just like Jesus did, that they find sanctuary, that they find that love and grace that Jesus afforded to these women, so that they may in turn act upon that word that they have received from God.

In each and every one of us here, we are lit, we are lighted up, not for our glory, but for God, to draw people not to us, but to God.

So I pray that you will find the time, the effort, the energy, the opportunity to put the word of God which is in you into action.

[ 60 : 06 ] Let us pray. Our gracious heavenly Father, we give you thanks for reminding us that your word is powerful and tremendous in its effect.

We pray, Father, that you allow us by your Holy Spirit to put into action your words, that we hear that our hearts and minds and souls and spirit will be changed and affected by it, that we may bring glory to you, that we may light up the darkness around us.

So, heavenly Father, be there with us in your spirit to bring us courage and power so that we may live our lives according to you, for your glory.

We ask this, heavenly Father, thankfully, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.