

## THE BIG IDEA: Our lives illuminate His message.

### The Take-Off

This week will be our last week in our “True Story” journey through Luke for a bit, and the last half of Luke 11 is the perfect place to land the plane for a bit, because it forces us to answer the “so what?” question that Luke always likes to bring us back to.

Remember, the book of Luke that we have in our Bibles is the report that Luke gave to Theophilus after his investigation into the claims of Jesus, and far from being just an academic report, it was a revolutionary document that solidified the foundation of who Jesus claimed to be, and it called Theophilus and its other readers to make a decision about following Jesus as Lord.

I think that’s so important for us to remember: Christianity isn’t about just retaining truth, but about allowing that truth to then change our actions, and the section of Scripture that we’re in today is going to drive that home.

Jesus is going to talk a lot about signs and light; about wanting to see signs and about needing to see light.

Before we dive into the Big Idea and 3 specific actions we need to take, let me make something very clear: when it comes to signs with light, broken signs communicate broken messages.

I know that sounds negative, but I don’t mean for it to be. Let me show you a few examples of how light not functioning correctly can totally change the message trying to be communicated.

### [BROKEN NEON SIGNS]

Now, if we’ve learned one thing in our journey through Luke, it’s this: Jesus is the Son of God sent by God to shine the light of God so that men can find their way back to God.

His message of redemption is what we often hear called the gospel, and now that He has ascended to heaven, WE are the ones that point others to Him.

In other words, we’re the signs communicating the message of the gospel, and it’s too important of a message for us to allow a broken sign to communicate a wrong message.

Maybe the Big Idea can help clarify what I mean: **our lives illuminate His message**, and in **Luke 11:29-54**, I believe that we find 3 very specific actions we need to take in order to make sure our lives are the best neon signs pointing people to Jesus.

## 1. We need to recognize the light

- a. Recognition is critical, and I learned how critical in a near-disaster early in our marriage when I almost gave a woman a bear hug from behind!
- b. I didn’t recognize that she wasn’t Wendy until it was almost too late!
- c. While Jesus’ words can sound harsh in **verses 29-32**, He’s really highlighting the importance of recognizing who He is.
- d. I think His harshest words are about people who ask for signs without recognizing the signs that they’ve already been given.
- e. Perhaps you remember this scene from Bruce Almighty?
- f. [VIDEO CLIP - Send me a sign - Bruce Almighty]
- g. We can waste a lot of time asking for signs, but Jesus IS the sign - HE is the light (**John 8:12**) and we recognize Him through His word

## 2. We need to receive the light

- a. It’s good to recognize the light of Jesus, but we must take steps beyond recognition, and the next step is to receive the light of Jesus
- b. According to **John 1:12**, this is the critical step of salvation
- c. Many people recognize Jesus, but don’t receive His message
- d. Pick your favorite apologists - Ravi Zacharias, Josh McDowell, Frank Turek - and you’ll hear them tell of people with whom they won arguments about WHO Jesus is without seeing those same people ACCEPT who Jesus is
- e. **Luke 11:34** is our key verse here
- f. Good eyes receive light, but bad eyes don’t. Full illumination comes when we are willing to receive the light from the lamp of God’s truth (the Word).

- g. What happens when we aren't willing to receive the light?
- h. Jesus responds clearly in His words of woe to the religious leaders at the end of **Luke 11!**
- i. When we are unwilling to receive the light, we can actually be surrounded by light and yet have souls of complete darkness, and religious activity is one of the areas that many are around the light of Jesus without ever actually receiving the light of Jesus

### 3. We need to reflect the light

- a. Now, if we're going to live out the Big Idea - that **our lives illuminate His message** - then there is one more crucial thing that we've got to do with the light.
- b. We recognize it, we receive it, and, finally, we reflect it.
- c. Keeping the light to ourselves is **INCOMPATIBLE** with Biblical Christianity! We **MUST** reflect the light of Jesus to those around us.
- d. A few verses that make our calling clear:
  - **Matthew 5:16** / our light shines before men and brings praise before God
  - **Acts 13:47** / the light we reflect brings salvation to the ends of the earth
  - **1 John 1:5** / we proclaim the same message that was proclaimed to us - "God is light!"

#### The Landing

I think it's interesting that today's passages began with Jesus saying hard things to a growing crowd and end with a growing opposition among the religious leaders as a result of the hard things Jesus said.

There is only one thing that really cuts at the root of the religious heart, and that's the message that knowing and doing are related and must go together.

Religion has a hard time getting past words, and as a result, often becomes stagnant

The challenge by Jesus is to connect knowing and doing

- **1 Corinthians 4:20**
- **Matthew 7:24**

If we recognize who Jesus is, receive what Jesus says, and reflect why Jesus loves to the world, then we'll never become one of those broken neon signs that accidentally communicate an incorrect message.

**Our lives illuminate His message**, and His message is far too important to get wrong.

Let's pray.