***Luke 11:27-28 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!” 28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.***

We’re back in Luke 11 this morning. Jesus has given instruction in this chapter on the Lord’s Prayer, about seeking God and His Spirit, about Houses divided and unclean spirits. A crowd has gathered, listening to the teachings of Jesus. He is speaking of our Eternal Home, seeking true treasure not of this world, reminding the crowd that there is a war between good and evil, and our minds are the battlefield. Some in the crowd are amazed at His teachings. Others accuse Him of being in league with Satan. As we so often see with Jesus, the crowd is divided and they begin to seek a sign, worldly proof.

What was true then is true today. Hebrews 4:12 says - *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* Jesus, the Living Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit according to Ephesians 6:17 divides. We either have faith to believe or we seek a sign. Jesus tells Thomas in John 20:29 – *Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed*.

In Luke 11, it is abundantly clear that Jesus is drawing a sharp line between the things of this world and the things of eternal significance. He’s interrupted by a voice from the crowd. Verse 27 *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 sounds like a great and uplifting statement! Surely, people in the crowd nod or speak their agreement. While it’s true that Luke 1 says Mary will be called blessed by all generations, notice that this statement, no matter how well intended, risks drawing attention from the truly important. Proverbs 25:11 says *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver*.

Interruptions from the crowd happen today. Perhaps we’re feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit. We’re learning and growing in Christ. Our Spiritual engine seems to be hitting on all cylinders. Then, a voice from the crowd speaks, a distraction presents, drawing attention back to the world. Satan is a master at this. Witnessing opportunities are derailed by our personal comfort. Discipleship opportunities are missed because of anxiety and aggravation. Ministry opportunities are missed because of self-doubt and blaming.

Jesus is not distracted. Just as we must not be distracted. In Matthew 12, He said *For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.* So verse 28 in our scripture is no surprise - *But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.* He in no way discounts what the speaker says. Instead, He redirects back to God. There is a sense of gentle correction here. He’s telling the crowd, “Lift your eyes. The meaningful things are above. Honor your mother, but praise God, seek God, learn of God. Learn His word and do it.” The word keep here has the idea of preserving the word in our hearts and obeying it. James 1:22 says *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.* 1 Samuel 15:22 says in part - *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice*. How well do we obey what we hear?

The command is the same today. Stay focused on Jesus. Every situation and statement must be used to sharpen our focus on Jesus. Perform the word of God. Believe on the Son. Turn from evil. Many are deluded and deceived, knowing the word, knowing the name of Jesus and yet, not looking any different than the rest of the world. See, even evil spirits recognize Jesus. Mark 1:23-24 *Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying, “Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”* Take a minute and notice where Jesus found this man… in the synagogue.Jesus is very clear – hear the word, understand the word, keep and obey the word.

This week, what distractions from the crowd are drawing our eyes from Jesus? What voices are urging our eyes back to the things of this world? How are we responding? Do we respond with anxiety, anger, breathless need to fix? Or do we simply look to God and ask, “How might this strengthen my walk with You Lord, my understanding of You Lord, my Faith in You Lord?” How might I help others in this situation Lord? Keeper of the Word. A doer of the word disciples those less mature in the faith. A doer of the word forms ministries that nourish fellow believers. A doer witnesses in word and deed, looking for opportunities to love the lost - people of every race, nationality, culture. Jesus says *blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.* May we take what we hear today and hide it in our hearts, so we might share it with others. May our every word and work lift all higher towards heaven.