

Mrk11 – **Check Your Heart, Pt 2 – Mark 4:1-25**

Dave Shepardson, wordbymail.com

Last week – we did **Check Your Heart – Part ONE**

If you've **NOT heard** that **msg**
it **would** be **good** - to go **back**

& **LISTEN**, **WATCH**, or **READ** that msg
on the **WBM Ph App**

Today - **Check Your Heart – Part TWO**

Where we **FINISH** looking
at the **Parable of the Sower**

AND . . .

We **FINISH** looking at the **DEEP TRUTH**
of **WHY** Jesus **taught in Parables**

There are **some Challenging Vs's** in today's **msg**

So – **Hold on Tight**

& let's get Ready to "**Check Our Heart**" - **AGAIN**

Let's Pray

Remember – from **last** week

In **Mark 4:1** – Jesus **takes** a **radical SHIFT**
in **HOW** he **teaches** the **CROWDS** - that are **chasing him** around

& he **begins teaching** them – **IN PARABLES**

We explained that a **Parable IS**

taking a **Deep Spiritual Truth**

& **“Placing it alongside”** - an **Easily Understood Truth**

& **then** we **dove into** the Jesus’ **FIRST Parable** in **Mark**

The **Parable** of the **Sower & the Seed**

That Parable started in **Mark 4:3**

& **described 4 TYPES of soil** that a **Farmer’s seed** will fall on

You’ll **have** to **go back** to **PART ONE**

To **get** all **the details** on that

But – **just** to **catch you up**

In **Mark 4:14** Jesus **explains** this **first parable**

So **everyone** will **know** - **HOW** the parables **WORK**

& he says

The **SEED** is **God’s Word**

& the **Soil Condition** represents the **Condition of OUR HEART**

& Jesus says
the Condition of our heart toward God's Truth

is LIKE - ONE of FOUR SOILS

1) Hard-Packed Soil

where the enemy can easily SNATCH it away

2) Shallow Soil

where the Word of God cannot take root

3) Thorny Soil

where the things of this world - CHOKE OUT God's Word

4) Fertile Soil

where God's Word will bring Real Eternal FRUIT

Again – you have to go back to Part ONE for all that

But – the Real DEEP TRUTH

that we tried to clearly explain last week - was this:

<p><u>The CONDITION of your heart</u> – <u>TOWARD God's Word</u> <u>DETERMINES</u> your Ability to <u>RECEIVE God's Word</u></p>
--

Jesus makes it ABUNDANTLY CLEAR in this Parable

The CONDITION of your Heart

is what Determines your ABILITY to RECEIVE God's Word

& then – we kinda skipped over Vs's 10-13 last week
Because we were saving those Vs's for THIS week

Jesus had TAUGHT this Parable to the CROWD

& then – in V.10 – the Disciples ask Jesus
WHAT the parables meant

But he answers them
by telling them WHY he teaches in Parables

& this is what we really want to GET TO today (for Pt-2)

Mark 4:10–11(A) (NLT)

10 Later, when Jesus was alone with the twelve disciples and with the others who were gathered around, they asked him what the parables meant.

11 He replied, “You are permitted to understand the secret of the Kingdom of God . . .”

Now – Remember – the Deep Truth of the Parable is

<p><u>The <u>CONDITION</u> of your heart – <u>TOWARD</u> God's Word <u>DETERMINES</u> your Ability to <u>RECEIVE</u> God's Word</u></p>

So – when Jesus says to the 12,
along with the OTHER Believers who were there

in v.11(a) “You are permitted to understand the secret of the Kingdom of God . . .

v.11(a) “You are permitted to understand the secret of the Kingdom of God . . .

He’s **NOT saying** - they **HAVE something SPECIAL**

He’s **NOT saying** - they **ARE something SPECIAL**

He’s saying

they have **HEARTS to RECEIVE**
the **Truths** of the **Kingdom of God**

& **we KNOW** that Jesus is **saying THAT**

Because he **CONTRASTS** it

with **those** whose **Hearts**

are **HARDENED** & **CLOSED** to the **Truths of God**

in Mark 4:11(B)-12 (NLT)

***11(B) . . . But I use parables for everything I say to outsiders,
12 so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled: ‘When they see what I do, they will learn nothing. When they hear what I say, they will not understand. Otherwise, they will turn to me and be forgiven.’”***

& then we read - in Mark 4:13 (NLT)

13 Then Jesus said to them, “If you can’t understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables?”

It’s **very critical** to **understand**

the **Solemn Warning** in **these Vs’s**

& to understand the Warning

we've GOT to understand
the CONTEXT these Vs's were written in

Jesus is quoting from ISAIAH CH 6
Which is the "Calling of Isaiah"

For 250 yrs (+/-)
Israel had been on a Steady Spiritual Decline

since Solomon took over for King David

For 250 yrs (for the most part) Israel's heart had been
growing harder & harder

toward the Lord - & toward his Word

& Isaiah was called - to Prophecy BOTH

About - The Coming Messiah – AND
About - The Judgment Coming BEFORE the Messiah

The Judgment that was coming

For the "JUDAH PART"
Of the Divided Kingdom of Israel

Was the EXILING of God's people to BABYLON

& the Destruction of Jerusalem & the Temple

But – the **REASON** for **that Judgment** – was **because**

the **people's hearts**

had grown **SO HARD** toward **God**

& **they** had become

SO REJECTING of **God's Word**

that they could **NO LONGER** - **HEAR or RECEIVE**

the **Word of God**

& **IN these two vs's**

that **Jesus Quotes** in **Mark 4:12**

God Telling Isaiah

that **even tho**

Isaiah is to **call** the **people** to **Repentance**

God Already KNOWS

they will **REJECT** both **Isaiah** - & **God**

God already KNOWS

that **their hearts** are **hardened BEYOND**

the ability to **RECEIVE His Word**

God's Word makes it clear – there is a time

when a person's heart

becomes **SO HARD** towards **God**

& their Rejection

of **God** becomes **SO ENGRAINED**

that it becomes impossible for them

to **Receive God's Word** and **Be Saved**

& so – your question - HAS to be

How do I KNOW

When I've reached that point

that I can no longer RECEIVE God's Word - & Be Saved

& the answer is SIMPLE – TRY IT!

TRY – Right Now

To **Ask God** to **FORGIVE YOU**

for **your Hard Heart** - & your **Closed Mind** to his **Word**

TRY – Right Now – To say

Lord Jesus, please take this Hard Heart from me

& give me a heart that can RECEIVE your Word

& Save me from my Sin

& I promise you – if you can say that – RIGHT NOW – to God
THEN . . . it is NOT too late, for you

Because - God will HEAR Your Prayer
& he will SAVE YOU – Before it is too late

WHY were there TWO thieves on the other Crosses with Jesus

Wasn't it - So that we could see what it looks like

for one Sinner

to have a Hard Heart toward Jesus - till the end

& another Sinner

to suddenly have a RECEPTIVE Heart toward Jesus

You will ALWAYS have the Choice
To RECEIVE God's Word

UNTIL – You Are No Longer Able
to RECEIVE God's Word

I promise you

If you will Sincerely Ask God - for a Heart
to be able to Receive the truths of His Word

God will GIVE YOU a Heart
to be able to Receive the truths of His Word

So – in Vs's 14-20 - Jesus goes on – to explain the Parable
(*we went thru that last week*)

Then – in Mark 4:21

We Pick Up our Focus today

With Jesus “Shedding Light” on what the Disciples
must've been THINKING

Jesus had just told the Disciples (& other believers)

That only those

with a ‘Heart to Receive’ God's Word

Would be able to grasp the truths in his Parables

& That may've been a HARD THING
for the Disciples to Accept

& so – Jesus wants to make it CLEAR

He is NOT HIDING ANYTHING - from ANYBODY

Jesus came – As the Light of the World

In John 8:12 (NLT)

12 [Jesus said] . . . “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”

Jesus came - AS the Light of the World - so that

ALL who followed him
would have the LIGHT that LEADS to LIFE

Maybe the Disciples were thinking

Jesus should only share His Words
with people who already had a Heart To Receive his Word

But – In Mark 4:21 - Jesus uses a 'MINI-PARABLE'

to explain that He came - to let the light of the truth
Shine on every person

Mark 4:21 (NLT)

21 Then Jesus asked them, “Would anyone light a lamp and then put it under a basket or under a bed? Of course not! A lamp is placed on a stand, where its light will shine.

It seems to me – that Jesus is saying

I CAME – to Shine the Light of the Truth of God
on EVERYONE – whether they will RECEIVE it or NOT

The Light Of The Truth
is NOT HIDDEN for a select few

It's meant to BRING EVERYTHING - into the light

Look at the Next Vs - Mark 4:22 (NLT)

22 For everything that is hidden will eventually be brought into the open, and every secret will be brought to light.

Ultimately - the LIGHT of the Truth

will **Bring Everything** into **the Open**
& **Every Secret** will be **brought** into **the light**

& **then** – **Jesus repeats** what **he often says**
at the beginning - or end of his **parables**

Mark 4:23 (NLT)

23 Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.

Jesus is **LIFE & DEATH SERIOUS** Here

Because this is An **Eternal Life & Death Issue**

& **he's** giving us **Every Reason**
AND **No Small Warning**

To **get us** to **have** a **Heart** to **RECEIVE his Word**

& so **he says again** here in **V.23**

***If you have Ears to hear – & a Heart to receive
Please - Pay Attention!***

& Then he says it AGAIN

in Mark 4:24 (NLT)

24 Then he added (for emphasis), “Pay close attention to what you hear. The closer you listen, the more understanding you will be given—and you will receive even more.

Do you HEAR That?

The closer you listen – the more understanding will be given

**& then he says it – AGAIN in V.25
*(for the 3rd time !!)***

Mark 4:25 (NLT)

25 To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them.”

We dealt with this Vs last week

It's an Encouragement - AND a Warning

IF we have a Heart to RECEIVE

then we will Receive even more

IF we have a Heart to REJECT

**then even what little understanding we have
will eventually be taken away from us**

The parables of Jesus will reveal to us
The TRUTHS of the Kingdom of God

IF - we will Come

with 'Ears to Hear'
& a 'Heart To Receive'

& PLS HEAR ME - - if we DON'T Receive
the life-changing POWER of the Words of Jesus

IT IS NOT THE SEED'S FAULT – The PROBLEM is the SOIL
the Problem is the CONDITION of OUR HEART

The parables are designed – to help us CHECK Our Heart
To help us acknowledge WHICH heart we have

One last thing

After we RECEIVE God's Word into our heart
We've GOT to continue . . .

to TEND the truth of God's Word in our hearts
JUST AS a Farmer tends a crop - while it's growing

Listen please: If seed falls on GOOD SOIL

BUT that farmer does not continue to TEND to its Growth

Ultimately that seed will be just as UNFRUITFUL
as the seed that fell on the HARDENED FOOTPATH

Jesus refers to this truth

in **the seed** that **fell** on **SHALLOW SOIL**
& **the seed** that **fell among** the **THORNS**

Don't let that **seedling** of **God's Word**
DIE in **your heart**

when the **Hot Sun of Trials** - **rises** over **your life**

& **Don't let** that **seedling** of **God's Word**
DIE in **your heart**

when the **Thorns of this world**
start trying to **CHOKe** the **Spiritual Life** out of **you**

Tend to the **seed** of **God's Word**
that's **been planted** in **your heart**

& **give God TIME** – to **Water** & **Mature** & **Grow**
The **truths** of **His Word** - that **you've RECEIVED**

& **have** an **absolute confidence**

that as you **Receive** - & **Tend**
the **Truths** of **Gods Word** - **planted** in **your heart**

God will see to it
that **your life** will **produce** - an **Eternal Spiritual Harvest**

Let's Pray