

- I) **V1-2 INTRO: And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered**
- II) **In ch 1 Mark began his gospel by introducing us to John the Baptist
He quoted Malachi and Isaiah in order to reveal that John was Jesus' forerunner**
- III) **Malachi wrote of the Messenger who would prepare the way for Messiah
Isaiah called the people to prepare their own hearts to receive Messiah**
- IV) **After introducing John, Mark went on to introduce Jesus**
- V) **He began by speaking of His baptism and anointing by the Holy Spirit
When Jesus was baptized, His Father gave witness of Who He is
Mk 1:11 A voice came from heaven You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased**
- VI) **With this introduction, Jesus was revealed as Israel's long-awaited Messiah
Jesus is Mashiach, the Christ, the anointed One: Messiah
Ac 10:38 (Peter said that) God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.**
- VII) **Interestingly, demons were well aware of just who He was
Mk 1:24 (Demonized man in synagogue) spoke and said 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!***
- VIII) **As we see, Jesus went about doing good and attracting multitudes
He cleansed lepers, performed miracles, cast out demons, and even forgave sins
His preaching was so attractive that crowds formed wherever He taught**
- IX) **His teaching was filled with power and authority
Mk 1:22 They were astonished at His teaching for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes
Jn 7:46 "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards replied.**
- X) **All of this was amazing, but not everyone thought it was good
The Pharisees began to see in Jesus a problem: He was undermining their traditions**
- XI) **Jesus was performing miracles on the Sabbath, and this was considered sinful**

He also forgave sins, which they considered blasphemy

XII) All of what Jesus was doing was amazing and attractive, yet people still rejected Him

I) Everything pointed to Him being Messiah, and yet many rejected Him

Jn 1:11 (Amplified Bible) He came to that which was His own [that which belonged to Him—His world, His creation, His possession], and those who were His own [people—the Jewish nation] did not receive and welcome Him.

II) His power was undeniable, His miracles amazing and His preaching authoritative

Yet there were those who *refused* to receive Him

III) His apostles (as well as His disciples) may have wondered why this was happening

V2 To answer this question, Jesus began to *teach them many things by parables*

IV) You might find it interesting to know that Jesus often communicated through stories

Approximately 1/3 of Jesus' recorded teachings were given as parables
Scholars differ on the amounts of parables He gave: They are between

37-39

V) The word *parable* speaks of placing of one thing by the side of another, for comparison

It has been defined as an earthly story containing a heavenly meaning
Through stories, God uses the familiar to communicate the unfamiliar

VI) Jesus used Parables in His teaching to share insights into the Kingdom of God
They reveal kingdom truth, give doctrine, and develop Spiritual understanding

VII) It has been said that parables are like mirrors and windows

We see ourselves *in* them, and they help us see life *through* them

VIII) In scripture, they were intended to both conceal and to reveal (V11-12)

The uninterested would hear the parable but not consider it deeply

IX) The one with a spiritual hunger would think of it and search out its meaning

Pr 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

- X) **SADLY: The same message that awakened one person hardened the other**
In this passage, Jesus begins to teach many things by using parables
- XII) **V1 And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered**
- XIII) **As we begin, Jesus is on the shore of the Sea of Galilee**
Many have assembled to hear Him teach
Once again, because of the great crowd Jesus gets into a boat (Mk 3:9)
- I) **V2 As the crowd assembles on the shore, Jesus begins to teach them many things**
- II) **With so many present, why didn't He begin by performing miracles**
This is something that Mark has been clearly reporting on: Jesus was a miracle worker
- III) **Part of the reason would be that believing in *miracles* does not save a person**
The miracle drew attention to the miracle worker, the message drew people to salvation
- IV) **Remember: Mark made it clear that after John was imprisoned, Jesus came *preaching***
Mk 1:15 The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel
It has been said that the way into a man's heart is through his ears
- V) **Preaching and teaching the gospel is God's way of bringing people to salvation**
Ro 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek
- VI) **I read recently that In 2009, 77% of Americans claimed to be Christians**
By 2019, only 65% claimed to be Christian
- VII) **During the pandemic one in three practicing Christians stopped attending church**
- VIII) **Today for many, the idea of preaching and teaching is considered ineffective**
We look back and see there have been centuries of preaching and

teaching the gospel

IX) Christians speak and write millions of words daily, yet there seems to be little results

This has discouraged pastors from teaching God's word

This has also impressed church attenders that church services are not necessary

X) Many have ceased claiming to be Christian and others have left church, forever

Should this cause believers and bible teachers to cease teaching?

XI) The question is: Has God's word lost its power? Is our preaching useless?

**XII) Not everybody sees the value of the message and the God who authored it
There are many who believe that the preaching of salvation is a joke
1 Co 1:18 The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

XIII) Today, the thing that is troubling is that many professing Christians don't value it

They reject the Bible's authority and refuse to do what scripture teaches

I) What we are seeing is actually one of the primary signs that we live in the last days

2 Ti 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables.

II) We are definitely living in such times

**III) Even the church has decided that there are better ways to reach people
SPURGEON: I do believe we slander Christ when we think we are to draw the people by something (other than) the preaching of Christ crucified**

IV) For centuries the gospel has been preached, but not all hearing it have responded

This parable gives us insight into the missing ingredient when it comes to God's Word

V) V2 Then He taught them many things by parables and said to them *in His teaching*

It is interesting to note that Jesus often communicated by the use of stories

Approximately 1/3 of Jesus' recorded teachings come through His parables

VI) Throughout the NT, Jesus often gave instruction by the use of Parables
Scholars differ on the amounts of parables He gave but they are between 37-39

VII) The word parable is something that all Christians are familiar with
But just what is the definition of the word?

VIII) Parable speaks of placing one thing by the side of another in order to make a comparison

It has been defined as an earthly story containing a heavenly meaning
Through the use of parables God uses the familiar to communicate the unfamiliar

IX) Jesus used Parables in His teaching to share insights into the Kingdom of God
They reveal kingdom truth, provide doctrine, and develop Spiritual understanding

X) It has been said that they are mirrors and windows
We see ourselves *in* them, and they help us to see life *through* them

XI) Jesus used parables to both conceal, reveal, and fulfill

XII) **CONCEAL:** From those who were not interested or hungry
Lazy listeners filled with unbelief would not care to seek for the deeper application

The uninterested would hear the parable but not consider it deeply

I) **REVEAL:** To those who are hungry for God's Kingdom and are pursuing Him
Pr 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter
Mt 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled

II) **FULFILL:** An example of this is V12, which fulfilled Isaiah 6:9-10

III) Jesus used parables to communicate things concerning the kingdom of God

They were *interesting, easy to remember, and easy to apply*

IV) In an atmosphere of hostility, it separates the true follower from opponents

V) Finally, Jesus gave these parables in order *to prepare His disciples* for their mission

Believers are to be busy preaching the gospel until Jesus returns

VI) V1-2 And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him

Great multitudes gather together to listen to Him teach

VII) One would think that He would teach a very clear and understandable message to them

If He were to make it too demanding or too difficult to understand they may leave!

VIII) Instead of making it easier, Jesus seems to have made it more difficult for them

Mark makes it clear that this time, He spoke *only in parables* (V33)
In doing this He pruned out the ones who were not sincerely interested

IX) V3-9 *LISTEN*: Behold, a sower went out to sow And it happened as he sowed that some

X) Notice how Jesus began by telling His listeners to listen, or to pay attention
He was making it clear that what was to follow would not be easy to understand

XI) Learning spiritual truth is not something that comes naturally, or easily
It requires a hunger and a diligence of heart
Pr 3:3-5 if you call out for *insight* and cry aloud for *understanding*, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

XII) V3 Listen Behold a sower went out to sow
A man walking with a bag of seed slung over his shoulder, moving through a field

XIII) He is scattering seed throughout the field with the intent of reaping a great harvest

I) As a farmer, he is scattering the seed with purpose and personal concern
He isn't just throwing the seed anywhere, but is carefully scattering it

over the ground

II) V4 And it happened as he sowed that some seed fell by the wayside and the birds

III) As he scattered seed, some fell on the hardened path that bordered the field
This is *soil* that has been hardened by foot traffic

IV) V5-6 Some fell on stony ground where it did not have much earth and immediately
These are underlying beds of rock, covered with a shallow blanket of dirt

V) The seeds germinate quickly, but the roots can't penetrate the rock, and end up springing above ground faster than normal.
The Plants look healthy but don't have mature root systems and quickly wither

VI) V7 And some seed fell among the thorns and the thorns grew up and choked it and it
The thorns are thistle bearing weeds that choke out good seed

VII) Weeds took the space, moisture, nourishment, and sunlight from the healthy plants
The result is that the ground yielded no crop

VIII) V8 But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up and yielded
This *ground* was fertile and receptive, able to produce a *spectacular harvest*

IX) V9 And He said to them He who has ears to hear *let him hear*
This is a call to listen closely to what He has to say

X) Those who desire to know Him will be those who seek Him
He is revealed to us through His word
Jer 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

XI) Listen closely to what I have to say because if you desire to understand, you will
Your heart is soil and it can produce a beautiful garden, or a field of weeds!

He who has ears to hear *let him hear*:

XII) Decide that you will listen, with a heart of faith

XIII) This is because God's word produces fruit that results in eternal life

1 Th 2:13 And we continually thank God because, when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, *but as the true word of God*--the word which is now at work in you who believe.

I) Jesus was speaking to a great multitude which included disciples and deniers
The religious leaders had already started to reject Him, as did many others

II) These people were not given the interpretation of the parable
Only those who had ears to hear were willing to listen and to understand

These were the ones that He gave an explanation

III) V10 But when He was alone *those around Him* with the twelve asked Him about the

twelve
There are those who are remaining to hear an explanation, and His

IV) Why are you giving stories but not giving any explanation

They all don't understand! And by the way, we don't either (V13)

V) V11 And He said to them To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom

Kingdom
It has been given (granted) *to you* to know the mysteries of the

VI) You have ears to hear, and to you the mystery of the kingdom is revealed

revealed
MYSTERY: Spiritual truth that previously was hidden but is now

To you, salvation has been revealed and received

VII) If God were not to reveal Himself to us, we would never know Him (1 Co 2:14)

Himself
God reveals to us how to have a relationship with Him and draws us to

Mt 11:27 All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son *chooses to reveal him*.

VIII) V11 You have been given the privilege of knowing the mystery of salvation

In your embracing Me by faith you have been opened to understanding the work of God

IX) V11b but to those who are outside all things come in parables
To others it has not been given: *They do not have saving faith*
They are blinded by unbelief and are simply not interested in what He has to say

X) V12 So that seeing they may see and not perceive and hearing they may hear and not

XI) He quotes Is 6:9-10: In the time of Isaiah, the Jews were rejecting the God of Israel

No matter how He called to them to repent, they refused to hear:
Ultimately, they were judged

XII) They hardened their heart to God, ignored His Word and were locked into their sin

I) V13 He said to them do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand

Understanding this parable is the key to understanding the other parables He is giving

II) V14 *FIRST*: The sower sows the *word*
The sower is Jesus (Mt 13:37) and obviously, the word is God's word, in the gospel

III) Jesus has been going throughout the nation teaching and preaching
Great multitudes from Galilee, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, Tyre and Sidon are following Him

IV) As they come to hear Him, He preaches to them and He teaches them
As the Sower, He is doing this with intent, covering the ground with the seed

Ps 126:5-6 Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him*

V) You men and many of you listening have heard what I have taught
You have become followers of Mine but have seen that not all have done so

This is the explanation as to why they have rejected Me

- VI) V15 These are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown When they hear
the word Why do they reject the word? Satan runs interference and takes away the word
- VII) Stereotypes, distractions, pride, bitterness, love of the world and sin hardens them
They hear the gospel but reject it having no desire to listen and be saved
- VIII) This would specifically point out the Pharisees and other religious leaders
love of God They were trapped in their religious traditions and refused the grace and
unbelief Satan has used this and has blinded them spiritually, encouraging
- IX) V16-17 These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who when they hear
the word
deeply Stony ground is similar to the wayside but is actually hidden more
There is a thin layer of dirt that is covering the hardness of the soil
- X) These people hear the gospel and emotionally seem to embrace its message
Externally they appear wonderfully saved, but in their hearts, they
remain hard in sin
Under the surface is unbelief and a lack of repentance
- XI) They are the Victims of easy believism
They hear a shallow message that eliminates cost, sacrifice or troubles
- I) They can show up at church, bible studies, go to retreats, and even serve
On the outside, they appear to be genuine believers
- II) When tribulation or persecution arises, they are immediately made to stumble
abandon faith Because they have not truly repented, when trouble arises they
fall away They never had a deep love for Jesus or hunger for righteousness, and
- III) They had no true conversion, although it may take years for this to show
They get disappointed in God and when hurt, they turn away from Him

IV) A.W. TOZER: "The Incredible Christian":

If God sets out to make you an unusual Christian He is not likely to be as gentle as He is usually pictured by the popular teachers. A sculptor does not use a manicure set to reduce the rude, unshapely marble to a thing of beauty. The saw, the hammer and the chisel are cruel tools, but without them the rough stone must remain forever formless and unbeautiful. To do His supreme work of grace within you He will take from your heart everything you love most. Everything you trust in will go from you. Piles of ashes will lie where your most precious treasures used to be...

Only a genuine believer will remain under such conditions

V) V18-19 Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word

Once again, the soil appears good but within it are seeds of weeds and thorns

When the seed is watered and cared for, the seeds of the thorns also sprout

VI) These are the double-minded hearers of the word

These include Jesus in their way of talk, but not in their way of life

Their first love remains the World: Pride, position, possessions all reign supreme

VII) They are overwhelmed with the deceitfulness of riches and their desires for other things

The love for the world dominates any love they might have for His word
Mt. 6:24 No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

VIII) Their love for this world chokes off any longing for heaven and they abandon Jesus

In every case: *The seed is fine*, it is the *person* who is callused

IX) V20 But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word accept it and

This soil is not filled with unbelief, and he is productive in the kingdom of God

X) NOTICE: Each one produces according to its own capacity

Not are equally productive, because not all are equally sold out to the Lord

I) Some just want to get in to heaven, others want to come in Victoriously and fruitfully

Jn 15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

II) Not everyone listened to what Jesus said

We need to remember that though He spoke to multitudes, in the end few followed Him

1 Co 15:6 tells us that after Jesus' resurrection His number of followers were a little more than five hundred

III) What happened to the rest?