

Mark 4: Kingdom Parables

Choose to Love...Love 'em to Life

Last week: Warning of rejecting Jesus

Luke 7:30 ...the Pharisees and lawyers [scribes] rejected the will of God for themselves

I. Invitation to become part of Jesus Family

Mark 3:31 Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. 32 And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You." 33 But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" 34 And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 35 For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother." Choice: reject/do will of God

- **Will of God:** Believe in Jesus and be saved

1 Timothy 3 [God] desires all men to be saved; come to the knowledge of the truth.

John 3:16 ...God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

4:1 And again He began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude was gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat *in it* on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land facing the sea. ²Then He taught them many things by parables

- **Boat pulpit:** Great Acoustics! Taught many things "by Parables"; 15,000 people
- Parables after Pharisee Rejection: Mark 3/Matthew 12

Mark 3:23 ...He called them to Himself and said to them **in parables:** "How can Satan cast out Satan?"

Matthew 13:34 All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them

Parable: Para "*alongside*" *ballein* "to throw" Lit. story thrown alongside a truth to illustrate . paint a picture of the truth

- Some know how to use parables and some don't. HS English class:
 - His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a dryer without Cling Free.
 - Her hair glistened in the rain like nose hair after a sneeze.
 - The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball

- wouldn't.
- From the attic came an unearthly howl. The whole scene had an eerie, surreal quality, like when you're on vacation in another city and "Jeopardy" comes on at 7 p.m. instead of 7:30.
 - She caught your eye like one of those pointy hook latches that used to dangle from screen doors and would fly up whenever you banged the door open again.
 - John and Mary had never met. They were like two hummingbirds who had also never met.

1. Interesting/grab listeners attention: Truths relating to hearers daily lives
2. Easily remembered
3. Reveal truth to those seeking truth
4. Conceal truth from those who oppose Jesus message

Matthew 10:34 "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.

II. Parable of the Soils: How the Word of God is Received

...and said to them in His teaching:3 "**Listen!** Behold, a sower went out to sow.4 And it happened, as he sowed, that some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds of the air came and devoured it. 5 Some fell on stony ground, where it did not have much earth; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of earth. 6 But when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. 7 And some seed fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no crop. 8 But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." And He said to them, "**He who has ears to hear, let him hear!**"

- **Seed Sowed:** Agricultural Society...relevant to hearers
 1. Wayside
 2. Rocky Ground
 3. Among Thorns
 4. Good Ground

10 But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable.

- 12 plus some disciples asked about the parable
- First **why** Jesus begins to use parables:

11 And He said to them, "To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God..."

- **Biblical Mystery:** Something not known unless revealed by God

...but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, 12 so that 'Seeing they may see and not perceive, And hearing they may hear and not understand; Lest they should turn, And their sins be forgiven them.'"

- **Parables:** Door to Truth needs the right Key to enter; understand [para. Guzic]
- **Key to Door of Truth:** Faith

Romans 10:17 ... faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- Listen...He who has ears let him hear!
- Those who have **ears to hear** will understand, turn and be forgiven

13 And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

- This parable fundamental to all that follow: Jesus interprets the parable:

14 The sower sows the word.

- **Sower:** Son of Man [Mat 13:37]
- **Seed:** Word of God
- **Soil:** Heart of man

How the soil accepts the seed...How heart of man accepts the Word of God

- Each different heart hears the Word; ears to hear means hear and do:

Matthew 7:24 "... whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." [After Lord, Lord]

1) Word to a Hard Heart Seed falls on hard road **Wayside**

15 And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.

- Road constantly walked on; no penetration to grow
- **Hear the Word:** NO growth...no effect...no change or worse: Harder heart
- Word easily snatched up by Birds of the Air; Satan

2 Corinthians 4:3 ... if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

2 Thessalonians 2:11 [After continued rejection/unbelief]... God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- Godless...self consumed...feel no need for God, Forgiveness, Truth

"Hard hearts must be 'plowed up' before they can receive the seed, and this can be a painful experience" (Wiersbe) Might take a tragedy...sometimes wont help:

[On devout atheist Christopher Hitchens]"In the last year of his life, Hitchens wrote some searching essays about his cancer and impending death," he continued. "He seemed to stand ever resolute in his atheism and to insist that the hour of his demise must be the proving ground of his unbelief." [Seeds pounded into hard ground]

- **Hard heart:** Most Difficult to penetrate. Seed does not have a chance to grow

2) Word to a Selfish Heart Light covering soil; **Stony Ground**

16 These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

- Hear the Word Sprout quickly; Glad to receive Word:
 1. Church Family
 2. Place to go
 3. Pastors funny, loud?
 4. Benefits of Holy Spirit: Peace, Deliverance

Mark 6:20 [Herod knew John] was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and **heard him gladly.** [Put him to death]

- No Root in themselves: No knowledge of depth of their sin and need of salvation

Some professing Christians have no root in themselves. Their root is in their parents, or in the Christian friends, or in the pastor, or in enthusiastic surroundings. "Then there are many more, whose religion must be sustained by enthusiastic surroundings. They seem to have been baptized in boiling, water; and unless the temperature around them is kept up to that point, they wither away ... the religion that is born of mere excitement will die when the excitement is over." (Spurgeon) Stony Ground

- Correct response to Word first **repentance then joy**
- Want what is on the Lords table. Not the Lord. What they can get
- Tribulation/Persecution for the Word they Stumble: Did not count the cost

1. Loss of friends
2. Status
3. Job
4. Ridicule
5. Not able to do "what they want" because Word

- "Immediately" they stumble [Saved?] 1 month, 6 months...a year

1 Peter 2:2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, 3 if indeed you have **tasted that the Lord is gracious.**

Psalm 34:8 Oh, **taste and see** that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

Eternal Cost of NOT following Jesus is much greater the temporal tribulation/persecution face as believers in this world

Hebrews 6:4 ...it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and **have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come**, 6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. 7 For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; 8 but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

2 Peter 2:21... it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: **"A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."**

- **Stony Ground:** Word to selfish heart
- Need for Self gratification/fulfillment/satisfaction. When gone...dies falls away
- Jesus is not Lord but Santa Clause

John 6:66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

- After a short time looking for something to disagree with, someone to blame

3) Word to Divided Heart Thorny Ground

18 Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, 19 and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

- Largest percentage of people: Materialistic
- Hear the Word grow until overwhelmed by thorns...Stop
- Thorns:

1. Cares of the world...Choke the Word

- a. Tyranny of the Urgent
- b. The next corner I'll be satisfied
- c. Discontentment
- d. Paralyzed by fear: Political and World conditions

Do not fear...Delight in ME!

2. Deceitfulness of Riches...Choke out the Word

Mark 10:21 Jesus, looking at him, loved [Rich Ruler], and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."²² But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

- Deceitfulness of Riches: Promises never delivered. Dodge MLC?

Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- Walked away from Jesus [eternal] to hold on to riches [temporal]

Delight in ME!

3. Desire for other things: Chokes out the Word

- a. Fame
- b. Notoriety
- c. Recognition
- d. Bright Lights:

Colossians 4:14 Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.

Philemon 1:23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, 24 as do Mark, Aristarchus, **Demas**, Luke, my fellow laborers.

2 Timothy 4:9 Be diligent to come to me quickly; 10 for Demas has forsaken me, having **loved this present world**, and has departed for Thessalonica

Delight in Me!

- Cares of the World, Riches, Other things [Idols] Unfruitful

John 15:8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples... 11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

- Divided Heart: On the fence; fearful/miserable/unsure of salvation

4) Word to a Ready Heart Word to the Good Ground

Mark 4:20-41 Parables and Provisions

Love 'em to Life: Sean and Venita

- Wayside Word to Hard Heart
- Rocky Word to Self-Centered Heart
- Thorny Word to Divided Heart
- Good Ready Heart

I. Healthy and Whole: God's Will

Word to a Ready Heart Word to the Good Ground

4:20 But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

- **Began with invitation:** Who is my Family: Those who do the will of God, 1 Agenda
- **Close with Invitation:** Word of God to a Ready Heart
- These Respond to the **Light given:**

John 6:44 ...No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him

John 1:9 [Jesus is] the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

1. Accept the Word of God
2. Grow Strong
3. Bear Fruit in themselves
4. See fruit in others

- These Respond to the **Water offered:**

Revelation 22:1...he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Revelation: 22:17 ...the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

- Responding to Light given/water offered: Spiritual Photosynthesis/Metamorphosis
 1. Permanent change in Spiritual DNA
 2. Delighting in the Lord and His goodness
 3. Every sin forgiven

4. Every stain of sin removed
5. Abundant life here; Eternal life forever
6. Released from every bondage
7. Living a Fruitful Abundant life
8. Seeing others bear fruit [Storing treasure in Heaven]

We are here “For such a time as this!”

Psalm 1:2 [Godly] shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

1. Not hard hearted allowing enemy to steal God’s Word
2. Not shallow soiled/thin skinned allowing trials/tribulation to make us fall away
3. Not tangled in thorns of concerns of this world stunting growth
4. But accepting God’s Word and bearing good fruit, lasting change

Time to:

1. Throw off the cares of world
2. Keep ourselves from idols
3. Delight ourselves in the Lord
4. Answer yes to the question...

When everything else gone, **Are we okay with Jesus alone?**

Psalm 37:3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.⁴ Delight yourself also in the Lord, He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Time to Know Our God!

Daniel 11:32...the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*.

Daniel 12:3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

Light Under a Basket

21 Also He said to them, “Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand?”

- Jesus is the Light: Purpose of the light reveal, expose, disperse darkness

John 8:12 “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

- We are responsible to respond to the Light
 1. Accepting the Light [God’s Truth]
 2. Shining the Light

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

- Light creates responsibility: God did not give us Light [Truth] to keep to ourselves

John 4:35 ...Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

Matthew 9:36 [moved with compassion] saw they were scattered, like sheep having no shepherd "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. 38 Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

22 For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

- God's promise is that truth will be revealed

...what we do with Light [Revealed Truth] has Eternal Significance

24 Then He said to them, **"Take heed what you hear..."**

- Not every church is a Church
 1. Teach the Bible?
 2. Whole counsel of God?
 3. Supplemental Books?
 4. Inherency of Scripture?
 5. Deity of Jesus?
 6. Salvation by Grace alone?

24b With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you

- **Direct correlation:** Hearing/Spiritual Growth

"The hearer of the gospel will get measure for measure, and the measure shall be his own measure." Spurgeon

- God responds in direct proportion to our response to His Word!

24c...and to you who hear, more will be given. 25 For whoever has, to him more will be given...

- Whoever has [desire to hear] more will be given [greater desire to hear]
- Hungry for Truth...Wow

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. [As much Jesus as you want]

25b...but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

- Whoever does not have [desire to hear] he will lose whatever little desire he has
- Uninterested, fault-finding, bored...don't expect anything

SUMMARY: Take heed what you hear...faith is the key to Truth...and faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Have ears to hear or pray about growing a couple.

II. More Kingdom Parables

Parable of the Growing Seed

26 And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, 27 and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. 28 For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. 29 But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

- Kingdom of God is...
- Spiritual Growth compared with Preaching of the Word [First Parable]
- Seed is the Word of God:

"The secret of growth is in the seed, not in the soil nor in the weather nor in the cultivating. These all help, but the seed spontaneously works according to its own nature." (Robertson)

- Spiritual Photosynthesis: Seed, Light, Water still not understood
- Friday night: I'm a sinner and I need Jesus!

Parable of the Mustard Seed

30 Then He said, "To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? 31 It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; 32 but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade."

- Mustard Seed: Smallest seed known at the time
- Grows into a monstrosity; abnormal growth; bush into a tree:

"The growth of the kingdom will not result in the conversion of the world. In fact, some of the growth will give opportunity for Satan to get in and go to work!" (Wiersbe)

- Pseudo-Christianity is more abominable than blatant Satanism
 1. Same terms: Born Again, Jesus, Heaven, Spirit
 2. Different Books: Supplements, magazines

3. Different Jesus

2 Corinthians 11:4 ...preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it! [Not Deity/Not Able to save]

4. No Salvation

- All call themselves Christian
- V13 How will you understand all the parables?
- Birds of Air: v4 explained v15 as Satan; powers of deceit, falseness, darkness
- Birds of the air satanic pseudo Christian cults and isms nesting under the umbrella of Christianity [Jesus is God/Salvation by Grace/ Inherency and Sufficiency of Scripture]

33 And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it. 34 But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples.

SUMMARY: Kingdom parables [Story thrown alongside a Truth] Power/mystery of the Seed [Word of God] to bring forth Salvation and Spiritual Growth. Infiltration by make-believers who find cover under the umbrella of Christianity.

III. God's Commands are God's Enablement

35 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." 36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.

- Taught all day; Evening Jesus want to cross over Sea of Galilee [5 miles]
- Leave 15,000 took Jesus "Just Jesus 'as He was'" [tired/hungry didn't return shore]
- Little boats crowded around them

37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. 38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

- Jesus asleep: Humanity
- Jesus said go to the other side; God's commands are His enablement
- Do You not care? Jesus not worried but asleep in Father's arms

39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

- A. "Do You not care for us?" Rescued all the "little boats"

1 Peter 5:6 ...humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

40 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"

- **No Faith:** Because they did not believe His Word: Go to the other side means we will get to the other side!

"There are many Christians today who seem to think the boat is going down! I am tired of the wailing of some of my friends who take that view. The boat cannot go down. Jesus is on board." (Morgan)

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

- Feared exceedingly because of the calm sea! Who can this be?
- Complete humanity sleeping/ Complete Deity commanding nature!

Psalms 89:8 O Lord God of hosts, Who is mighty like You, O Lord? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.⁹ You rule the raging of the sea; When its waves rise, You still them.