



Mystery, Revelation, and Being with Him

June 17, 2018 | WONDERFUL MERCY CHURCH

Revised Common Lectionary Texts

- Mark 4:26-34 NIV
- Ezekiel 17:22-24 NIV

Both Texts Rely on the Use of Parables

- **Mark 4:34a** NIV
“He did not say anything to them without using a parable.”
- **Ezekiel 17:1-2** NIV
“The word of the LORD came to me: ²“Son of man, set forth an allegory and tell the house of Israel a parable.””
- **PARABLE:** a simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson

The Blockade at Calca, Peru



The Medical Mission Team's Response



The Lesson Learned

- God can remove any blockade
- One could simply announce that God can remove any blockade, but this would be a statement of fact and nothing more
- Story takes that same factual reality and sets it in the middle of life as it's lived by real people; story engages our imagination, stirs our soul, and invites us into an experience

Parables and Stories

- Story-telling was one of Jesus' preferred approaches to teaching
- People would come to him with a question, and again and again Scripture captures his response this way: "Then he told them a story..."
- This is the way we find our way to the Father's heart—we enter through his story and discover where his story meets ours

“Why Not Say What You Mean, God?”

- The mystery, hiddenness of parables drives us to Him for revelation
- **Mark 4:34b** NIV
“But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.”
- *With him, with Jesus*—this is the place of revelation, and it utterly confounds the world

Being With Him

- Being with Jesus was his project from the beginning
- **Mark 3:14** NIV
“He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him...”
- Mirrors God’s intention in creation when, before sin broke in, God walked with Adam and Eve in the garden in the cool of the day. They were made to be with Him

Both Texts Highlight Mystery of God's Ways

- **Mark 4:27** NIV

“Night and day, whether [the farmer] sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.”

- **Ezekiel 17:24** NIV

“I the Lord bring down the tall tree and make the low tree grow tall. I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it.”

What God is Saying In This Moment

- “I make the dry tree flourish. I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it.”
- Connect this with the word from last week: turning. Out of a season of hardship there is a turning toward something good, a prospering, a coming-out-of kind of turning

Four Insights from Graham Cooke

- “We must prepare ourselves to be astonished. Because your astonishment is going to be a part of your testimony in this next season. We need a fresh ability to be astonished by what God is going to do. So our whole persona in the Spirit is going to change.”

Four Insights from Graham Cooke

- “We have to strike the ground [cf 2 Kings 13 and the king who only struck the ground with the arrows three times, settling for half of what God had for him]. That is, we have to apply the Word of God now to the ground of our circumstances. Strike within this season until you have destroyed what is trying to destroy you.”

Four Insights from Graham Cooke

- “The Word of God demands a continuous response. If you don’t do it, it’s because you don’t believe it. There is a gap between the hearing His word and our doing of it, and that gap must close.”
- “There is a danger in only going half way. A halfhearted response will only get a partial breakthrough.”

[Graham Cooke, “Strike the Ground,” Bethel Church sermon, June 10, 2018]



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