

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for October 2, 2016

Pay Attention
Mark 4:21-25

I. A parable of revelation (4:21-23)

- Background of parables = “story with a point”
- Jesus began teaching in parables for two reasons:
 - to continue teaching about the Kingdom to disciples on the inside
 - to hide this same message from opponents on the outside
- Parables can be long extended stories or brief proverbs
- Key to understanding Mark 4:21-25 is to see these statements as a balance to Jesus’ words in 4:10-12
- In other words, even though the disciples were privileged to be on the inside with the secret of the Kingdom of God, they still had a great responsibility to reveal these secrets and to respond to them

A. The picture of revelation (4:21)

²¹ *And he said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand?”*

- This follows immediately after the parable of the sower/soils
 - Parable of sower explained all the different responses to Jesus
 - These parables give the challenge to His disciples to consider their response
- Jesus is still speaking to the inner crowd of disciples from verses 10-20
 - Began addressing the entire crowd on the Galilean shore (4:1-9)
 - He explained the parable of the sower to the “in” crowd (4:13-20)
 - He tells two more parables and explains them again (4:21-25)
- The illustration of a lamp seems fairly easy to comprehend
 - A lamp shining from under a basket or a bed is worthless
 - A lamp’s purpose is to shine from on top of a stand
- Jesus called Himself the light
 - **John 8:12** “Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”
 - **John 1:1-9** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with

God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.”

- The concept of light is connected with the Word of God
 - **Psalm 119:105** “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”
- Thus, Jesus’ picture of the lamp for all to see is parallel to the Word of God, which must be revealed for all to see

B. The plan of revelation (4:22)

²² *For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light.*

- The “hidden” will be made “manifest”
- The “secret” will come to “light”
- Hidden items are meant to be revealed at some point
- Secrets are meant to be brought to the light at the right time
- Jesus is connecting “hidden” and “secret” things to the “secret of the kingdom of God” from verse 11
- The revelation regarding the Kingdom of God must be made known!
 - Disciples were privileged to know the secret of the Kingdom (v. 11)
 - Disciples were not to keep the secret of the Kingdom to themselves
- Jesus promoted this example in the days of His ministry
 - Jesus will not stop preaching (allows Judas to stay for entire ministry)
 - Jesus will send disciples out to declare the Kingdom in His ministry
 - Jesus will send disciples out to preach to the nations at the end of His life

C. The purpose of revelation (4:23)

Valley Bible Church
3347 West Avenue J
Lancaster, California 93536
www.valleybible.net

²³ *If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.*”

- Revelation about the Kingdom must be heard
- Jesus and the disciples were not done yet
- As the farmer would scatter seed all over the field on all types of soil, so too would Jesus and the disciples continue to preach to all kinds of people
- Jesus wanted His disciples to hear/understand the very plan and purpose of His teaching; namely, that it must be heard and made known!

II. A parable of response (4:24-25)

A. The proper response (4:24a)

²⁴ *And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear”*

- Shift from everyone else’s response in parable of sower to the disciples’ responses themselves
- Since they would eventually take this revelation to the world, they must pay attention
- Consider Jesus’ teaching!
- **2 Peter 1:19-21** “And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,”²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation.²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”
- How can one pay attention to God’s Word?
 - Meditate upon the Word
 - **Joshua 1:8** “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it.”
 - Do the Word
 - **James 1:22** “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

B. The proportional response (4:24b)

with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you.

- Measure = Bowl/basket sizes when filling up on grain or some other commodity
 - Small basket = Less grain, Big basket = More grain
- Principle of reaping what you sow
- Similarly used in regard to judgment
 - **Matthew 7:1-2** “Judge not, that you be not judged. ²For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.”
- Here it is used in reference to the disciples hearing the parables and secrets of the Kingdom of God
 - There is a proportionate reward
 - They would be rewarded based upon the effort they put into their hearing and understanding of these parables
 - The disciples will get out of the parables what they put into them
- What are good approaches/measures to use with the Word?
 - **Exodus 33:18** “Moses said, ‘Please show me your glory.’”
 - **Psalms 119:18** “Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.”
- What does “and still more will be added to you” mean?
 - This is the positive reward for the disciples’ right response to parables
 - **Principle:** You don’t use it, you lose it!
 - Coming to God’s Word with correct approach to learn and do what He says results in a reward
 - The reward is more understanding of the revelation of who God is and what He has said in His Word

C. The principle of response (4:25)

²⁵ *For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.*”

- “the one who has”
 - Referring to those who have been given the secret of the Kingdom of God (4:11)
 - This is such a one who has ears to hear
- There is a reward for “the one who has” → they will be given “more”
- The “more” that will be given is a reference to more teaching and revelation

- “The one who has learned spiritual truth and applied it diligently will receive even more truth to faithfully apply.” (MacArthur Study Bible)
- “the one who has not”
 - Referring to those who were not believing in Jesus
 - They are described as those on the “outside” (4:11)
 - They are the ones who made up their minds and put themselves on the outside
- “even what he has will be taken away”
 - This is what those on the “outside” will reap
 - As Jesus would continue to teach in parables, they would find themselves more and more on the outside and not understanding the Kingdom