

SUBJECT : LEARNING TO LISTEN

BIBLE BASIS:

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 13:9-17


BIBLE TRUTH:

Taking steps to listen to Jesus.

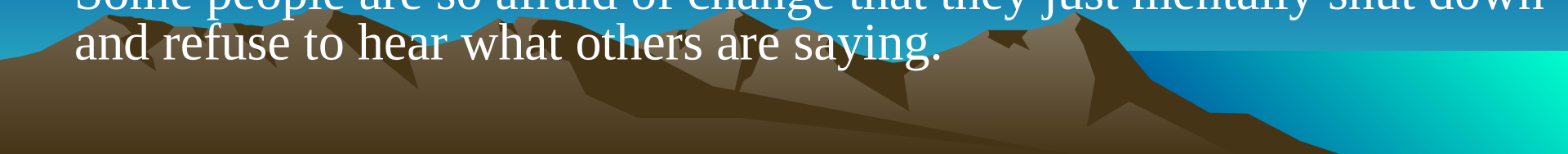
MEMORY VERSE: READ Matt. 13:9

LESSON AIM:

Lesson Aim: To examine Jesus' use of parables as a teaching tool that both clarifies for some and conceals to others. Most discussions about “the meaning of life” can seem abstract, complex, and impractical, right? Jesus bypassed this problem by using imagery from everyday life. When He did, He was able to communicate deep truths.



Introduction

- In the parable of the sower, Jesus describes 6 different responses to the gospel. Three negative and three positive. To hear and know something is one thing, to benefit from what you hear you must do or put into practice. To the degree that you practice what you preach will determine the outcome. James 1:23-25, John 13:17
 - To really hear we must develop the art of listening. Most people find it difficult to listen for different reasons.
 - Some people are so pre-occupied with their own thoughts and agenda's. it is difficult to hear what others are saying especially if it requires you to change. Pro. 12:15, Rom. 2:13
 - Others feel vulnerable of being persuade if they listen to the ideas of others especially if it requires you to change your mind. Luke 6:47-49
 - Others have already pre-determined in their own minds their situation is hopeless and reject any suggestion of hope or deliverance. Pro 14:12
 - Some people are so afraid of change that they just mentally shut down and refuse to hear what others are saying.
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He That Has Ear Let Him Hear

- Matthew 13:9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear[10] And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?
- Everyone that has ears to hear is given a strong command to hear the word of God. The ears greatest purpose is to hear the message of God.
- The disciples ask the question at this point because Jesus had made a significant change in His method of teaching. He began to speak in parables that were difficult to understand.
- Why would He speak so that His unbelieving audience could not understand what He was saying?
- The unbelieving crowds were deliberately shutting their eyes and ears to His claim and refusing to be converted and healed spiritually.
- It was time to teach the “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” to true disciples. The mysteries would be understood by true disciples, but they would be misunderstood by those who deliberately blinded their eyes and deafened their ears.
- The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” cannot be understood without first recognizing Jesus as the Messiah and as the One who brings the Kingdom of Heaven to men. Matt 4:17

Understanding A Mystery

- [11] He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.
- God's Word shall never return to Him void (Isaiah 55:11). How you respond to the word determines your outcome.
- What qualifies us to attain an understand the mysteries of the gospel?
- We ought to have an honest desire after light. There is a connection between desire and its accomplishment. The hungry are filled.
- We ought to have a habit of prayer along with a habit of scripture reading; and to these activities more will be given. It is by the Spirit that God reveals his truth to the believer. 1 Cor. 2:9-10
- Common sense tells us that God cannot reveal to a person who ignores, neglects, and could care less about God. Therefore, Christ puts it very simply: "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [unbelievers] it is not given." God does not reward unbelief; He rewards belief and trust. Matt. 13:35, Heb.11:6

Mysteries Of The Kingdom

- There are “mysteries” in the kingdom of heaven:
 - The incarnation and virgin birth of Christ. Matthew 1:16; Matt 1:23
 - The ideal and perfect righteousness of Christ secured by His living a sinless life while on earth. Matt. 5:17-18
 - The death of Christ on the cross for man. John 15:13, John 10:17-18
 - The intercessory work of Christ going on right now. Hebrews 3:1
 - The Holy Spirit and His presence in the believer. Jo 14:15-18, Col. 1:25-27
 - The material world and the spiritual world, or the physical and spiritual dimension of being. Matthew 6:9
 - Man’s sinfulness and his dead spirit due to sin. Romans 3:9-19; Ephes. 2:1-3
 - The church, both local and universal. Matt. 16:15-19
 - The future resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:51
 - The destruction and remaking of the heavens and earth into a perfect universe. 2 Peter 3:10-13
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It Doesn't Pay To Doubt?

- [12] For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.
- Doing stands in the same relation to prayer that reading does. Without the one or the other it is the prayer either of presumption or hypocrisy. Christ is given to those who obey Him. Reading, prayer, and reformation are obvious things; and It is the neglect of these obvious things which involves doubt. It is for the lack of seeking that you do not find.
- It is the law of nature: the early bird gets the worm; the early get much and more; the late get little and lack.
- Men reward energy and effort, results and production. They threaten and often take away from the lazy and inactive. Those who labor and practice and are diligent. The persistent see, hear, and get. They are in a position to get more and more and to be given more and more. But the neglectful, lazy non-worker, and the unfaithful lose. . He seldom, if ever, stands still. It is the law of God. Gal. 6:7-9

The Other Side Of Truth

- As exemplified in the experience of the insincere. They who have heard the gospel from childhood, now give up hearing. They have no taste for it. They have lost the power to appreciate it.
- Others receive the grace of God, but not acting upon it, lose its power.
- *The law of increase*: — In the world among men it is commonly observed that it never rains “but it pours. Where you see a sheep there is generally a flock. Money makes money. Poverty remains poor. Want of capital brings bankruptcy. A company starts on imaginary or borrowed capital: it makes a fuss and a noise, but it never prospers. By-and-by it breaks up, and all is lost, and yet it never had anything of its own to lose: thus it verifies to the letter the truth — “whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.”
- Ordinarily, prosperity is a hen which likes to lay where there is a nest egg. When one swallow of success comes, others will follow it.
- Certainly we have found it so in the things of grace; where grace has been given more grace comes; spiritual capital well worked multiplies the stock, and spiritual wealth is realized where there is a solid basis to begin upon.

The Other Side Of Truth

- *Increase gradual through effort:* — Why did not the Lord give us the largest measure of grace to begin with — why promise more abundance as an after result? I think it is because we value grace all the more when it comes to us by little and little. Again, it is to our good to be exercised to get more grace.

A poor woman is allowed to go and glean in a field; your generosity might say, “Come, my good woman, I will give you the corn, and you shall not have the trouble of gleaning;” but this might not be so good a thing for her as to allow her to gather the wheat by her own efforts. It is often much better to enable the poor to help themselves than to help them without their own exertions. Matt. 6:26

God is wise towards us; he means to give us the corn, but he decides that we shall glean it, and so exercise ourselves unto godliness. We are to become rich in grace, but it is to be by heavenly trading. Growth is gift of Gods grace, remember that.



No Connection

- [13] Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.
- Christ here touches upon a common fact of our human nature, spiritual insensibility — that state in which spiritual things pass before a man; and instead of being beautiful and blessed realities, they are meaningless to him. We understand how a man may be face to face with anything, and yet not perceive it, through the appropriate faculty in him being dormant. Men are coming into contact with nature, art, charity, and yet are insensible to them. Rom 8:6-8
- Not that God decrees arbitrarily that a certain few shall be blessed with the power of vision and receptivity, and others deprived of it. It is not imposed upon men, but is the result of certain lines of conduct. 2Peter 3:9
- Formal endorsement of the Christian principles is one thing, living realization of them is another



How Do Men Get Here?

- [14] And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:
- How do men get here?
- It is one of the penalties of wrongdoing that the moral nature is made unresponsive to spiritual things.
- It grows on a man through the mastery of worldly pursuits.
- The habit of continual doubting is another circumstance which leads to insensitiveness. Caution must not degenerate into procrastination.
- 4. *Sin* The evil thing in which you have indulged is not like a wave which lifts a ship for a moment, and then passes on. leaving everything-as it was before. Far from that! It has entered as a poison into your spiritual nature — it has become a force in your character. You are essentially a different man: the measure of your religious capacity is so much less than it was.
- Let any one yield to selfishness, to falsehood, to lust, and every day that man becomes weaker and weaker in his ability to respond in faith and obedience to the things of God.
- He who opened the understanding of his disciples is with us.

It's A Heart Condition

- Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.
- Why does a person act so illogically, rebel and refuse to understand? The unbeliever's rejection is prophesied. Isaiah 6:9-10. Christ said, "This people's heart is waxed gross" vs. 13:15. The Greek is "this people's heart has grown fat [overweight]." Being fat indicates sensuality. His sensuality is due to his lust for the things of the world. Rom 8:5-8; 1 John 2:15-16, and his senselessness is due to being deceived by the evil one (2 Cor. 4:3-4).

The condition of a mans heart is the direct responsibility of the individual person. A mans heart is waxed gross by their own decisions and desires of the flesh. Pro. 4:23
- The consequences of such desires and decisions causes one to be blinded to the reality of God and deaf to the transforming Word of God. If our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost. 2Peter 3:9
- It's a dangerous thing to hear the word of God and reject it. Rom. 1:24-32, Gen. 6:3, Ps. 81:11-12

Your Blessed

- [16] But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. [17] For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.
 - The third reason Christ spoke in parables is that believers receive and are blessed with more. The blessings of God include the greatest possessions imaginable: love, joy, peace, confidence, assurance, and eternal security. The blessings of God come from seeing and hearing, that is, from *conversion and spiritual healing*, not from the things that men desire. Rev. 22:14, John 10:10; John 14:27; John 15:11; John 16:33; Phil. 4:6-7, Acts 3:19, Ps.19:7.
 - New Testament believers are much more privileged than Old Testament believers because of Christ. 2 Cor. 3:6-18; Heb. 1:1-3; Heb. 1:4-14; Heb. 2:5-13; Heb. 2:14-18; Heb. 3:1-6; Heb. 4:14-16; Heb. 5:1-1 John 2:20, Proverbs 15:31.
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