



Springcreek
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USE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN OR IT WILL BE TAKEN AWAY

Let Me Answer the Question You're Really Asking – Part 4
Pastor Keith Stewart
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The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom; and now something greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and now something greater than Jonah is here. Luke 11.31-32

1. A TURNING POINT IN THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST

Again, Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables... Mark 4.1-2a

The Greek word for parable literally means "something placed alongside of something else" so that a comparison can be made.

The Purpose of Parables

When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, 'they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!'" Mark 4.10-12

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- Reveal(s) - truth to the spiritual receptive
- Conceal(s) - truth from those who were spiritually closed

"Jesus now, more than ever before, begins to speak in parables in order to further reveal the truth to those who accepted the mysterious, but to conceal it from those who rejected the obvious." - William Hendriksen

□ Parallels with Isaiah's Day

He said, "Go and tell this people: 'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." Isaiah 6.9-10

A - *Make the heart of this people calloused;*

B - *make their ears dull*

C - *and close their eyes.*

C - *Otherwise they might see with their eyes,*

B - *hear with their ears,*

A - *understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."* Isaiah 6.9-10

Chiastic structure

...they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven! Mark 4.12



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2. TRUTH MUST BE ACTED UPON OR ELSE IT IS LOST

Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.
Matthew 13.12

The Law of Use

"In matters spiritual, standing still is impossible, a person either gains or loses. He either advances or declines." - William Hendriksen

Truth must be acted upon in order to be retained.

The Nature of Judgment

In the Law, it is written: "Through men of strange tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then, they will not listen to me," says the Lord. Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers..."
1 Corinthians 14.21-22

Why Conceal Truth?

- It's Merciful
- It's Discretionary

Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. Matthew 7.6

- It's Redemptive



3. WHAT'S THE CONDITION OF YOUR HEART?

Parable of the Four Soils

Hardened soil

As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Mark 4.4

Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Mark 4.15

Rocky soil

Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. Mark 4.5

Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Mark 4.16-17

Thorny soil

Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Mark 4.7

Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Mark 4.18-19



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There's been a progression in these first three seeds:

- The first never took root at all
- The second rooted but died
- The third survived but bore no fruit

Good soil

Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times.
Mark 4.8

Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown. Mark 4.20

“The climax of the parable is the harvest. It is a bountiful, unexpected and wondrous harvest. Thirtyfold, sixtyfold and hundredfold yields are beyond the imagination of first century farmers. Yields of five or six were typical in Italy; Nile-irrigated fields in Egypt typically yielded seven. Yields of four or fivefold, however, were typical in Palestine; thirtyfold has only been achieved in modern Israel with good weather and improved technology.” - Allen Black, The College Press NIV Commentary: Mark

