

A Study of Mark – Lesson 10

Mark 4:21-34 Three Parables

4²¹ He said to them, / “Do you bring in a lamp / to put it under a bowl / or a bed? / Instead, / don’t you put it on its stand? / ²² For whatever is hidden / is meant to be disclosed, / and whatever is concealed / is meant to be brought out into the open. / ²³ If anyone has ears to hear, / let them hear.”

²⁴ “Consider carefully what you hear,” / he continued. / “With the measure you use, / it will be measured to you / —and even more. /

²⁵ Whoever has / will be given more; / whoever does not have, / even what they have / will be taken from them.”

The Parable of the Growing Seed

²⁶ He also said, / “This is what the kingdom of God is like. / A man scatters seed on the ground. / ²⁷ Night and day, / whether he sleeps or gets up, / the seed sprouts and grows, / though he does not know how. /

²⁸ All by itself / the soil produces grain / —first the stalk, / then the head, / then the full kernel in the head. / ²⁹ As soon as the grain is ripe, / he puts the sickle to it, / because the harvest has come.”



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The Parable of the Mustard Seed

³⁰ Again he said, / “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, / or what parable / shall we use to describe it? / ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, / which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. / ³² Yet when planted, / it grows / and becomes the largest of all garden plants, / with such big branches / that the birds can perch in its shade.”

³³ With many similar parables / Jesus spoke the word to them, / as much as they could understand. / ³⁴ He did not say anything to them / without using a parable. / But when he was alone / with his own disciples, / he explained everything.

Vocabulary

1. **To disclose:** To tell something once a secret.
2. **To conceal:** To hide a person or thing
3. **Stalk:** Supportive part of a plant. Stem.
4. **Sickle:** Farm tool for cutting tall grass or plants.

Pronunciation:

Measure, leisure, pleasure, treasure

Questions:

1. How did people farm about 300 years ago in your country?
2. How has farming changed today?
3. Can you explain *What goes around comes around* using Verse 24?
4. What does each of the parables mean?
5. How is Jesus a wise teacher?

Notes:

1. These parables give four different sayings of Jesus. Mark puts them together, but Matthew separates them. Needless to say, he didn't do them all the same day.

Verses 4:21-25 are interesting because it is a list in Mark and an explanation in Matthew

4:21 in Mark, but Matthew 5:15: The lamp

4:22 in Mark, but Matthew 10:26: Revealing of secret things.

4:24 in Mark, but Matthew 7:2: Receive back same measure.

4:25 in Mark, but Matthew 13:12 and in Matthew 25:29: Those who have more.

6. Jesus walked from village to village, and probably said many of the same stories and parables. Thus, all the disciples knew them, and probably remembered them on different occasions.
7. Our truth and our beliefs are meant to be seen. People really do catch a good deal of who and what we are. Let your talents and light shine to do good. The truth cannot really be suppressed or hidden for long. It will come forward.
8. The mustard seed story includes two pictures that every person living in the time of Jesus in Judea would recognize:
 - **Size:** The grain of the mustard seed represented the smallest possible thing...faith the size of a mustard seed means "the smallest conceivable amount of faith." But, it grew into a large plant, like a tree, taller than a horse and its rider. Birds liked the

seed and were often around it. Like the seed that grows into a tree, so believers grow into a church.

- **Meaning:** Don't be afraid of starting small. Think of a gallon of water, and that it takes only a few grains of sugar or food coloring to change it thoroughly. Nothing emerges fully-grown, for it is our duty to grow and do what we can. The cumulative efforts of anything can become great.

In this parable we see Jesus as the wise teacher. Two dangers a wise teacher must avoid;

- Self-display: draw attention to the subject, not the teacher
- Sense of Superiority: Sharing and discovering truth together

Qualities every teacher should try to acquire:

- Understanding
- Patience
- Kindness
 - Don't use the lash of the tongue to score a cheap triumph
 - Avoid sarcasms and making people laughing-stocks

The wise learner:

- Does not go away to forget, but to think on the teachings
- Seeks the master's company. After Jesus taught the crowds, the disciples sought his company for explanation and fellowship.