

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus The Perfect Servant Of God

Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

M. Christ's Work Of Telling Believers HOW To Become Productive In Scripture (Mark 4:21-29)

I. Introduction

- A. We learned in our first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright Christian service from personal failure.
- B. We saw in our last lesson that all such failure, according to Jesus' Mark 4:1-20 Parable of the Sower, in light of the Mark 3:20-35 context, rises from one's heart being unproductive soil for God's Word.
- C. Accordingly, Jesus in Mark 4:21-29 supplied invaluable information on **how** believers might *become productive spiritual soil* and hence **productive** in the Scriptures as to knowledge and maturity (as follows):

II. Christ's Work Of Telling Believers HOW To Become Productive In Scripture, Mark 4:21-29.

- A. Following His Parable on the Sower on the various responses of men to Scripture depending on how fertile was the soil of their hearts (Mark 4:1-20), Jesus gave three parables on **improving** one's *soil* in Mark 4:21-29.
- B. The **first** parable of the **Candle** calls us to be **receptive** of what we hear of God's Word as *eventually* the **degree of one's receptivity** will be **EXPOSED** for **ALL OTHERS** to **SEE**, Mark 4:21-23:
 1. Jesus taught that a candle is never meant to be hidden, but set on a candlestick for all to see, Mark 4:21.
 2. Thus, what truth from God's Word a believer hears becomes a light in him that is readily evident to onlookers, meaning it is imperative that a believer heed the Word he hears and not be like the hard ground (Mark 4:15), that he not get offended at trials that arise after he first learns God's truth (Mark 4:16-17) and that he avoid worldly and sin nature lusts that only choke out the truth he has, Mark 4:18-19 with 4:22-23!
- C. The **second** parable of the **Measure** motivates us to be **HUNGRY** to **learn** God's truths, for our heart will **either GROW or** have what we know **LOST** via Satan, the world and/or the sin nature, Mark 4:24-25:
 1. The **appetite** one has for God's Word, signified in the measure used (Mark 4:24a), determines how much of the Word he actually understands, applies and sees produce maturity in his life, Mark 4:24b.
 2. Regarding the intake of Scripture, this matter goes to extremes: if we have been receptive of it, we will be given more by the Lord (Mark 4:25a), but if we have not heeded what we have, Satan, the world and our own sinful natures will erode what we have to our harm and embarrassment, Mark 4:25b with 4:15-19.
- D. The **third** parable of the **Seed Growing Slowly** motivates us to be **patient** in learning and applying God's Word to see it become **productive** in our lives, for spiritual productivity ultimately takes **TIME**, Mk.4:26-29:
 1. Sometimes a believer may be motivated to learn God's truths because he realizes everybody else one day will publicly know how much he has absorbed it, and he may also have a big appetite to absorb as much of God's Word as he can lest he lose what he has, but even these motivations may initially seem futile because the believer fails to see any productivity in the short-term.
 2. However, an additional important principle needs to be applied for success to occur, that of **consistency**:
 - a. Jesus taught that the Kingdom of God is like a farmer casting seed into the ground and not seeing it immediately spring up to produce a crop that is fit to be harvested, Mark 4:26-27a.
 - b. Indeed, the farmer must sleep and rise, night and day, day after day for some time before the seed even begins to grow in a way that he himself cannot actually see if he simply stares at it, Mark 4:27b.
 - c. Over **time**, the ground produces first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear, Mark 4:28.
 - d. Finally, when the ear **ripens**, the farmer immediately puts forth the sickle to harvest it, Mark 4:29.
 - e. This principle applies in growing in the Word: besides the **motivation** to be seen by others as productive and not barren and besides a **hunger** to learn lest we lose what we have, we must **consistently STAY** thus **motivated** and **hungry** to become **PRODUCTIVE** in the knowledge and use of God's Word! (Mark 4:20)

Lesson: (1) *If we believers are (a) motivated to mature by God's Word, knowing others will eventually see how far we have come, if we are (b) hungry to learn that we not lose what we have and if we (c) stay this way, (d) we are headed for blessed productivity!* (2) *Yet, (a) if we do not care to learn, (b) if we are not hungry or (c) if we are slack in caring and hungering for the Word, (d) we will be humiliated and unproductive to our loss of blessing!*

Application: (1) *May we believe in Jesus for salvation, Mark 1:1, 15. (2) As believers, may we GROW in Him by HEEDING His instruction and warnings in the parables of the Candle, the Measure and Seed Growing Slowly!*