

Mark: Chapter 4

- I. The Parable of the Soils (v.1-20)
 - A. The Parable (v.1-9)
 1. Key parable to understand (v.13), but we have been given the secret (v.11)
 2. παραβολή - placing one thing by the side of another
 3. Contextual background of the sower and seeds
 - a) Path goes along or through the field
 - b) Rocky ground not referring to large rocks in ground, but thin layer of soil covering limestone a few inches below surface
 - c) Visible thorn bushes would likely be burned, but roots remain
 - d) Good soil - action separated into three parts as well as yield
 4. He who has ears to hear
 - B. The Secret of the Kingdom of God (v.10-12)
 1. The heirs of the secret
 2. The content of the secret (Romans 16:25-26)
 3. Judgment on those outside (Isaiah 6:9-10)
 - C. The Explanation of the Parable (v.13-20)
 1. Two precursory questions
 2. The seed is the Word of God / Word of the kingdom (Luke 8:11; Matthew 13:19)
 3. Attitude of the hearers towards the Word determines the final result
 4. Parallel explanation of the locations
 - a) Satan coming away to take away the Word that has been heard (1 Peter 5:8; Ephesians 2:2-3)
 - b) Immediate joy but then trials (Luke 14:27-33; Matthew 10:22; John 15:18-21; Matthew 7:24-29)
 - c) Threefold distractions (1 John 2:15-16; 1 Timothy 6:10; James 4:1-3)
 - d) Good soil again split into three parts (John 15:5, 9-10; Galatians 5:22-23; Luke 3:9-14).
- II. More Parables (v.21-34) - “And he said”
 - A. The Responsibility of the Citizens (v.21-23)
 1. Private lesson
 2. Light of the world (Ephesians 5:8-10; Matthew 5:16)
 3. Eventual manifestation of the “secrets” after the resurrection; parables now, preaching later!
 4. Precursor to the Great Commission
 - B. The Valuation of the Citizens (v.24-25)
 1. “What you hear” - spiritual understanding and not material blessing

2. Insert the *what you hears* into the next sentence
3. Not merely reciprocal, but even more will be added
4. Insert the *understanding of what you hear* into the next sentence
5. For those who don't understand, even what exposure they have will not benefit them
6. Challenge to value what they hear rightly

C. The Growth of the Citizens (v.26-29)

1. Probably talking again to crowd (no "to them")
2. Growth independent of sower (1 Corinthians 3:6-7)
3. Progressive growth
4. Two probable interpretations:
 - a) Sower puts in action / responsibly manages the fruit at the appropriate time
 - b) End times (e.g. Matthew 13:24-30; Revelation 14:14-16)

D. The Kingdom of God (v.30-32)

1. Parable for the kingdom of God, not to be confused with faith (e.g. Matthew 17:20)
2. Mustard seed probably referring to common black mustard, *Sinapis nigra*, smallest seed the Jews were accustomed to sowing in fields
 - a) Grows to be a thick-stemmed plant around 10-12 feet in height
3. Not many understood and believed, but Christ is assuring the disciples of the growth of the kingdom
4. Bird of the air probably referring to Ezekiel 17:23-24; from all tribes and people and languages in Revelation

E. The Parabolic Teaching (v.33-34)

1. Parables to match the heart of the crowd; direct teaching to parables to match the dullness of heart of the listeners
2. But to thee ones eager to understand the secret of the kingdom (Mark 4:10), Jesus explained all

III. Jesus Calms the Storm (v.35-41)

A. Ceaseless Ministry of the Christ (v.35-36)

1. Teaching for the whole day, and left "just as he was"

B. Consternated Concern of the Disciples (v.37-38)

1. Strong winds characteristic of the Sea of Galilee - 682 feet below sea level and surrounded by highlands; we must not underestimate the true concern in the situation
2. Full depth of Jesus's humanity - wearied just as we are
3. Do you not care? Relational question, not a question of power / authority. Teacher here, "Lord" and "Master" in Matthew and Luke, respectively.

C. Creation's Response to the Creator (v.39-41)

1. Jesus's power over all creation (John 1:1-3)
2. Fear and faith (Matthew 6:25-32; Romans 8:28)
3. "General revelation" serves to instill fear (Judges 13:22; Job 42:1-6; Isaiah 6:5; Revelation 1:17)
4. Disciples starting to understand (c.f. Isaiah 53:2-3)

IV. Homework

- A. Choose a Bible verse(s) to memorize. Share your verse with someone else in the class and ask someone else for their verse, and memorize it as well. You should therefore at a minimum memorize two verses this week.

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C. The Explanation of the Parable (v.13-20)

II. More Parables (v.21-34) - "And he said"

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B. The Valuation of the Citizens (v.24-25)

