



## **WHEN GOD TURNS OUT THE LIGHTS**

More than Meets the Eye – Part 4

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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

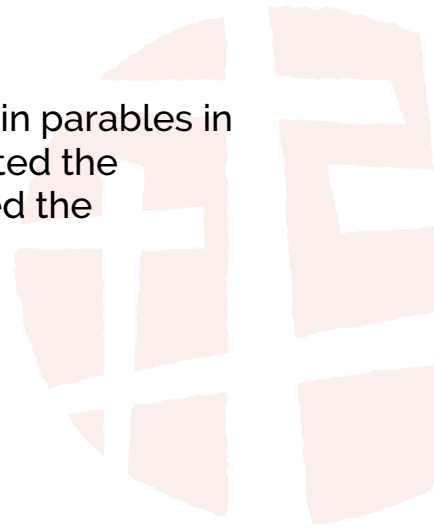
*...everything is said in parables so that, "they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding"*  
Mark 4.12

***Parables CONCEAL truth from those who DON'T want to see the truth while at the same time REVEAL truth to those who DO want to see it.***

***Reveal(s) - truth to the spiritual receptive***

***Conceal(s) - truth from the 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



*Those who reject the truth will lose what truth they have. And those who act on the truth they are given, will be given more.*

*Parables are puzzles*

❑ Eyes that can't see, ears that can't hear

*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

**Isaiah 6.9-10 (Chiastic Structure)**

**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*

*...everything is said in parables so that, "they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding"*

Mark 4.12

## ***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

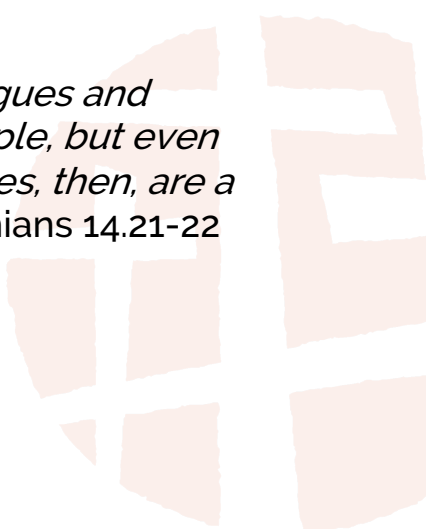
*If you don't use it, you lose it.*

"In matters spiritual, standing still is impossible, a person either gains or loses, they either advance or decline." - 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*



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#### ☐ Why Conceal Truth?

- It is Merciful
- It is Discretionary

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

- It is Redemptive

### ***3. WHAT'S THE CONDITION OF YOUR HEART?***

#### ***The 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

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

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Unsure truth is always lost. What can we do as a community group to entrench the truth we find from scripture?
2. Mark 4 gives us the parable of the sower, with 4 stages of where seeds land. With everyone being honest, what condition is the soil of your heart today?
3. As a small groups read the parable of the mustard seed, found in Matthew 13:31-32, and answer these three questions:
  - 1). What does this passage mean to me personally?
  - 2). What does this passage say about the world I live in?
  - 3). What about this passage is weird, cool, or confusing?

