

Bible Study Review Lessons 15-17 June 19th 2018

Open Line Bible Study Lesson Fifteen April 24, 2018

Scripture Texts: Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-10, Luke 8:4-15

Tonight's subject "The Promise" to "The Meaning"

Lesson 15 April 24, 2018

Look at M 13:15. Let us see the three fold responsibility of who did what to whom in this verse. The point is this. Too often, we miss the deeper truths here and the LORD is held responsible for the lack of attention persons have toward HIM as if HE wanted it that way. NOT SO! Look closely. V. 15 remind us the LORD allows us to reap what we sow. This is HIS first part & influence in the verse. So, the LORD allows the process of corruption to take place when persons disobey HIM. There is always a price to sin and original sin which is the effect of sin.

Satan's hand is seen in reference to the callous. The callous represents the hard heart. We know the devil is present where there is hardness! His character is hard! He is a slave driver who hardens anything he can influence in his destruction. Obedience to truth leads to the softening of the heart. Disobedience to truth leads to the hardening of the heart. The statement, "they hardly hear with their ears" suggests several things we must consider. The callous presence leads to this. This hardness covers the ears. It is completely possible there is a demonic assignment over persons who have their ears covered over by a spirit that deafens them to Kingdom gospel truth. The intercessor must learn to pray against this attack and work of the adversary otherwise it largely goes unrestrained. Notice the statement, "they hardly hear"! By the grace of GOD they are allowed to at least somewhat hear that JESUS loves them!

So, we now see the first part of the LORD's influence. We see the devil at work in the callous and the deafened ears. NOW, LOOK at the statement, "and THEY have closed their eyes". Who closed their eyes? The persons in disobedience did! They played a part in this tragedy! They set their will making a decision to not do the right thing. Ultimately, they came into agreement with the enemy of GOD. None of us can totally blame Satan much less say this is GOD's will. No, it was the will of persons who would not submit to JESUS. So, we begin to see the part played by the human being in this. They have a part and are responsible for their decision and sin. BUT GOD will have the last say and laugh! Let us become the OTHERWISE PERSON! What the LORD wants is the OTHERWISE CREATION. The LORD wants us to see, hear, understand and repent and be healed by HIS intervention! So the LORD has the last say in this process. HE allows the process to exist and develop. But He desires to see His creation healed. JESUS states in v. 16 HE has intervened and has stopped this madness if only anyone would listen and respond to HIM. Please see the three fold influence of GOD, Satan, and person and the process in v. 15 and the LORD's intervention in v.16.

If we are not careful, we will accept Satan's lies that there are some who can have spiritual eyes and ears and others who cannot and for some self-imposed discrimination and condemnation of our own making, we must be one of those who weren't blessed by Jesus in this area. THIS IS DECEPTION! The New Testament does not teach that blessed open eyes and ears belong only to certain Disciples, or the greatest or the Five Fold Ministers in the body of Christ! NO, blessed open eyes and ears are given to all those whom will walk with Christ in faith relationship. WE ARE ALL INCLUDED!!!! In trust and faith, accept the 16th verse as being for you too. It is! Refuse to accept anything less. The way you will know you are included in this gift is what is stated in the story line. If in any capacity you have believed that you are somehow a 2nd class citizen in the Kingdom then the adversary will use this against you! He is a 1st class thief. So the eyes and ears see and hear into the Kingdom and see and hear into your being where your blind spots are made known to you. They are removed by Holy Spirit's work in you. We have reached that season, the door is opened, we have access to the realm of revelation and the spirit realm like never before. Then, as we approach each new work of GOD and the return of Christ our opportunities are increased! The earthly and spirit realm are colliding into one another as never before. Do you recognize it, see it hear it and receive it?

Lesson 16 May 8, 2018

Beginning in v. 18, Jesus begins to describe the meaning of the parable sower. The parable is described in great detail with little room left for confusion about what is meant in this story. Jesus has done this here in the detailed explanation. This parable clearly explained gives you the necessary start to interpret and follow the rest of the story correctly. Remember Mk 4:13. You must start right to possibly stay right. While Jesus explains the sower parable other truths must be sought after. Remember, your eyes and ears are blessed so you can receive the truth if you search it out. The point for us is that we are given the basics and when they are exercised we mature into the useful purpose GOD has for us. The disciples didn't know this originally and neither does today's church.

For now let's look at v. 23 at the promise of the return we reap the LORD describes. We do this to further consider why Jesus so details this parable to us. We notice the promised phenomenal return is a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown! This means so much more than we ever have imagined. It is discussed now to make one thing clear. How often are we aware of any such incredible return on our ministry or labor or dividends from our faith values and investment into the Kingdom? The LORD has some encouragement for us.

How does our LORD define the concept of return? Jesus is not exclusively examining what is obvious to and/or important to persons alone. What is Jesus looking at to evaluate return? We must first remember the return is to HIM, not us! Whatever the result is the result should glorify GOD and be given back to HIM first. Jesus isn't just looking at our return. He is looking at HIS return! This changes our perspective about return! When Jesus considers His return what is He examining?

We may presume we know what return is and only consider obvious outward numerical increase as His return. This certainly is part of what Jesus will often examine. But it isn't all He considers. Jesus will examine our life and ministry with the following criteria for certain. These are not exclusive but HE examines the following as the bare essentials. Jesus will examine the return of persons influenced, persons returned to Him, persons returned to fellowship with the local Church, persons returned to unity and fellowship with other persons, any persons who are in any way impacted positively by our ministry to them. Jesus will examine the character development this creates within our hearts. After all ministries are said and done have we been transformed more into the image, likeness and character of Jesus? Do we love more, hear more, pray more, give more, forgive more, rejoice more, have more patience, hope more, show more grace, exemplify more peace, serve more, care more and other like qualities? Jesus will examine as to whether He was truly glorified or not in our ministries? Was the ministry business as usual just to do something or was the ministry birthed out of passion for GOD and compassion for persons? This question evaluates whether the LORD was glorified or not. Almost any emphasis on "look what we did" is not a work that glorifies GOD. So Jesus will examine without, within and to HIM what is done as to evaluate the return. We must remember that when there is greater enlightenment, HIS presence is greater, the devil's presence is exposed and decreased and persons are somehow benefited by the gospel then these are returns the LORD is looking for. Has your definition now been broadened? Mine has! Please do not define return as exclusively being about more quantity the physical/carnal eye can see. As well, please do not define return as exclusively being about anything but more quantity than the physical/carnal eye can see. Again, Jesus is looking at return in every capacity.

Lesson 17 May 15, 2018

We must acknowledge when there is a lack of return. This may well prove how we have not understood the parable and have not applied its deeper meanings into our walk with Christ and His ministry to us and others. At first glance, we would assume it should be obvious when there is a lack of return in our ministries and walk with Christ. IT ONLY BECOMES OBVIOUS ONCE YOU HAVE YOUR EYES AND EARS OPENED TO THE FURTHER WORK OF THE FATHER'S PURPOSE. Thus most North American believers who are not evidencing the promised return Jesus offers fail to see this! It is one of the major reasons some keep having lack and poverty in their ministry. We have not realized the lack we are living in. This is not exclusive but very often most local churches that are hurting, in decline and have minimal results in their ministries continue in this lack and decline simply b/c they do not have any expectation of it being better. They assume all is well and their situation IS THE BEST IT CAN BE. Many never see this truth and live in endless frustration about why some local church can't get their ministry plan together. Sometimes, they don't even want a ministry. They only wish to exist. Again, their spiritual eyes and ears have not been opened. Then others do see the lack, crises and decline but when the problem doesn't improve in their timing they become discouraged and give up on their dreams. Others are so influenced by unbelief they have no expectation of the better plan the LORD has. When they hear about a better situation elsewhere, they refuse to believe it is the work of GOD! So they curse others advanced return!

Still, others are simply unwilling to pay whatever the price is for the promised return b/c of their preoccupation with this life and the deceitfulness of the world's riches! Do you see a parallel here from the parable? Blindness, frustration, apathy, discouragement, unbelief, worry and deceit stop the promised return. Remember, Jesus is looking at many criterions when He judges our return to His purpose.

Is increase guaranteed in some capacity if we are faithful? How do we understand increase? Apparently, there is a noticeable part of the body of Christ in America with this problem. If you are a student of the past 50 years of Church history in North America, you should know that there was and is some extremism in the prosperity gospel movement. That is true. It is also true that the opposite extreme is even more prevalent. However, an immature church will not criticize anyone for actually believing that our Heavenly Father hates wealth and actually wishes poverty, lack, failure and constant struggle on HIS church. While too much of the church cannot see this marred interpretation of the goodness of our GOD, the world certainly sees it and thinks "well, since your GOD hates wealth and wants everyone poor or barely making it, you can keep your GOD, we aren't interested" Here is the bottom line on this subject. Does the LORD promise to ever bring increase into our life or not? We cannot place every single person into some group as to how they understand increase and prosperity but most persons who wish to be critical of believing that GOD is willing to bring increase are very hypocritical about it. They have their basic needs met, they aren't poverty stricken, they may be average income or better and they never ask themselves, "Well, if GOD so hates increase then why do I have any increase? Am I sinning against GOD to prosper at all?" If you are balanced about this, you can see the dead end this always leads to. Persons who cannot accept GOD's increase are revealing they haven't come to terms with the goodness of GOD and their trust of GOD. Let's make it clear. Increase is neutral. What we do with it is what is right or wrong, righteous or sin. If GOD sees we are trustworthy then increase will flow in our life. Therefore increase is guaranteed in many ways if we are faithful.

We must always have an expectation of the LORD to believe HE is more than "able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us." Eph 3:20 Consider Phil 4:19, "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." When you read these verses with open eyes and ears how could anyone believe that our Heavenly Father is against the blessing of increase? GOD is more than able! The enemy often robs us without our knowledge. If you don't understand the seed cast forth the thief comes and steals that seed the sower cast into our hearts!

If we are obedient does it always lead to some form of "fruit" being borne in our life or others? Is it possible to obey GOD and there be nothing positive, pleasing or productive that comes forth from that act of obedience? Would the LORD ever determine our obedience is not complete if HE sees no "fruit" as the outcome of our obedience? This is a challenging question. The probable first fruit of genuine heart obedience is the broken repentant teachable humbled heart within us only the FATHER sees.

We may not entirely know whether we have been altogether obedient or not in a given situation. As well we may not see greater return in the situation. But GOD does! We must rely on HIM in this situation presuming nothing totally giving ourselves up to JESUS and trusting that if anything is out of order HOLY SPIRIT will convict and direct us as necessary. The short answer to this question is yes. The depth of that answer is not always clear to the disciple. We must each trust the LORD to bring to our attention anything we don't see or know that we must see and know.