

# Open Line Bible Study Lesson Ten February 6, 2018

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

Tonight's Subject: The Challenge, (What did those hear that did not hear)

Good Evening! Let's look at the question we asked two weeks ago in conclusion. "If the heart is the central focus of the sower parable then why is it not specifically referred to in the story line?"

To begin considering the answer to that question look at the answer JESUS gave the disciples in M 13:11-13, Mk 4:11-13 & L8:10. In each of these verses they all three separate persons into two or more groups in how they listen. As normal, we've got a lot of info. 2 look at.

Our question is not to trick anyone. It is asked from the presumed perspective most human beings have about truth and what GOD will say as HE speaks to us. Without Christian maturity and the development of a renewed mind we assume that whatever the LORD wants to make known to the world, GOD would just simply clearly shout it aloud or scream it out so loud, long and livid that everyone would know what is going on. Committed disciples learn quickly as they pursue JESUS they discover that this is not how the FATHER communicates. The LORD protects the truth from those who really don't want to hear it. This is also a form of mercy since the LORD doesn't wish to immediately judge anyone for what they refuse to listen to after the first time they hear the truth whether they know it's the truth or not. M13:10-17 helps explain these principles of the Kingdom. Many persons find it confusing to hear the LORD tell the disciples and others to resist going out and telling everyone who JESUS is or what He has done in a given situation. Examples of this are: M12:16, M8:4, M9:30, Mk1:25,34, Mk5:43, Mk7:36, Mk 8:26,30, Lk4:41,35.

The reasons JESUS sometimes gives the unexpected advice to not repeat what the Spirit says or does is first b/c everyone is not yet ready to hear all the truth of the Kingdom. Let's go back to the question and look at it again. After reading that again we should somewhat be able to answer the question. JESUS told a story to illustrate what the FATHER, the master gardener is doing, HE's examining every human heart, not literal gardens. But the people would have never understood or necessarily believed JESUS if JESUS had stated, "Listen, my Heavenly Father is examining every human heart here! So, you had better cooperate with him by letting the FATHER remove all sin out of your heart NOW!" We know this is true but we also know you cannot as the LORD teaches "cast pearls among the swine b/c they will trample them and then turn on you too" (M7:6) Furthermore, the LORD uses the garden analogy to teach truth to HIS children such as what is hidden in the heart of all men or that the adversary can plant his seeds into our hearts or that the adversary can steal the seeds the LORD plants or that we can expect great returns from what the LORD plants in our heart once it grows to full maturity.

Now, let's look at M13:10. The disciples ask JESUS why he speaks to the people in parables. Consider the following! How did the disciples even know to ask such a question? From the gospel story lines it is apparent the disciples rarely understood JESUS themselves. Numerous stories end with JESUS asking them "do you still not understand". Consider M16:9, LK 18:34, LK 24:45, J 8:27, J 12:16, J 13:7, J 16:18, J 20:9. From all these references we learn the disciples didn't get JESUS' meaning themselves very often so how are they to have the perception to know to ask the question they ask! While the answer of JESUS to them is straight forward, remember what we said a few weeks ago about this question in each synoptic gospel. (Lesson 7, Jan 9) The disciples in between the lines are also saying to JESUS, "We don't know what you are saying ourselves, help us!" Probably they were also saying, "Why do you speak to us in parables?" Or at least JESUS often considered their deepest thoughts and motivations in any question they asked him. What is happening here besides what has been referred to would be the following. It is likely that some of the disciples had been approached by numerous persons who would ask them, "Why does JESUS speak to us in parables?" Scripture story lines tell us this happened frequently. This is normal and characteristic of how persons interact with the followers of any leader. They ask their followers questions. That said, the disciples may have been asking this question more out of the people's request than out of their own concern, discernment or maturity. This brings new light to the question asked JESUS. JESUS is thinking (although it's not referred to here), 'do you want to know yourselves or are you asking for others?' We know JESUS considered this when he asked the disciples in M16 "Whom do men say that I am?" & "Who do you say that I am?" So please get the following down in your heart. This question is not asked by the disciples' strictly b/c THEY completely understand JESUS themselves and are compelled to wonder why JESUS left everyone else out. No, they have heard persons comment that JESUS doesn't make sense in what he is saying to his audiences. JESUS has two challenges here! His disciples don't know what HE means and 2ndly, His audience doesn't know what HE means either! HIS task is harder than we realize b/c at the time virtually no one knew how to cooperate with JESUS in HIS ministry as HE taught. I can reasonably assure you the disciples were not praying for the other listeners to get straight what JESUS was saying. Understandably, they were concerned about getting it right themselves first. We've alluded to this already. (Lesson 7, Jan 9) We should pray others hear it right and receive it right but we have to also hear and receive it right ourselves first in order to 2ndly be useful to the LORD's purpose as HIS Word is taught to others. What I did not say on Jan 9<sup>th</sup> was that the same mistake we have made as the gospel is taught the disciples likewise committed the same error. Furthermore, once we know better this error becomes sin. We fail to realize we unintentionally don't cooperate with the LORD! The LORD HELP us in this issue and challenge!

The very warning JESUS gave in the parable is unfolding in front of the disciples as they ask this question to JESUS! In the parable JESUS speaks of a heart that was shallow. When trouble arises in this heart or life such a person quickly falls away. The point is they become offended through the problems they experience. The very people who heard this parable, some of them were offended at JESUS that HE didn't make it clearer or why does HE speak in parables reaction. When the disciples hear this question from the audience they too must deal with the question within themselves lest they be offended by the

question and take on the attitude of the audience. Few have realized this! When we over analyze the sermon and teaching out of our brokenness and immaturity we are being influenced by the offense against the gospel derived from our sin or carnal nature. We are coming into agreement with the adversary! We must be careful! This has been one of Satan's best kept secrets but his works are being exposed as we speak now! Our hearts are being purified as the WORD is spoken!

The last point we will make tonight comes from Mk 4:10. From Lesson 7 Jan 9, again we see the different approaches the disciples took in seeking answers from JESUS about what they or others did not understand the LORD taught. In Mk 4:10, the disciples are said to have asked JESUS in private this question concerning the parables he taught. The verse describes JESUS was alone at the time of the question. This is not stated to be the case in M & L. I believe the 3 stories are not in reference to the exact same occurrence. So, by the time the disciples come back to JESUS in private to ask this question of Him what can we learn from that fact? It could be one of two extremes or both. To the disciple's credit and advancement they ask JESUS the question in private to protect the LORD from their being any appearance of disunity between themselves and JESUS in front of others.

So the discussion was held in a "staff meeting" if you will for the sake of learning, honest conversation and their concern being shared to JESUS as to what people are telling them. To their possible loss, some of the disciples are motivated to ask JESUS this question in private b/c they don't wish to be found lacking or uninformed in front of others. If I had to take one of these two options, it would primarily depend upon the timeframe of when JESUS taught this parable. The Disciples exhibit evidence of going either way in their motivation. What we must consider regarding ourselves is simply this. What is our motivation in the questions we ask and where we ask them?

No matter what JESUS desires to do, that work is helped or hindered by the church based upon our cooperation, obedience and understanding. JESUS has known all this throughout time. We the church must move into greater cooperation with the LORD for the fullness of His intention to be fulfilled. The LORD had this in mind every time HE taught. It took the disciples a long time to learn that. Most of the church today is still not seeking a greater level of the unity of the Spirit.