

2025-09-14

What Is a Hearer to Do?

Mark 4:21-25

Jesus had just told the parable of the Sower. He then explained it to the disciples and the others who were with them who really wanted to hear, learn and apply His teachings to their lives. The Sower is the person that sows the word of God, which are spoken words and loving attitudes and actions. That parable is also about the different types of soils or people and how they respond to the word of God that they hear and experience. Some people have hard hearts. The word of God cannot get into them. The devil takes God's word away so that these people cannot and choose not to believe the truth. **Then there are other people who have hearts that have no depth.** They misunderstand God's word or believe only what they want to. However they believe, they do not believe the truth of God's word. Their hearts are as hard as stone. When problems, hardships and challenges come, they have no trust in God's word to get them through these difficulties. These people refuse to believe the truth. Still other people allow all the cares and concerns of the world and their love and dependence on wealth to choke out the word of God that they heard. These too, do not believe God's word. Their trust is in their wealth and their desires are in things other than God's word of truth. It is the last soil, the good ground, these are people who hear God's word. They accept and receive God's word which produces fruit in their lives. These next parables are written to these people who represent this good ground. Jesus is talking to them and answering their questions of what does it mean to accept and receive God's word. What does it look like to believe and follow Jesus?

Mark 4:21 *"Also He said to them, 'Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand?'"* Jesus spoke to "them." The 'them' are those who represent the good ground, who accept and trust Jesus. The lamp Jesus is talking about is just a lamp until oil is put into it and it is lit. To put a lit lamp under a basket would keep the lamp from doing its intended purpose. It would not be seen and possibly could be snuffed out. To put a lit lamp under a bed would set the bed on fire. A lit lamp can be destructive. It can burn up lots of things. This is not the lamp's intended purpose either. The truth is supposed to convict people not destroy them. I have met many people who have been hurt by the church. They will have nothing to do with God or the church because they have been burned by the church. The lit lamp, the fire has an intended purpose. To give light and warmth to all within its area. The light of the lamp represents insight, understanding, wisdom and grace which is to be shared so that others are benefited not destroyed. Those who receive God's word, His Spirit, His grace and His truth should say and do good things to others, which is producing fruit. God expects a pleasing return from His gifts to us.

There are many people in this world with hard hearts. Some will totally reject your grace and honesty. Some will receive it but when troubles come, and troubles will come because we live in a sinful, fallen world, they will reject the truth because their hearts are hard. They refuse to accept and understand the true God and His work in their lives. Some people are so consumed with the world and all the wealth and the pleasurable activities and even the cares and problems of this world that our acts of grace and love and words of truth are choked. They seem to die on ears that refuse to hear. Can hearts of stone be changed? Who can change hearts? Can we? No, we cannot. **Only God can change hearts when a person wants the change** (Ezekiel 36:26). It is God's truth we speak accompanied by our acts of grace and love that God uses so that people want a changed heart. It is interesting that those people who are the good ground, who receive God's word and produce fruit, they are also the sower of God's word. We should not think that our actions of grace and love are wasted and worthless on people. The more we intentionally believe and live God's love, the more we share with others in a loving way God's salvation in Jesus Christ, the more impact we will have on people. We never know how God will work and all He will use to get people ready to want a changed heart.

Verse 22 *"For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light."* Jesus has just told the many disciples with Him that grace and truth, love and kindness are to be shared so that others are benefited. Now He is telling them that there is also a time to keep things hidden. There is *"a time for every purpose under heaven"* (Ecclesiastes 3:1). There is a time to make things known. There is also a time for concealment. For example, Jesus has not revealed to any of the disciples when and how He is going to die. He is concealing His coming crucifixion and resurrection from the disciples for now but He will begin to teach them at the right time (Mark 8:31 / 9:30-32 / 10:32-34). Things are hidden for a time in order that they may be revealed at the right time. God will reveal each and every truth at it's right time.

What Jesus taught His disciples privately was not just for their benefit. They were going to be responsible to communicate the teachings of Jesus with the world (Matthew 28:19-10). The same is true for us. We are responsible to communicate and teach those around us the truth of Jesus at the right time. When a person first becomes a believer and follower of Jesus Christ, God does not reveal everything about Himself to us in a moment. Do you want to know more and understand more about God? God will reveal Himself to you when you are ready. How do you get ready? Study more. Study God's word. Show God you really want to know Him. He wants you to earn your growth. When you truly seek God, you will find Him (Deuteronomy 4:29 / Proverbs 8:17 / Jeremiah 29:13 / Luke 11:9). Don't give up.

Verse 23 *“If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”* Jesus is saying, I know you have ears and I know you can hear. Make sure you are hearing correctly by thinking through what is being said. Jesus began His ministry at a certain time and in a certain way. He did not begin with a megaphone declaring to the world that He was God in human flesh or the Messiah and everyone had to follow Him. There were plenty of zealots who were willing to physically fight and die for the cause. All they needed was a strong leader. Instead, Jesus came preaching repentance and calling people to believe in the gospel. He did not want violence. He wanted people to surrender their hearts to Him. He will teach the people at the right time to take up their cross and follow Him (Mark 8:34). Jesus wants the people to listen, to think about what is being said, to count the cost, make a decision and do the right things. Yes, the right decisions are usually the hardest to do and the most costly.

Verse 24 *“Then He said to them, ‘Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.’”* Consider what you are hearing. Should people listen to anything and everything? Be careful of what you listen to. In this world of social media anything you can imagine is being said by someone out there and it is available for all to hear on the internet. The vast majority of things being said are not worth two cents. People are letting the wrong things fuel their lives. Be careful of what path in life you take. *“With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you.”* The path you choose to go down, you will get more and more of that teaching because you pursue that interest. When you choose to follow Jesus, you are choosing to read and study God’s word. You choose to believe God’s truth and apply it to your life. You choose to worship God with His people. To those who hear, read, learn, believe and apply, more will be given. Be careful what you hear and what path you choose to go down. People generally act on what they hear. People will also act against what they hear.

It can happen in every path of life. There are many wrong paths, many evil paths. They will pull you down and feed you their lies and you will believe them and they will destroy you. There is only one path to eternal life. Jesus is *“the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through”* Him (John 14:6). The results of your hearing will be in proportion to the amount of effort you put into believing and living what you heard. To those disciples of Jesus who have learned spiritual truth and applied it diligently, they will receive more spiritual truth to apply to their lives. Then, at the right time they may have opportunities to share those truths with others.

Verse 25 *“For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.”* God is not a socialist nor is He a

communist. He does not take from the rich and give to the poor so that everyone has an equal amount. Though God may want the rich people themselves to recognize how He has blessed them and, out of the kindness of their own hearts, they can help those who are poorer. Everyone starts out with different gifts in life. Some are given more. Some are given less. Yet **everyone is given something to start with** (Matthew 25:14-30 The Parable of the Talents). To those who use their gifts and develop their gifts whatever they are, more will be given. This is not being optimistic. Optimism is like positive thinking. Good things generally do not just happen. We live in a sinful fallen world. Bad things are going to happen unless we do something about it.

God wants people to live in hope and faith in a Him who loves you and will help you in life. We need to live daily hearing God's word, believing God's word and putting God's word into practice in our lives. Whoever lives this way, more will be given. *"But whoever does not have,"* why don't they have? Because they have not used or developed what they were given. In the Parable of the Talents in Matthew's Gospel, the last servant who was given the least in life buried his gift. He did not use what was given to him to change his life and honor the Giver by producing an acceptable increase. That unprofitable servant was cast *"into the outer darkness"* (Matthew 25:30). Not everyone who is given the least buries their gift. Think of the widow with two mites (Mark 12:41-44). God sees what we do with our gifts. It works with knowledge as well. Paying attention to what is being taught and applying it causes growth, negligence brings destruction. Everyone is given an opportunity to believe. You have a brain. You can think. You can make choices. Those who do, more will be given. But whoever does not respond by increasing the gift that God has given them, they will suffer the loss of everything.

God's grace and faith are gifts from God (Ephesians 2:8). What is a Hearer to do? They must receive what is taught and apply it to their lives. After the disciples were taught a very challenging lesson (Luke 17:1-4), their reply to Jesus was, *"increase our faith"* (17:5). What is a Hearer to do? Jesus told us to *"Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven"* (Matthew 5:44-45). Make your choice to trust in and follow Jesus faithfully.

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Our mission statement: **Spread the gospel of Jesus Christ;
Teach believers to worship God; Foster growth in the Christian faith**

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What is a Hearer to Do?

Mark 4:21-25

Questions to ask yourself?

Who are sowers of God's word?

Can Christians push people away from God?

What is our intended purpose with the truth God gives us?

Who can change a person's heart?

What does God use to bring about a changed heart?

Is grace wasted on people who have not changed?

Why does God conceal things? Why does God reveal things?

What are we to reveal to others?

Why do you have ears?

Is it alright to listen to anything we want to?

What path are you choosing to go down?

What evidence shows you have chosen that path?

What has God given you to use for His glory?

What is a Hearer to do?

Actions to take:

Apply God's teaching to your life.

Live daily hearing God's word, believing God's word and putting God's word into practice