

Christology, Discipleship, and Evangelism

Mark 4:1-20

Series: Christ Our Focus

1. Introduction

a. What is Christology

- i. ***Christology*** (from Greek Χριστός *Khristós* and -λογία, -logia) is the field of study within Christian theology which is primarily concerned with the nature and person of Jesus as recorded in the canonical Gospels and the epistles of the New Testament.

b. Discipleship

- i. While Webster's Dictionary describes a disciple as "a pupil or follower of any teacher or school of religion, learning, art, etc," a *Christian disciple* follows **Jesus**. A Christian disciple is one who loves God with everything one has. A Christian disciple, by God's grace, becomes more and more like Christ through a life of faith and obedience.

c. Evangelism

- i. The spreading of the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness.

d. Sandwich Method

- i. A1 – The Parable, b – The explanation, A2 – Further clarification of the Parable

2. Verse 1 – The crowd

- a. As an opportunity and a hindrance

3. Verse 2 – Teaching in parables

- a. A big chunk of Teachings
- b. There are over 60 parables found mostly in Matthew and Luke
- c. Parable – something placed along something else for the purpose of clarification – the subject is the kingdom of God
- d. Christ's parable do not require any special knowledge or vocabulary to understand
- e. However, they are confounding
- f. The parables of Jesus cannot be understood apart from He who told them
- g. The parable carries within it the Good News of the Gospel.

4. Christology – Verses 3-9

- a. Hear – the parable begins and ends with this summons
 - i. 10 times in Mark
 - ii. Imperative mood – urgency; importance
 - iii. **Shema Yisrael - Deuteronomy 6:4-5** "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
 - iv. The only way to understand Jesus is to Hear
 1. **Romans 10:17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
- b. Sowing – Difficult Galilee – These soils were prevalent
 - i. Farmers sowed unsparingly hoping to get a good enough crop.
 - ii. The sowing is superabundant – it almost seems wasteful
 1. Our evangelism has to be like this
 - iii. So intent is the farmer on having a harvest that he sows in every corner of the field – in hopes that he might grow enough
 - iv. Rocks, thorns, and harden ground render three-fourths of the labor useless
 - v. This parable ends on a high note however
 1. The good soil – produces, grows, increases, yields
 - a. These verbs are a crescendo of momentum
 2. This good soils gives a divine harvest
 3. **Genesis 26:12** And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him,
 4. This is no ordinary harvest
 5. Astounding results in spite of discouraging beginnings
 - vi. The growth is not due to human ability
 1. God is at work hidden in the unobservable
 - vii. Christology
 1. Jesus would produce a harvest disproportionate to human reasoning
 2. The sower's work, which looked wasteful, is proven to be most effective in the amount of crop collected.

- viii. Discipleship – verse 9 – we are to hear
 - 1. It is not up to me to cause the increase. I, like Christ, must sow with extravagance.
 - 2. It would produce a miraculous harvest in heaven

- 5. Verse 10 – Asking about the parable
 - a. This is his group
 - b. They are around him
 - c. They have listened and ask for clarification

- 6. Verse 11 – To you it has been given
 - a. Each audience receives a different form of teaching
 - b. The twelve and others are members of the insider group and to them a further revelation is given
 - c. The knowledge of the mystery is a gift of God and not by human achievement.
 - i. Greek word is *mysterion*—a knowledge of God that cannot be attained by natural means—it must be given
 - d. Outsiders – parables are a way for Jesus to talk to people with ears but who are spiritually deaf.
 - i. To any who would hear with hardened hearts or carelessly
 - ii. Notice who are the insiders vs. the outsiders – a great irony
 - e. Insiders and outsiders correspond to the soil
 - i. Those that hear (maybe not comprehending all) but a re genuine, the mystery will be given to them.
 - ii. The difference between fruitful seed and lost seed is dependent upon hearing.

- 7. Verse 12 – see and not perceive
 - a. Many do violence to this verse in order to make it read differently.
 - b. The truth of the matter is that this verse reads as it is supposed to
 - c. The sense of this verse is – Jesus’ parables confirm the states of people’s hearts; insiders who are with Jesus will be given the understanding of the mystery, and outsiders who are not with Jesus will be confirmed in their disbelief.

- i. There is tension between divine sovereignty and human free will.
 - ii. Ultimately, however, only those that God's has ordained will come to him.
 - iii. The God who gives the mystery also blinds the eyes of the unwilling.

- 8. Verse 13 – This parable is the key to all others
 - a. It is God that produces harvest
 - b. It is God's kingdom that will be filled with a bumper crop
 - c. It is god that enlightens those that are his
 - d. Two elements in the parable – Christology and Discipleship
 - i. Christology verses 3-9
 - ii. Discipleship verses 14-20

- 9. Discipleship - Verses 14-19
 - a. Stresses hearing
 - b. Discipleship depends on our receptivity
 - c. Disciples hear the mystery and receive what Jesus teaches them
 - d. The word 'logos – word' appears eight times in the command to hear (hear is four times).
 - e. The first three types of hearing are in the aorist tense in Greek.
 - i. Something done simply and finally –
 - ii. A quick superficial hearing – in one ear and out the other – no effort in heeding
 - iii. Satan, persecution, and cares of this world destroy those with only a casual hearing
 - iv. Their failure to hear confirms them as outsiders – the word of God becomes fruitless to them
 - f. The last type of hearing is in the present tense.
 - i. A continual, ongoing hearing
 - ii. "hear, accept (receive), and bear fruit
 - iii. A responsive hearing produces a miraculous crop

- 10. Evangelism -
 - a. The gospel of Jesus is difficult but it will be victorious.
 - b. The seed that Jesus sowed, is the same seed we must sow.
 - c. There will be frustration with the fruitlessness we will encounter.
 - d. Like Christ, the seed will find good soil.

11. Benediction –

- a. **John 15:4-5** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. (5) I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.