

THE GOSPEL OF MARK: STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

4, As the Gospel source being uniquely (the) Son of God, Jesus Christ is LORD, i.e. Mediator of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven & Creator, i.e. Uncreated God,

Part 4D

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Introduction: Jesus did not invent the parable form, both in the Bible and outside of the Bible the parable is an ancient form associated with proverbs, dark sayings, riddles, etc. in wisdom literature. But just as Jesus is uniquely the incarnate wisdom of God, so His parables are also uniquely divine revelations primarily about the Kingdom of Heaven/God. It is not overly simplistic to categorize Jesus' parables as one-of-a-kind earthly stories revealing heavenly realities, i.e. the magisterial mysteries about our Creator-God's way of salvation and eternal life.

“We must constantly bear in mind that the parables of Christ teach directly neither history nor doctrine nor morals nor prophecy. They express directly only certain great *principles* of the Saviour's divine kingdom, of the kingdom of heaven or God, when that kingdom comes into contact with the human heart. History, doctrine, morals, prophecy, may be deduced from them, because the truth of God and the human heart are essentially the same in all ages. But it is with principles alone that the parables deal; with principles which imply doctrines, which result in morals, which appear in the history of the past, and will reappear in the future. To set forth these principles in a sphere which is wider than that of either individuals or churches, in the sphere of divine truth in contact with the heart of man, is the object of the New Testament parables.”
(McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, VII, 649)

In chapter 4, Mark continues with straight talk about Jesus Christ as the Gospel source being uniquely (the) Son of God, Jesus Christ is LORD, i.e. Mediator of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven & Creator, i.e. Uncreated God.

4:1-34, Jesus' didactic parables are used to reveal and conceal by His mysteries about the Kingdom of Heaven/God.

**Jesus' parables are not allegories, i.e. no one-to-one correspondence of each detail, nor fables, i. e. not stories made impressionable by legend and myth, nor moralisms, i.e. cautionary tales about the consequences of good vs. bad decisions/behavior.*

vv. 1-13, To understand Jesus' parables by a revealed and learned knowledge begins by faith believing Jesus' mysteries about the Kingdom of Heaven/God; the gift of faith enlivens the soul to the intuitive witness of the Holy Spirit bearing the fruit of God's Word...

vv. 13-20, This parable of Jesus' is often called "the Parable of the Sower" but sometimes "the Parable of the soils", etc.

Part D

vv. 21-25, Jesus' example of a lamp and a unit of measure—*every analogy used for illustrating divine truth is not a parable, e.g. the Church as the body of Christ...*

vv. 21-22, A lamp is used as an object lesson of faith-seeing based on God being all-seeing by His light of Truth believers faith-see more...

vv. 23-25, A unit of measure is used as an object lesson of faith-hearing based on God being all-knowing by His measuring out revealed Truth believers faith-hear more...

In each example believers expand the witness of God's divine mysteries, while unbelievers are exposed and accountable to the externally revealed and conscience-witness to God's truthfulness...

**Jesus' parables are intended for His disciple-believers to provoke thought and reflection, so the two following parables about the growing seed and the mustard seed could be considered as elaborations on the theme of the sower parable, i.e. the effectual presence of the Kingdom of Heaven/God in this world.*

vv. 26-29, The Parable of the Growing Seed: seed germination from within itself and then nurtured from without to be fruit-bearing, i.e. the fruitfulness of the Word of God by the internal and external means of grace...

note: the successive development of the seed's germination and growth to fruitfulness contrasted with the unfruitful seeds in the Parable of the Sower, cf. 4:3-8//14-20...

vv. 30-32, The Parable of the mustard Seed: a small seed that produces a large and useful plant, i.e. the fruitfulness of the Word of God is far greater than its visible appearance...

note: the physical exaggeration of a seed about the size of a grain of sand grows into a plant the size of a basketball goal...the use of birds here not negative or evil, cf. 4:4//15...

vv. 33-34, Although unbelievers may hear the parallels of spiritual truths from Jesus' parables, unbelief is demonstrated by no fruit of repenting and confessing the guilt of sin and gift of salvation by the fruit of the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration, e.g. Jesus emphasizes fruitfulness, cf. 4:8//20, 29, 32...

Faith-seeing and faith-hearing (listening): are you watching and listening for the Kingdom of Heaven/God?

