

THE GOSPEL OF MARK: STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

8, The Gospel Paradox in this sin-fallen world demands faith in Divine providence integral to the salvation of the world, progressive revelation recorded in Holy Scripture, predictive prophecy terminating in Christ's New Covenant Gospel, and promised gospel consummation to the glory of God, Part 8C 2

G.H. Elliott, Pastor

Our Lord's Day, Sunday, August 5, 2018

Introduction: What did Jesus mean about watching out for the leaven/yeast of the Pharisees and the leaven/yeast of Herod? (v. 15) Jesus is using a common function of language technically labeled a metaphor, i.e. a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is used to describe an object or action by a comparison of characteristics not literal identity. So Jesus is not talking about bread that comes from the Pharisees or Herod, cf. Mk. 7. Jesus is using leaven/yeast to describe the false teaching of the Pharisees and Herod as working like yeast in dough by spreading and growing...If you understand Jesus' meaning, ask yourself how you know this.

8, The Gospel Paradox in this sin-fallen world demands faith in Divine providence integral to the salvation of the world, progressive revelation recorded in Holy Scripture, predictive prophecy terminating in Christ's New Covenant Gospel, and promised gospel consummation to the glory of God

vv. 1-10, Jesus' miraculous feeding of the 4,000+ people in gentile territory further demonstrates God's providence integral to the salvation of the world...

vv. (10) 11-26, Jesus' healing a blind man in 2 stages provides another gospel object lesson about the need to understand the progressive revelation of Scripture in order to avoid the spread of false-teaching...

vv. 11-13, Jesus' spirit-emotional growl was given verbal expression over the Pharisees' disputes trying to bait and entrap Him with temptation to perform heavenly signs and this should be interpreted by the words and story in the wider scope of the Bible...

vv. 14-21, Jesus' teachings and works are the ultimate validation (cf. Hebrews 1:1-4, John 14:8-12, et al.) of God's ordinary means of grace intended to accommodate basic human learning and understanding.

"All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear to all: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in due use of ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them." (WCF chapter 1 section 7)

(v. 13), Once again the boat is both a literal and symbolic part of the story narrative whereby Jesus and His disciples not only change geographical location (cf. vv. 22, 27) but also transition to another phase of gospel ministry (cf. vv. 30-33).

vv. 14-18, Jesus expected His use of analogies in preaching and teaching to be mentally clear and connected to the theological subject of His lesson objective...

➤ vv. 14-16, the Disciples confusion over Jesus' intensely charging them [Gk.

διὰ τὸ ἐπιθετικὸν ἰσχυρῶς /diastellomai—imperfect tense ongoing action from past time, i.e. intense, a compound form prepositional prefix διὰ=through + verb from ἐπιθετικὸν=putting, placing, installing, i.e. be thoroughly still, instill...]

resulted from their circumstantial and literalistic interpretation of Jesus' words...

**For Christian ministers and believers in the church, the Disciples' confusion over Jesus' words provides an example of the same kind of confusion when forced literalism is identified with extra-Biblical circumstantial historical evidences ... e.g. earth-centered model of planetary motion, bread and wine in Lord's Supper change-over into physically limited human flesh and blood of Christ, credit card # or bar code #, etc. is the mark of the Beast, helicopter gun-ships are the locusts out of the pit, the political villain de jour is the Antichrist...*

- vv. 17-18, In correcting the Disciples' confusion, Jesus uses words describing ordinary mental activities, e.g. reasoning, perceiving, understanding, hardened hearts, unseeing eyes, unhearing ears, not remembering, cf. 4:13, 34; 6:52; 7:18, i.e. not intellectually connecting the dots, not focusing, having an unteachable disposition, ...

**By the authority of Christ, Christian ministers are also intensely charged: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth...I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." (2 Timothy 2:15, 4:1-2)*

Christian believers in the New Covenant Church are also urgently ordered to "...receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word not hearers only...." (James 1:21-22)

Faithful Christian ministers are to "be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity...give[ing] attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine...not neglect[ing] the gift...which was given...by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you." (1 Timothy 4:12-16), et al.

- vv. 19-21, Jesus asked factual questions about His witness to redirect the Disciples back to a clear theological starting place in order to continue their progress in sanctification...

**Note Jesus' responses to the Pharisees and Disciples by comparison of grammatical uses:*

| <i>Pharisees</i> | <i>Disciples</i> |
|--|--|
| <i>v. 12, formal threatening oath</i> | <i>v. 15, intense commanding charge</i> |
| <i>v. 12, conditional clause expecting negative condition</i> | <i>vv. 19-20, factual questions witnessing to positive faith</i> |
| <i>v. 12/vv. 17-18, 21, rhetorical questions used like truth serum in the soul prompting psychological responses in the conscience</i> | |
| <i>to the Pharisees' condemning unbelief</i> | <i>to the Disciples' correcting weak belief</i> |

From the example of Jesus and the Holy Spirit's witness to Scripture, there is an expectation of Christian growth and maturity in the mind of Christ for believers. Sanctified rhetorical questions are not intended to undermine faith by engendering doubts, but to instill self-examination through God's promised means of grace.

