

Redemption

BIBLE CHURCH

Home Church Sermon Discussion April 15, 2018

Mark 4:21-23 (read)

And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

Dig Deeper

Unfortunately, modern translations obscure a rather unusual "wrinkle" in this parable. Literally it reads, "*Does the lamp come to be under the bed?*" The use of the word "come" is interesting, because lamps do not "come." They are not capable of movement; they are brought. **(Most translations smooth this over and use a passive form "do you bring a lamp" rather than the active form in the text.)**

This form is completely intelligible, though, if Jesus is speaking of Himself. That is almost certainly what He is talking about. He is not talking about the "truth" or "the word" — He is talking about Himself.

What is this little parable here for? What is its point?

Probably, this goes with the earlier parable as an assurance. The parable of the sower shows:

1. how invisible and small the kingdom's beginnings can be
2. how slowly the work can proceed,
3. how varied and usually disappointing the response to it will be.

But here Jesus assures them that He did not come to be a little light under a couch. The purpose of having a light in a dark room is to illuminate the whole room. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bed. Jesus is saying, "*believe me — I've come to show the whole world the kingdom of God. Everyone will eventually see it! Don't despair during all the long wait.*"

Mark 4:24-25 (read)

And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

Dig Deeper

The phrase *“the measure you use, it will be measured to you”* most likely refers to the idea of listening. This is both a promise and a warning. What we get from God is dependent on how well we listen to His Word. It seems that to “have” and to “carefully listen” are the same thing. So the more we truly believe and submit to what He has said, the more He will give us.

More what?

It means at least more of His truth, but it probably refers to God’s blessing in general. So the promise is — listen, take heed, and obey the truth and you will get more. Jesus is saying something like this: ***“Why should I give you more wisdom and blessing when you aren’t acting on what you already know?”***

But there is a warning here as well. Verse 25 tells us *“and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”* Notice that on the one hand (the first clause) this person does not ‘have’, and yet in the second clause ‘what he has will be taken from him’.

How can he “have” and yet not “have”?

It means that if you don’t apply and act on what you’ve learned from God, even what you knew will become unreal and you will lose it. Spiritual growth is a lot like riding a bike. If you don’t go forward, you “fall off”.

Application: Write down areas in your life in which you need to listen more. List some ways that you can be more active in listening for God’s truth. Once you have done that, take that piece of paper, and find a place to put it in which you will see it every day. Be sure to read and pray that God will give you opportunities to point people through you to Him.

Mark 4:36-34 (read from a Bible)

Dig Deeper

There is a power in the Word, even though its power may be hidden and mysterious. The Word gives us spiritual life (cf. James 1:10-11; I Peter. 1:23-25; Romans 1:16-17). However, this powerful word takes time to work.

In the parable of the mustard seed (v. 30-32), the Word looks insignificant, but produces results all out of proportion to itself. How is the Word like a mustard seed?

1. The Word of the gospel seems foolish to us — (it’s a story of a man whose career failed!) Yet it produces amazing fruit in our lives.
2. The Word may enter our heart without fanfare and make no great difference at first, but the more we learn, the more it transforms us. When we accept the Word into our hearts, we have no idea what we got ourselves into!