

Matthew 13:10-17: Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" ¹¹ And he answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ¹² For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: 'You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.' ¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. ¹⁷ Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

Intro: Last Lord's Day, we saw Jesus tell a parable about the different kinds of soil to teach His disciples why many reject Him & His message & why some receive Him & His message. Jesus taught us that there are different kinds of hearts (soils) out there in the world. There are 3 kinds of hearts (soils) that end up rejecting the Word of God (the seed) & there is one kind of heart (soil) that receives the Word of God. In the midst of telling the parable of the sower, the seed, & the soil (the focus!) & giving the explanation of the parable, Jesus teaches more deeply about why those who reject Him, reject Him. And why those who receive Him, receive Him. It is given or not! Jesus spoke in parables to both reveal truth to those who are His sheep & to conceal truth from the goats – not His.

1. Jesus' Disciples Ask Him A Question

Matthew 13:10: Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"

Jesus had just told the parable of the sower & the soils, & His disciples ask Him, "Why tell it this way?" This is hard to understand. This seems unclear. This doesn't seem to be the best method of communication. Why this way?

Al Mohler: The context helps us see that the disciples expected Jesus to speak more directly about himself. They hoped he would publicly claim his Messianic identity and speak openly about his divine nature and mission. But, as we read in the Gospel of John, Jesus knew that his "hour had not yet come" (7:30; 8:20). The disciples knew who Jesus was, and the confrontations with the Pharisees and the series of healings and miracles made obvious Jesus' divine nature and power. But when Jesus sat in the boat and spoke to the vast crowd, he told them a story. A parable. No wonder the disciples were puzzled. It hardly seemed like the right time for a parable, and a parable about a farmer at that! When the disciples asked Jesus why he spoke in parables, they were asking more than they knew – and Jesus' answer gave them far more than they expected

2. God Gives The Secrets Of The Kingdom To You But He Withholds Them From Others

Matthew 13:11: And he answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

a. What are the secrets of the kingdom of heaven? James Edwards: Secrets or mysteries in the Bible refer to "Knowledge of God that cannot be attained by natural means."

Daniel 2:27-28: Daniel answered the king and said, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery that the king has asked, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries"

In this case of the secret of the kingdom of God, God is both the Revealer of the secret and the secret itself! Jesus & His Gospel message are the secret of the kingdom of God! The King is here! The kingdom is in our midst!

C. E. B. Cranfield: It is the secret that the kingdom of God has come in the person and words and works of Jesus. It is a secret because God has chosen to reveal himself indirectly and in a veiled way. The incarnate Word is not obvious. Only faith could recognize the Son of God in the lowly figure of Jesus of Nazareth. The secret of the kingdom is the secret of the person of Jesus.

b. Notice this is a gift given to you: It's a gift! To see & perceive is a gift! To hear & understand is a gift! To turn from your sins & be forgiven is a gift! To be born again is a gift, you have nothing to do with it! Jesus is a gift!

1) Repentance-a gift of God: 2 Tim 2:25: God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth

2) Faith is a gift of God: Philippians 1:29: For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake . . .

3) Opened hearts to understand God's Word is a gift of God: Lydia: Acts 16:14: The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

4) Coming to Jesus is God's act: John 6:44: No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him

c. Notice this gift is not given to everyone: V. 11: but to them it has not been given.

Matthew 11:25-26: At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. (Has this gift been given to you? GOSPEL!)

3. Those Who Have Christ Will Gain More But Those Who Do Not Know Christ Will Lose Everything

Matthew 13:12: For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

Remember the context: Jesus has been teaching & preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, & He's been doing all manner of great signs & wonders: healing the sick, forgiving sins, casting out demons! And the religious leaders of His own people, the Scribes & Pharisees, have been rejecting Him & ridiculing Him over & over again. These Jewish religious leaders have been given much: **Romans 9:4-5:** They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

These Jewish leaders who are rejecting Jesus are poor because they don't have Christ, & all the covenant blessings they have enjoyed in the past will cease to be blessings for them but will become reason for greater judgment & those very blessings will be taken away: And all those blessings will become curses!

May we not be like them! May we trust Christ! Rest in Christ! Be eager to hear from Christ! Long to obey Christ! Humbly submit to all of God's Word, and be eager to grow in conformity to the image of Christ! May we be diligent in our pursuit of Christ as we pay attention to hearing the Word of God!

J. C. Ryle: The man who makes rapid progress in spiritual attainments – who grows visibly in grace, and knowledge, & strength, & usefulness – will always be found to be a diligent [person]. He leaves no stone unturned to promote his soul's well-doing. He is diligent over his Bible, diligent in his private devotions, diligent as a hearer of sermons, diligent in his attendance at the Lord's table. And he reaps according as he sows. Just as the muscles of the body are strengthened by regular exercise, so are the graces of the soul increased by diligence in using them!

20-80 Rule: 20% of the people do 80% of the work. That 20% will see the most growth & sanctification!

4. Many See Yet Don't See And Hear Yet Don't Hear

Matthew 13:13: This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

They can see with their physical eyes; they can hear with their physical ears; they can understand things with their physical minds; But they can't see, hear, and understand the spiritual truths about Jesus Christ & Who He is!

Greg Beale: They have become like the idols they worship: blind, deaf, unable to understand!

5. These Spiritually Blind, Deaf, And Ignorant People Fulfill Isaiah's Prophecy

Matthew 13:14-15: Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: 'You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. ¹⁵ For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.' (**Isaiah 6:9-10**)

Isaiah 6:9 is cited 5 times in the New Testament. In each Gospel, and in Acts 28. In each situation where this text is cited there is a rejection of Jesus and his teaching – a hostility toward what God is doing in and through Jesus Christ by the Jewish people. And this is very similar to what was happening in Isaiah's day. God's people Israel were acting wickedly, and God called Isaiah to go and preach to them as a sign of judgment, not salvation.

a. They don't understand or perceive: 1 Cor. 2:14: The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

b. Their hearts are dull, their ears are deaf, their eyes are blind: Jeremiah 17:9: The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

c. They will not understand, they will not repent, they will not be saved: Romans 8:7: For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

- **Man's responsibility: 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12:** because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, ¹² in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- **God's sovereignty: John 12:39-41:** Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, ⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them." ⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him. (**Jesus!**)

d. What did the leaders of the Jews do in Jesus' day? They saw Jesus conquer the demon world, casting out demons, and they called evil good by claiming the evil prince of the devils possessed Jesus, and they called good evil by saying Jesus cast out demons by the power of the devil! They called the Good of goods, evil! They called the Light of lights, darkness! They called the Sweet of sweets, bitter!

e. So God judged them by giving them over to indulge the wicked desires of their hearts: Their eyes were blinded so that they could not see; their ears were stopped up so that they could not understand!

- **Romans 1:22-24:** Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves . . .

- **2 Corinthians 2:15-16:** For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

- **Luke 12:47-48:** And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.

6. The Amazing Blessedness Of Jesus' Disciples

Matthew 13:16-17: But blessed are your eyes, for they see, & your ears, for they hear. Truly, I say to you, many prophets & righteous people longed to see what you see, & did not see it, & to hear what you hear, & did not hear it."

Jesus' disciples are blessed beyond our wildest imagination! Blessed more than the prophets: Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, John the Baptist. Blessed more than the most righteous heroes: Noah, Abraham, Job, Joseph, David! Blessedness all depends on closeness or proximity to Jesus Christ! You have seen Him! You are blessed!

James Edwards: The mystery [secret] . . . is the point of the parable of the Sower – that the providence of God is effective in Jesus to produce a fruitful harvest in the world . . . [Those who have been given the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom] are those for whom the fellowship and will of Jesus take precedence over everything else!

"That's My King!" Who's The Secret Of Secrets Of The Kingdom Of God!

He's the greatest secret that has ever been concealed in this universe!

He's the surprise of the ages!

He's the sure secret!

He's the sovereign secret!

He's the satisfying secret!

All the secrets of wisdom are found in Him!

He's the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret since the beginning of the world but has now been made known!

He's the secret wisdom of another age, greater than the all rulers of this age, and destined to never pass away!

He's the secret place of refuge where we find safety from the wrath of God and confidence in His righteousness which surrounds us like rich robes of blood stained purity!

He's the secret no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, that God has prepared for those who love Him!

He Himself is the secret of knowing how to be content when you don't have anything!

And He's the secret of contentment when you have everything because you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you!

If you have Him and nothing else, then you have everything and a whole lot more!

He's the secret place of the Most High Who keeps you in the shadow of the Almighty!

He's the secret of God's will set forth at the fullness of time to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth!

He's the secret Who was hidden from former generations but Who has now been made known!

That's my King! Do you know Him!

He's the secret Who brings together all races – Anglo, African, Asian, Arab, Latino, Jew, and Gentile and everyone else and makes them all one in Him!

He brings them all together so that Christ is all and in all!

He's the secret Who makes possible the broadcast of the manifold wisdom of God to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places through the Church!

He's the secret of all faithful marriages because they are all to be little parables of Christ and His blood-bought Bride – the Church!

He's the secret of the Gospel and its power to save and change the hardest of hearts!

He's the riches of the glorious secret that Christ is in you, the hope of glory!

He's God's preeminent secret in Whom is hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!

He's the secret worthy to be declared to every tribe, tongue, people, and nation whether they want to hear about Him or not!

He's the secret to Whom every knee will bow someday, willingly or unwillingly, and every tongue will confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father!

He knows all the secrets of your heart and mind!

He heals all your secret hurts!

He fulfills all your secret desires!

He's the only One Who can explain all the unexplainable secrets in your life with perfect precision, prudence, practicality, and piety!

That's my King!

He's the secret of godliness!
He was manifested in the flesh!
He was justified by the Spirit!
He was seen by angels!
He's being proclaimed among the nations!
He's being believed on in the world!
He was taken up into glory!
He was the secret Suffering Servant Who was stricken, smitten by God and afflicted, wounded for our transgressions, and crushed by His Father on that cross so that all those who ever repent and believe in Him might be saved!
He's the secret of the empty tomb – He rose from the dead conquering sin, death, and hell so that we might live in Him!
He's the secret to the satisfaction you so long for that nothing in this world has, can, or ever will satisfy!
He's the out-of-this-world satisfying secret Who alone satisfies all your deepest longings!
He Himself is the end of your search for the secret to satisfaction, serenity, and sanctification!
He's the secret Who, when you find out about Him, compels you to sing, stomp your feet, celebrate, and shout about Him to others so that they might know Him too!
He's the secret that can't be kept, shouldn't be kept, and mustn't be kept but published, proclaimed, presented, and preached to all the world!
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is Lord!

That's my King! That's my King!

Christ Jesus Gives The Eyes To See
The Ears To Hear, The Hearts To Be
All That God Commands With Glee
In Parables Christ Spoke So He
Would Hide The Secrets Lest They'd Flee
From Their Sins, Be Healed And Free
Yet Those He Chose Like You And Me
He Gives The Secrets That Are Key
To Knowing Him In Deep Degree
He Died For Us Upon That Tree
To Buy Our Faith, Desires To Flee
From Sin To Live As His Decree
He Rose Alive, We Bow The Knee
Confess Him LORD, The One In Three
By Faith Alone We Now Can See
He Saved Our Souls And Set Us Free!