

Parables of Jesus Week 3

Lamp Under a Bushel

Matthew 5:14-16

Mark 4:21-22

Luke 8:16, 11:33

Matt. 5 – “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven.” (NIV)

Just as a lamp is placed in a dark room to give light so Jesus came into the world to bring the light of life to men. Even so as Jesus, we have received this light that we may be lights in the world, in order for the world to see Jesus.

John 1:4-5, “In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.” John 8:12, “When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”

The prophet Isaiah spoke of the coming light. “Arise, shine for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.” (Isa 60: 1-3, NIV)

The book of Psalms, especially Psalm 119, declares “Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light for my path.” Psalm 18:28 – “You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light.”

Sure, Jesus brings light to our darkness. I Thessalonians 5:3, “You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.”

Philippians 2:15 admonishes us, “Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without

fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of Life...”

It seems clear that Jesus’ message to his disciples was to tell them they were to make his truth known to all men. It was the destiny of the truth to be spread abroad to all nations on earth. Therefore he told them to be careful how they hear because they would begin a proclamation that would become universal. Indeed, their words have come to us down the centuries and continue to bring the light of the gospel to all men.

Just as the disciples were given responsibility to let their light shine in the dark world, even so we have been given the same responsibility. The world around us becomes darker as the sinister forces of evil influence the minds and attitudes even in our nation. As our culture and society drifts farther and farther from Biblical principles, Christians must shine brighter and brighter. No “dimmer switches” for us!! It is tempting to remain quiet while controversy rages against Christian values, but now is the time when we must stand firm and refuse to be silent. The love of Jesus as manifested by our good deeds brings a powerful message to our world. Jesus is depending upon us to be shining lights in the world until He comes.

Can we speak a kind word to someone today? Can we share our blessings of food, clothing and money with those less fortunate? Can we mention the name of Jesus in our conversations with friends? Can we tell someone who’s hurting that God loves them and cares about their pain? There are so many ways to love and share Jesus. There are so many ways to preach the gospel besides from behind the pulpit on Sunday Morning.

Final thought (origin unknown) – “The light that shines the farthest, shines brightest nearest home.”

Part 2

Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders

Matthew 7:24-27

Luke 6:47-49

Luke 6:47-49 – “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words, and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words, and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.” (NIV)

Notice Jesus begins this parable with a rebuke for those who call Him their Lord but fails to put into practice his teachings. It is easy to talk religious talk but fail to live like Jesus instructed us to live. Jesus says this is like a man building a house (building his life). The wise man digs down deep and lays the foundation of the Rock, Christ Jesus. Obviously effort is required to dig down deep, as in hearing the Word, believing it and incorporating it into one’s life. This man gives up his own ideas about how to live life and decides to follow Jesus and do what pleases Him. One’s complete life is transformed by the gospel and by obeying the instructions given in scripture. No other foundation can any man lay but that which is laid – Christ Jesus. But the foolish man who hears the word and partially obeys. He then begins building his life on his own desires and aspirations. He chooses his own way which is sand.

The same storm hits both the house on the Rock and the house built on sand. In the same way, trials and tribulations come to all. Trouble is common to everyone of us. However, when the storm hits the house without a firm foundation, it collapses. In other words, Christians fall away when their faith is tested because they have not built securely into the foundation of Jesus Christ. Their trust is shaken and they walk away from the church and from Christ because they cannot endure.

