

Proclaiming Gospel of Jesus: A Greater Message

One of the most important competencies in building a strong relationship is communication. The art of communication is just that – a great art that requires practice and skill. Practicing assertive communication and active listening is a fundamental to any healthy relationship. Couples that do not learn how to verbalize their feelings and wishes, and on the other hand practice really listening to their partner by staying focused with their eyes, heart and body have not learned the skill of hearing and understanding each other.

There is a similar problem going on with Jesus and most of us. We often fail to hear and do what Jesus is telling us to do in Mark 4 - the companion version of the parables of the kingdom in Matthew 13. Here Jesus warns us, “*Consider carefully what you hear...with the measure you use, it will be measured to you and even more.*” Mark 4: 24. Unfortunately, many have not really heard Jesus’ message. When asked what the gospel is – people respond with many different things like – “God is love”, “Jesus saves”, “For God so loved the world...”, or “Jesus is coming very soon.” These are all very good news, but the gospel that Jesus proclaimed and taught his disciples to share was – “The kingdom of heaven is here!” The good news of Jesus was the good news of the kingdom. If we are going to share Jesus’ gospel with others we too will need to understand his message of the kingdom and learn how to share it in a way that others can understand and embrace with their whole life.

Journey Together:

- 1). Who do you know that’s a good listener?
- 2). How can you tell when someone is really listening to you?
- 3). What is more difficult – confronting others or being confronted and why?

Road Map: Read Matthew 13

- 4). Matthew 13 is about the parables of the kingdom. Which of these parables are the easiest for you to understand and why?
- 5). The disciples seem surprised that Jesus has shifted his approach to telling stories. Why has he moved from the open proclamation of the kingdom to stories about the kingdom?

6). Jesus tells 7 parables illustrating the good news of the kingdom. What do we learn from:

- The Sower
- The Weeds
- The Mustard Seed
- The Yeast in The Bread
- The Hidden Treasure
- The Pearl of Great Price
- The Net

7). What were people expecting concerning the coming of Gods kingdom? How do these parables challenge their expectations? What can we learn from Jesus about telling others about the gospel of the kingdom?

8). How would Jesus message change if he were sharing it with people today? What words would he use and how would he revise his message? How would Jesus have us explain the good news of the kingdom now?

Discipleship challenge: Jesus is challenging us to proclaim *his* gospel. Practicing the fourth competency of discipleship under Rabbi Jesus - *A Greater Message* by telling someone what you have learned about the good news of the kingdom from this study.

10). How can this group pray for you right now?

My Journey:

- 1). How has God been using *Journey* in your life this week to do *Great Things* for Him?
- 2). How has God used you to explain the message of Jesus this week?
- 3). How can this group pray for you today?