

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 105

May 7, 2021

Welcome to the next edition of “The Mind of Christ”. We are making our way through the Gospels, looking at everything that Jesus said and did in order to determine His mind; how He thinks. Last time that we were together, we started a section that is in **Matthew 13:1-23**, **Mark 4:1-34** and **Luke 8:4-18**. I’m not going to go back and read Mark or Luke. This is a section about kingdom parables and it is a very, very long section. If you’re following along, it’s section 64 in A. T. Robertson’s book, “The Harmony of the Gospels”. We began this section last week but because of how long it is I had to break in and stop it, and we’re picking off again where we left off last time.

We’ve been talking about the parable of the sower and we haven’t really gotten deeply into the parable. Matthew gives us the parable of the sower; then it takes a break and explains something about **why Jesus spoke in parables**. That’s the section that we’re in right now; we’re talking about that. Then it comes back and gives us an explanation of the parable of the sower; and after that there are some additional parables that we’ll look at in this section. So, we’re in the middle of that . . . this idea of why does Jesus speak in parables. So let’s read a bit of that. It begins in **Matthew 13:10**.

Matthew 13:10-17

¹⁰ And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” ¹¹ Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. ¹² “For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. ¹³ “Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

¹⁴ “In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; ¹⁵ FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.’

¹⁶ “But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. ¹⁷ “For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

We’re going to continue to dig into that section. So, we’re back to **Matthew 13:14** where He is quoting from Isaiah. Jesus uses the word ‘**perceive**’, “sunimi” (συνιμι). It is a word from “horao” (οραω) from which we get the word “see”; to **behold**, to **look**, to **visit**, to **mark something**, or to **observe something**. A couple of definitions kind of strike home when we think about this word because He’s saying here that you are **seeing** but you will not **perceive** it. You will not really understand it.

One of the definitions is to **‘to be admitted into the most immediate presence of God’**. This word is in **Matthew 5:8** meaning to ‘see God’. The pure in heart will ‘see God’. The pure in heart will enter into the immediate presence of God. Then in **Hebrews 12:14** it says, ‘pursue peace with all men and the sanctification without which, no one will see the Lord. This is the word that’s used here; ‘perceive’, “sunieimi” (συνιημι). **So this is the idea of perceiving or coming into the presence of God.**

So, you can “see” something, like seeing all the evidence for God but not perceiving God. People live in a world where they perceive the heavens and the earth that God made, but they don’t see God. Look at **Romans 1:18 ff** . . . this concept is found there.

The second definition is **‘to attain to a true knowledge of God’**. Sometimes people “see”, they understand a little bit, but they don’t really perceive; they don’t really attain to a true knowledge of God. **3 John 1:11** says, “Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is of God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.” In other words, he has not entered into this **true knowledge** of God. Evil prevents us from entering into the true knowledge of God.

This experience of God is the **heart of understanding**. To do so, **we must perceive who God is and see Him**. This is the goal. So we see Jesus explaining things to His disciples; not the crowds. He wants those who have made the initial commitment to have the spiritual breakthroughs that they need. So, a person has to kind of get to a point where they may not fully understand and fully be engaged in something, but they’re trying. And with that trying comes moments of spiritual breakthroughs where they suddenly **perceive**; they begin to understand the true knowledge of God or they begin to enter into the presence of God. So, there certainly is a pattern in Jesus’ ministry.

He pulls His disciples aside and He explains things to them. In **Luke 24:45** it says Jesus opened their minds. “**Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.**” This is with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. He opened their minds so that they could understand more. In **Mark 7:34**, referring to the deaf man, after Jesus put His fingers into the man’s ears and put His finger on his tongue He ‘looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, “**Ephphatha!**” He said Ephphatha which means “to be opened”. His ears were opened. In **Luke 2:23** every firstborn male who opens the womb shall be called, “holy”. There is this “breakthrough” as in birth; **someone coming into the world or as a deaf man whose ears have been opened** and there has been a new **perception** of things. **Luke 24:31** when Jesus broke bread with them, “**Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight.**” Again this is the disciples on the road in Emmaus. They had a different perception of Him. In verse 32, they said, “**Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?**” In other words, this is the point we want to get to in our understanding of the mind of Christ. There is this breakthrough where it’s like stepping into a new perception of things. In **Acts 17:3** in the Synagogue on the Sabbath, Paul reasoned from the Scriptures “**explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and [saying], "This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ."** Paul is shooting for that ‘breakthrough’ in their minds. **Acts 16:14**, Lydia’s heart was opened to respond to the things spoken by Paul. Too often peoples’ hearts are not open. You know,

we sing the song, “Open the Eyes of my Heart” so that I can truly see. Jesus relates the present phenomenon of some hearing but not understanding to Isaiah’s prophecy in **Isaiah 6:9-10**. Let’s look at that original context there. ⁹ He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on listening, but do not perceive; keep on looking, but do not understand.’ ¹⁰ Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed.”

Isaiah is in the throne room scene where he was taken by a vision into the throne room of God and he is introduced to the King who is very holy. He’s undone and falls at the King’s feet because he understands his own uncleanness; his unclean lips. The King provides healing for his lips and then he asked Isaiah “Who will go? Who can I send?” But God’s message seems strange. It’s a message that speaks to people’s failure to hear, to see, to understand. It seems **Isaiah is to expose the insensitivity of the hearts of the people**. How can you make a dead man know that he is dead? How can you make a deaf man know that he is deaf? How can you make a blind man see that he is truly blind? How do you make one aware of their own apathy? How do you convince someone who is mentally ill that they are truly mentally ill? That is the task that God was giving Isaiah in Isaiah chapter 6. To Isaiah, (note **Isaiah 6:8**) it says The Lord asks, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” (It’s not just ‘who will go for Me?’ but ‘who will go for US?’ That’s interesting). Then the King says, ‘Tell this people, keep listening...’ Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I. Send me!” ⁹ He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on listening, but do not perceive; keep on looking, but do not understand.’ ¹⁰ Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed.”

Have you ever looked at the optical illusions for the hidden message? Someone else stands over your shoulder asking you, ‘can’t you see it yet?’ Have you ever done that with an optical illusion, where someone is looking at it and **they can see it**, but you haven’t seen it yet. You haven’t seen the hidden word or the hidden face in the optical illusion. The longer you stare, the blurrier it seems to get. I went to a site on the internet as I was studying this called “I tricks” and they have a lot of optical illusions on this site. What makes a person stare long enough to ‘see’ the message? What if you knew the author and you knew he wanted to communicate a very important message that would save your very life and that if you committed yourself to Him, seeking to see and to hear and to understand that He would help you, He would explain it to you; but He wants to test you to see how interested you really are and how desperate you are to “get it”. Are we willing to put the effort in?

God may be looking, in other words, He may give us enough to give us “the interest” but He wants to see, are we interested enough to **stay with it**, to look longingly at it ... long enough to find the true message in it? What might hinder our seeing it? It could be impatience, it could be distractions, it may be that we don’t really value it, or it could be that we do not really believe that the message would make any difference in our lives?

In **Acts 17:27** Paul talking in Athens, on Mars Hill says ‘God is not far from any one of us’. So, sometimes people are saying, ‘Where is God, where is God’, and God is saying ‘I’m right here. I’m not very far from you. I’m not hard to find, but there is something that’s hindering you from actually seeing me or perceiving me.’

Isaiah's commission is dark, really. It's to preach so that blindness and deafness are exposed, but not for the sake of healing but for the sake of justifying the coming destruction. This is hard for us to see here because for people who just will not see, God wants them to understand that they are blind because of something that's wrong with their hearts. They're not really looking for Him. He wants them to know that so that He is justified when He punishes them. Imagine a room full of lepers or very ill people; a dark, cold, isolated place and someone looks at the room through an infrared light ... a light that allows them to be seen but not a light by which they can see.

Is justification a motive for this kind of preaching? In the judgment of Israel God compares it to the burning of a tree and a stump is left. But the holy seed is in the stump. The redemptive part was left. Jesus was what was needed. The forsaken places are many within the midst of the land. That's often how I feel. When you preach to people who will not see, who just will not 'get it', who just will not understand, it's almost like you're seeing a fire come through and just ravage a landscape and you think, 'there's no hope, everything's burned up'. But He is painting a picture here that there is a stump; there's a stump that still has roots in it, whose roots go down deep and it still has life in it and there is going to be a branch that is going to come out of that stump. So, even in a despairing message like Isaiah is preaching, and Jesus seems to be painting here in Matthew 13, there is still this hope that there are people who will have faith.

Is Jesus' preaching meant to reduce everything down to Him, the Holy Seed? There is a veil; the Bible talks about a veil that comes over our faces, but when anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. When the Lord appeared to Saul in a light so bright that it blinded him, it also humbled him. He went to his knees in prayer for days until the scales fell from his eyes. Eventually, his eyes beheld things in the third Heaven that he couldn't even speak of. In other words, what I'm saying here is **“does Jesus want to reduce us down to the point of utter blindness so that we will seek the only thing that is possible to see?”** We can't see anything with our own strength, with our own eyes anymore. We can only see what God reveals to us.

Does God bring us to such severe blindness of heart that can only be penetrated by Jesus Christ, but it has to come in some bold and dramatic way? There has to be resurrection; there has to be the power of the poured-out Spirit; but what of a common man preaching a simple message of the cross? Can that break through hard hearts? You know ... it can. It can but it often doesn't; but it is what God has given us. There is a tenth portion in it ... a remnant, a tithe of the Lord. Few saved, many find the broad path. Is Jesus' Kingdom only a tenth of the total population? Are we wrong to expect mass 'anything'; mass conversions? Must we be sowing many more seeds to be getting a little harvest? Must we seek the seeker harder than ever because it is harder to find like the oil in the shale? It's there, but it is more expensive to find it and to mine it. True worshipers are harder to find; they're very hard to find.

Jesus through Isaiah describes the hearts of the people as being 'dull'. The word dull here is "pachuno" or (παχυνω) meaning to 'thicken', to 'fatten', to 'stupefy', to 'render callous' or to 'wax gross'. It means 'unfeeling'. It's used in **Acts 28:27** for peoples' hearts becoming dull.

Luke quotes Paul in his Roman ministry. Paul had been allowed to receive people to teach and a large number came, and he attempted to explain and testify about the Kingdom of God trying to persuade them concerning Jesus from the Law of Moses and the prophets. All day long he did this. Some were persuaded but others would not believe. They did not agree with one another, but right before they left, Paul spoke a parting word ... and what did he quote? **He quoted the same words that Jesus quoted in Isaiah 6:9-10 in Romans 11:8-10.** Paul then lets them know that this message will also be offered to the Gentiles. They will also, he says, listen. The Jews that were there that day in a huge dispute over this ... this idea that somehow since they would not listen ... they would not perceive; that somehow God was going to turn to the Gentiles. But for two years Paul taught all who came to him focusing on two things:

1. Preaching the Kingdom of God and
2. Teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul did this openly and unhindered.

This is a parallel to Jesus' ministry. Does this not define:

1. The context of our message?
2. The reality of our ministry? That most simply will not "get it"?

Jesus and Paul both agree on this task. They are "one" on this. So if you compare what Jesus said in **Matthew 13:13-15** and what happened with Paul in **Acts 28:23-27** in the two-year ministry that he had there, both of them concluded that people are going to hear but they are not going to perceive; they're going to see but they're not going to understand. So what do we learn from this?

It is Jesus' desire for people to 'return' and to be 'healed'. His ministry had two groups: the crowds and the disciples. **To the crowds He gave parable stories. To the disciples He gave explanations** and additional teachings. Like Paul, Jesus sowed the seed everywhere, but He focused on those who were good soil, and He gave much greater care to those. Jesus did not have an illusion of mass evangelism, even though we **do** see the unusual day in Acts 2 where 3,000 people were baptized on one day. It seems that traction and growth in the kingdom was fueled by suffering and persecution. One thing that penetrated hard and reluctant hearts was the commitment that they saw in others.

There are the three conditions of the people who had been martyred for Jesus Christ. One was the blood of the lamb; one was the word of their teaching; and the third was their commitment and willingness to die for the Kingdom of God.

Jesus' desire was twofold. He wants people to

1. Return to Him
2. To be revealed

To 'return' is a word that means to revert, to come, or to go again, to convert, to turn towards something. It is used prophetically of the work of John the Baptist in **Luke 1:16-17**. **"And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ "It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."**

Referring back to Malachi 4 John is compared with Elijah whose power is to turn the hearts of the fathers back to their children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord**. This alone is meat for us to study for a while. Three turnings, three things He says about turning.

1. The Sons of Israel will be turned to the Lord
2. The fathers will be turned to their children.
3. The disobedient to an attitude of righteousness ... literally to the ‘understanding of the just’ is what he’s saying there. A thoughtful frame, a sense of right-mindedness, of intelligence.

Ephesians 1:8 says ‘mental action or activity, or intellectual or moral insight, wisdom and prudence, a mode of thinking and feeling’ ... all of this is what we’re trying to turn people to. God’s grace has to be accompanied by good sense. We’re trying to return people to their “good sense”. This rings so true. As I look over those whose children are at risk, it is the caretakers who seem to have lost their sense of right; their wisdom. Note in this passage it is to be the “just” or the “righteous” who set the practical standard of good sense in the community. But is that true?

In other words, **there needs to be a righteous element within a community that has retained their good sense; their sense of right and wrong. Do Christians really become the lights and the beacons of wisdom in a community? Does their right judgment prevail within a community?**

In **James 5:19** it talks of one straying from the truth and one who brings him back. **Our jobs are to be agents of turning; turning people back; trying to get people’s attention to focus on Jesus**. What is at stake? **It’s the salvation of the person’s soul and the covering of our sins!** In **Acts 9:33-5** after Peter healed Aeneas in Lydda, ‘all who lived in Lydda and Sharon *turned* to the Lord’ it says. **Acts 11:21** says in Antioch, a large number believed and *turned* to the Lord. In Lystra where the people began to worship Paul and Barnabas, Paul tells them that he is there to preach the gospel in order for them to *turn* away from these vain things to a living God and still they tried to sacrifice to them in **Acts 14:15**. In **Acts 15:19** in the council at Jerusalem James the elder concluded that “we do not trouble those who are *turning* to God from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood.” They must not lay on them unnecessary burdens. In other words, **if we make it more difficult for those who are turning to the Lord then they may not turn to the Lord.**

In Acts 26 Paul relates his meeting with Jesus on the road and Jesus’ instructions to Him. This was what Paul’s ministry was about ... to open their eyes so that they may *turn* from darkness to light, and from the dominion of Satan to God in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me (talking about faith in Jesus). In other words, it was Paul’s job to *turn* people from darkness to light.

In **Acts 26:20**, Paul tells Agrippa he was obedient telling them what John the Baptist told his crowds; repent and *turn* to God performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

In **2 Corinthians 3:14** there is a significant text in this regard. Paul speaks of a veil that is over Israel's face when Moses is read. This veil was there due to the hardness of their hearts or their minds, but whenever a man *turns* to the Lord, the veil is taken away (verse 16). When it falls, a new process takes place. In other words, when the veil falls away, the person enters into a new process. **The secrets of the Kingdom** are able to be revealed then to him. There is now freedom and transformation that occurs. That's what follows.

Paul continues in the next chapter to describe the blinding that occurs by the god of this world to prevent people from seeing the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God. In other words, Satan does not want people to see; he wants to blind their eyes so that they cannot see.

The reason we started this discussion is because Jesus talks about (from quoting Isaiah 6) hearing, they will not perceive; seeing they will not see. So we're talking about what is the process? How does a person get into this **breakthrough** where they begin to see and they begin to let the light of the gospel flood into their life where they **begin to perceive** now what is true?

In Thessalonica Paul wrote how they had *turned* to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from Heaven. This is in **1 Thessalonians 1:9-10**. There is no salvation without turning. The influences or idols that hold our attention and control our actions must be turned from; and we must turn toward God, the Lord or the truth. **Breaking the bonds of earth's gravitational pull to touch the face of God is our perpetual struggle**. We are earthbound, not just physically but spiritually! What draws me? What binds me? What controls me? What causes me to do what I do? What wind blows strong in my life? **Matthew 13:15** says that the result of turning is healing! In other words, when we actually *turn*, what we receive is healing. **Mark 4:12** says it is forgiveness.

Heal is the word "iaomai" (ἰαομαι). It means to cure, to heal, to make whole, to restore, to restore to bodily health, but it's a metaphor for our moral or sin diseases. **John 12:40** quotes Isaiah 6 and Isaiah 10 in answer to the question of **Isaiah 53:1**, "[Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?](#)"

This is John's commentary on what was happening. The frustration of this text is palatable. The crowds did not; they could not connect 'Son of Man' with the 'cross'. **John 12:41** says Isaiah saw Jesus' glory and spoke of Him. **This Isaiah text just keeps coming up**. **Luke 4:18** is also a quotation from **Isaiah 61:1-2**. I think the word is "bind up" in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament.

Hebrews 12:13 he talks about straight paths are needed lest the lame be harmed more instead of being healed. "[...make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.](#)" So, if you have an uneven path and the lame walk on it, they may be hurt more; but if you give them straight level paths for their feet, their healing can be extended.

In **1 Peter 2:24** is this curious passage says, "[And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.](#)"

This is quoted from **Isaiah 53:4** we read, “Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; and Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted”, and **Isaiah 53:11**. “As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities.” It’s found in **Matthew 8:17** where reading it connects us to the healing of our diseases. “This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: **“HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES.”** Certainly *healing is our great need, especially spiritual, but we probably pray more for physical healing than we do for spiritual healing.* Why do we focus on the more noisy needs instead of the true needs of our souls? Jesus would not have had to go to the cross to heal us of physical diseases. It is our soul’s diseases that He had to deal with on the cross. That is the balm that we need.

Mark says our need is forgiveness. Healing ... those who *turn* will be forgiven, but *turning* is required. We as Christians often think in terms of the world *turning* back to God *and it should!* But Christians must demonstrate this *turning* daily in our lives. We must “take up our cross and daily”. The way Mark says it quoting Isaiah makes God seem to be like Jonah; a reluctant evangelist almost hoping that people will not ‘get it’ but this can’t be true. All God’s actions cry out against such a view.

In **Matthew 13:6** Jesus declares a blessing on the disciples for seeing and hearing. This is the purpose for which Jesus came. That is, to bless everyone! The historical moment they were in is expanded on here. Many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see and hear what you hear, but did not hear it. Again, this is **Matthew 13:17**. They desired, they set their hearts; they longed for something, they were counting on it. You might even say they were ‘lusting after this knowledge’; that they wanted to see these things.

In **Luke 22:15** Jesus says *He earnestly desired to eat the Passover with His disciples.* We might say He was so looking forward to it. In **1 Timothy 3:1** a man must desire to do the work of an elder. There must be some ‘looking forward’ to it. In **Hebrews 6:11** we desire that each of you show the same diligence that you have always demonstrated unto the end. So, there is this longing, this desire that he is speaking about in this passage. So, we are desiring this blessing and we’re desiring this healing.

1 Peter 1:10-12, “As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, ¹¹ seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.”

The future perspective of Old Testament prophets and even angels show that they did not have a full understanding of the gospel; only bits and pieces of the puzzle, enough to know something great was coming. *This is the attitude that we must have* if we’re going to perceive the things that God has for us! We have to have this longing, this desire, this seeking so that we can turn and we can be healed and we can experience everything that God wants for us.

Careful searches and inquiries, revelations, the Spirit of Christ within them indicated two things: It indicated and *suffering* and the *glory* of Christ. Christ *had to suffer*. It was squarely in God's plan. The suffering was tied to the *dullness of hearts* who did not understand it. If they had, they would not have crucified Him ... the Lord. **1 Cor. 2:8**. Suffering is instigated by those who didn't see or hear or understand. *Most do not remain neutral*. If you are not *for* Jesus, you are *against* Jesus. In other words, *if they had understood that the very suffering that they were inflicting upon Jesus; that the very suffering was something that the Old Testament prophets predicted or prophesied was going to happen*. Yet they couldn't see it even though they were agents of that suffering.

Jesus often compared or contrasted groups with each other for emphasizing a point. Here, He compares the prophets and the righteous men of old with the crowds and the leaders of His day. In previous texts He compares this generation with Nineveh, the Queen of Sheba, and even Sodom and Gomorrah! In **2 Corinthians 10:12**, Paul says it is not wise for one man to measure himself by himself or compare himself with himself. I know the context is a little different but can we say that 'the comparisons and the contrasts that Jesus makes are always spot-on wise, but our judgments are always flawed?' Of course.

1 Corinthians 6 does say that we can and should judge between two brothers in some matters instead of taking these things before pagans. At least here, we can say *Jesus, God, the Old Testament, the New Testament writers will hold up certain men and women of faith as examples of those whose hearts were committed to serving God and His plan, and to know this mystery that had been hidden*.

Jesus values seekers; true genuine seekers. He takes every opportunity to highlight those whose hearts are very committed to Him and His Father. The apostles and other disciples must have felt so privileged to be a part of this revelation. The King Himself explaining the kingdom, back to the idea of "outside". **Mark 4:10-12** says, "As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables. ¹¹ And He was saying to them, 'To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to those who are outside get everything in parables, so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven.'" This is where we find this idea of "outside".

Let's talk about those who are "*outside*"; not the Apostles, not His close followers, but the crowds. The word 'outside' is "exo" (εξω). It's used in **Matthew 8:12**. Jesus speaks of the sons or subjects of the kingdom being thrown '*outside*' where there is darkness and weeping and gnashing of teeth as opposed to those who come from the east and the west and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Clearly, *this is about Jews who were the natural sons of the kingdom*, or the natural olive branch, as we talk about in Romans 11 who were cut off or cast "outside".

The "insiders" become the "outsiders" if you will; and the "outsiders" become the "insiders". So, the Jew who was "the insider" becomes "the outsider" and the Gentile, who was "the outsider" becomes now "the insider". In **Matthew 22:13**, here the guest without the proper wedding clothes is thrown "outside". There are many invited but few are chosen. In **Matthew 25:30**, remember Jesus died "outside" Jerusalem so that we could come inside.

Back to **Matthew 13:17**, “For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it”. The “faith” chapter in **Hebrews 11** has this idea of those who *served in hope* but they never “saw”; they never got to see what the end result was. Those who came before us wanted to see the end but they never got to see it. So if you look in **Hebrews 11:8** Abraham was going to a new land without knowing. In **Hebrews 11:10** Abraham was looking for a city whose foundations and architect and builder is God. In **Hebrews 11:13** he died without receiving the promises, but he only welcomed them from a distance; and he was a stranger and an exile on the earth. In **chapter 11:14** these people were seeking a country of their own. In verse **16** they desired a ‘better’ country, a heavenly one. God is not ashamed to be called their God and has prepared a city for them. In verse **26** Moses considered the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. In verse **35** women received back their dead to obtain a better resurrection, and in verse **39** they did not attain what they sought. In verse **40** they were only made perfect “with us” ... “it was because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.”

*But how can we perfect them if we do not understand what we really have? I’m getting across the point here that the people of old longed for this understanding of what they were prophesying or what they were ‘looking forward to’. We are the ones who have the secrets of the Kingdom revealed to us and sometimes we don’t appreciate what we actually have as much as the people who *didn’t* have it and longed to see those things. If our eyes and ears cannot see and hear the secrets He is now fully revealing, *then what’s wrong with us*, because there’s no excuse for us not hearing today?*

Galatians 1:11-12 says Paul took great pride in having *personally received this revelation apart from the other apostles*. It was the same ‘source’ of revelation that the Twelve had. Paul had the same revelation. His longing and desire to see and to hear and to understand was satisfied completely by Jesus and the Spirit. Paul spoke often of this *mystery* revealed and his insights into the plan of God lived out before the creation of the world (**Eph. 1:9**).

He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him. Paul knew he was caught up in the middle of the stream of God’s eternally perfect will. He was in the middle of the main river and not sidelined in some minor tributary; not some beach backwater place that only indirectly and secondarily had to do with the kingdom of God. Paul was about kingdom business at its center; no fringe or margin for him.

Back to the actual parable; the actual parable of the sower. Actually I think what I’m going to do is I’m going to stop here before we go back to the parable of the sower. Let’s take a break right here and we’ll pick up here next time and go forward. I think we’ve covered enough today. If you’re hearing this for the first time, you may think like you’re drowning in information. Well, this is “*meat*”; this is not “*milk*” of the kingdom. This is diving down *deep* into the Mind of Christ and trying to understand things in a very deep way. There is a transcript that we produce every week and you can have access to that transcript. Go to our website at <https://www.centalsarasota.org/> we’ll put you on a mailing list to get it by E-mail. We want to dig deeply into this so we’re going to stop right here and we’ll pick up here next week. Thank you for joining us. Until next week, God bless.

