

# If Anyone Has Ears To Hear, Let Him Hear

These words are recorded in God's Word, the Christian Bible, as only being uttered by Jesus Christ, the One who spoke with divine authority, [**Matthew 7:29**].

These words were **only** spoken on distinct occasions in order to emphasise and call attention to the utterance Jesus Christ had made.

This is an important example of the figure of speech called polyptoton, the repetition of the same verb in a different inflection, by which great emphasis is put on the statement just made.

The occasions are marked out in this way for special attention to what was being taught, to those with ears that had been opened by the Creator God.

In this article I wish to take each of these events in turn and seek to see clearly exactly what our Saviour and Lord is telling us.

**Luke 8:4-8** [New King James] *“And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: ‘A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.’ When He had said these things He cried, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’”*

As in all His parables, Jesus Christ was using an illustration that His hearers would recognise. It is quite likely that Jesus Christ and the crowd could see, as He spoke, some sower sowing seed broadcast from a basket.

The common ground in Palestine was split into long narrow strips with paths between each strip which would be trodden down and hard.

There was also ridges of limestone rock with no moisture or nourishment.

The ground as a whole was full of thorns and may look clean when turned over but the fibrous roots would soon grow again more strongly than any seed.

The good ground was ground that was several inches deep and had been well worked and cleaned.

**Luke 8:9-10** [New King James] *“Then His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘What does this parable mean?’ And He said, ‘to you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that “Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.””*

At first it sounds that Jesus Christ was speaking in parables so that the people would deliberately **not** understand.

**Matthew 13:13** [New King James] *“Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.”*

This indicates that it is the people who are unable to understand.

How is this?

Paul helps us to understand this in his letter to the mainly Gentile Church in Corinth.

**2 Corinthians 4:3-4** [New King James] *“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”*

Satan is being allowed at this time to blind the vast majority of people to the truth of the message that Jesus Christ brought from God the Father.

The truth of the real purpose for human existence.

**John 6:44** [New King James] *“No-one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

Only God the Father knows the best time for a person to be called to have their opportunity for salvation, now or in one of the future resurrections back to human life as recorded in Revelation.

A parable is far easier to remember in the future than a spiritual principle which can only be understood with the help of the Holy Spirit which those people did **not** yet have working within them, [**John 16:13**].

**1 Corinthians 2:11** [New King James] *“For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”*

Only the Holy Spirit can reveal spiritual principles, in the same way as the human spirit gives us intellect, the awareness of our existence, [**Job 32:8; Proverbs 20:27**].

**Luke 8:11-15** [New King James] *“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.”*

The question being asked by Jesus Christ is *“how do you receive God’s Word, the Christian Bible, into your life?”*

Do you shut your mind to God’s Word, like the hard ground?

Do you accept God’s Word, think how wonderful it is, yet do **not** allow it to make any changes in your life, so it soon leaves your mind and dies like seed on shallow, stony ground?

Are you far too busy with life to study or meditate on God’s Word, so it has little chance of having any real influence on your style of living?

Then you are having your eternal life choked out of you.

The Word reaching a person with a heart and mind prepared by the Creator God will respond in three ways:

**First** – they will listen attentively.

**Second** – they will keep what they hear in the forefront of their mind, meditating on it until they discover the full meaning for themselves and what changes need to be made to their lives.

**Third** – they will act on the Word of God they have received and as a result they will grow and mature spiritually, patiently over the whole period of their physical life.

Therefore – “*he who has ears to hear, let him hear!*”

The same term is found in **Matthew 11:15**. What is Jesus Christ emphasising in this passage of scripture?

This was after Jesus Christ had given His twelve disciples their first mission, [**Matthew 10:1-15**] told them that any job that He would give them would **not** be easy, [**Matthew 10:16-23**].

Jesus Christ then points towards the word of John the Baptist that had ended with him being put into prison.

**Matthew 11:7-15** [New King James] “*As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.” Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’”*

Jesus Christ paid John a tremendous tribute, because of what kind of man he was and the successful work that he had accomplished.

John was **not** – “*a reed shaken in the wind.*” This was a kind of proverb referring to a person who was a weak vacillator.

**James 1:5-8** [New King James] “*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*”

John received the Holy Spirit from birth, [**Luke 1:15**] and was never “*double-minded*” [Greek means “*double-spirited*”] but was constantly influenced by the Holy Spirit and **no** other spiritual or physical influence.

John was **not** – “*clothed in soft clothing.*” Referring to that of those in the court of a king or ruler. John was an ambassador of God, **not** a courtier of Herod.

John was **not** a prophet – John was more than a prophet, he came as a herald who was to introduce the Messiah. The Jews believed that Elijah would return to perform this job, [**Malachi 4:5-6**].

**Malachi 3:1** [New King James] “*Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,’ says the LORD of hosts.*”

John was the herald who prepared the way for Jesus Christ and His message from God the Father that is encompassed in the New Covenant Jesus Christ introduced.

The people who did receive John’s message and repented, John was to them then and now the “*Elijah*” who would restore all things [**verse 14**] and the Elijah who was referred to in **Malachi 4:5-6**.

Those who do **not** repent will have to wait until after Jesus Christ’s Second Coming as King and Judge, “*a great and dreadful day.*”

These people are only those who “*have ears to hear, let him hear!*” Now!

Jesus Christ uses the same phrase after He explains the parable of the tares.

**Matthew 13:36-43** [New King James] *“Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, ‘Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.’ He answered and said to them: ‘He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’”*

To understand what is happening in this parable we have to project our thoughts forward in time to *“the end of this age.”*

The end of the *“age”* when Satan is no longer allowed to continue his rule over this world.

**1 John 5:19** [NIV] *“We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.”*

Jesus Christ did **not** deny that the world was controlled by Satan and his to offer, [**Matthew 4:8-9**] and Paul told the mainly Gentile Church that Satan had blinded most human people to the very reason why they exist as human beings and what great plans their Creator God has for them, [**2 Corinthians 4:4**].

This reign of Satan will come to an end at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as *“King of kings and Lord of lords,”* [**Revelation 19:11-16**].

**Revelation 20:1-3** [New King James] *“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.”*

Until this time two sets of human beings will be working for their respective masters in this world.

The *“sons of the kingdom”* all who have been called by God at this time to have their chance of salvation and receive the gift of eternal life.

**2 Corinthians 6:1-2** [New King James] *“We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He says: ‘In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.’ Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”*

This is subject to the decision of God the Father as to when is the best time for each individual human being, [**John 6:44**].

There is a second group of human beings working for a different master who are called *“sons of the wicked one.”*

**2 Corinthians 11:13-15** [New King James] *“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”*

Working for Satan while presenting themselves as “*apostles of Christ*” or other self-promoted leaders of religious groups who are influenced by spirits, who do not accept Jesus Christ as God, Who has come in the flesh. We need to be aware of such people who are influenced in this way.

**1 John 4:1-6** [New King James] “*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*”

Such spirits are Satan’s demons and we must resist them for they are also “*sons of the wicked one.*”

The blade of tares resemble wheat and not until harvest time are they clearly distinguished from wheat.

The “*tares*” as the “*sons of the wicked one*” who are burned in the fire at the end of time, will **only** be those who refuse to repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord, [**Revelation 20:15**].

Note this will only be after the reign of true Christians with Jesus Christ for 1,000 years, [**Revelation 20:4**] and the great “*white throne judgement,*” [**Revelation 20:11-13**].

We all need to apply “*he who has ears to hear, let him hear*” to this prophesised future that was given to the apostle John by Jesus Christ.

**Revelation 1:1-3** [New King James] “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants, things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.*”

This is **not** something we can ignore.

**Mark 4:21-23** [New King James] “*Also He said to them, ‘Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand? For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.’*”

The phrase is again repeated after this statement of Jesus Christ, to emphasise that He was revealing things which had been hidden until then concerning the secrets of the Kingdom of God.

**Matthew 5:14-16** [New King James] “*You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*”

Perhaps we should insert the phrase that Jesus Christ is using whenever we meditate on this command of Jesus Christ.

**Mark 4:24-25** [New King James] “*Then He said to them, ‘Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.’*”

The light of truth that has been revealed to us must **not** be hidden.

But it is **only** as we put this revelation into practice will we be able to understand even more of the truth, the plan of God for all humanity.

**James 1:22-25** [New King James] *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”*

God’s Word is **not** just something we hear, it is something that must change our very lives, as we apply it to the decisions and actions we make every day.

*“If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”*

**Mark 7:14-16** [New King James] *“When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, ‘Hear Me, everyone, and understand: There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!’”*

This statement of Jesus Christ was made in response to the Pharisees asking why Jesus Christ and His disciples did **not** comply with the traditional ceremonial washings every time they ate.

These washings were part of the many rules and regulations that the great Jewish legal experts of the past, like Hillel and Shammai, had added to the basic laws to cover every possible situation.

Life was no longer to be governed by principles but by rules and regulations.

These rules and regulations were called the Oral Law and eventually were written down to be known as the Mishnah.

Jesus Christ condemned this attitude towards religion by quoting Isaiah to them, [**Mark 7:6-7**].

Jesus Christ then made a simple statement in the form of a parable [**Mark 7:15**] showing that what is defiling to a person is what is generated in their mind and heart that comes out in words and actions that are sinful.

The disciples did **not** understand the spiritual implications of this parable so Jesus Christ, when alone with them, explained it to them and us.

**Mark 7:17-23** [New King James] *“When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. So He said to them, ‘Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?’ And He said, ‘What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.’”*

When we consider what Jesus Christ explained to His disciples we can understand why we should apply His words to such a situation.

*“If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!”*

Remember every evil act begins with a thought!

**Luke 14:34-35** [New King James] *“Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavour, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”*

To fully understand why Jesus made this statement about salt and added great emphasis by saying “*he who has ears to hear, let him hear!*” we have to study two things.

Understand what the people would relate to salt that had lost its taste.

Salt was used as a preservative but it loses its effectiveness if it is watered down or mixed with dirt, which did happen in Jesus Christ’s day because it was expensive.

**Luke 14:25-28, 33** [New King James] “*Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it,’ ... ‘So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.’*”

Jesus Christ was pointing out that to become His disciple would cost a personal literally their life.

**True Christianity is NOT one hour, once a week activity.**

The priorities we have in life have to be re-directed towards serving Jesus Christ, including our affection, [the Greek word translated “*hate*” is “*misēō*” meaning to love less by comparison.]

**Matthew 6:24** [New King James] “*No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*”

We cannot love the things in the world and love our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ.

**A Christian life cannot be adulterated salt. –**

Every Christian must preserve [as salt preserves] Christian morals in a corrupt world.

Act as a cleansing antiseptic [as salt can] in the circle of people in which they live.

Every Christian must add flavour [as salt does] to their own life and that of others, by their courage, hope, cheerfulness and kindness.

We can now see why Jesus Christ added impact to what He was teaching by ending with the words “*he who has ears to hear, let him hear!*”

**Jesus Christ is still using this way to emphasise what He is saying to the Churches today.**

The apostle John records these words in Revelation, each linked with our need to overcome the influence of Satan and his servants in our lives, and a promise for our future life.

**Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29** [New King James] “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.*” ... “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.*” ... “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.*” ... “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*”

**Revelation 3:6, 13, 22** [New King James] “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*” ... “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*” ... “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*”

We also have a powerful warning of what will happen if we are **not** recorded in the Book of Life, that is, have an active presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

**Revelation 13:1-9** [New King James] *“Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marvelled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?’ And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear.”*

It is **only** through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that we can avoid being deceived by Satan and his human agent, the “*beast*.”

*“If anyone has an ear, let him hear!”*