

Seeing But Not Perceiving

Mark 4:10-12 [New King James] *“But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. And He said to them, ‘To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that “Seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest they should turn, and their sins be forgiven them.””*”

This statement comes between the parable of the sower, [Mark 4:3-9] and the explanation of the same parable.

Matthew alters the sense of Mark’s record of what Jesus Christ said by using the conjunction “because” instead of “so that,” [Matthew 13:13].

That is to say, because the general public was slow to grasp the sense of Jesus Christ’s teaching, He embodied it in parables to make it more immediately intelligible.

The hardness of the saying is thus mitigated, it is readily accepted that **not** all people are being called to be disciples of Jesus Christ, only a certain number in each generation.

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.”*

It is God the Father who decided when is the best time for a person to be called, now or after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ when society will be freed from the influence of Satan, [2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19; 1 Peter 5:8] in a physical resurrection back to life, [Revelation 20:1-3; Revelation 20:10; Revelation 20:11-13].

This statement of Jesus Christ is a plain adaptation of an Old Testament text.

Isaiah 6:1-7 [New King James] *“In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!’ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said: ‘Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.’ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: ‘Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged.’”*

Isaiah saw in vision the very throne of the Eternal God.

Isaiah 6:8-10 [New King James] *“Also 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.’ And He said, ‘Go, and tell this people: “Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and return and be healed.””*”

Isaiah then offers to be a messenger of the Eternal God, but is warned that few, if any, will respond to his message.

The effect of Isaiah’s preaching will be the people’s persistent refusal to pay any attention or accept what Isaiah said. This continued to the point where they will have rendered themselves incapable of accepting the message Isaiah brought from God.

The next forty years proved just how true this was, and Isaiah's experience was reproduced in the ministry of Jesus Christ, and of all Christians who preach the same message in each generation.

People cannot take the Christian message and so they cannot profit from it.

When the saying of Jesus Christ is understood in this way, its relevance to the context, the parable of the sower, is very clear.

The missing ingredient is the active presence of the Holy Spirit, Who is **not** as yet available to all people as promised in **Joel 2:28-29**.

The work of the Holy Spirit as listed in John 16:8 is limited to those who obey God, [Acts 5:32].

John 14:15-18 [New King James] *“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”*

Given to the disciples of Jesus Christ.

John 16:5-8 [New King James] *“But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:”*

This is the work that the Holy Spirit will accomplish in those who receive Him.

True repentance, true righteousness, [**Romans 4:13, 16, 18-24**] and a realisation of a coming judgement, [**2 Corinthians 5:10-12**].

Until this happens to a person they will be blinded to the very reason that they exist as human beings.