

“Every Disciple is a Teacher”

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Matthew 13:51-53//Mark 4:21-22.

Understanding = Salvation.

Light is Salvation > Darkness is condemnation

Personal Light > House.

Light for the others > Teacher.

Light to see the whole world through = C.S Lewis.

(v.51) Do you understand all these Parables? The disciples replied “Yes.”

Understanding is a key word in this section; from the beginning Jesus introduced the teaching about parables clarifying that his disciples would understand parables, but the ones who were not his disciples would not understand them.

What did the disciples understand? Obviously they did not understand everything, just like we (including the preacher) do not understand everything; we need to remember that the Word of God is infinite, there is always more and more that we can dig and learn as we open Scriptures. We, as his disciples did, understand the main concept Jesus was teaching: Salvation.

When we look back to the parables, we must know: (i) Salvation is by grace alone - these are the parables of the seeds/yeast; (ii) Salvation is received by faith and repentance - these are the parables of the hidden treasures; (iii) Salvation must be preached/shared - these are the parables of the mustard seed and the net.

Overall, our standing with God is what summarises the parables: Those who are saved, are not saved because they are perfect or better than the average; those who are saved are the ones who have left all behind (their unbelief, shallowness, love for money/pleasure/sin) and they are now lorded by Jesus - their lives do not belong to their selfish ego, but they belong to the saviour himself.

(v.52) It is curious that Jesus uses the words “disciple” and “scribe” at once here. Who were the Scribes in Jesus’ time? The word scribe means “lawyer.” The lawyers of our days deal with the Constitution and civil affairs; in Jesus’ days, the lawyers dealt with the Word of God and spiritual affairs.

Context: A Scribe by trade had to study so many years. As a matter of fact, a scribe had more authority than a rabbi - because every scribe was a rabbi, but not all rabbis were a scribe. Being a scribe meant the apex of the career of a student of the Bible.

Why would Jesus call his disciples “scribes?” He is teaching us something very special, that life with God is not academic achievement, nor ministerial accomplishment, but instead, it is intimacy with the Word of God in our private devotional life. The figure that the scribe is inside the house pulling treasures old and new, is strong, as it makes us understand the Bible - both Old and New Testament - is a treasure, and we need to be familiar/comfortable with it. Reading the Bible should feel like “we are navigating our safe place, because we feel at home!”

That's what allows any simple person to have a deep intimacy with Christ, as opposed to the "great preachers" who know all the doctrines of the Bible, but have zero intimacy with Christ. From Genesis to Revelation, Scriptures are clear: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge - not academic baggage.

Another interesting point in this verse: The disciple is a teacher (scribe); and the teacher (scribe) is a disciple. As someone has said before, "the day I stop learning, that day I should stop teaching..." Good teachers are the ones who are always learning; no matter how much I know about God's word, there is always more I can learn. The more I learn, the more I teach; and the more I learn, the more I recognize I still need to learn more.

Lastly, verse 52 teaches us about the old and new treasure: Jesus is prophesying the New Testament. We should keep in mind that Jesus had only the Old Testament in his hands as he did his ministry; the N.T. was still in the oven (per se). The N.T. is a compound of the Gospel of Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) plus the book of the History of the early church (Acts) plus the doctrine of the Apostles (the letters of Paul, James, John, Jude, Peter) and its conclusion is the climax of human history (Revelation).

This should give us assurance that the Bible is the Word of God. It is trustworthy. Moreover, from a practical point of view, we are encouraged not to despise the Old Testament, but to read it. As a matter of fact, the more we read the O.T, the more we understand the N.T

Moving forward, Jesus summarizes all these ideas that I have said with a small parable: The lamp. The idea the Lord is proposing here sounds pretty obvious, no one hides a lamp; the whole purpose of the lamp is to be placed at the right spot, and when the light is on, the room gets clear.

We may not realize it, but this summarizes with splendor, all that we discussed before: (i) First, the word "understanding" and "light" are synonyms. Anyone who is in darkness, has no understanding, those who have light, have understanding. The Word of God is like a light that penetrates our heart, and as it shines in our darkness, it transforms our hearts. Disciples of Jesus have been transformed by his teachings; his words brought light to their lives. (ii) Secondly, we are called to preach the Gospel to a fallen world. The message of salvation is a light to a world in darkness. Hence, that's why Jesus places his disciples at the right spot, so that they shine the light (preaching) to the world (darkness). Disciples of Jesus are called "scribes," "instructors,"

“preachers.” (iii) Lastly, as C.S. Lewis says: “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.” It is interesting that the *lamp* is not where our eyes look, the *room* is where our eyes look. The idea here is that the Bible (the treasure - Old Testament and New Testament) shapes our understanding about everything around us. Family, human rights, work, ethics, Earth, God, eternity, politics, etc... As we read Scriptures, it shapes our understanding about everything.

Conclusion: It is interesting the correlation this verse has with the great commission. The great commission states “go into the world and make disciples.” Our very last parable (the net) did talk about evangelism. Jesus is summarizing his parables’ teaching with a hint on the great commission. Jesus knows his words are spirit and truth & life and light; thus, once his disciples go into the world (darkness), preaching the truth (light) and seeing the world with understanding (light), the world (darkness) has only but two options: 1- Accept the truth, or 2- Deny the truth.

This is a reminder to us that the blindness of the world is not an intellectual problem, but a problem at the heart. They know the truth, they just love the darkness/lie better.

On the opposite hand, Jesus’ disciples are confronted by the truth (light) daily, yet they love it - by repenting and turning to Christ daily - and they embrace truth (light) even among the opposition of the world (darkness).

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Key ideas:

- 1- Light inside of us: There is no way to hide it. This is a key doctrine in the Bible, “You know the tree by its fruit.” Saved people act like saved people; born-again Christians show by fruits/deeds they are saved.
- 2- C.S. Lewis’ quote: The idea of The Bible becoming the light through which we see all the world around us is powerful! The more we understand the Bible and apply it to our lives, the more we see it is the truth.
- 3- Our conclusion reminds us of the Parable of the Wheat and Weed, where the sons of God co-exist with the children of the devil.
- 4- Do you struggle with the new?
- 5- Do you struggle with the old?
- 6- Would you consider yourself a good teacher who brings the old and new together?