

“Encountering God Through the Gospels”

Summer Bible Jam (Pt. 5)

July 16, 2017

INTRO ...

- Different Genre’s of Scripture are created to provide God ordained variety of content & encounter
 - **The Gospels** = 4 Biographical sketches of Jesus’ life, times, ministry, and teachings—we need to be students of EACH of these dimensions for us to be fully impacted by “Seeing & Savoring” in the Gospels.
 - **Teaching in PARABLES** ...Jesus frequently taught by the use of “parables”—39 recorded parables in the Gospels.

SEEING ...There are things to notice in the landscape of our Bible Reading

Matt 13:1-9

SEE the Context... Matt 11-12—Jesus Conversations with the Crowds and the Leaders of the People

- “You’ve rejected John the Baptist” ... “Chorazin & Bethsaida—rejected the mighty works shown to them” ...the Pharisees challenge Him over His Sabbath Practices (eating grain in the fields; healing on the Sabbath) ...challenging Him to produce an acceptable sign
 - THIS is the condition that Jesus “Picks a Fight with” through the Parable of the Sower!

v. 9 ...Here is the Root of the Problem—it’s a “HEARING PROBLEM”... a RECEIVING Problem—

“The Word of God has come to you—but it doesn’t produce fruit!”WHY???

v. 11-17 ...**The Contrast of 2 Sets of People**—an UNRESPONSIVE/Unfruitful Group and a RESPONSIVE/Fruitful Group

- v. 11 ... "to you it has been granted" ...**SEE humility!** ...

...WHY do you 'understand' and agree with God, when others Don't?? ...2 Reasons given in this verse—behold, the mystery:

- (1) You see, because it has been 'Granted to you'
- (2) They do not see... because (v. 15) "...For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed,

- SEE!! ... the RICH PRIVILEGE that Frames Our Life's Interaction with God's Word!

- **We are given access to the 'Secrets of the Kingdom' (v.11)**

1 Cor 2:7-15 But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"—10 these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. 12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. 13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. 14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

- **More will be added to what we already have (v.12)**—we should anticipate growth in the knowledge of God and the kingdom of God ...NOT because we're smart, but because God has ordained more to be revealed to us!

- v. 16 ...**your eyes and ears are uniquely 'blessed'!**
- v. 17 ...**the time frame of your life affords you greater insight into God's unfolding plan**
- v. 18 ...**The Guiding Hand of the Living God** ...Jesus (for us the Holy Spirit) "Leads us into all truth"!!

What Does This Let Me Conclude about God's Word Touching My Life? ...That if I will "RECEIVE" God's word, it will be revealed to me and will bear fruit (impact) in my life.

SAVORING – Tasting ...Personally Drawing Near ...Letting These Verses 'Read You'

What is it that might make God's Word unfruitful in my life?

- **v. 19 ...Having a heart like a Highway rather than a Cultivated Field**
 - Fact ...the Devil actively seeks to steal the Seed of God's Word from being fruitful in our lives!
 - Hearing but not understanding is seed that is sitting on the surface, waiting to be stolen!
 - *Having "Highway Hearts" in the INFORMATION AGE ...*
- **v. 20-21 ...Having no depth of spiritual soil in which to plant God's Word.**
- **v. 22 ...Having a heart that is absorbed in the "cares of this world or the deceitfulness of riches"**

What is this parable intended to stir up in us?

- There are ultimately 2 audiences of humanity ...Christians & Non-Christians—Does that mean that the only benefit in this passage for me is to ascertain whether or not I'm a Christian? Whether I've Received the Word and I'm Saved?

...there is an ongoing dialogue and teaching emphasis in the N.T. that is directed at Christians and it pertains to their maturity, fruitfulness, and conformity to the image of Christ

1 Pet 2:2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk of the Word, that by it you may grow up into salvation"

2 Peter 1:5-10 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

This is a Parable about the interaction between God's Word and our Heart's Soil Condition ...It summons me to an awareness of my own heart's soil condition. It summons me to responsibility that is under the shadow of God's wing of grace!

ENCOUNTERING – Receiving from & Responding to this passage as the Holy Spirit has led me to encounter it
