

HOW'S YOUR HEARING?

Mark 4:1-20

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Remember the story about the man who went to the doctor about his wife's hearing problem? She refused to admit that she couldn't hear too good, so he asked the doctor for advice. The doctor told him when he got home to ask his wife a question when they were far apart, then if she didn't answer, to move closer and ask the question over again and repeat the process until he got close enough to hear her and that would tell a lot about her hearing problem. The man went home, opened the door and asked "what's for dinner?" No answer, so he moved closer and asked the question again, still no answer, so he went into the kitchen where she was and got up right in her ear and asked again, "what's for dinner?" She turned around and looked him right in eyes and said, "for the third time, we're having Spaghetti!"

1. Everybody has a "hearing" problem at one time or another.

- Sometimes we are engrossed in reading or watching or doing something and don't hear.
- Sadly, there are times when we don't hear God either.
 - Once again we get absorbed or engrossed in something that takes our time, attention and interest away from God onto something or someone else.
- Not very many heard Jesus either. Oh, they heard His words and voice, but they didn't "hear" with their heart or soul.

2. The parable in the text speaks about farming and seeds falling on different kinds of ground.

- Jesus was showing that the different kinds of soil/ground represents people and how they hear/receive the Word of God, the Gospel message.
- Notice that three of the four receivers/hearers (soil/ground) of the seed (word of God) didn't do anything lasting with the Gospel/Word of God.
- Jesus tells everyone to listen carefully to what they hear, especially about the things of God. Often Jesus would say, "...*LISTEN! He how has ears to hear, let him/her hear...*"
- We must learn to listen to God and especially when God is talking about eternal things and His Son, Jesus Christ.
- The Word of God is our means of access to God and we need to be prayerful that we will be sure to listen to what God has to say to us.

3. People hear the "sounds" but they don't pay attention to the words being spoken.

- Ever been to an assembly or convention where there lots and lots of people and there were lots and lots of things going on at the same time somebody was trying to address (speak to) the people? Some had coffee cups, some were on their cell phones, some laughing and talking.
 - The person speaking could be heard but not everybody was paying attention to WHAT he/she was saying.
- Sad, but true, we hear the "sound" of God in our ears, but that "sound" never gets to our hearts.

4. Things are said and what was said was heard and understood, but that was about it.

- Remember when Jesus healed a man of leprosy and Jesus told him to not tell anybody about it. Remember what the man did? The man immediately hurried out and did exactly the opposite - he told every one he saw about what Jesus did. (*Mark 1:40-45*).

- We are quick to condemn the man for disobeying Jesus' orders but doing the opposite, yet he is typical of so many of us who are Christians and yet we have not done what Jesus has told us to do.
- We hear what Jesus said, we understand what Jesus said, but we don't do what Jesus said for us to do.

5. Most people pay little attention to anything being said by anybody.

- Think about school. There is the teacher, the class is in session, the teacher is "teaching" but what are the students doing? Paying attention? Taking notes? Or distracted by whatever?
- While Jesus was trying to teach, to preach, to tell about God, the Father and heavenly things, were the religious leaders listening? No they were making plans on how to get Jesus out of the way.
 - They were making up stories and lies trying to discredit Jesus so the people would stop following Him.
- Most of the people who were following Jesus were not following Him to hear what He was teaching and saying, but to SEE the miracles and such that He was doing.
- The people around Jesus paid little attention to what He was saying and were following Him for their own reasons.
- As a matter of fact, even Jesus own family tried to get Him to be quiet thinking He had "lost it.."
- Are we really any different? Why do we not pay very much attention to what Jesus says?

CONCLUSION:

1. All of us have a hearing problem. Especially hearing the "spiritual" things.
 - When we do "hear," we have a problem of remembering, a problem of doing.
2. From now on, whenever we read God's Word, let's put away, get away, from anything that might distract or compete for our attention and then ask the Lord to help us "hear" what He has to say.
3. Let's work on our "hearing."