

HOW'S YOUR HEARING?

Matthew 13:1-23

I. Christ's *parables* have two contrary purposes (vv. 10-17).

A. His parables *conceal* His kingdom word.

B. His parables *clarify* His kingdom word.

II. Christ's *hearers* have two contrary responses (vv. 18-23).

A. His hearers *deny* His kingdom word.

B. His hearers *discern* His kingdom word.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

1. What is a parable?
2. Why does Jesus tell His hearers to hear when there is no doubt they have heard His teaching from the boat? Is He talking about physical hearing?
3. Why does Jesus use parables to teach the crowds and His disciples? How does this relate to Jesus's prayer in Matthew 11:25-26?
4. What are the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven? How do they relate to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2?
5. What is sowing? What happens as the farmer sows the seed in Jesus's story?
6. Who is the sower a picture of? What is the seed a picture of? What are the different kinds of soils pictures of?
7. If parables call for a spiritual response, what is the response that the parable of the sower calls us to? Why?

QUESTIONS FOR PRIVATE REFLECTION

1. How can the same parable obscure and elucidate at the same time?
2. Am I truly hearing? Has the word of the kingdom taken root in my heart and produced a harvest of righteousness?
3. How seriously do I treat my hearing of the word as I read it and hear it taught and preached? Do I listen as if my life and eternity depend upon it?