

THE PARABLE OF THE CANDLE

TEXT: MARK 4:21-25

Introduction:

1. We are going to look tonight at the parable of the candle.
2. The greatest chapter on parables is Matthew 13. But the parable of the candle is not found in Matthew 13. It is recorded in Matthew 5:14-16, in the Sermon on the Mount.
3. Luke records it twice (8:16-18; 11:33-36). The fact that our Lord repeated this parable several times emphasizes its great importance.
4. It is quite probable that our Lord frequently used this parable to illustrate and enforce the truth He was teaching.
5. The word *parable* literally means to “cast alongside.” A parable is a story that teaches something new by putting the truth alongside something familiar. Everyone is familiar with lighting a candle or a lamp (Mark 4:21).
6. A parable starts off as a picture that is familiar to the listeners. But as we carefully look into the picture we see ourselves. Some people do not like what they see. That is why some of our Lord’s listeners became angry when they heard His parables.

I. WE MUST LET OUR LIGHT SHINE

1. It is not difficult to understand the meaning of this parable. The candle (or lamp) represents the light of the Gospel. We often sing, “Send the light, the blessed Gospel light;
Let it shine from shore to shore!
Send the light, the blessed Gospel light;
Let it shine forevermore!” – Charles Gabriel
2. The Psalmist wrote, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105).

3. "The entrance of thy words giveth light" (Psalm 119:130).
4. Preachers have pointed out that the bushel (Mark 4:21) represents business and the material things of this life; while the bed represents comfort and ease (cf. 4:19).
5. In other words, we are not to let worldly pursuits and worldly pleasures dim our light. We are to let it shine
6. We are to let our light shine everywhere we go. Some of you have the opportunity to preach to more lost sinners than I do. You see them every day on the job, on the bus, on the train, in school, etc. Do not hide your light!
7. One of my favorite children's songs is "This Little Light of Mine, I'm Going to Let it Shine..." "Don't let Satan blow it out..." (cf. Mark 4:15).
8. This is one of the great themes of the Bible, and it is repeated over and over.
9. Our Lord said, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16).
10. "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Matt. 10:27).
11. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (John 1:4, 5).
12. "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9).
13. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest

- his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:19-21).
14. Referring to John the Baptist, our Lord said, “He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light” (John 5:35).
 15. John 8:12 says, “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”
 16. Our Lord said in John 9:5, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”
 17. John 12:35, 36 says, “Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.”
 18. In John 12:46, Jesus said, “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.”
 19. The Lord told the apostle Paul, “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God” (Acts 26:18).
 20. Ephesians 5:8 says, “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.”
 21. First Peter 2:9 says God has called us “out of darkness into his marvellous light.”
 22. You and I are going to be held responsible for the light that we have received. That is the message of this parable (Mark 4:23-25). And it is taught throughout the Word of God.

II. EVERYTHING WILL EVENTUALLY COME TO LIGHT (4:22).

1. Over and over again we see this principle in the Bible, that when things are hidden, in due time they will come to light (cf. I Cor. 4:5).
2. In Luke 12:2, our Lord said, “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”
3. Our Lord said in Matthew 12:36, “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”
4. Everything will all come to light. The lost shall have their appointment before the great white throne (Rev. 20:11-15).
5. For the Christian, our appointment will be at the judgment seat of Christ (cf. Rom. 14:10-12; I Cor. 3:13-15; 4:5; II Cor. 5:10, 11).
6. In this world many things get covered up and hidden. People are often not what they appear to be. But at the judgment seat everything shall be made manifest (Mark 4:22).
7. Some people feel our Lord was referring to the parables themselves in Mark 4:22. Are not the parables themselves a deliberate obscuration of the truth to “them that are without”? (Cf. Mark 4:10-12).
8. The old-time preachers used to say the same sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay.
9. However, the ultimate purpose of the parables is not to hide, but to instruct. The parables are not meant to conceal truth; they are meant to reveal truth.
10. “If any man have ears to hear, let him hear” (Mark 4:23). Our Lord said this several times in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and then again to the seven churches in Revelation 2 & 3.

III. TAKE HEED WHAT YE HEAR

1. The man who receives God’s Word properly and uses what he hears will have still more given to him (Mark 4:24, 25).
2. If we use what God has given us it will increase. But if we do not hear what God has given us we will lose everything (cf. Luke 19:26).
3. It is a serious thing to hear and understand the Word of God, because this puts on us the obligation to share the Word with others.
4. “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22).

CONCLUSION:

Every believer is called on to witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. We must let our light shine before others. Some one put it this way:

**I want to be a little light,
That glistens clean and true,
I want to show forth Jesus
In everything I do.**

**I don't like smoky lamps, Lord,
Or candles dim and slow;
I don't like flickering, hazy lights
That do not shine and glow.**

**Thou hast told me in Thy Word,
To let my light so shine,
That those who look into my face
Will know that I am thine.**

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