

39. Anti-establishment

July 24, 2016

Lately, we've heard the word "Establishment" a lot from the political arena. Now it is "IN" to be "Outsider." The word "Establishment" almost has become a dirty word. The outsiders who use this word to fight against the "Establishment" who have been in Washington, D.C. for a long time and become power players who could care less about the will of voters, but only care about themselves, their own power, and financial benefits. It is so true.

Do you know there is not much difference in the arena of church since the birth of Christian faith than the United States political world?

The Lord Jesus commissioned His apostles and His followers to go throughout the world to teach the Word, to make disciples, and to baptize them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. With His blessing, the church spread out. But Satan was right behind the heels of the church planters and the believers. He started to infiltrate to put his false believers within the ranks and files of the church. We see the results of this in the Book of Revelation in chapter 2 and 3. Five out of the seven churches were harshly reprimanded by the Lord Jesus for their lovelessness, corruption, deadness, compromise, and lukewarmness.

Throughout church history, many individual churches and denominations have started well with good intentions to honor the Lord and follow Him. As the generations start to change, that-once-staunch-heart for the Lord starts to erode. Several denominations within the ranks of Methodist, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians, but not all, are good examples of this spiritual erosion.

Don't you ever think that Calvary Chapel will be an exception of this, because we are right with the Lord now. Now that the founder, pastor Chuck Smith has passed away, I already start to see the cracks on the strong wall of determination to be right with the Lord. The Lord willing, our church will not lose our love for Him, nor will we compromise or corrupt ourselves. But I cannot guarantee that the next generation pastor will continue in this narrow path with the Lord 30-40 years from now.

Today, the Lord is going to show us this principle through several parables. It's my hope and prayer that we take heed what we hear from the Lord, so that we may walk close with Him all the days of our life.

A. TAKE HEED WHAT YOU HEAR

Mark 4:21-25 Also He said to them, "Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand? 22 For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light. 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." 24 Then He said to them, "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given. 25 For whoever has, to him more will be given; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

In this parable, our Lord used a common object, a lamp. The lamp was a clay dish filled with oil, with a wick put into the oil. In order to give light, the lamp had to "use it up" and the oil had to be replenished. If the lamp was not lit, or if it was covered up, it did the home no good.

If we have the truth of God, we have a solemn responsibility to spread that truth in whatever way God gives us opportunity, just as someone who has the cure for a life-threatening disease has the moral responsibility to spread that cure. That is not just a pastor's and evangelist's job. Remember what I taught you: What is better than going to heaven? Taking someone with you.

The more we hear the Word of God, the better we are able to share it with others.

B. THE PARABLE OF THE GROWING SEED

Mark 4:26-29 And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, 27 and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. 28 For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. 29 But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

Here is an unusual parable that our Lord gave and only Mark records it. It takes a good deal of faith and patience to be a farmer.

This shows that the Word of God works invisibly within us. God promised that His Word would accomplish the purpose for which He sends it according to Isaiah 55:11.

C. THE PARABLE OF WHEAT AND THE TARE

Matthew 13:24-30 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

Satan's strategy in his battle against God and His people is, "If you cannot beat them, join them." That is what exactly Satan is doing here. Since he cannot get rid of Christians, he plants false Christians in the midst of us.

Again, Jesus explains this parable for us.

Matthew 13:34-43 All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world." Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into

the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

I was told that tares look like wheat in the early stages and can only be distinguished from it when the head appeared.

The field is not human hearts. The field is the world. Christ is sowing true believers in various places that they might bear fruit. But, wherever Christ sows a true Christian, satan comes and sows a counterfeit. The counterfeit Christian looks like a real Christian, smells like one, and he or she even talks like one. But they are not God's child.

Our task is not to pull up the false doctrines, rather to plant the truth of God's Word. We are not detectives but evangelists.

When we face the darkness, we shouldn't fight against it in the midst of darkness with our own strength, rather we should simply let the light of the Lord come into the place. The power of His light will defeat the darkness of the devil.

D. THE PARABLE OF MUSTARD SEED & LEAVEN

Matthew 13:31-33 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

This parable gave the disciples, both warning and encouragement: The encouragement was that, from very small beginnings, the kingdom would eventually grow in size and in influence. While a mustard seed is not the smallest seed in the world, it was probably the smallest seed that the Jews sowed in their gardens. It was a traditional symbol of that which is tiny.

But the warning for them was the birds in the branches. In the Parable of the Sower and Soils we just studied a couple of weeks ago, the birds stood for satan and his cohorts, who snatches the seed of God's Word. If we are to be consistent in our interpretation, we must take this into consideration as well.

In fact, some of the growth of the size of the church will give opportunity for satan to get in and go to work within the ranks of Christianity. Passages like Daniel 4:12 and Ezekiel 17:23 indicate that a tree is a symbol of a world power. These facts suggest that the parable teaches an abnormal growth of the churches in general, one that makes it possible for satan to work in it.

Roman Catholic has become a worldwide power with a complex organization of many branches. What started in a humble manner, today it boasts of material possessions and political influences. Many denominations within the ranks of Presbyterians, Methodists, and Episcopelians are other examples of compromising churches that walked away from the Word of God to be accepted by the worldly demands, so that they could grow big.

The mustard seed illustrates the false outward expansion of the kingdom, while the leaven illustrates the inward development of false doctrine and false living.

Throughout the Bible, leaven is a symbol of evil, which was excluded from the sacrifices in the OT.

Satan has worked hard to introduce false doctrine and false living into the ministry of the Word of God. From the very early days of the church, true believers have battled false doctrines and hypocrisies.

E. MORE PARABLES ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

1) Hidden Treasure and Costly Pearl

Matthew 13:44 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

The common interpretation of these parables is that the sinner finds Christ and gives up all that he possesses to gain Him and be saved. But this interpretation presents three problems. To begin with, Jesus Christ is not a hidden treasure. He is the best-known Person in the history. Secondly, the sinner cannot "find Christ," because he is blind and stubborn. It is the Savior who finds the lost sinner. Besides, no sinner could ever purchase salvation with his own merits!

The field is the world. Jesus is the Man who gave all that He had to buy the world. What could the treasure be so wonderful that Jesus would give all to purchase it? You and me! Jesus gave everything to redeem the whole world to preserve a treasure in it, and the treasure is His people.

2) Dragnet

Matthew 13:47-50 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

This is the same concept as the parable of the wheat and the tare.

Matthew 13:51-58 Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old." Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there. And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?" So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house." Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Because these villagers were so familiar with Jesus as a regular boy, and so unaccustomed to spectacular things from Him. I am sure that you have noticed in your own life that it is more difficult to witness to your own family members than a complete stranger.

God is not limited by anything, nor anyone. But He would withhold His mighty works from the people who wouldn't believe. Are you one of those who doesn't believe God?

F. APPLICATIONS

1) The more we hear the Word of God, the better we are able to share it with others.

2) If you are here in the midst of us and pretending you are a Christian, you can fool all of us. But you cannot fool God who knows your heart. You, too, can have a heart to follow Jesus as your Savior and Lord sincerely. Again, it's your choice!