

Speaking into Other Circles

JVI, Long Lake Friends Church, 10.18.20, 1

Texts, NIV '84: Mark 4.1, 10-11, 26, 30, 34-36

i. This week and next, Lord willing, I will share some themes from Mark 4

- a These are OBSERVATIONS about the Scripture
- b I'll illustrate with a couple stories from Rev. William Taylor
- c Then, I'll share something similar we're doing, a way we're reaching out

ii. Theme | *The Audience, Who is Jesus speaking to?* Mk 4.1, 36

- a All one day, possibly a "conference," clues from the Text
 - 1 Mk 4.10-20 is a parenthesis, an *intercalation*: story within the story
 - a) It could have been after this big day, or on lunch break
 - b) Mk 4.10-20 matches verses 33-34, **Mk 4.10, 34**
 - 2 **Mk 4.35-36**: It was all 1 day, and then they left the crowd
- b Large crowd: *common theme in Mark*, showing influence of JC & The12

iii. Theme | *Kingdom of God*, Mk 4.11, 26, 30

- a "Kingdom of God:" used sparingly by Mark, but usually as a *revealed truth*
- b JC *reveals* the Kingdom: miracles, authority, paradox, & parables
- c It's like JC stays a step or two ahead of the crowd, but *whets the appetite*

iv. Theme | *Parables, a sermon of 4 parables*

- a "Parable:" not just a "story," as some Translations say
 - 1 *Aesop's fables* are similar to *parables*, b/c they're stories w/ a meaning
 - 2 *Parables* offer insight metaphorically into a greater Kingdom truth
 - 3 In Mark, Jesus uses *parables* as a teaching device very often
- b Mark 4 says on this day our Lord ONLY speaks *parables* to the large crowd
 - 1 JC speaks plainly to The12, and His close followers...
 - 2 But with *parables* He is **Speaking into Other Circles**

v. We have an autobiography in our church library of Wm Taylor from 1800's

- a It has a hand-written letter from him on one of the blank pages
- b Wm Taylor serves overseas as a Missionary, and all over America
- c For awhile, he oversees *Methodist* missions in Cal in the pioneer days
- d Fascinating stories, he often preaches in unlikely places, i.e. street preacher
- e This is my paraphrase of one of his stories that ties into our themes today¹

¹ JVI paraphrased: William Taylor, *Story of My Life: An Account of What I Have Thought and Said and Done in my Ministry of More Than Fifty-Three Years in Christian Lands and Among the Heathen* (New York: Hunt & Eaton, 1895), 190-191.

* William Taylor lands on *Long Wharf* in SF on a ship. *Long Wharf* was later known as *Central Wharf* or *Commercial Street Wharf*. It turned out to be the largest wharf in Frisco in the 1800's, up to 5 city blocks long. Many ships and massive cargo-ships could dock on *Long Wharf* at the same time. Business became so good that *Long Wharf* could only receive about half the ships that requested to dock there.

From the *gangplank* of his ship on *Long Wharf*, Wm Taylor begins preaching to a crowd that is there to meet him. He shares a fiery Scripture from the Hebrew Bible about how God judges the Babylonian leaders who hold Israel captive. It's a mysterious Passage, like the mysteries of Christ's Parables, just right to whet the appetite.

Little does Wm Taylor know when he starts, that another ship will arrive right next to his. That ship is full of the California Legislature. As they disembark, they have a crowd listening to their speeches also.

Wm Taylor suddenly realizes that his crowd - and the Legislature's crowd - are both close enough to hear him preach. So he starts preaching much louder about the Babylonian Captivity, and how God judges the Babylonian leaders. He later admits he is NOT judging the Cal Legislature or their crowd. This is just the Scripture he has.

So he improvises and tweaks his sermon to both crowds. He is ***Speaking into Other Circles***. It works. Wm Taylor starts gaining the attention of both crowds. He uses his platform to speak to his people, but he is REALLY preaching the Gospel to the neighboring crowd. Ears begin to turn and lives are changed.

vi. Wm Taylor is *Speaking into Other Circles* . . . So did we this week²

- a Last Sunday, we filmed the layreading and sermon on *Facebook Live*
- b I didn't know it, but we also recorded communion, and it got a lot of views
- c In communion, I called us to pray for unity in Michigan, NOT in my notes
- d Like Wm Taylor on *Long Wharf* in *San Francisco* reaching the *Legislature*
- e Communion, the Word of God reached other ears, not just our *Friends*

vii. I highlighted the Communion post over the weekend and all day Monday

- a When we highlight a video, we post beyond *Facebook*
 - 1 It's like sharing it with other *News* networks
 - 2 On other social networks, the number to look for is VIEWS
- Tuesday we hit 100 VIEWS³**
- b On FB, the important number to look for is REACH
- Tuesday we hit 267 REACH on FB**

² Google Trends for title, other circles, past 90 days, accessed 10.13.20. **Michigan & SF Rising:** how do I register to vote #election2020, presidential debate. **MI/SF Top Search Queries:** Google, YouTube, news, facebook, gmail. SF terms ranked in order: San Francisco (way higher in rank), friends, friend (way higher in rank), circles/wharf, Methodist/Legislature, William Taylor, Methodists

³ IGTV, Patheos, YouTube, LinkedIn

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c Between Tuesday & Friday, I did NOT do any extra sharing

Friday VIEWS: 124

Friday FB REACH: 329

viii. Some people might think that's not a lot

a They don't know our congregation or the effort we've all put forth

b This 1 communion video may not be making a difference for thousands...

1 But if you add the Friday numbers up...

2 We've made a difference for **453 people!!!**

Thank you for investing in the online ministry of Long Lake Friends Church

1 People are watching and hearing the Gospel

2 We are ***Speaking into Other Circles***