

Pay Attention to What You Hear

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Date: 19 May 2019

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[0 : 00] Paul, please turn your Bible to the Gospel of Mark, chapter 4.! Verse 25.

Those of you who were here three weeks ago would recall that Brother Lyndon preached the last sermon in this series. He did a great job preaching the truth of the parable of the sower.

And the short passage that we have come to this morning is very much connected to the passage of the sower. And so I want to begin by reading the parable of the sower again.

That will serve as an introduction to the text for this morning's sermon. So though we will focus our attention on verses 21 through 25, we will begin reading in verse 1 of chapter 4.

Again, he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea.

[1 : 31] And the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. And he was teaching them many things in parables. And in his teaching he said to them, Listen, Behold, A sower went out to sow.

And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprung up since it had no depth of soil.

And when the sun rose, it was scorched. And since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.

And other seeds fell into good soil, and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.

And he said, He who has heirs to hear, let him hear. And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables.

[2 : 55] And he said to them, To you have been given the secret of the kingdom of God. But for those outside, everything is in parables, so that they may indeed see, but not perceive, and may indeed hear, but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.

And he said to them, Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? The sower sows the word.

And these are the ones along the path where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.

And these are the ones sown on rocky ground. The ones, the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy.

And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while. Then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

[4 : 13] And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word.

And it proves unfruitful. But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.

And he said to them, Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket or under a bed and not on a stand? For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest.

Nor is anything secret except to come to light. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. And he said to them, Pay attention to what you hear.

With the measure you use, it will be measured to you and still more will be added to you. For to the one who has, more will be given and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

[5 : 38] Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for the privilege we now have to sit under the preaching of your word. And Lord, we pray that the very truth of this passage that we have just read

would grip our hearts and cause us to obey it that we would truly in this moment of preaching pay attention attention to what we hear.

Lord, we all desire to be fruitful Christians. We all desire to bear much and lasting fruit. And Lord, that only comes when we pay attention to what we hear.

And so, Father, we pray right now that you would grant to us the attentiveness of heart, the focus of heart that we may hear the truth of your word that you are speaking to us in this moment.

Lord, I pray for myself and for grace that I would be faithful to proclaim your word to your people and that your name will be glorified.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. If you listen to local radio, you probably have heard a number of new commercials that have been playing dealing with road safety and discouraging drivers from using their cell phones.

[7 : 10] And one of them is pretty quite vivid. You hear the sound of a phone ringing, a very familiar ringtone, and then you hear the person obviously speaking to somebody else in the car saying, oh, this is so-and-so calling, and then the person proceeds to take the call and is having a conversation.

Then seconds later you hear, watch out! And then you hear a loud crash. And it sounds like a real crash. I don't know how they were able to duplicate that sound, but it sounds like a real crash.

And the whole point about these commercials is to help us to pay attention when we are driving. Because if we don't pay attention and we are distracted by our cell phones or we are distracted by something else, the result could be catastrophic.

We could lose our own lives and we can also lose the lives of others who are depending on us to pay attention. But as important as it is for us to pay attention when we are driving, this passage that we are considering this morning tells us it is far more important for us to pay attention when we hear God's word.

And I pause because I believe that most of us would probably certainly in terms of how we function feel the need to pay more attention when we are driving than when we are hearing God's word preached.

[8 : 59] But I believe we will see this morning when we consider this passage that when we don't pay attention when God's word is being preached it has eternal consequences. If we don't pay attention when we are driving and we were to lose our life that's confined to this life.

It really has no eternal consequence. You could be a Christian not paying attention you crash and die you go to heaven. An unbeliever you're not paying attention you're driving you crash and die you'll go to hell.

But what we see in this passage is Jesus is saying to us you have to pay attention because the consequences of that can be eternal.

In this passage that we are considering this morning what I want us to recognize as we think about the gospel of Mark is up to this point Mark has introduced Jesus to us as a teacher.

He's referred to him in the first three verses as teaching. He first comes out proclaiming the gospel but Mark has not gone into any detail about what Jesus taught in any significant way.

[10 : 20] So what we have come to in chapter four is the first significant teaching that we find in the gospel of Mark and it's on the parable of the sower and when we when we consider what Jesus is saying to us in the passage we're focusing on this morning in light of the parable of the sower we see that Jesus is making a very important point connected to the parable of the sower and the important point that Jesus makes is this God's kingdom is rightly understood by those who carefully hear Christ's teachings God's kingdom is rightly understood by those who carefully hear Christ's teachings I imagine that for many of us this morning that point in these five verses verses 21 through 25 may not be that evident may not be that obvious

I'm trusting the Lord that at the end of the sermon you'd be able to say yes I see that I see that is what Jesus is saying so this morning I have two simple points first what we see in this passage coming from Jesus is a call to rightly to understand rightly the first thing you see coming from Jesus in these five verses is a call to understand rightly and we can summarize that call in one word and that word is dependency we understand God's kingdom rightly not through self sufficiency but through dependence on God himself to help us to understand it we understand God's kingdom rightly when we acknowledge that we are dependent on help outside of ourselves to understand it and

Jesus makes this point starting at verse 21 by asking this question what is the purpose of a lamp which we all know the answer to it's an obvious answer the purpose of a lamp is to give light so that we can see now what is Jesus referring to and by the way let me say this as well although these five verses are not referred to as a parable as the others are this is a parable this is a parable Jesus is teaching something beyond just the words and so what is this lamp that Jesus is referring to some commentators say that this lamp is Jesus himself he is the light of the world who comes into the room of the world and he shines light on everything some say that's what the lamp is Jesus is the lamp others say the lamp really is the preaching ministry of Jesus preaching of the kingdom of God and the revealing as a result of that preaching of things that are hidden and things that are in secret well theologians who are much smarter than I am say either one can be correct I share them with you this morning but I don't think that we need to necessarily wrestle with which one it is because I think we can see the larger point I think we're able to see the larger point the larger point whether it is Jesus himself is the lamp or whether it is his preaching ministry that is the lamp is we know that it is a divine light we know that it is a divine light that can expose and make manifest everything that is hidden and everything that is secret whatever is secret brings it to light whatever is hidden brings it to manifestation that's a divine light that does that and we know that this light obviously that Jesus is referring to is a light that is coming from God into a dark world where there is limited understanding and God brings light that we may understand things that we otherwise would not understand so the point is is that

God is the one who brings the light of revelation to reveal what is hidden and to reveal what is secret and again if God doesn't do so we will not see as we ought to see in verse 22 Jesus tells us that nothing is hidden to remain hidden and nothing is secret to remain secret it's hidden to be revealed by divine revelation it is secret that through divine revelation it may come to light again this is a call to dependency the only way that we will see and understand what's hidden and what's secret is through the divine lamp of God bringing revelation that we might do so in verse 23 Jesus asks a question or actually he makes a statement in verse 23 if anyone has heirs to hear let him hear

[16:23] Jesus said the same statement earlier in verse 9 in the parable of the sower he who has heirs to hear let him hear and clearly Jesus is making a point Jesus would recognize that except for those who are deaf everybody present would have heard him they would literally physically heard him but he says he who has not just heirs let him hear he says he who has heirs to hear let him hear Jesus could have said he who has a heart to understand let him understand now thinking back to the parable of the sower Jesus tells us that there are four kinds of soils that this sower is sowing his his seed on and

Brother Lyndon pointed out to us that the sower is the one who is sowing the word of God and we would have to acknowledge that Jesus is the principal sower as a matter of fact he is the most logical one who is in view in the parable of the sower that he was the one who was at that time sowing his seed on these diverse kinds of soils and we saw that the soils were representative of the hearts of people the kind of people who were receiving the word that was sown and the first soil is the hard ground or the hard heart the word of God falls on it but it doesn't penetrate it because it's hard and Satan comes along and he takes it away you see that in verse 15 and then the second soil is the shallow soil in verses 16 17 and that refers to the shallow heart the word of God is sown into it because there's no depth of soil it seems to make good progress right away it comes up but it doesn't survive because the lack of depth in the soil doesn't give it an opportunity to have a root system where it can be able to tap into the water that is in the soil water table belief the soil to give it the nourishment that it actually needs and so when it encounters difficulties and we see not in this parable but in this account of it but in

Matthew's account we see that the trials the tribulation Matthew refers to it as the scorching sun the sun comes up and it is scorched because it lacks that root system to be able to get the nourishment from the water that it needs and soon it dries up and it falls away Jesus tells us that the issue for people with shallow hearts is that they cannot withstand the persecution that will come because of the word of God persecution will come on account of it Jesus says those who have shallow hearts they aren't able to withstand it and then he tells us about the third kind of soil the third kind of heart which is the thorny ground or the thorny heart in verses 18 and 19 and he tells us that the thorns are the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things but I want you to look at that in verse 18 he says and the ones that others are the ones sown among thorns

they are those who hear the word but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word and proves unfruitful and the image there would really be that because the thorns as it were were not managed because they were not dealt with because they were just allowed to have full reign the word was actually choked and before I talk about the last kind of soil one of the things that we should recognize is that all of the what we may call adversities or difficulties that these three soils that we have considered faced the last soil faces as well they're all in the same general area the sun is going to scorch down on all of them if there are thorns in the general area they are liable to encroach into the other areas as well but this fourth soil what Jesus tells us about it we know that this has to have been prepared soil no soil is naturally like this this is prepared soil and it represents people with prepared hearts to hear the word of God and look at what Mark says in verse 20 he says they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit thirtyfold sixtyfold and a hundredfold now here's how it could be helpful at times to look at the account of the same thing the same parable or the same event that's being accounted and see what the other one says and what's interesting is when you look at Matthew's account of this parable in Matthew 13 verse 23 what Matthew says is this Matthew says the one who receives the word and understands it who receives the word and understands it so what what Mark uses as accept Matthew uses as understands he says who receives the word and understands it is the one who bears fruit to different degrees thirtyfold sixtyfold a hundredfold the critical issue or we may say the critical difference between this last soil and the other three is understanding and so here what we can see is what we may call a division of labor God provides the light he provides the divine illumination but we are called to hear and we are called to understand in light of that light that God brings to us he brings the light he brings the illumination but the understanding is not just going to come to us by reverse osmosis it comes by a prepared heart one way you can think of it is let's say a teacher teacher in the morning will stand before our class and we'll teach or his class and we'll teach if the student does not apply him or herself bring up an effort to the teaching moment the student is not going to get much out of it so there's a division of labor that we see being called for and here's the reality that we should all remember and Brother [24:07] Lyndon did a good job of reminding us to think about the power of the sower in this way every one of us is one of those four soils every one of us has a heart brings a heart that is one of those four sources and in between we are one of them that's the reality and we need to consider that which one am I right in this moment and I don't believe for a second that we have a certain kind of heart once and for all once your heart is this way it will be that way forever not so good or bad the hard heart doesn't have to stay hard the thorny heart doesn't have to stay thorny the shallow heart doesn't have to stay shallow and indeed the good soil the one that brings forth fruit from the word that is being heard in that moment will not necessarily always bring forth that good fruit if they cease to bring a good and prepared heart to the hearing of God's word whenever it's being heard however it's being heard rather publicly in preaching as we're doing this morning or privately in one's devotional life and so the question this morning is do you have ears to hear are you doing more than just physically hearing this morning or are you bringing a prepared heart to hear the word of God and to ponder the word of God would it better help us to consider what it means to have ears to hear let's consider the next point not only does Jesus in these five verses issue to us a call to understand he issues to us a call to listen carefully he issues a call to us to listen carefully and this brothers and sisters is a call to humility the first call is a call to dependency this call is a call to humility understand rightly that causes us to be dependent now we listen carefully this calls us to be humble and the humility is expressed in this acknowledgement that we need to hear from God and his word and that it is not optional you see the attitude that we would bring to God's word when we see God's word in such a way that we don't see the need to come with a prepared heart we can as the old people would say come any kind of how that shows a lack of humility that shows an attitude as

God's word is optional don't really need it I'll listen maybe for a couple of seconds see if that's something I want and if not I can check out and I can do something else it is only through listening carefully that we will understand rightly it is only as we primarily listen to Jesus carefully listen to his teaching carefully that we will understand the kingdom of God that he came to bring in the proper way that we should again the sower can be broad anyone who is proclaiming the word of God but in its primary context this sower is the Lord Jesus Christ himself and what he's saying to us what he said to his first hearers what he's now saying to us is pay attention to my teaching pay attention to

my word pay attention to what you hear and

Jesus connects this statement with two promises first look at what he says in verse 24 he says pay attention to what you hear with the measure you use it will be measured to you and still more will be added to you this word for measure in that context would have been a commercial word used that they would be speaking about how you measure grain you were going to go purchase grain from someone there had to be some standard by which you could measure how much you were getting you didn't just say give me a couple handfuls there was some standard measurement and they would sell it in measures and so what Jesus is saying and maybe we can think of it in this way rather than thinking about measure let's think about effort let's think about extent

Jesus could be understood as referring to the extent of the effort that we put into hearing the word of God that is coming to us again whether it's coming to us as we are this morning in public proclamation of it or we're hearing it in our devotional time where we're getting into God's word this measure is basically saying what you put into the effort that you put into hearing carefully the effort that you put into seeing this as important and giving yourself to it he says that will be measured to you again but he says he makes a promise he says but I promise you it'll still be even more than your effort and that speaks to his grace that speaks to his kindness that he's saying I will ensure that whatever effort you put forth it's just not going to be that match back to you it's going to be that and plus some more and again remember the whole idea is we listen to understand we don't just listen to listen we don't just listen to acquire knowledge the devil is not troubled by how much knowledge we get if it never gets in our soul if it never makes a difference in our feet if we can't walk it out our head could swell with knowledge it doesn't matter the reason we listen is to understand that we may live it out the lamp of God that comes the light that he brings the revelation the illumination that he brings enables us to understand what we hear so that's added to the effort that we bring and we're able to both hear and understand

God's word now again think back to the power of the sower our fruitfulness is connected to our understanding the thirtyfold sixtyfold a hundredfold when you when you accept that the issue is understanding it is that the depth of that word that comes into our hearts our understanding of that word and our application of that word is what results in fruitfulness mere knowledge of the word of God doesn't automatically produce fruitfulness and what we do not do we do not truly understand the evidence that we understand something is that we do it not that we know it but that we do it and it is in the doing of it that brings fruitfulness in our lives it is the doing of it that gives evidence that we have truly heard and so

[32 : 45] Jesus promises us something more than our own effort he tells us that as we pay attention to what we hear we will get more out of it than we have put into doing so again a clear understanding clear indication that God will help us to understand his word and he will help our efforts to produce in verse 25 Jesus makes a double promise he says for to the one who has more will be given and from the one who has not even what he has will be taken away this is a very puzzling statement especially the last one which I'll talk about first how can you not have and then even what you have be taken away that's what he says the latter part and from the one who has not even what he has will be taken away this person who

Jesus is referring to really is the person who disregards whatever knowledge whatever level of understanding that he has and it really speaks to this whole idea of there is no staticness in the Christian life there is no minimizing or being complacent or disregarding what we have being careless with what we have so when you're careless with it and you don't consider it much you're going to regress and it's not that Jesus is saying I'm going to come and take it away from you he's not saying that at all that's not the implication the implication is you will regress the implication is you will slide back and not be as fruitful and this applies to the good soil as well this isn't just for maybe some other group of people but this is for the good soil as well that if we come to a place of complacency not considering what we have as important and valuable and needing to be protected and needing to be added to we're going to lose it we're going to lose it but then he says for to the one who has more will be given to him and the idea there is not okay you have something so I'm just going to come and drop something in your lap no it's it's the same as the latter one that as you consider that valuable as you understand the importance of paying attention to what you hear as you understand the importance of understanding what you hear you're making that effort towards it the promise is that more will be added to us more will be added to us one of the realities is again the

Christian life is at the end of the day about being fruitful and what we see is that fruitfulness is connected to paying attention to God's word that we may understand God's word and that we may apply it in our lives so how can we pay attention to what we hear I want to suggest two ways that we can pay attention to what we hear and I want to talk about it in the context of corporate gatherings like we are gathered this morning do you know what is the most important thing that happens on a Sunday morning when we gather as we are gathering this morning most important thing all that we do is worship all that we do is worship every aspect of the gathering we come together we sing let's worship unto the

Lord when we give our finances and tithes and offerings that's unto the Lord that's worship when we sit under the preaching of God's word that also is worship but the most important thing that we do when we gather is this the most important thing that we hear God's word not because it's coming from me because the faithfulness of the preacher is to do his best to bring God's word to God's people not his own word and the extent to which a preacher is able to do that that word will profit those who hear it and so this is the most important part you realize that you can actually approach a gathering where you are perhaps more engaged at some other point than you engaged in this particular moment and don't forget that when we consider the problem of the sower do you think that all

Satan does is he is only interested in the seed that is falling on the hard ground to steal that seed there is warfare and there is distraction to get the word of God away from us there are all kinds of distractions whether it might be a phone that may be distracting you or some other thing that you may have that may be distracting you recognize that if you think about spiritual warfare in this way when the church is gathered rest assured that the warfare is greatest in the preaching of the word of God get our minds distracted get our minds in all kinds of different places where we are not able to pay attention to what we're hearing to be careful to hear what we're hearing so let me suggest two ways that we can prepare for corporate gatherings to hear

[39 : 38] God's word to worship generally but to hear God's word preached particularly when we gather as a church on Sunday mornings first of all let's prepare spiritually let's prepare spiritually let's not come any kind of help let's prepare spiritually when we understand what is at stake paying attention to what we hear includes preparing our hearts to hear and I think if we all would acknowledge it we're busy hearts our hearts are busy our hearts are busy with work things our hearts are busy with family things our hearts are busy with personal things our hearts are busy with all kinds of things and if we don't make an effort to prepare our hearts to come to hear the word of God we bring an unprepared heart and we are not prepared to listen carefully that we may understand rightly that we may apply appropriately and so when we think about preparing our hearts spiritually that doesn't begin

Sunday morning I think I think it begins at least the day before I think it begins on Saturday and I would think at least at some point we should consider for ourselves a point in the afternoon the evening where we are beginning now to prepare to gather one of the lessons we can learn from the Jews as they celebrated the Sabbath is that the day before the Sabbath was called the day of preparation they prepared a whole day to worship on the Sabbath and though I don't believe that we are called to that kind of regimen to do that I do believe that there is wisdom and there is benefit in preparing our hearts for this important task that Jesus tells us be careful pay attention to what you hear and so we can prepare our hearts by doing things such as making

Saturday evening look different than it ordinarily would because we know we're going to gather to worship and to hear God's word preached we can prepare our hearts by turning the TV off at some particular point by taking an intentional break from social media by intentionally opening God's word picking up some other kind of devotional to feed our souls to nourish our souls to rest our souls we foreshadow the text for the message and the bulletins take it look it over read it try to grasp what it is actually talking about refrain from as best you can idle conversation maybe listen to worship music maybe pray maybe if the dynamics of your family is such it may be based on how the week goes that would be a great time to have some kind of a family devotional time where the whole family quiets down and be prepared to gather for this important task of hearing

God's word preached and all of this is to bring a prepared heart an undistracted heart to our whole time of worship but in particular to the time when God's word is being proclaimed here's what I say to us this morning if this is not our practice and we do this it has to make a difference any measure of preparation that we engage in to gather to worship God and to hear his word preached will make

a difference in our lives and in our experience and so I encourage us this morning if we're going to take seriously this word that Jesus calls us to pay attention to what we hear it's going to require preparation and it's easy to just take what

Jesus is saying as good listening advice and that's not what he's talking about he's not telling us oh you know learn to listen listen well there's some things we shouldn't listen to at all so he's certainly not telling us to pay attention to everything he's calling us to pay attention to primarily his word that he brings and that he brings through others so that's the first way we can prepare we need to prepare spiritually the second way we need to prepare practically prepare yourself and your family in advance so that on Sunday mornings you're able to get ready you're able to be to church on time because that's the expression of being careful to hear that's an expression that you know I'm not going to be hurried and busy I'm not going to be distracted and frenzied as Sunday mornings can typically go for us so think about tasks for example that we may leave to a

[45 : 29] Sunday morning that we can't attend to on Saturday evenings! whether it's as simple as maybe you don't put your keys in the place where you need to put it consistently but find those keys on Saturday night don't be scrambling for them on Sunday morning and you have children perhaps who put one shoe here the other shoe there well then try to attend to those things on the night before so that when Sunday morning comes those distractions are not there it's very difficult to place percentages of people in these four categories of soil but I would estimate that the overwhelming majority would find themselves in the area of the thorns the deceitfulness of wealth the desires for other things the cares related to living in this world those are the kinds of things that can cause us to have very busy distracted hearts where the word of

God doesn't profit us as we as we ought to be profited from it and then once we would have prepared our hearts spiritually we would prepare ourselves practically to come to hear the word of God one of the things I would say try to get to bed early try to get to bed at a reasonable hour where you know you'll get sufficient rest if you're able to get up on time and you come refreshed and you bring yourself to the preaching God's word one of the things that I have experienced you probably have experienced this as well sometimes I end up working I work on something late at night I'm writing something and and it took me a while to realize this that whenever I'm working on something maybe I'm working on an email or something

I've learned the best thing I could do is reading until the morning to send that because there are all kinds of things I will see in the morning that I just don't see at 11 12 o'clock at night and you bring a fresh mind to it you bring fresh eyes to it and you're just in a different place and that's what a good night's rest will do for us and so I encourage us to connect all of this to hearing it's not just showing up here and say okay I'm going to pay attention right now no it starts way before then and that demonstrates the intentionality that demonstrates the importance that we place on hearing God's word and then when we sit under the preaching of God's word all that's good we need to do that then we become when we sit under the preaching of God's word we need to do so with a humble heart we need to do so with a humble heart that will cause us to pay attention to what we hear and humility of heart requires that we recognize that there may be some things that we hold preconceived ideas bad theology that we just need to submit and allow the word of God to inform and correct and instruct in those particular areas this was the Pharisees problem the Pharisees could not hear from

Jesus because one they thought they knew more than he did and they were proud and so when he would be teaching they would be listening trying to find fault with what he was saying as opposed to hearing the very word of God that would have brought life to their souls but they couldn't hear him because they were proud and they were blind they thought they were seeing and they were blind they could not see and therefore the teaching of Jesus could not benefit them brothers and sisters one of the things that we must do when we come to the preaching of God's word we bring humble hearts we hold open hands allowing the Lord to speak to us to teach us to instruct us if your heart is postured in a way well I know more than him so I wouldn't listen to him you're not going to benefit you're not going to profit from the preaching of

God's word so we need to bring a humble heart if we are going to pay attention if we are going to understand what is being taught the last part this paying attention doesn't end after the sermon is over as a matter of fact the real work begins when the sermon is over because the question always needs to be what am I now going to do with this how is this going to apply in my life again so much of what people believe they are to get out of preaching is more knowledge to learn more and yes

that's good but in and of itself that's bad that's not good what is good is to think about okay what am I now going to do with this how am I going to apply this so even now for this sermon how are you going to apply it how are you going to prepare your heart how are you going to practically prepare so that you're able to come to hear

[51 : 45] God's word and profit and benefit and be fruitful with it are you going to maintain an attitude where you need to pay more attention driving and we need to pay attention driving not minimizing that at all but not really see the importance of paying attention when we hear God's word preached the key is application we have to apply it it's not just we take those notes and when we're done we put the notes aside we need to be thinking how can I apply this in my life how can I ponder it how can I begin to think about it because a lot of the understanding only comes as we mull it over as we think about it and so if your practice this morning is that you try to get it all here and when this is over that's it until next week that's not a good practice to be careful and pay attention to what you hear that you may understand it and that you may profit by it you need to kind of really do what they do in school you need to go and do some homework you need to take that with you and you need to be thinking about how you can apply that to your life a good practice would be especially a day like today maybe in the afternoon at some point pick up the text again maybe pick up your notes again reflect on it

Lord how would you help me to apply this in my life I believe that when we don't do that we fall in this category that Jesus talks about where he says to the one who has even what he has will be taken away because we don't see the value in it and though it is enough to move us forward in our journey in fruitfulness for the Lord we end up regressing and so I encourage us this morning let's not be deceived Satan doesn't care if we listen to God's word 24 7 365 days a year if we're not paying attention to what we are hearing if we're not making an effort to understand it and to apply it in our lives he does not care if we're going to be fruitful disciples for

Christ we must pay attention to what we hear and we must apply it to our lives and it is only when we do that that we give evidence that we truly belong to the Lord Jesus Christ and so I want to encourage us this morning to soberly hear these words five short verses but five critical verses where Jesus is saying to us pay attention to what you're hearing primarily his words that he was saying and secondarily as ministers sow that seed sow his word we want to pay attention as for to he to he has he has to his son he has to son he