

102 – Beware what you are hearing

The children of Israel had several occasions to wish they had never left Egypt. It was as if they'd forgotten hundreds of years of oppression.

Numbers 11:5

We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, **leeks**, onions and garlic.

They grumbled against Moses and against God for having to eat manna every day – food which God Himself provided to nourish them throughout their journey. Somehow, the miracle of their salvation was not enough; it was not a sufficient source of daily encouragement as they went toward the Promised Land, and, 40 years later, it was still not enough to sustain them when they possessed the land.

The truth is, Israel's salvation by God's sovereign, miraculous signs and wonders throughout their existence, were every bit enough to sustain and encourage them throughout their history. It was what God told Moses to tell them not to fail to talk about throughout their days – for the very reason that it could sustain and encourage them and the generations that followed. They had everything they could possibly need, but they failed to lay claim to it. They failed to receive, own and integrate everything that God had done and was doing on their behalf even though they could see it, time after time after time, with their own eyes.

As the year 2011 ended and 2012 began, we crossed a spiritual Jordan together. You may remember the build-up to that crossing, and all that was spoken by the Spirit during that time, from mid December, 2011, well into January, 2012.

Since then, we have seen people and relationships burned out of our lives, while others have begun to be established. Other relationships that were built on a solid foundation of common commitment, faith and confession, have been strengthened wonderfully. We have seen livelihoods threatened with destruction, or at least turned upside down in a divine sifting, while God sovereignly builds new business and resources in ways we could not have invented.

While we take this new land that we entered in 2012, let's remember how God operates – let's remember that He IS OPERATING! If things don't look like we imagined they would; if people don't act like we thought they would; if it seems harder in this new land than we thought it would be, it's not because something is wrong; it's not because we missed God. It's because we brought expectations with us from the old land into this one. We're learning, some of us, that NOTHING old will survive here. We were told that before and after we crossed over, but we may need reminded again.

The message I have heard building for a few weeks, but couldn't articulate until now, is this word from the Lord:

"I am with You," says the Lord. "I took you at your word when you said you wanted to know Me fully; when you said you wanted the deepest possible relationship with me. Everything that has been happening in and around you, in virtually every area of your life, is precisely the process by which you and I will establish Our fellowship. I cannot relate to flesh and blood that is yet sinning. I do not RECKON your offenses, but I cannot relate to you in them, so you are in a purifying process. I created you in My image, but now you are becoming that image. Now you are just beginning to reflect My nature. I call you sons and daughters, but maturing is the process you're in now. I'm well aware of how painful it feels to you – you need to know that it is no less painful for Me to witness it in your life; however, if you withdraw from this process – and you can at any time – you and I will not have a mature relationship until the eons are completed. I am impatient for you to know Me like you have wanted to, so I have taken you at your word. Where your life looks chaotic and turned upside down, that is My hand upon you, like a father's behind a child's bicycle seat as he or she learns to ride without training wheels. For you to know Me, You have to become LIKE Me. Yeshua went before you, and others followed Him. It's your time, *if* you wish to continue growing up into a mature son or daughter in My image.

"You have seen Me more clearly than ever before, and yet you have felt uncertain. You have doubted yourself. You have even doubted Me. The source of your doubts, fears, or concerns is what must die. Therefore relationships and other areas of your life that were built on those things must also die. But be encouraged, because the life into which you are being raised, just as surely as Yeshua was raised out from the dead, is that life in Me and with Me. The world will not know it; the world will not recognize it, let alone welcome it. You will find fulfillment, satisfaction, peace, joy, love, in abundance, at the cost of every relationship which is unequal with Ours. Others may scorn you, and even attempt to persecute or afflict you. I am with you; indeed, I have made My home in You and have prepared yours in Me. Will you care more for them or Me?

"I believe in you. What I have worked out in you thus far is enough to bring you into more and more with Me. Hold not your life from ME and I will not hold Mine from you. The best of the land is before you. Hold to Me. Fix your eyes on me; tune your ears to My voice. Turn aside from that which does not look or sound like Me. Encourage yourself continually in My

Word and in My Spirit. Walk above the world while you are yet in it. Trust Me. Believe Me. Have I not shown you My power? Have I not shown you My Love? Have I not shown you My faithfulness? Confess it. Own the experience of it, in the face of a world that is blind to it and deaf to Me.

“You are four months in a new land, and the terrain is unfamiliar, even steep and rocky. Many of the natives are unfriendly; many are as untrustworthy to you as they are suspicious *of* you. Did you think it would be an easy walk? Who told you it would be easy? Milk and honey are the reward, not that I must reward you with them, but that they are in the land that is yours when you walk through it and conquer it in staunch faith, militant and steadfast commitment to My Name, My Word, My Spirit, and My Son.

“Who is sovereign in your life, you or Me? Then Do not mistake trouble for missteps. If you stay focused toward Me, you will not miss Me. And, as you already know, when you do miss Me, I am quick to correct, swift to discipline, and unafraid to scourge where and when it is needed. Remember that living requires dying first. Both are happening at once – that is the nature of maturing into the image of My son or daughter. You have a pattern to follow; follow Him. You have Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers among you and in the Word has gone before. Seek them out and hearken to them. Your goal is the prize of the calling above in Christ Jesus. Press on toward it, toward Me, and I will press in toward you.”

When I send out the notice of the recording of tonight’s Light Up the Scriptures, I’ll attach this word in a PDF document.

Earlier today, Barbara talked with someone into whose life she had spoken a clear, strong word of the Lord a week ago. All of us listening, I pray, recognize that when the word of the Lord comes, it is often uncomfortable – it pushes us outside of the boundaries inside which we have become altogether too comfortable...or with which we are at least familiar. Often the word of the Lord expands the horizons beyond where we have sailed before, and we don’t always have familiar landmarks to follow. Sailors had to discover new stars to steer by when they crossed from the northern to the southern Hemisphere. If they tried to find the stars they knew in the old Hemisphere, they would become hopelessly lost in the new waters.

The word Barbara gave this person last week was that uniquely divine boundary-pushing, horizon-expanding, make-me-squirm kind of word. We could both feel a shift in

the spirit this past week, as we knew that this person was making decisions about the word that had been given and making determinations about what to do. Today, it was time to ascertain if offense had been taken and correct any that may have occurred. I overheard the person say, "Well, I felt pushed, but God put it all back in order." Immediately, I thought, "Uh Oh." First, I know a God who pushes regularly when we need it." Second, I questioned the so-called order that He had "put back," which indicated that it had been decided that His word appeared to have plunged life into disorder.

I believe, because of my own experience with God and the experiences of virtually every character I read about in the scriptures, that God was showing His order and it was **received** as disorder. True, what He showed did not agree with the old order, but that is precisely the point – God is about the establishing of His New Order, and that requires breaking down our old order. In effect, I heard the person say, "No, thank You, God. Not now."

God will not take a number, sitting in our waiting room, or kept in a drawer, while we do other things – essentially worshipping other Lords.

Jesus gave a succinct 5-word instruction to his disciples, early in their relationship:

Mark 4:24: "Beware what you are hearing!"

That instruction: sort of a combination instruction and warning rolled into one – came after he'd given a parable of seed being scattered; some of which fell on rocky soil, some in briar bushes and some on fertile ground. He explained the parable to the disciples. Let's read the account of **Mark 4** together, and consider where we are today, what our condition is, and how we can move forward, not with a spirit of timidity, but a spirit – His spirit – of power and sanity and love, God's kind of love, that will stop at nothing short of the truth and our perfection in His image, the image of Christ Jesus.

Mark 4:3 - "Hear" = attend to, consider what is or has been said; to understand, perceive the sense of what is said; give ear to a teaching or a teacher; to comprehend, to understand

Mark 4:4 & 15 – The "flying creatures" are the ones that take the easiest pickings. They aren't predators, they are opportunists, so when seed lies on the roadside, it's out in the open and easy to grab and take. The roadside doesn't own it and can't care for it, let alone grow it.

Mark 4:5 & 16-17 – The "rocky place" has soil, but not to any depth, so what grows, grows fast – very enthusiastic, but dries up just as quickly in the sun and wind. We have witnessed this phenomenon countless times in the brief time Barbara and I

have been together. We've been sent into peoples' lives, spoken the word, poured out life into life on the Lord's behalf and by His leading; and the word was received enthusiastically and with great celebration; then, within only a few days, we would witness it wither, become discounted and the person return to "normal life." God moved on, and moved us on. Barbara quotes a prophet, Paul Kane, who said, Jesus is still the great beachcomber, searching for lives He can use. When Jesus said, "Many are the called, but few are the chosen." His "many" points back to this idea of the seed sown in rocky soil.

Mark 4:7 & 18-19 – The "thorns" are also part of the "many" to whom Jesus referred. These seeds at least grow, but cannot stand up and thrive in the face of opposition. They are, the word says, "stifled": *to choke utterly; pressed round or thronged so as almost to suffocate*. Look at your life at those who have received you, encouraged you, upheld you, harbored your most treasured visions and intentions. Compare those to the ones, probably more numerous, who belittled, attempted to choke utterly, the life out of you if by any means to gain some for themselves at your expense. If you're hearing this today, you haven't been choked out – your life is indeed, **"hid together with Christ in God"** (Colossians 3:3). Now think of the thorns in another way: the thorns of our own stubbornness, unbelief, even outright rebellion, or just our thinking—reasoning in our minds against the Spirit of God living in us, that threatens to suffocate His word -- His promises to us in Christ Jesus. As Paul often says, **"May it not be coming to that."** Either easy, whether the thorns are all around us or we are "thorning" the word of God in us, no fruit is born. There is no harvest. When the trumpet blast sounds, and we ascend to Him, I pray there will be fruit, and lots of it, that stands to our account in the fire of His glory.

Mark 4:8 & 20 – The "ideal soil" bears fruit; it comes up, grows up, and yields 30, 60, or even 100 times what was sown into it. There can be no doubt that we would all aspire to be **"the ideal soil,"** right?

Matthew 5:14-16

14 "You are the light of the world. A city located upon a mountain can not be hid.

15 Neither are they burning a lamp and placing it under a peck measure, but on a lampstand, and it is shining to all those in the house.

16 Thus let shine your light in front of men, so that they may perceive your ideal acts and should glorify your Father Who is in the heavens.

Notice the Jesus instruction in verse 16 is, “**Let your light shine in front of men.**” He does not say, “Shine your light,” as if to blind them with your brilliance. Rather, let it shine – in other words, don’t hide the light you are and the light you have. Don’t force it on anyone, but rather *allow* it to shine; let others see it, and be drawn to it and thereby to the Lord who makes that light shine in you and out from you.”

The same parable and explanations we read in **Mark 4**, can be seen in **Luke 8**.

Then, in **Luke 11:33**, we find this:

21 "Whenever the strong one, **armed**, may be guarding his own courtyard, his possessions are in peace.

22 Yet if ever a stronger than he, coming on, should be conquering him, he is taking away his panoply, in which he had confidence, and is distributing his spoils.

23 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who is not gathering with Me is scattering.

- 1) Arm yourself and guard your own courtyard, that what you have not be taken, along with your panoply – your complete armor. No one is stronger than He Who lives in you.
- 2) Attempts may be made to take you and your possessions – even your spiritual ones; perhaps especially those. Jesus said, “If ever,” not “whenever.” Our job is to be armored up and alert. Now, lest you think that to be too much, too tiring, remember that no instruction is given which is beyond our capacity to perform. And, lest you think it still too taxing, remember the Lord Himself – God’s only begotten Son – as he trudges up a hill to die like a criminal, after having been beaten, whipped, and beaten some more, only to be nailed – not even tied, nailed! – to a cross and left to die. You think you have it tough? When your life needs a reality check, remember that! That’s actually the title and the back cover byline of my fist book. Fits here, doesn’t it?

O, what makes the difference between the types of soil in Jesus parable and the explanations He gave the disciples? Can’t you imagine the guys asking Him, “How can we be certain to be the ideal soil, and not one of the others?” I believe their answer and ours is found in what Jesus says next:

Mark 4:24- "Beware what you are hearing!" Beware – look out for what you are attending to – that is, what you are paying attention to. Beware what you are considering that has been said; beware what you understand or perceive the sense of that has been or is being said; beware to what teaching or teacher you are giving ear. This is all active on our part. In my second book, GO GOD, I talk about our faith not being a passive experience, but a wholly active one. It’s not

supposed to be easy. It is supposed to take effort. Do you know that if you assist a butterfly coming out of its cocoon, or a chick coming out of its egg. You cripple it – you disable it from being able to survive in the world. These tiny creatures are supposed to have to work at breaking free of their limitations or they'll never make it into adulthood. It's the same with us in the spirit. If we are not exercised – “pushed” as I made mention of when we began tonight – we won't make it into maturity either. Barbara says, “Wimpy saints won't make it.” Barbara, what's that image you give of running with the footman – someone like that?

There's more to Mark 4:24-25:

With what measure you are measuring, it will be measured to you, and it will be added to you.

25 For he who has, it shall be given to him; and he who has not, even what he has shall be taken away from him."

Give others the grace you have been given, while standing for God where He is standing, not in judgment, but in agreement with His word and His ways. Don't put yourself between God and someone He's breaking. O.C. says you'll rob that person of Jesus Christ and He'll break you to get to them. If we will let God Almighty – El Shaddai – help Himself to our lives, we will find ourselves in His camp at all times.

Here's a personal example of this in my life recently: Many of you listening know that for several weeks, all signs were that Barbara and I would be moving to Washington, D.C. I was thrilled just to be going along with her wherever she goes, but I was especially excited to be going east. Barbara knows as well as God, how I felt in Texas three years ago. One morning, then, when, as I bounded up the stairs, blissfully ignorant of any change in plan, Barbara announced, “I'm going home to Dallas,” I was so shocked that I said a bad word. It was less upset with her – she's precious and I'll go wherever she goes, by the grace of God, as long as I'm breathing -- but I felt like the rollercoaster I thought I'd just gotten the hang of had taken a sudden, blind turn – actually, more like an about face. I told her later, I felt like someone else had said: “I need a cervical collar to handle the Lord's sudden turns.” Now, truth be told, which I shared later with Barbara, I wasn't all that excited about Washington, D.C. – I love the history of the land, the architecture, but the density and the unreality of that place were not things I looked forward to, but would face everywhere every day. When Barbara shared with me that the Lord, for the first time since she left everything to follow Him, was inviting her to come home to “settle down,” and knowing that “home” meant Dallas, Of course I was in and I've had peace in every cell of my being since. If I had measured to Barbara my agreement or acceptance according to my self-interest, my preference for the eastern U.S., I would find myself striving against God and out of harmony with Barbara. There

would be no peace in my heart, mind or spirit, and certainly no peace at home. I'd be going through the motions and life would become quite miserable. With what measure would I receive this sudden change in our direction – certainly not the first since we got together?! Any measure short of the grace of God which brought His sovereign rescue mission into my life, in the person of my wife, is simply unthinkable, to say nothing of unworkable. So I embraced God's invitation to her with genuine enthusiasm, full, unequivocal cooperation. As a result, peace reigns in my heart and in our home together. God has seen to the sale of nearly every stick of furniture in the house – the last of it, nearly, save a Daybed, a dresser and our respective office appointments will leave this coming Saturday. Anything else that God doesn't want us taking to Dallas will be sold or given away before we pull out, come the 1st of July. Lest anyone consider this a lame example of the principles we've been looking at so far tonight, let's me remind us all that it is not the devil but God Who is into the smallest details, and Who, according to the Scriptures is examining – testing -- the heart.

2 Timothy 1:

3 Grateful am I to God, to Whom I am offering divine service from my ancestors with a clear conscience, as I have an unintermittent remembrance concerning you in my petitions, night and day,

4 longing to see you, remembering your tears, that I may be filled full of joy,

5 getting a reminder of **the unfeigned - undisguised, sincere – faith** which is in you, which first makes its home in your grandmother Lois, and in your mother Eunice. **Now, I am persuaded – that is, I believe, trust and have confidence -- that it is in you also.**

6 For which cause I am reminding you to be **rekindling the gracious gift of God -- inflame your mind, your strength, and zeal with what God gave you -- which is in you** through the imposition of my hands,

7 for God gives us, not a spirit of timidity – DREAD! fearfulness, cowardice --, but of **power – we've been given a spirit of ability: inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth; power for performing miracles; moral power and excellence of soul -- and of love – We've been given a spirit of love, agape, the same kind as God's, which will stop at nothing short of the perfect and complete accomplishing of His purpose -- and of sanity – this is not a state of mind; we have been given a spirit which admonishes or calls us to soundness of mind, to moderation and self-control - this is an activity, just like worship and praise and study are activities.**

...

13 Have a **pattern of sound words – have an outline, sketch, brief and summary exposition; an example, of words which are sound, as in whole, healthy, free of error**

which you hear from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.
Remember how we began our study with **Mark 4**? "Beware what you are hearing?"
Now we're into studying and speaking as well as hearing! (read Concordant commentary)

14 The ideal thing committed to you, **guard** – protect by vigilance and power; keep watch; have an eye upon: lest it escape; that it may remain safe; lest it suffer violence, be despoiled; to keep from being snatched away, preserve safe and unimpaired; to keep from being lost or perishing; take care not to violate; -- through the holy spirit which is making its home in us.

The means or agency to accomplish all this is the Holy Spirit, and, Oh, by the way, it is making its home in you – so you know you're up to this. It's not by your wits or vigilance alone – but the vigilance and power is THROUGH the Holy Spirit – yet another example of how necessary it is that we have the activity of the Spirit in us – again, there is nothing passive about this!

...

2 Timothy 2:1 - be **invigorated** -- receive strength, be strengthened, increase in strength -- by the grace which is in Christ Jesus. This is the superabounding favor of God that resides in Christ Jesus. Let that be the well-spring or fountain from which we receive strength, by which we increase in strength.

John 16-17:26

33 These things have I spoken to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have affliction. But courage! I have conquered the world."

Chapter 17

1 These things speaks Jesus, and lifting His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, come has the hour. Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son should be glorifying Thee,
2 according as Thou givest Him authority over all flesh, that everything which Thou hast given to Him, He should be giving it to them, even life eonian.

3 Now it is eonian life that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou dost commission, Jesus Christ.

4 "I glorify Thee on the earth, finishing the work which Thou hast given Me, that I should be doing it.

5 "And now glorify Thou Me, Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had before the world is with Thee.

6 I manifest Thy name to the men whom Thou givest Me out of the world. Thine they were, and to Me Thou givest them, and Thy word they have kept.

7 Now they know that all, whatever Thou hast given Me, is from Thee,

8 for the declarations which Thou hast given Me, I have given them, and they took them, and know truly that I came out from Thee, and they believe that thou

dost commission Me.

9 "Concerning them I am asking. Not concerning the world am I asking, but concerning those whom Thou hast given Me, for they are Thine.

10 And Mine all are Thine, and Thine Mine. And I have been glorified in them.

11 And no longer am I in the world, and they are in the world, and I to Thee am coming. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, in which Thou hast given them to Me, that they may be one, according as We are.

12 When I was with them in the world, I kept those whom Thou hast given Me in Thy name, and I guard them, and not one of them perished, except the son of destruction, that the scripture may be fulfilled.

13 Yet now to Thee am I coming, and these things am I speaking in the world that they may be having My joy filled full in themselves.

14 "I have given them Thy word. And the world hates them, for they are not of the world, according as I am not of the world.

15 I am not asking that Thou shouldst be taking them away out of the world, but that Thou shouldst be keeping them from the wicked one.

16 Of the world they are not, according as I am not of the world.

17 Hallow them by Thy truth. Thy word is truth.

18 "According as Thou dost dispatch Me into the world, I also dispatch them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I am hallowing Myself, that they also may be hallowed by the truth.

20 Yet not concerning these only am I asking, but also concerning those who are believing in Me through their word,

21 that they may all be one, according as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us, that the world should be believing that Thou dost commission Me.

22 "And I have given them the glory which Thou has given Me, that they may be one, according as We are One,

23 I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in one, and that the world may know that Thou dost commission Me and dost love them according as Thou dost love Me.

24 "Father, those whom Thou hast given Me, I will that, where I am, they also may be with Me, that they may be beholding My glory which Thou has given Me, for Thou lovest Me before the disruption of the world.

25 Just Father, the world, also, knew Thee not, yet I knew Thee. And these know that Thou dost commission Me.

26 And I make known to them Thy name, and I shall make it known, that the love with which Thou lovest Me may be in them, and I in them."

1 Cor. 1:3-11

3 Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of pities and God of all consolation,

4 Who is consoling us in our every affliction to enable us to be consoling those in every affliction, through the consolation with which we ourselves are being consoled by God,

5 seeing that, according as the sufferings of Christ are superabounding in us, thus, through Christ, our consolation also is superabounding.

6 Now, whether we are being afflicted for your consolation and salvation, or whether we are being consoled for your consolation, which is operating in the endurance of the same sufferings which we also are suffering,

7 our expectation, also, is confirmed over you, being aware that, as you are participants of the sufferings, thus of the consolation also.

8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning our affliction which came to us in the province of Asia, that we were inordinately burdened, over our ability, so that we were despairing of life also.

9 But we have the rescript of death in ourselves, that we may be having no confidence in ourselves, but in God, Who rouses the dead,

10 Who rescues us from a death of such proportions, and will be rescuing; on Whom we rely that He will still be rescuing also;

11 you also assisting together by a petition for us, in order that, from many faces He may be thanked by many for us for the gracious gift given to us.

Romans 5:10

For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

Hebrews 1:3

By many portions and many modes, of old, God, speaking to the fathers in the prophets,

2 in the last of these days speaks to us in a Son, Whom He appoints enjoyer of the allotment of all, through Whom He also makes the eons;

3 Who, being the Effulgence of His glory and Emblem of His assumption, besides carrying on all by His powerful declaration, making a cleansing of sins, is seated at the right hand of the Majesty in the heights;

4 becoming so much better than the messengers as He enjoys the allotment of a more excellent name than they.

5 For to whom of the messengers said He at any time, "My Son art Thou! I, today, have begotten Thee"? And again, "I shall be to Him for a Father And He

shall be to Me for a Son"?

6 Now, whenever He may again be leading the Firstborn into the inhabited earth, He is saying: And worship Him, all the messengers of God!

7 And, indeed, to the messengers He is saying, "Who is making His messengers blasts, And His ministers a flame of fire."

8 Yet to the Son: "Thy throne, O God, is for the eon of the eon, And a scepter of rectitude is the scepter of Thy kingdom.

9 Thou lovest righteousness and hatest injustice; Therefore Thou art anointed by God, Thy God, with the oil of exultation beyond Thy partners."

10 And, Thou, originally, Lord, dost found the earth, And the heavens are the works of Thy hands.

11 They shall perish, yet Thou art continuing, And all, as a cloak, shall be aged,

12 And, as if clothing, wilt Thou be rolling them up. As a cloak also shall they change. Yet Thou art the same, And Thy years shall not be defaulting.

13 Now to which of the messengers has He declared at any time, "Sit at My right, till I should be placing Thine enemies for a footstool for Thy feet"?

14 Are they not all ministering spirits commissioned for service because of those who are about to be enjoying the allotment of salvation?

Chapter 2

1 Therefore we must more exceedingly be heeding what is being heard, lest at some time we may be drifting by.

2 For if the word spoken through messengers came to be confirmed, and every transgression and disobedience obtained a fair reward,

3 how shall we be escaping when neglecting a salvation of such proportions which, obtaining a beginning through the speaking of the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who hear Him,

4 God corroborating, both by signs and miracles and by various powerful deeds and partings of holy spirit, according to His will?

5 For not to messengers does He subject the impending inhabited earth, concerning which we are speaking.

{ Love is patient...
Parallel with
Fruit of the spirit