

But it is given to those who ask. For the Lord says, "Ask, and it shall be given you."<sup>4</sup> But the others, the Lord has blinded lest it be to their greater condemnation that they should understand what they ought to do, and yet not do it. There is another interpretation. Do you wish to understand that God has made all to see what it is they ought to do? Listen: that they see, comes from God; but that they see without perceiving, comes from their own wickedness. For God created them able to see, that is, to understand the good, but they do not see, intentionally shutting their eyes so that they will not turn back and be corrected. It is as if they despised their own salvation and betterment. So, then, it can be understood as follows: "To the others I speak in parables, so that seeing they may choose not to see, and hearing they may choose not to understand, for fear that by doing so, they would turn back and be corrected."

**13-20. And He said unto them, Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables? The sower soweth the word. And these are they along the way, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they fall away. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred.** Here are three types of those who destroy the word: the inattentive, who are on the trodden path, preoccupied with pleasing all and sundry; those of little faith, who are among the stones; and the pleasure-seekers, who are among the thorns. There are also three types of those who accepted and preserved the seed: those who bear fruit a hundredfold, who lead a life at the pinnacle of

<sup>4</sup>Mt. 7:7 and Lk. 11:9.

perfection; those who bear fruit sixtyfold, who live a life of moderate achievement; and those who bear thirtyfold, who achieve small things, yet they, too, contribute according to their strength. For example, some are virgins and desert dwellers, others are monastics who live together in communities, while others are laity who are married. But the Lord accepts them all as good ground which bears fruit. Thanks be to His love for man!

**21-23. And He said unto them, Is a lamp brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? And not to be set on a lamp stand? For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come into the open. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.** Here He exhorts the apostles to be shining examples in life and in conduct. For just as a lamp is set out where its brightness may be seen, so will your life be conspicuous to all, and all will look upon it. So you must strive to lead a good life; for you will not sit in a corner, but you will be a lamp. The lamp is not hidden under a bed, but it is placed on a lamp stand and sheds light on all. Each one of you is a lamp which ought to be placed upon a lamp stand, which is the high place belonging to a God-pleasing life, so that you might shine on others as well. Your lamp should not be placed under a bushel, which signifies gluttony and making much ado about food; nor should it be placed under a bed, which signifies ease and relaxation. For no one who makes much ado about food and desires to take his ease can, by his own life, be a lamp that shines upon all. "For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested." Whatever one does in secret, whether good or evil, will be revealed, both now, and how much more so in the age to come. Is there anything more hidden than God? Yet God Himself was revealed in the flesh.

**24-25. And He said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.** He exhorts His disciples to spiritual sobriety. "Take heed," He says, "what you hear," let nothing of what I have said slip away from you. For "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you;" that is, whatever degree of attention you give Me, by that same degree will you receive