

Please listen to the audio lesson "A Letter from Jesus: Ephesus" first. Then after finishing the audio lesson, have the Scriptures handy to best utilize the following questions to answer and consider thoughtfully for your further study.

A Letter from Jesus: Ephesus

1. Read Matthew 11:11-15

- a. Jesus taught the crowds concerning whom specifically?
- b. What did Jesus want them to understand concerning John the Baptist?
- c. Had they already put all the pieces together, or was this a new concept?
- d. In verse 14, Jesus said that John the Baptist is the fulfillment of Elijah.
 - 1.) Were they willing to accept what Jesus said?
 - 2.) Was there a question of if John was the fulfillment of Elijah?
 - 3.) Jesus told them the truth, why would they not accept it?
- e. What is the last statement in these verses concerning their ears?
- f. Do you have ears to hear when Jesus speaks? Will you accept it?

2. Read Matthew 21:23-27

- a. Jesus has cleansed the temple earlier in the chapter, what is the question the chief priest & elders had concerning Jesus' actions?
- b. What is the question Jesus has for them?
- c. Do the Chief Priests & Elders answer based upon truth, or how it reflects upon themselves?
- d. Did the Chief Priests and Elders have ears to hear? Did they accept what God sent John the Baptist to do?
- e. If we are unwilling to accept Jesus' word, will He show or reveal Himself any further to us?

Thoughts to Consider: When Jesus uses the phrase "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." It is not a matter of whether Jesus' words are true or not. He was never a liar, and His words are always true. The real crux of the matter is ... will you accept the truth or not. His words are true no matter whether you decide to accept or reject the words of Jesus in your life. But if our ears/hearts are closed from accepting the truth of Jesus' word, we will never understand His true authority. The Chief Priests & the elders of Jesus time, were hard-hearted toward the words of Jesus, and they smeared & twisted Scripture based upon how it would reflect upon themselves. If truth is based upon us, we are in deep trouble,

because we understand so little of the whole. However, God understands the whole down to the little and beyond. Who understands more, the Creator or...?

3. Read Mark 4:2-12

- a. Did Jesus' followers & the twelve understand this parable?
- b. What were Jesus' words in verse 9?
- c. Because you have ears to hear, does that mean you always understand?
- d. Should we get discouraged because we don't immediately understand all the Scriptures the first time we read through them?
- e. Since they did not instantly understand, who did they ask?
- f. Who should we ask for understanding & wisdom?

4. Read Mark 4:21-25

- a. What are Jesus' words in verse 23?
- b. Where is the lamp not to be placed? Why?
- c. What is hindered, if the lamp isn't placed on the lampstand?
- d. What reveals the hidden secret things?
- e. What if the lampstand is removed? What changes?
- f. Jesus said, Take care what you listen to. Why does that affect your life?
- g. If you measure by the light, what happens?
- h. If you measure without the light & lampstand, what is the outcome?
- i. Do you have ears to hear the words of Jesus given here? Accept it?

5. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13

- a. Why was Paul so thankful to God for the saints in Thessalonica?
- b. Did they have ears to hear?
- c. What happened within them, when they accepted the word of God?

Final Thoughts: Even when we have ears to hear, it doesn't mean the flood gates of spiritual knowledge immediately download into our daily thinking. We still must seek out Jesus so His word will perform its work in us who believe. As we respond faithfully to God's word, more and more is given because the Light of Jesus is placed on the lampstand. It is the perfect place for light to shine unhindered in our lives. A lampstand was generally tall enough to shed light on the entire space. It would reveal and bring the darkness to light. God's Word does the exact same things, revealing the hidden secrets of life in Jesus. With ears to hear, are you willing to accept the truth? It will change how God responds to you!