



DAILY REFLECTION: Monday 25th May, 2020

Understanding God's Message

Alan Akers

It's **been** a beautiful Autumn! Refreshing rains have brought relief to many and smiles to the faces of those who rely on the seasons for their livelihood. Now we're enjoying the glorious colours of autumn as our deciduous trees prepare for the winter recess ahead. All around us we see evidence of our provident Creator.

It amazes – and often frustrates – me that others see the same things I see – amazing sunsets, awe-inspiring thunderstorms and the glories of spring as it unfolds – yet fail to recognise, or deliberately choose to ignore, the hand of God behind them. They speak instead of “Mother Nature” and scorn any suggestion of a Creator. Why is this?



Jesus' disciples asked him once why he spoke to the people in parables. We may have expected him to say the parables were illustrations, calculated to emphasise and reinforce the truths of the kingdom he was trying to teach. What Jesus *actually* said may surprise us:

The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, 'though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.'” **Luke 8:10** (including words from **Isaiah 6:9**)

It seems the truths of God's kingdom are not available to the indifferent or casual enquirer; but are freely given to those with sincere hearts and a genuine desire to serve in that kingdom. The disciples' query and Jesus' answer followed his parable of the sower, where the different responses correspond to the state of the hearts of those who hear God's words. How are *our* hearts? Are the hearts of those with whom we long to share the gospel of love and salvation in a fit state to receive it? Do we have a role in preparing hearts?

Jesus tells us we do. In a metaphor (rather than a parable) he tells his followers:



*“You are the salt of the earth. ... “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. **In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.** Matthew 5:13-16*

That “cup of cold water” (or hot coffee!), offered freely really *can* start to make a difference! Others already know we are Christians. Let's show them by our lives, our actions and our attitudes that our worldview has merit and is worthy of their consideration.

Food for thought!

PRAYER:

Praise God for his creation; and for eyes that see and acknowledge it for what it is. Thank him for the example of Jesus and the privilege of following him.

- Ask him for opportunities to help prepare hearts *and* sow the precious gospel seed

SONG: *I Stand in Awe* by Citrail - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BLNNyKaicQ>

