

5. Imagine explaining the idea of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven to a group of new believers. How would you convey this concept in a way that encourages growth in faith?
  
6. What specific actions can you take to guard against spiritual dullness so that you remain receptive to God's teachings in your life?
  
7. If there was a cosmic algorithm that picks up on people's primary interests and pursuits and then feeds them more of what they're looking for, what would it see in someone's life that indicates a deep desire for Jesus and for understanding his words, his way of life, and his kingdom priorities?
  
8. How will you apply the insight from this passage to your own spiritual journey in seeking a better and more impactful understanding of God's kingdom?

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## SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

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### **The Secrets of the Realm**

"Getting in on the Secret" (Part 2)

Matthew 13:10-17

"The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you but not to them." (Jesus)

This passage suggests that if you're not all in with Jesus, God's not inclined to share the secrets with you because Jesus is at the very \_\_\_\_\_ of what God is up to.

My hope is that this series impacts you in such a way that by watching your life, a cosmic \_\_\_\_\_ would pick up a deep desire for Jesus and for understanding his words, his way of life, and his kingdom priorities.

#### **How to Get in on the Secret**

1. Stand out from the \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus is calling people to become disciples. That means you have to leave the crowd (the "\_\_\_\_\_ middle") and join his band of brothers and sisters.

2. Pay attention and listen \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Go to the \_\_\_\_\_ for answers.

"Why parables? Because the stories test people. Would they write Jesus off as a mere storyteller? Or would they insist on learning what the parables meant?" (D.M. Doriani)

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Where is God leading you with your BLESS list this week?



"We cannot explain the deep truths of the kingdom to people who deny the first principle: Jesus is Lord and King." (D.M. Doriani)

If I believe that Jesus is Lord and King and I go to him for answers, a whole new \_\_\_\_\_ of understanding and meaning opens up through the parables.

4. Open your \_\_\_\_\_.

Only a heart \_\_\_\_\_ to God will pay attention and listen intently.

The condition of their heart determines their ability and desire to \_\_\_\_\_.

“People will listen and listen to what Jesus is saying and they simply won’t be able to understand. Like tone-deaf people listening to a symphony, they will have no idea what it’s all about.” (N.T. Wright)

Two important insights:

- Jesus clearly emphasizes the \_\_\_\_\_ to listen, to pursue him, and to become disciples.
- The words of warning in Isaiah are directed at a people (the crowds), not every \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions**

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week’s sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Read Matthew 13:10-17. How does Jesus’ explanation about the purpose of parables challenge conventional teaching methods?
3. Re-read Matthew 13:11-12. How would you explain the dynamic that if someone believes that Jesus is Lord and King, a whole new world of understanding and meaning opens up through the parables, but if they deny it, then whatever they do understand is lost?
4. Describe a situation in which you experienced a sudden understanding of a spiritual truth that was previously unclear to you, and then many other spiritual realities fell into place.