Mark 4:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

> If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

Analysis

Jesus repeats the hearing formula: 'If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.' The conditional 'if' (εἴ τις) emphasizes individual responsibility—those with spiritual ears must use them. This second occurrence (also v. 9) brackets the parable explanation, reinforcing the central theme: how one hears determines spiritual condition. The imperative 'let him hear' (ἀκουέτω) demands active, obedient response. Spiritual hearing requires more than physical audition—it requires Spirit-given understanding, humble reception, and life transformation. The repetition underscores the teaching's critical importance.

Historical Context

The repeated formula was characteristic of Jesus' teaching, emphasizing urgency and importance. Prophets used similar formulas: 'Hear, O Israel' (Deuteronomy 6:4); 'He who has ears, let him hear' (Ezekiel 3:27). Early church recognized responsive hearing as mark of genuine discipleship. Revelation repeats this formula seven times (Revelation 2-3), addressing churches. Church history distinguishes those who merely hear sermons from those who hear and obey —'hearers only' versus 'doers of the word' (James 1:22-25).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does your hearing of Scripture translate into obedient action?
2. What prevents you from truly 'hearing' with responsive, transforming faith?
3. How can you cultivate spiritual ears sensitive to God's voice in His word?

Interlinear Text

εἴ	τις	ἔχει	ὦτα	ἀκουέτω	ἀκουέτω
G1487	G5100	**have**	**ears**	**let him hear**	**let him hear**
		G2192	G3775	G191	G191

Additional Cross-References

Mark 4:9 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 11:15 (Parallel theme): He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.