

Mark 4:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And with many such parables spake he the word unto them,
as they were able to hear it.

Analysis

Mark summarizes Jesus' teaching method: 'And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.' The phrase 'many such parables' indicates Jesus used numerous similar illustrations beyond those recorded. He 'spake the word' (ἐλάλει...τὸν λόγον)—proclaimed God's message. The qualifier 'as they were able to hear' (καθὼς ἠδύναντο ἀκούειν) shows pedagogical wisdom: Jesus adapted instruction to hearers' capacity, not overwhelming with more than they could receive. This demonstrates progressive revelation—teaching foundational truths before advanced doctrine. Wise teachers discern students' receptivity and developmental stage, neither over-simplifying nor overwhelming.

Historical Context

Jesus' parabolic method characterized His public teaching throughout Galilee. Mark's phrase 'many such parables' indicates selective recording—Gospels preserve representative sample, not exhaustive catalog. Early church recognized this: 'Jesus did many other signs...not written' (John 20:30; 21:25). Jesus' pedagogical wisdom contrasted with scribal method of citing authorities and traditions. He taught with inherent authority using accessible illustrations. Early Christian education adopted graduated approach: milk for babes, solid food for mature (1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12-14). Church history emphasizes catechesis and progressive instruction.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' adaptation to hearers' capacity model wise, patient teaching?
2. What does this teach about balancing accessibility with depth in communicating biblical truth?
3. How can you discern appropriate teaching level for different audiences without compromising content?

Interlinear Text

Καὶ	τοιαύταις	παραβολαῖς	πολλαῖς	ἐλάλει	αὐτοῖς	τὸν
And	such	parables	with many	spake he	unto them	G3588
G2532	G5108	G3850	G4183	G2980	G846	
λόγον	καθὼς	ἠδύναντο	ἀκούειν·			
the word	as	they were able	to hear			
G3056	G2531	G1410	G191			

Additional Cross-References

John 16:12 (Parallel theme): I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.