

Matthew 10:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

Analysis

Jesus commands public proclamation: 'What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops' (ο λεγω υμιν εν τη σκοτια ειπατε εν τω φωτι και ο εις το ους ακουετε κηρυξατε επι των δωματων). 'In darkness' (εν τη σκοτια) refers to private instruction; 'in light' (εν τω φωτι) means public proclamation. 'In the ear' (εις το ους) indicates whispered, intimate teaching; 'upon housetops' (επι των δωματων) means shouted publicly. Jesus taught disciples privately; they must proclaim publicly. No secret knowledge for elite insiders; everything becomes public gospel. 'Preach' (κηρυξατε) is herald's proclamation—authoritative, clear, public announcement. This transforms disciples from private students to public heralds.

Historical Context

Rabbis often taught select students privately, guarding esoteric knowledge. Jesus does opposite: private teaching prepares public proclamation. Flat roofs in Palestinian houses served as gathering spaces with excellent visibility and acoustics. Announcements were literally shouted from rooftops. Jesus' metaphor: what I whisper in classroom, shout from rooftops. Early church obeyed: private resurrection appearances led to public Pentecost preaching. No secret societies or mystery religions—Christianity was public, universal proclamation.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does this command challenge tendencies toward private, insider Christianity?
2. What does it mean to 'preach from housetops' in contemporary contexts?
3. How can we balance thoughtful preparation with bold, public proclamation?

Interlinear Text

ὃ	λέγω	ὑμῖν	ἐν	τῇ	σκοτία	εἶπατε	ἐν	τῷ	φωτί
What	I tell	you	in	G3588	darkness	that speak ye	in	G3588	light
G3739	G3004	G5213	G1722		G4653	G2036	G1722		G5457

καὶ	ὃ	εἰς	τὸ	οὖς	ἀκούετε	κηρύξατε	ἐπὶ	τῶν
and	What	in	G3588	the ear	ye hear	that preach ye	upon	G3588
G2532	G3739	G1519		G3775	G191	G2784	G1909	

δωμάτων
the housetops
G1430

Additional Cross-References

Acts 5:20 (Parallel theme): Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

John 16:13 (Parallel theme): Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

John 16:1 (Parallel theme): These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

Acts 5:28 (Parallel theme): Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

John 16:25 (Parallel theme): These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

John 16:29 (Parallel theme): His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

Luke 8:10 (Parallel theme): And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Acts 17:17 (Parallel theme): Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

2 Corinthians 3:12 (Parallel theme): Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: