

JESUS' PARABLES

definitions, purposes, Kingdom parables & interpretation principles

1. Definition of parables = a New Testament parallel truth to what Jewish saints already understood.
BUT...correcting or completing the truth or challenging a false preconceptions.
2. Parables were fairly easy for NT Jews to connect-the-dots. Jesus was building on OT teachings and sometimes expanding them. Only a few required Jesus to explain them: *soils & tares*
3. Jesus elaborated on only a few parables.
4. There is only one central teaching in each parable.
 - * The soils and the tares are unique in that they give substance to several nouns in Jesus' account.
Parables are usually quite succinct.
Don't feel as though you have to look further than one basic precept.
Many parables cover less than four lines. Jesus has trimmed them down intentionally.
 - * I believe it is the exception rather than the rule to find a meaning or truth in the "details" of the parables.
5. I think each parable can be understood and explained in one or two cogent sentences. (*examples to follow*)
6. Parables have two purposes: to open the eyes of the seeing and to close the eyes of the blind.
Matt 13:10,11,13 The disciples came, and said unto Him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.
7. SOME KINGDOM PARABLES, i.e. Millennial Kingdom of future (they will enter this Kingdom after death)
 - * Of course, there will be many applications to the Church Age.

Matt 13:31,32 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a **grain of mustard seed**, which a man took, and sowed in his field: 32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the **greatest among herbs**, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

** The Kingdom will be worldwide, not just for the Jews.*

Matt 13:33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto **leaven**, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the **whole was leavened**.

** Although leaven is often bad, it seems not so here. Kingdom seems small but will be worldwide.*

Matt 13:44-46 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto **treasure hid in a field**; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. 45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: 46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and **sold all that he had**, and bought it.

** Seeking to please God demands our very best all day long.*

Matt 13:47-50 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and **gathered of every kind**: 48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and **gathered the good** into vessels, but cast the bad away. 49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and **sever the wicked from among the just**, 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

** Although this has several moving parts, find the one central truth. What did Jews commonly believe, and what false notion was Jesus correcting?*

Mark 4:26-29 So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should **cast seed** into the ground; 27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he **knoweth not how**. 29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

** God sees what you sow. He will reward you at harvest time.*

Matt 25:1-3 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. 2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them.

** Perhaps I've abbreviated this one too drastically, but the central theme is still there.*

** Don't be foolish, He will return so use His talents while you can.*

Matt 25:14-18 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. 15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. 16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. 17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. 18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

** I've also abbreviated this one, but the theme is still captured.*

** Don't be foolish, He will return.*

Matt 18:23-30 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. 24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. Mat 18:25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. 28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. 29 And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

** God will reward you graciously. Little things are little, but faithfulness in little things is a BIG thing.*

Matt 20:9-15 When they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. 11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, 12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

** Jews despised Gentiles and felt that they were entitled to more favor.*

8. SOME NON-KINGDOM PARABLES, same general principles apply, (the Kingdom isn't always mentioned).

Luke 14:7,8,11 He put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, 8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him; 11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

** Humility will be rewarded abundantly.*

** Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth, Prov 27.2.*

Matt 5:21,22 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

** The Pharisees got it wrong. Godliness is spiritual, not just a list of do's & don'ts.*

Matt 5:27,28 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

** The Pharisees got it wrong. Godliness is spiritual, not just a list of do's & don'ts.*

THE PARABLE OF THE SOILS

Matt 13:3 He spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; 4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: 5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: 6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: 8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

** Sower & weather are the same, but the heart (soil) was different. This is not primarily a focus on salvation, but upon the response of the soil to the Word of God. Everyone listens with a different pair of ears.*

Joh 10:6,11 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. 11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

* see my blog, www.PhilMyersBlog.com

I AM, Thirteen Times (13X) in the Gospel of John

John 8.12 I am the light of the world.

** He also calls us the light!*

John 6.35 I am the bread of life.

** He is enough. "Without Me ye can do nothing." John 15.5*

9. PARALLEL STATEMENTS, some are not identified with the introduction "parable."

Luke10:30 Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. GOOD SAMARITAN

Luke18:9,10 He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.
Pharisee & PUBLICAN

Luke15:8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? LOST COIN

Luke15:4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? LOST SHEEP

Luke15:11 He said, A certain man had two sons: Luk 15:28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. TWO LOST SONS

Luke13:6 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. FIG TREE

10. Consider also the beatitudes which tell us a half dozen times, "ye have heard" . . . "but I say. . . ."

Matt 5.21,22	ye have heard. . .but I say. . .
Matt 5.27,28	ye have heard. . .but I say. . .
Matt 5.31,32	ye have heard. . .but I say. . .
Matt 5.33,34	ye have heard. . .but I say. . .
Matt 5.38,39	ye have heard. . .but I say. . .
Matt 5.43,44	ye have heard. . .but I say. . .