

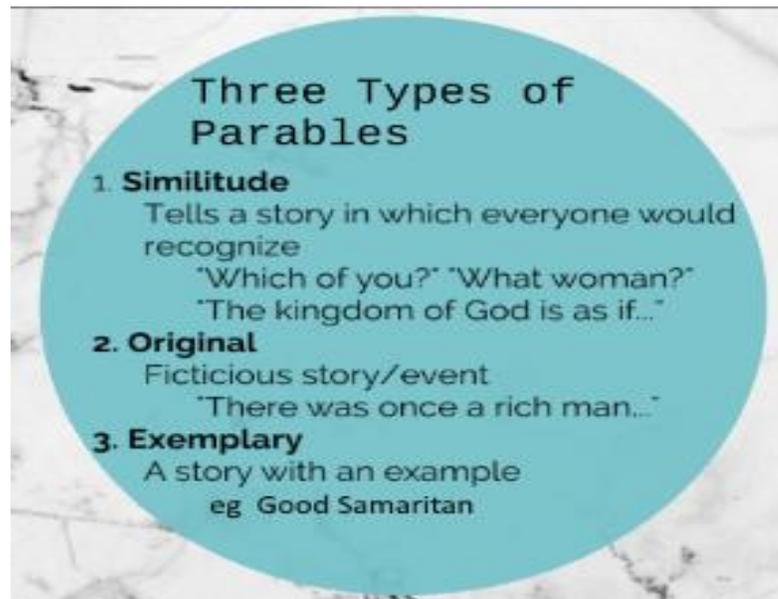
Parables of Jesus



- “Perhaps no other mode of teaching was so common among the Jews as that by Parables” “... Every ancient Rabbinic work is literally full of Parables” (Alfred Eldersheim)

Eze 17:2 "Son of man, pose a riddle, and speak a parable to the house of Israel,

- In most cases a parable is a story drawn from everyday life. It is usually symbolic or metaphoric in nature & often conveys a profound spiritual lesson



- Perhaps 1/3 of Jesus teaching was in Parables ... Some of His most memorable lessons
- The english “**Parable**” comes from the Greek “**parabole**” meaning “**comparison**”. The Hebrew word can also mean “riddle”

Common Themes in Parables

- Great reversals e.g. first shall be last
- Growth and transformation over time –nature parables
- Joy of finding what has been lost
- Effect of mixing ingredients – yeast with flour to make bread; salt flavors meat and preserves it like nothing else
- Living in the Kingdom of God: coming of the Kingdom, grace of the Kingdom, discipleship, now and not yet



1. As the hearer comes into contact with the image or symbol – a field or a fig tree – they are easily **reminded** of the parable & the lesson



I continue to remember, a (dorky) advertising campaign used by the **A&P** chain of grocery stores where they (effectively for me) associated a stop sign with their pitch:

Switch To Our Prices

2. Teaching by parables was commonly accepted among Jewish people of the day – an effective way of engaging the listener to “think”, “figure out” & come to conclusions

3. To make a truth clearer – to **Reveal**

4. To hide the truth – to **Conceal** (Jesus’ main reason for using parables).

As a “teaching tool” parables are often made up of similes & metaphors (figurative language) which clarify concepts by saying:

This (unfamiliar thing) **is like this** (familiar thing) ... **in some ways**
Eg The Kingdom of God ... is like ... a mustard seed

(Who knows **ANYTHING** about the Kingdom of God unless it is **revealed**?)

... parables help us understand the mysterious or unknown things by comparing to things we are well familiar with. They can **make a truth clearer**

However ... Jesus clearly explains He also uses Parables to hide truth

Mat 13:10 & the disciples came & said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

Mat 13:11 He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has **not been given**."

Mat 13:12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

Mat 13:13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they **do not see**, and hearing they **do not hear, nor do they understand**.

Jas 4:17 Therefore, to him who **knows** to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.

Mat 7:6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces."

... the reaction of some people to the Truth of God is to attack!



- Most don't realize Jesus' parables were given in 3 distinct sets or groupings (Galilean, Judean & Jerusalem ministries or periods)
- Each set had a theme or overall message
 - Galilean – The Kingdom of God
 - Judean - The anticipation of a future community of followers, & the role of his apostles in leading it
 - Jerusalem – God's Judgment
- Each set became progressively stronger in meaning and impact
- Each set had a distinct geography where spoken & were given at 3 distinct times in Jesus' ministry



The Galilean parables



- SETTING: Jesus grew up in Nazareth
- Later moved to Capernaum (where he may have owned a home)
- He worked as a carpenter/stonemason in the province of Galilee
- This was early in Jesus' ministry
- The location was ideal where Jesus was in a boat speaking to a multitude on the shore/hillside



- THEME: These 10 parables all refer to the **Kingdom of God** – each is designed to motivate, to really want & desire the Kingdom
- Jesus spoke **6 parables to the people** & later he explained these only to the disciples
- He provided the disciples **4 more** parables not needing explanation containing moral & spiritual lessons aimed directly at the disciples pertaining to their apostolic ministry

To the public:

- 1) The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-9),
- 2) The Wheat and the Tares (Matthew 13:24-30),
- 3) The Lamp Under the Bushel (Mark 4:21-25),
- 4) The Grain of Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32),
- 5) The Kingdom like Leaven (Matthew 13:33) and
- 6) The Seed Cast Into the Ground (Mark 4:26-29).

For Disciples only:

- 7) The Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)
- 8) The Merchant Seeking Pearls (Matthew 13:45-46)
- 9) The Net Cast Into the Sea (Matthew 13:47-50)
- 10) The Householder & His Treasure (Matthew 13:52)

The Parable of the Sower

Mat 13:1 On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea.

Mat 13:2 And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

Mat 13:3 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow.

Mat 13:4 And as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.

Mat 13:5 Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.

Mat 13:6 But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.

Mat 13:7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.

Mat 13:8 But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Mat 13:9 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

The Parable of the Sower Explained

Mat 13:18 "Therefore hear the parable of the sower:

Mat 13:19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

Mat 13:20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

Mat 13:21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

Mat 13:22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

Mat 13:23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."



- Special significance of THIS parable: (Mark 4:13) "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? (...This is the model)
- There **are** different categories of people ... Each responds differently to the Gospel
- John 15:5 – Jesus is the vine ... and wants us to bring forth "much fruit"

The Parable of the Weeds

Mat 13:24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

Mat 13:25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

Mat 13:26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.

Mat 13:27 So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

Mat 13:28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'

Mat 13:29 But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.

Mat 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' "



The Parable of the Weeds Explained

Mat 13:36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

Mat 13:37 He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.

Mat 13:38 The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*.

Mat 13:39 The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

Mat 13:40 Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.

Mat 13:41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,

Mat 13:42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Mat 13:43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

- Simple (yet profound) point ... both the converted & unconverted have to coexist in the same society until the harvest at the end of the age at Christ's return.
- **Parables are "doctrinal"** ... a doctrine is a biblical principle, teaching or Truth backed by God's authority.
- The fate of those who follow the devil when they *know better*, results in the second death. There is no immortal soul ... This parable teaches doctrine!

A Lamp Under a Basket

Mar 4:21 Also He said to them, "Is a lamp brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be set on a lampstand?"

Mar 4:22 For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light.

Mar 4:23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

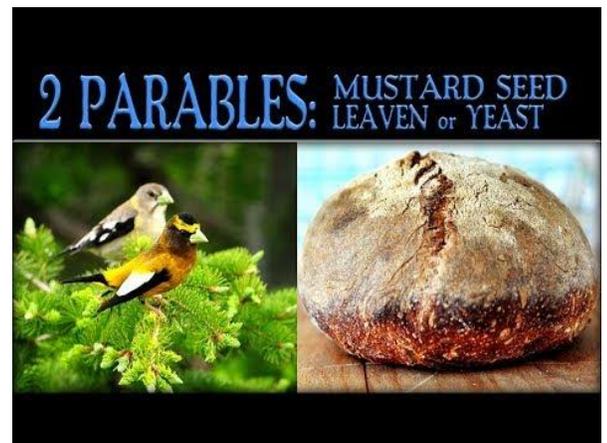
- Jesus earlier taught ... Mat 10:27 "Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.
- The **Gospel** message is light in a dark place. **Jesus** is the light of the world (John 1:9). Our **Christian example & message** is to light the world (Matt 5:14-16)

The Mustard Seed and the Leaven

Mat 13:31 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field,

Mat 13:32 which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."

- Preparations for the Kingdom of God have the smallest beginnings
- The Kingdom will ultimately fill the earth



Mat 13:33 Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

- The same point via a different analogy ... What God has started with a comparative few now, will ultimately result in the entire earth being blanketed with the knowledge of God

The Parable of the Seed Growing

Mar 4:26 And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground,

Mar 4:27 and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how.

Mar 4:28 For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head.

Mar 4:29 But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."



- We don't understand the precise mechanism by which the Word of God produces fruit in human lives. But we can plainly see that it does!
- God causes each member to grow in grace & knowledge & character. He increases the church qualitatively & quantitatively.

“For Disciples only”

- Last 4 parables designed to show the incredible value & pricelessness of their apostolic calling – true worth of the knowledge of the Kingdom of God... and how they were to teach others about the Kingdom.

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

Mat 13:44 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.



- Not everyone who responds to God’s call, is seeking the truth of God
- A wise person will immediately recognize the value & meaning of that high calling
- Jesus reminded the disciples of the importance of their calling (and our calling too!)

The Parable of the Pearl of Great Value

Mat 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls,
Mat 13:46 who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

- This person (who responds to God’s call), is seeking the truth of God & sees it’s value
- If we are patient & endure to the end - being willing to forsake all - we will see God

The Parable of the Net

Mat 13:47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind,

Mat 13:48 which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away.

Mat 13:49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just,

Mat 13:50 and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

- The Gospel message attracts all kinds of people. Not all are sincere & headed for the Kingdom. Some have wrong motives & are hypocrites—they will be separated-Will you?

New and Old Treasures

Mat 13:51 Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

Mat 13:52 Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure *things* new and old."

- The disciples understand to be teaching some “old things” from the Old Testament along with the new truths Christ had personally gave to them.
- The New Testament has 850 references to the Old Testament ... 280 are direct quotes

Number ↕	Event ↕	Matthew ↕	Mark ↕	Luke ↕
1	The Growing Seed		Mark 4:26–29 ↗	
2	The Two Debtors			Luke 7:41–43 ↗
3	The Lamp under a Bushel	Matthew 5:14–15 ↗	Mark 4:21–25 ↗	Luke 8:16–18 ↗
4	Parable of the Good Samaritan			Luke 10:25–37 ↗
5	The Friend at Night			Luke 11:5–8 ↗
6	The Rich Fool			Luke 12:16–21 ↗
7	The Wise and the Foolish Builders	Matthew 7:24–27 ↗		Luke 6:46–49 ↗
8	New Wine into Old Wineskins	Matthew 9:16–17 ↗	Mark 2:21–22 ↗	Luke 5:37–39 ↗
9	Parable of the strong man	Matthew 12:29–29 ↗	Mark 3:27–27 ↗	Luke 11:21–22 ↗
10	Parable of the Sower	Matthew 13:3–9 ↗	Mark 4:3–9 ↗	Luke 8:5–8 ↗
11	The Tares	Matthew 13:24–30 ↗		
12	The Barren Fig Tree			Luke 13:6–9 ↗
13	Parable of the Mustard Seed	Matthew 13:31–32 ↗	Mark 4:30–32 ↗	Luke 13:18–19 ↗
14	The Leaven	Matthew 13:33–33 ↗		Luke 13:20–21 ↗
15	Parable of the Pearl	Matthew 13:45–46 ↗		
16	Drawing in the Net	Matthew 13:47–50 ↗		
17	The Hidden Treasure	Matthew 13:44 ↗		
18	Counting the Cost			Luke 14:28–33 ↗
19	The Lost Sheep	Matthew 18:10–14 ↗		Luke 15:4–6 ↗
20	The Unforgiving Servant	Matthew 18:23–35 ↗		
21	The Lost Coin			Luke 15:8–9 ↗
22	Parable of the Prodigal Son			Luke 15:11–32 ↗
23	The Unjust Steward			Luke 16:1–13 ↗
24	Rich man and Lazarus			Luke 16:19–31 ↗
25	The Master and Servant			Luke 17:7–10 ↗
26	The Unjust Judge			Luke 18:1–8 ↗
27	Pharisees and the Publican			Luke 18:9–14 ↗
28	The Workers in the Vineyard	Matthew 20:1–16 ↗		
29	The Two Sons	Matthew 21:28–32 ↗		
30	The Wicked Husbandmen	Matthew 21:33–41 ↗	Mark 12:1–9 ↗	Luke 20:9–16 ↗
31	The Great Banquet	Matthew 22:1–14 ↗		Luke 14:15–24 ↗
32	The Budding Fig Tree	Matthew 24:32–35 ↗	Mark 13:28–31 ↗	Luke 21:29–33 ↗
33	The Faithful Servant	Matthew 24:42–51 ↗	Mark 13:34–37 ↗	Luke 12:35–48 ↗
34	The Ten Virgins	Matthew 25:1–13 ↗		
35	The Talents or Minas	Matthew 25:14–30 ↗		Luke 19:12–27 ↗
36	The Sheep and the Goats	Matthew 25:31–46 ↗		
37	Parable of the Wedding Feast			Luke 14:7–14 ↗