

The Parables of Jesus



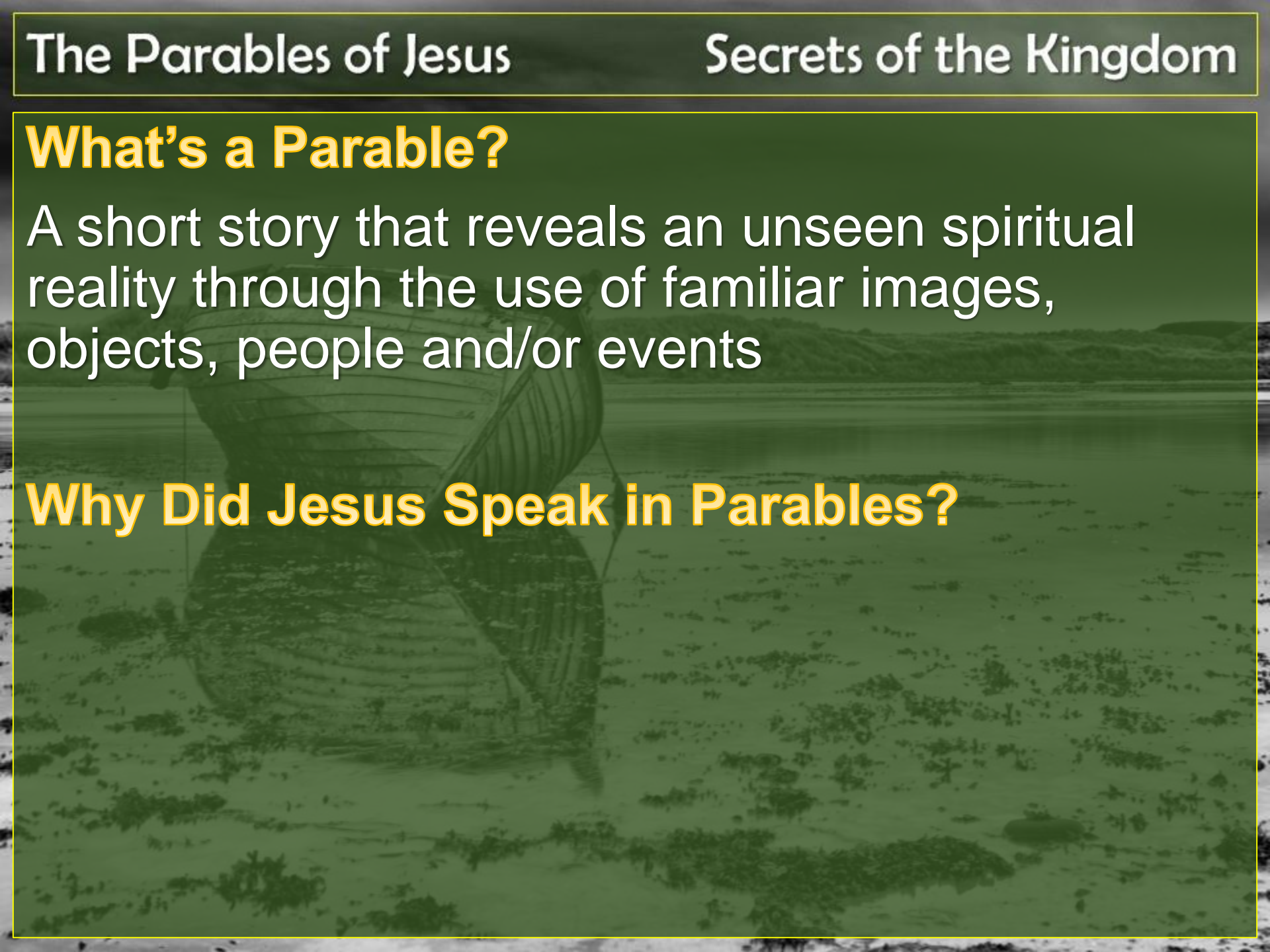
Secrets of
the
Kingdom

The kingdom of heaven is like...

What's a Parable?

A short story that reveals an unseen spiritual reality through the use of familiar images, objects, people and/or events

Why Did Jesus Speak in Parables?



Matthew 13:10-17

¹⁰ Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” ¹¹ And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ¹² For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says:

““You will indeed hear but never understand,
and you will indeed see but never perceive.”

Matthew 13:10-17

¹⁵ For this people's heart has grown dull,
and with their ears they can barely hear,
and their eyes they have closed,
lest they should see with their eyes
and hear with their ears
and understand with their heart
and turn, and I would heal them.'

¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.¹⁷ For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

Purpose of the Parables

1. Test of the heart:
 - a. Receptive heart – one who humbly hears, sees and consequently, understands the word. The secrets of the kingdom are revealed and applied
 - b. Unreceptive heart – one who covers their ears so cannot understand and shuts their eyes so cannot perceive the truth. The secrets of God's kingdom remain hidden to this person
2. Challenge the hearers perception of reality and truth by revealing how God sees things
3. Deconstruct common beliefs and attitudes that are contrary to God's design and desires

Matthew 13:44-45

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶ who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

The Greatest Treasure

The Context:

- Jesus is sitting in a boat near the shore while a great crowd of people stood on the beach
- Near the end of a discourse/sermon about the kingdom of heaven
- Content of the discourse:
 1. The kingdom begins via spreading of gospel
 2. There is opposition: enemy, world, hard-hearts
 3. The kingdom begins small and seemingly insignificant but grows exponentially
 4. There will be some kind of sorting/judgement
 5. The value of the kingdom beyond everything

The Greatest Treasure

The Problem:

Humans undervalue the kingdom of heaven

- The common perception was that what we can see and obtain on earth is of the greatest value
- Jesus confronts this belief by showing the infinite value of God's kingdom and his salvation

The Greatest Treasure

The Kingdom Secrets:

1. God's plan of salvation is of far greater value than anything we can hang on to in this world
 - The treasure was "found"
 - The pearl was "searched" for
 - Entry into the kingdom is not a fair exchange (in his *joy*, he goes and sells *everything*)

The Greatest Treasure

The Kingdom Secrets:

Matt 6:19-21... ¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matt 6:33... ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

The Greatest Treasure

The Kingdom Secrets:

1. God's plan of salvation is of far greater value than anything we can hang on to in this world
2. Entry into the kingdom is all in or not in
 - Unless you give up your entire self, you cannot become a citizen of God's kingdom
 - Jesus cannot be one of many options in your spiritual walk

The Greatest Treasure

The Kingdom Secrets:

Matt 16:24-26... Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?”

The Greatest Treasure

The Mirror of the Parable

1. How much do you value the kingdom of heaven?
 - What does the evidence of the way you live your life suggest about what you value most?
2. Are you all in when it comes to Jesus?
 - Is Jesus just one of many options to follow?
 - Do you see Jesus more like a life coach or the King of Kings?

The Parables of Jesus

Secrets of the Kingdom

