


The Parables of Jesus



Seeds
&
Soils
Matt. 13

The kingdom of heaven is like...

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Parables

“The word parable means to “cast alongside”. A parable is a story that teaches something new by putting the truth alongside something familiar. A parable starts off as a picture that is familiar to the listeners. But as you carefully consider the picture, it becomes a mirror in which you can see yourself, and many people do not ask for help, then the mirror becomes a window through which we see God and His grace. To understand a parable and benefit from it, demands honesty and humility on our part.”

Warren Wiersbe

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Parables

“The primary purpose of the parables is to reveal some aspect of the coming of the kingdom of God in the person and teaching of Jesus. But Jesus also intended that the parables conceal his teaching while being a vehicle for it. Even the disciples of Jesus did not understand the parables without fail. But their adherence to Jesus caused them to seek and receive understanding of the parables. Understanding is made subject to whether a listener is willing to identify with Jesus or wishes to remain "outside" (hold Jesus at arms length). The disciples inquiry arose from commitment and was itself hearing which was in contrast with others failure to hear.” Eerdmans

Bible Dictionary

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Parables , What do We Know?

1. They used everyday objects, events and images to communicate important truth.

-Matthew 13: 1-7

2. They were designed to test, not the intelligence but the spiritual responsiveness of the hearer.

-Matthew 13:11-13

3. Great insight about God and his Kingdom can be ours by listening carefully to these parables

-Matthew 13:16-17

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“That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away.”

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“Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear” Matthew 13:1-8

- vs 9-17 discussion with disciples
- purpose of parables
- explains the parable starting vs. 18

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“Hear then the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.”

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As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

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Four Soils for the Seed

1. Hard Pack

- seed lays "exposed"
- enemy quick to steal it away
- hard heart, no interest, opposed to.....

2. Shallow or Rocky

- enough for germination
- exciting to see quick response, growth
- lacking what is necessary to withstand elements

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- receives it with joy
- endures for awhile – no depth or root
- "tribulation", "persecution" on account of the word (counter cultural & opposed)
- falls away – no working through difficult circumstances and staying rooted

- Eph. 4:14 *“so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”*

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3. Crowded or Thorns in Soil

- truth takes and growth occurs
- one more thing in many lives, alongside
- choked out – slow and constant
- strangled by "cares of the world", and "deceitfulness of riches"
- often a loss of keeping in community, and keeping God`s perspective in situations
- world bombarding us with extreme language and responses daily

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- start looking to economies, leaders, our plans to find security and purpose
- defined lack of trusting God is good, cares or will act in my circumstance
- illusion of money fixing or easing anxiety
- proves unfruitful – crop with no harvest

4. Fruitful Soil

- understands and acts on knowledge
- huge return, larger than local standards

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- sower expects a return for seed

- John 15:1-6 *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned”*

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D A Carson

“People don't drift towards holiness. Apart from grace driven effort, people do not gravitate towards godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith and delight in the Lord.”

“we drift towards compromise and call it tolerance; we drift towards disobedience and call it freedom; we drift towards superstition and call it faith; we cherish the indiscipline of lost self control and call it relaxation; we slouch towards prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism”

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So What

1. Not enough to know or hear truth, needs to be tended and bear fruit in our lives.
 - common myth – enough to know the info
 - many ways our fruitfulness taken away
 - great return is promised – keep eternity in view [here](#)

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2. The Growth of truth will be difficult

- enemy seeking to steal it
- shallow and not able to endure
- struggle of life overcomes what is there
 - life will have struggles and concerns
 - community, priorities, faithfulness matter
- great reward to tend and care for truth

3. The Sower Expects a Return

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4. You have control of the soil in your life

- soft heart towards God, absence of bitterness, unforgiveness, hidden sin, etc.
- discipline of developing a deep root to withstand the difficulty of environments
- keep the difficulty of a broken world, and the temptation to trust in other things in perspective
- remember the harvest and reward of our heavenly father worth attention to this