

**The Parables of Jesus #1**  
**Introduction to the Parables**  
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**INTRODUCTION**

**A. Ps 78:1-2**

Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.  
I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, (NKJ)

1. With that statement, the Old Testament laid the foundation for one of the most effective methods of teaching, to be used by Jesus during his ministry
2. Matt 13:34-35  
All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "'I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.'" (NKJ)

**B. Aside from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is perhaps best known for his parables**

1. Defined
  - a. (parabole) = to throw alongside
  - b. a comparison, analogy
  - c. an earthly story with a heavenly meaning (good, except that some parables are sayings not stories)
  - d. parables use something that is generally familiar to us to show or illustrate a deeper truth or meaning
2. Parables are used in the Old Testament (but sparingly)
  - a. Isa 5:1-7 -- parable of the vineyard (God's building, disappointment and judgment of Israel)
  - b. 2 Sam 12:1-7 -- Nathan's parable about the rich man who took the only sheep from his poor neighbor (Thou art the man -- thus revealing David's guilt of adultery with Bathsheba)

**C. No one used parables more effectively than Jesus**

1. Tonight we begin a series of sermons from the parables
2. Just as in our study of the Sermon on the Mount, this study can and will stretch our minds and our hearts as we understand God's will better

## **I. HOW THE BIBLE INTRODUCES THE PARABLES OF JESUS**

### **A. Note the following verses**

1. Matt 13:10-18

And the disciples came and said to Him, ""Why do You speak to them in parables?" 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. "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. ""Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ""And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: "Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.' But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; "for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. Therefore hear the parable of the sower: (NKJ)

2. Matt 13:34-35

All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: ""I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world." (NKJ)

3. Mark 4:34

But without a parable He did not speak to them. And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples. (NKJ)

### **B. Many have asked, "Why did Jesus teach in parables?"**

1. Ps 78:2 -- in fulfillment of prophecy

2. Mt 13:10-12 -- to make truth clear to believers

- a. parables illustrate the truth in understandable ways
- b. parables encourage thought and reflection
- c. parables are easy to listen to; people love stories
- d. they make a lasting impression
- e. to stimulate inquiry, causing people to seek the meaning
- f. to cultivate the true believers from the disinterested
- g. to disarm those who might be antagonistic or judgmental

- h. to encourage people to come to their own conclusions
- i. to encourage people to see themselves in the picture
- j. to produce what is called "the light bulb experience"
- k. to move people to think on heavenly themes
- l. to leave people with clear options and alternatives, but free to choose

## **II. WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT BY STUDYING THE PARABLES?**

### **A. To learn more about Jesus**

- 1. You learn a lot about a man from what he teaches others
- 2. His thinking and his character come through in his words

### **B. To learn more about God's will for man**

- 1. Some parables are meant to teach important principles of life
- 2. Understanding them help us know how to please God

### **C. To learn about the nature of God's kingdom**

- 1. Some parables are specifically about the kingdom
- 2. We can understand what it is, how it is established and grows, and how God works

### **D. To learn the importance of personal responsibility**

- 1. Some parables describe man's responsibility for seeking God
- 2. We can understand what God wants from us

### **E. To learn the truth about God's judgment of evil and reward of righteousness**

- 1. Some parables plainly declare God as a judging God
- 2. At the same time, others describe him as a rewarder and blessing giver

### **F. To learn about the character of God**

- 1. Some parables declare the grace, mercy, compassion, and love of God
- 2. They help us understand how God feels about mankind and the great lengths to which he will go to save us

### **G. To learn how to relate to other people**

- 1. Some parables encourage us to practice godly characteristics to others
- 2. They challenge us to be God-like in the way we live

## **CONCLUSION**

- A. If the Sermon on the Mount give us the foundation for being the people of God, then perhaps the parables give us the practical application of those principles
- B. We cannot be like Jesus until we know his teachings
- C. Join in the study and determin to grow
- D. Invitation