

2/11/18

Are You Saved?
Matt. 13:1-23

Jesus has been doing miracles, preaching and teaching, but the Pharisees, Scribes and the multitudes have been rejecting Him.

1. Jesus has warned them of the unpardonable sin and that a tree is to be judged by its fruit.
2. Asking for a sign Jesus refused them and gave the sign of Jesus, His resurrection!
3. Then as Jesus called the multitudes a wicked generation His mother and brothers arrived.

Matthew presents five mayor discourses.

1. Sermon On The Mount. Matt. 5:1-7:29
2. Instructions to the Twelve. Matt. 9:35-10:42
3. Parables of the Kingdom. Matt. 13:1-52
 - a. The gospel of Matthew is the most important gospel of the four, being the hindge from the Old to the New written to and for the Jews.
 - b. This chapter is the most important and key chatper of the book of Matthew
4. The Christian Community. Matt. 18:1-35
5. The Olivet Discourse. Matt. 24:1-25:46

Now Jesus begins to speak in Parables and gives what is known as the Kingdom Paralbes.

1. These Parbles are a description of the response of people to the gospel of the Kingdom in the absence of the King until He returns at the Second Coming.

2. These parables often are interpreted as the “Kingdom of heaven” in a positive way that it is going to keep growing in a miraculous way and the church will establish the Kingdom.

- a. This is precisely what is taught by many popular Pastors under “kingdom Theology”, to put Christians in political office, take back territory from Satan to set up the kingdom.
 - b. Much of the health and wealth, seed faith are part of it and now the Emergent Church.
3. When in reality these “kingdom Parables” describe the opposition, hostility and rejection of the Kingdom of God through the preaching of the gospel.
- * “Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there **few** who are saved?” And He said to them, Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Lk. 13:23-24

Some important things about Parables.

1. Parables are not allegories, which are a spiritual meaning to a historic story, parables are an extended metaphor or simile taken from every day life.
2. The word parable “parabole”, means to throw along side, taking something you know, putting it next to something you do not know, so that knowing what you do know you will know what you did not know.
3. Parables have one central message and not all elements are to be interpreted. lest they confuse or destroy the central message and the punch-line that reveals the truth intended in the particular parable.

4. Only when the particular elements are given as a clear interpretation as we will see Jesus gives in the parable of the sower are they legitimate and to be applied to all the “kingdom parables”.
5. Often people impose a subjective meaning to the parable that is foreign to the text, making the text say what they want it to say, this is what is called “spiritualizing” or “allegorizing”.
6. All symbols and figures must be interpreted consistently in; **a)** Context, **b)** the book, **c)** the whole of the Bible, **d)** the first time mentioned in Scripture.
7. Parables do one of two things, compare or contrast.
8. G. Campbell Morgan said a parable is “An earthly story with a heavenly message.”

We want to look at the Parable of the Sower that unfolds for us in three movements. Matt. 13:1-23

- I.** The Parable of the Sower. vs. 1-9
 - II.** The purpose for teaching in parables. vs. 10-17
 - III.** The parable of the Sower explained. vs. 18-23
- I.** **The Parable of the sower. vs. 1-9**
 - A.** The scene is Jesus teaching the people. vs. 1-2
* Parallel passages. Mk. 4:1-9; LK. 8:4-8
 1. The specific time stated is a related time,”
On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea.” vs. 1
 - a.** “On same day Jesus went back with His mother and brothers.” Matt. 12:46-50

- 1) The house could have been His mother’s Mary, Peter or His own house in Capernaum. Matt. 8:14
 - 2) The the definite article is present “the house” where Jesus lived. Matt. 4:13
- b.** Jesus sat by the sea.
 - 1) The customary position of teacher.
 - 2) The students or people would stand.
2. The crowd came to Jesus. vs. 2
 - a.** Not a few, “And great multitudes were gathered together to Him.” vs. 2a
 - b.** Jesus chose a place to be heard, “so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.” vs. 2b-c
 - 1) He sat in the boat to teach, using the natural amphitheater affect of His voice being carried to the shore.
 - 2) The whole multitude stood on the shore ready to hear Him teach.
- B.** The Proclamation of the Parable of the Sower. vs. 3-9
 1. Jesus taught many parable, “Then He spoke many things to them in parables,” vs. 3a
 - a.** There is a definite change in the ministry of Jesus as He began to teach a series of Parables called “the Kingdom Parables”.
 - b.** This is due to all the opposition, conflict and rejection of the kingdom, their king and Messiah that had arrived, so Jesus now is going to reveal truths kept secret

- from the foundation of the world. Matt. 3:2-3; 4:17; 10:7; 11:12; 13:34-35
- c. The revelation will disclose the opposing resistance throughout the kingdom of heaven in the absence of the King till His Second Coming.
- d. Jesus used parables before. Matt. 5:13-16; 6:26-30; 7:24-27; 9:16-17; 11:16-17
2. Jesus presented His first parable, “saying: “Behold, a sower went out to sow.” vs. 3b-c
- a. The word Behold “dou” is emphatic being at the beginning of the sentence.
* It is an imperative command, aorist middle voice, each person must obey to pay attention for themselves.
- b. The parable reveals the initial work of sowing the seed of God’s word for one to be saved by giving ear and repent to enter the kingdom.
* Literally, “The sower not a sower”.
- c. Jesus told His disciples “the Parable of the Sower” was crucial to understand all other parables correctly, if you interpret it wrong you can misinterpret the other parables, “And He said to them, “Do you not **understand** this parable? How then will you **understand** all the parables?”
Mk. 4:13
3. The sowing of the seed fell on various kinds of soil. vs. 4-9

- a. The hard ground, “And as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.” vs. 4
- 1) Sowing was done by hand or donkey as a bag with a hole was tied to him.
- 2) The wayside “hodos”, were the paths compacted and hard, unpenetrable.
- 3) Jesus interprets this as one who does not understand the word sown in their heart and the birds snatch “harpazo” the seed suddenly and violently, Jesus says the birds represent **Satan**. vs. 19
- b. The shallow ground, “Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.” vs. 5-6
- 1) The stony ground hearer, hears and receives the seed, but has no depth of soil and the heat of the sun germinates it, but then withers.
- 2) Jesus interprets this to be one who does not endure but for a while, for when tribulation, persecution confront him for the word, he stumbles “skandalizo” meaning to begin to distrust and desert, **the flesh!** vs. 21

- c. The thorny ground, “And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.” vs. 7
- 1) The thorny ground hearer, hears and receives the seed, but is choked out becoming unfruitful.
 - 2) Jesus interprets the things that choke the word, the cares of **the world**, the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and is unfruitful, vs. 22
* “For all that *is* in the **world**--the lust of the **flesh**, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the **world**.” 1Jn. 2:16
 - 3) The devil, the flesh and the world!
- d. The fertile ground, “But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.” vs. 8
- 1) The fertile ground hearer, hears and receives the seed on good “kalos” ground, suitable, excellent rich soil.
 - 2) Jesus interprets the good ground hearer as one who understands the word and bears fruit, 30, 60 and hundredfold. vs. 23
- e. The exhortation and warning is the punch-line of the parable, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” vs. 9
- 1) Literally, “He having ears to hear” personal accountability to God.

- 2) Then comes the imperative command, “let him hear”.
- f. The Parable of the Sower is a key parable revealing two classes of people, those that are lost by their own rejection of the hearing of the gospel and those that are saved by receiving the gospel.
- 1) The four types of soils represent the hearts of people for the seed of God’s word be planted.
 - 2) The process of those lost is described in three ways, first by rejecting the gospel all together, the other two by not enduring for distinct reasons.
 - 3) Mark and Luke have a section of a lamp revealing the heart that Matthew does not. Mk. 4:21-29; Lk. 8:16-18

Illustration

When a woman has a miscarriage or a still born does that mean the child was not really child or conceived?

Application

1. One of the question people ask me about the Parable of the Sower is the one out of four ratio.
 - a. Is the parable teaching 1 out of 4 are saved?
 - b. No, I do not believe so, Jesus is merely illustrating four kinds of soils or conditions of man’s hearts that hear the word of God.
 - c. It is a strict warning to all not spurn or reject the gospel message when a person hears it.

* “For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of **salvation** I have helped you.” Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of **salvation**.” 2Cor. 6:2

2. The fault is clearly stated on the individual heart.
 - a. The One sowing is God, He cannot be faulted.
 - b. The word is perfect, it cannot be faulted.
 - c. The one hearing and responding is the problem.

* “The heart *is* **deceitful** above all *things*, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?” Jer. 17:9

3. The parable of the sower is a simple illustration of four kinds of hearts, but we have to be careful that we not come to wrong conclusions through logic or reason, when the Scriptures reveal the opposite.

- a. A person with a hard, stony or thorny heart could die in that condition and be lost, but equally repent and become a believer.
- b. Equally the believer is to abide in Christ, not to backslide or go back into the world. All the warnings are to believer, not unbelievers.

1) Listen to the words of Jesus, “**Abide** in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you **abide** in Me. “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. “If anyone does not **abide** in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather

them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.” Jn. 15:4-6

- 2) “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we **drift** away.” Heb. 2:1
- 3) “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil **heart** of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” Heb. 3:12-13

The parable of the Sower reveals the rejecting hearts of sinners!

II. The purpose for teaching in parables. vs. 10-17

* The parallel passages. Mk. 4:10-12; Lk. 8:9-10

- A. The disciples questioned Jesus about His teaching in parables . vs. 10-11
 1. The disciples were surprised He had resorted exclusively to parabolic method, “And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” vs. 10
 - a. The word “them” refers to the crowds in contrast to the disciples.
 - b. Jesus has been rejected by the Jews and confronted with great hostility.
 2. The Lord Jesus gave them a clear answer. vs. 11

- a. They were the “good ground”, “He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.” vs. 11a-b
 - 1) To the disciples it had been granted to know “ginosko”, to understand and percieve the spiritual truths.
 - 2) The word mysteries “musterion” means to shut the mouth and used of secret religions for initiatory rites hidden revealed to them.
 - 3) But every time the word is used in the New Testament it means something previously hidden, but now made known clearly. Rom. 16:24; 1Cor. 2:7
- b. The multitudes were on the waysid, the stony and thorny soil, “but to them it has not been given.” vs. 11c
 - 1) The diciples were able to understand now the “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven” because they had received the seed of the word in their hearts, on “good ground”, being born again into the Kingdom.
 - 2) The multitudes had not been granted by their own rejection of the word of God they heard, God did not reject them by predestination, but by their own unbelief.

- B. The explanation for the seeming denial by God for them to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven is clearly stated. vs. 12-13
 - 1. The believer is given more illumination having received the word, “For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance.” vs. 12a-c
 - a. The entire section reveals the free-will of man to make their eternal decision.
 - b. No one is ever rejected by God, they reject God!
 - 2. The unbeliever in his ongoing rejection of the word brings on himself greater darkness, “but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.” vs. 12d-e
 - a. The accountability is according to the measure of light received, like Pharoah.
 - b. “For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be **required**; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.” Lk. 12:48d-g
 - 3. The reason Jesus gave to the disciples for speaking in parables to the crowds was to try and get them understand the spiritual truths, “Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.” vs. 13
 - a. The crowds were indifferent to the words of Jesus in unbelief and rejecting Him and the gospel. Matt. 11-12

- b. Jesus was attempting to stimulate their interest through the teaching of word-pictures that they might break out of their apathetic indifference and unbelief and believe the truth and come to faith .
- c. Jesus was taking what they did know, putting next to what they did not know that in knowing what they did know they would come to know the spiritual mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven.
* “Parables reveal truth not conceal, it is the method of infinite love.” Morgan

C. The prophetic confirmation of their unbelief.
vs. 14-15

- 1. Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah about their refusal to hear, “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.’” vs. 14
 - a. The quote is from Isaiah in the LXX. Is 6:9-10
 - b. This prophecy once again is not a proclamation that God would bring this on them, but rather the announcement of their hard hearts of unbelief that would result in greater spiritual blindness, not that the teaching in parables was to blind them.

- * “He who is often rebuked, *and* hardens *his* neck, Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.” Prov. 29:1
- c. The word fulfilled is not the usual word for Matthew “pleroo” but “anapleroo” to full up, to fill completely, appearing only this time in the New Testament.
- 2. Jesus quotes the problem, it is not their brains, but their hearts, “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.” vs. 15
 - * Mark has, “Lest they should turn, And *their* sins be forgiven them.” Mk. 4:12c
 - a. Their hearts had grown dull “apachunthe”, heavy and fat.
 - b. Their ears hard “bareos”, heavily, without interest or desire.
 - c. The context of Isaiah is that he was asking God how long he had to proclaim His message without people responding? God told him until they went into captivity. Is. 6:11-12
 - d. Notice they closed “kammuo” , to shut the eyes, not God!
 - e. Therefore the statement, “Lest they should understand with *their* ears and turn, So that I should heal them”, was not

the purpose of God, but rather the outcome of their own doing!

D. The high privilege of the disciples. vs. 16-17

1. The disciples were able to comprehend spiritual truth, “But blessed *are* your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear.” vs. 16
 - a. This is another beatitude, the word blessed “*mararios*” is oh how happy.
 - b. They were spiritually alive able to understand the things of God.
- 2) The longing of the prophets and those of faith was to sit under the Messiah, “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*.” vs. 17
 - a) They understood the prophetic promise. Gen. 3:15; Is. 7:14; Mic. 5:2
 - b) Peter declared this also, “Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now

have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things which angels desire to look into. 1Pet. 1:10-12; Is. 64:1

Illustration

Are you willing to accuse God of predestinating Judas to betray Jesus against his will? Listen, “Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, “I have sinned by betraying **innocent** blood.” And they said, “What *is that* to us? You see *to it!*” Matt. 27:3-4

Application

1. Not one person will ever be able to say to God.
 - a. You did not choose me.
 - b. You predestined me to hell.
 - c. You never gave me an opportunity.
 - * “The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should **perish** but that all should come to repentance.” 2Pet. 3:9
2. Not one person who does not repent will escape being judged for all their sins.
 - a. The Judge will be Jesus, “And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another **book** was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the

dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.”

Rev. 20:12

- b. The eternal abode of the unbeliever is real, “And anyone not found written in the **Book of Life** was cast into the lake of fire.” Rev. 20:15
- c. Heaven is sinless, “But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s **Book of Life**.” Rev. 21:27
- d. The garments of the saints is the righteousness of Jesus, “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not **blot out** his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” Rev. 3:5

The purpose for teaching in parables is not to conceal, but to reveal truth to sinners!

III. The parable of the sower explained. vs. 18-23

* The parallel passages. Mk. 4:13-20 Lk. 8:11-15

- A. The different conditions of hearts. vs. 18-19
 - 1. The authority of Jesus is the final one, “Therefore hear the parable of the sower. vs. 18
 - 2. The wayside is hard and unbelieving and unresponsive, “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.” vs. 19

* The word snatches “*harpazo*”, remember means to seize violently and suddenly.

- 3. The stony ground is shallow, “But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 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.” vs. 20-21
 - * This is a personal choice!
- 4. The thorny ground has a divided heart and compromise, “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.” vs. 22
 - * This is what the Gentiles seek. Matt. 6:33
- 5. The good ground is committed, “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.” vs. 23
 - a. The sower is Jesus, the Son of man.
 - b. The seed, the word of the gospel.
 - c. The hearts of sinners is the soil.
 - d. The birds evil, the wicked one is Satan.

- e. The Kingdom of Jesus is spiritual being manifested on the earth now, but we are looking for a heavenly kingdom in the future, it is part of the “kingdom of heaven”, but not synonymous.
- f. The Jews are looking for an earthly kingdom that will take place in the Kingdom Age for one-thousand years. Matt. 8:11; 12:28, 13:40-43
- g. That is why the disciples kept asking Jesus, “Are you going to restore the kingdom of God now.”

Illustration

“For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!” But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?” So then **faith comes by hearing**, and **hearing** by the word of God.” Rom. 10:13-17

Application

1. The first two parables Jesus interpreted and serve as the foundation for interpretation of the rest. vs. 18-23; 29-30

- 2. Mark says the Parable of the Sower is to be understood to understand all other parables. Mk. 4:13
- 3. The explanation of the “Parable of the Sower” was to His disciples in public. vs. 18-23
- 4. The explanation of the “tares” was to His disciples in private. vs. 36-43
- 5. The first four parables are given publicly to the multitudes and the disciples, showing the activity of Satan until the Second Coming. vs. 1-35
- 6. The next four are given privately to the disciples showing the activity of God till the Second Coming, in spite of the seeming opposition. vs. 36-52
- 7. The 2nd to 8th parables reveal the work and process till the end of the age, the Second Coming. vs. 38-39

The parable of the sower explained makes every person accountable to God for their choice of the gospel as a sinner!

Conclusion

The Parable of the Sower has unfolded in three movements.

- I. The Parable of the Sower reveals the rejecting hearts of sinners!
- II. The purpose for teaching in parables is not to conceal, but to reveal truth to sinners!
- III. The parable of the Sower explained makes everyone accountable to God for rejecting or excepting of the gospel as sinners!