



In our world we seem to prioritize direct communication with others because it seems to be the most efficient way to convey the things we need to say. While direct communication can be important for conveying information, we can also learn from more subtle forms of communication, like storytelling. In Jesus' day He used a form of storytelling called parables as a tool to let people know the work that he was doing. In this week's message we look at several parables Jesus told and the practical steps we can take to help us understand how they apply to our lives today.

1. What were your overall thoughts about the sermon on Understanding the Parables of Jesus?
2. When you communicate with others, are you more of a direct communication person or indirect communication? Why do you think you lean toward your communication style the most?
3. In what types of relationships or circumstances do you find a more indirect form of communication helpful?
4. How would you describe what a parable is generally? What are some popular modern day parables and what are their purposes (Boy who cried wolf, etc.)?
5. How did Jesus use parables compared to how modern day parables are used?

Finding the significance for us 2000 years later in Jesus' parables is connected to the context Jesus told them in. In the message Jeremy shared 4 practical ideas to help us understand what the parable means and how they apply to our lives:

- **Pay attention to the narrative's context.**

- Remember the purpose of the parables
- Remember the 3 things:
 - Is the parable about the surprising arrival of the Kingdom of God?
 - Is the parable about the surprising nature of the Kingdom of God?
 - Is the parable about a moment of crisis or decision?

- Try to understand the significance of the parable beyond the context.

6. In what ways do you think the 4 practical steps can help you when you read Jesus' parables.

7. What do you find is the hardest part of understanding the parables of Jesus?
How can this group help you find the significance of Jesus' parables for your life?

8. Is there a parable that comes to mind that has been difficult for you to understand?
Would you be willing to revisit the parable this week in an attempt to understand it more and will you ask God to help you understand how it applies to your life?

The Gospels are full of parables that Jesus told, and we believe that the Bible as a whole points to Jesus. Jesus is the one that brings peace, healing, meaning, and purpose to our lives and He makes it possible for us to be loved and forgiven by our Heavenly Father. We want to help each other understand the Bible because when we can understand what scripture is saying it can help us trust Jesus more.