

Parables About the Kingdom

Matthew 13 introduces us to Jesus' famous teaching method of using parables. Jesus gives seven parables in this chapter. A parable is a story that is true to life, but it is designed to teach something spiritual. There are several reasons why Jesus often taught in parables.

Jesus told many famous parables during His time on earth (ex: the prodigal son, the good Samaritan, the sower). Among the most overlooked parables today are the final five told in Matthew 13. In them, Jesus reveals many essential truths about the kingdom of God. God's kingdom is synonymous with the church many times in the Bible (Matthew 16:18-19).

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed and leaven (Matthew 13:31-33).

- A mustard seed is tiny but can produce a tree-sized plant.
- Leaven is a fermenting agent typically used to make the dough rise. Commonly, the word is used in the Bible to talk about the impact of sin (Matthew 16:6; 1 Corinthians 5:6). Here though, Jesus uses the term to reveal something positive about the kingdom of God.
- These parables talk about how the kingdom would experience explosive growth and have a huge impact on the world.
- Like the mustard seed, the kingdom would start small but grow tremendously (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:1; 6:7). Like leaven, the kingdom would impact the world (Acts 17:6). God expects the church to be doing these same things today.

The kingdom of heaven is like a hidden treasure and costly pearl (Matthew 13:44-46).

- These would have been very familiar stories to those in the first century. Finding someone's buried possessions was common in the first century. This person found a treasure, hid it again, and then sold all he had to obtain it legally.
- Another person sold all he had to purchase an expensive pearl he found.
- These parables reveal that being part of the kingdom is more valuable than anything else in the world. Nothing we possess in this world is more valuable than being part of the kingdom of God! Do we believe this? If so, then we will never give it up by leaving Jesus!

The kingdom of heaven is like a net cast into the sea (Matthew 13:47-50).

- Like fish caught in a net, the kingdom of heaven is comprised of all kinds of people.
- Once the net is brought to shore, the good fish are separated from the bad. Unlike the previous parables, this is one of judgment.
- It speaks of how the righteous and wicked will be separated in the end.
- Which group will you be in when this takes place?

Conclusion:

Are you part of the kingdom of heaven (Colossians 1:13)?

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