

# F. Y. C.

**For Your Consideration**

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❖ SPECIAL EDITION 2015 ❖

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# PARABLES

## OF JESUS

### WHY JESUS TAUGHT IN PARABLES

The answer is found in Matthew 13:10-13ff

- The Jews
- had not repented
  - had refused the invitation to come to Christ
  - had criticized His miracles, His teachings, His life
  - were seeking to destroy Him
  - had attributed His power as coming from Beelzebul
  - were demanding signs

His disciples would benefit from hearing the parables. The parables would help them increase their understanding of the kingdom of God (spiritual). Others, who were not disciples, would lose what they had heard ... its meaning escaping their notice.

### KEY TO UNDERSTANDING PARABLES

In Mark 4:13ff, Jesus told the disciples two parables and then gave them the explanations. Then He told them some more parables and asked them, "Do you understand all these things?" And they replied, "Yes." [You are encouraged to read Mark 4:1-34 to help you understand.] In knowing how some parables are explained, helps us understand Jesus' other parables.

Jesus presented spiritual truths in "natural" settings, thereby enabling the human mind to grasp the profound truths.

### APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING PARABLES

- Refer to all the places the parable is recorded (if found in more than one book).
- Note the setting: people, place, subject under discussion.
- Determine if there are any clues in the context.
- Ascertain how much is already explained in the passage.
- Draw out the central truth.
- Compare the central truth with other passages (to see if it harmonizes).
- Look at the other points contained in the parable that may have an application.

# PARABLES

What is a PARABLE?

Lit., a placing beside. It signifies the placing of one thing beside another with a view to comparison (Vines).

1. Generally a somewhat lengthy utterance or narrative drawn from nature or human circumstances with the object being to set forth a spiritual lesson.

2. It is the lesson that is of value. The hearer must catch the analogy if he is to be instructed.

The distinction between parables and proverbs is not clearly defined. They are basically the same method of teaching. One generally is more drawn out than the other. A proverb could easily be drawn out to make a parable. E.g., "If a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into the pit." Mat. 15:14b.

Because of varying opinions as to what constitutes a parable or a proverb, the number of parables is listed as 30, 32, 33, 37, 39, 59, 71, 79. – Vines Expository Dictionary of NT Words

## METHODS OF TEACHING

**PROVERB:** A wayside saying, a byword, a maxim. (cf. 2Pe.2:22, and the book of Proverbs).

**ALLEGORY:** A setting forth of one thing in the image of another, the principle subject being inferred from the figure rather than by direct statement. (cf. Gal.4:22-31).

**FABLE:** a narrative in which animals and inanimate objects of nature are made to act and speak like human beings. (Aesop's fables).

**MYTH:** a great tale, in which there is a blending of the deeper meaning with an outward symbol. (Greek myths about gods and goddesses).

To sum up, the PARABLE differs from the FABLE by moving in a spiritual world, and never transgressing the actual order of natural things.

from the MYTH because in that there is an unconscious blending of the deeper meaning with the outward symbol, the two remaining separate in the parable.

from the PROVERB in as much as it is longer carried out, and not merely accidentally but necessarily figurative.

from the ALLEGORY by comparing one thing with another, and not transferring, as the allegory, the properties of one thing to another. – From Notes on the Parables of Our Lord, R. C. Trench

## PARABLES — ONCE-OVER-LIGHTLY

While many lessons can be drawn from the parables, there is one main lesson.

The following list is formatted by category.

### NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM

**SOWER** – Mat. 13:3-8, Mar. 4:3-8, Luk. 8:5-8

The varied effects of the Word upon different hearts.

**TARES** – Mat. 13:24-30

The separation of good and evil people is reserved for the future.

**MUSTARD SEED** – Mat. 13:31-32, Mar. 4:30-32, Luk. 13:18-19

The small beginning and great growth of the kingdom.

**LEAVEN** – Mat. 13:33, Luk. 13:20-21

The Gospel, injected into the world, will have its influence on mankind.

**HIDDEN TREASURE** – Mat. 13:44

Realizing the value of the kingdom; giving up all to have a part in it.

**PEARL OF GREAT PRICE** – Mat.13:45-46

Willingness to pay the price of discipleship.

**DRAG NET** – Mat.13:47-50

The careful, final separation of good and evil at the end of the world.

**BLADE, EAR, AND FULL CORN** – Mar.4:26-29

The Lord relies upon the power of His Word and the condition of men's hearts to produce salvation.

**RICH MAN AND LAZARUS** – Luk.16:19-31

If the revelation of God's will by inspired men doesn't produce repentance in those who serve mammon, then nothing will.

### **SERVICE AND REWARDS**

**LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD** – Mat.20:1-16

Those who work long and suffer much will receive what was promised. They will not receive more just because others, who worked less, receive the same.

**TALENTS** – Mat.25:14-30

God will not require more than we are able to do; He will not accept any excuses for inactivity.

**POUNDS** – Luk.19:11-27

We are to serve the Lord now. However, rewards come later.

**UNWORTHY SERVANT** – Luk.17:7-10

When we've done all, we are still unworthy servants. Salvation is God's gift.

### **PRAYER**

**FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT** – Luk.11:5-8

The need to be earnest and persistent in prayer.

**UNJUST JUDGE** – Luk.18:1-8

We ought to pray always and not lose heart.

### **HUMILITY**

**LOWEST SEAT AT THE FEAST** – Luk.14:7-11

Selfish ambition condemned.

**PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN** – Luk.18:9-14

Self-righteousness denounced.

### **WORLDLY WEALTH**

**UNJUST STEWARD** – Luk.16:1-9

Disciples are to act wisely and prudently.

**RICH FOOL** – Luk.12:16-21

It's foolish to rely on riches. Be rich toward God.

**GREAT SUPPER** – Luk.14:15-24

Some things, though not wrong in themselves, can keep one from having a part in the Kingdom of God.

### **GRATITUDE**

**TWO DEBTORS** – Luk.7:41-43

Love in proportion to grace received. (Self-righteousness excludes grace.)

## WATCHFULNESS

### TEN VIRGINS – Mat.25:1-13

Be watchful, the Lord may come later than expected.

### FAITHFUL AND UNFAITHFUL SERVANTS – Mat.24:25-31; Luk.12:42-48

Be watchful, the Lord may come earlier than expected.

### WATCHFUL PORTER – Mar.13:34-37

Be busy, be prepared, be watchful.

## LOVE OF NEIGHBOR

### GOOD SAMARITAN – Luk.10:30-37

Practical application of the Lord's teachings are a must.

## GOD'S LOVE FOR THE LOST

### LOST SHEEP – Mat.18:12-14; Luk.15:3-7

Portrays the seeking love of God for sinners.

### LOST COIN – Luk.15:8-10

Portrays the searching love of God.

### LOST SON – Luk.15:11-32

God, a merciful and forgiving father, desires the faithfulness of all mankind.

## JUDGMENT

### TWO SONS – Mat.21:28-32

A sinner who repents and does the Father's will have part in the kingdom; but an unrepentant self-righteous man will not.

### WICKED HUSBANDMAN – Mat.21:33-44; Mar.12:1-12; Luk.20:9-18

The self-righteous reject the Son, just as their forefathers rejected the prophets.

### BARREN FIG TREE – Luk.13:6-9

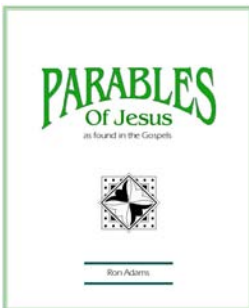
God comes in judgment against those who refuse to repent.

### MARRIAGE FEAST OF THE KING'S SON – Mat. 22:1-14

Many are called to have a part in the kingdom, few accept the invitation.

### UNFORGIVING SERVANT – Mat.18:23-35

There is no limit to forgiveness—received or given.



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