

JESUS & HIS PARABLES

Mt. 13:34 - "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them."

Introduction

Jesus Christ was the greatest teacher that ever lived. He was great because He was God's Son, the second person of the godhead, and as such He was omniscient, or all-knowing. But He was also great because He was able to perceive the thoughts of those around Him, and He knew how to convey the truth to them in the best way possible. Interestingly, Jesus often chose to teach people through parables. Parables are earthly stories that are told to make spiritual points and teach heavenly lessons. The word parable comes from the Greek word **parabole**, which refers to making a comparison. It literally means to lay something alongside something else: the familiar alongside the hidden, the earthly alongside the spiritual.

Of the roughly 40 parables that Jesus spoke, below is a list (in no particular order) of some of his best loved and well known, and where they appear in scripture:

- A. The Prodigal Son - Lu. 15:11-32
- B. The Pharisee & The Publican - Lu. 18:9-14
- C. The Good Samaritan - Lu. 10:30-37
- D. The Growing Seed - Mk. 4:26-29
- E. The Hidden Treasure & The Pearl of Great Price - Mt. 13:44-46
- F. The Laborers in the Vineyard - Mt. 20:1-16
- G. The House Built on the Rock - Mt. 7:24-27 & Lu. 6:47-49
- H. The Friend in Need - Lu. 11:5-10
- I. The Rich Fool - Lu. 12:16-21
- J. The Lost Sheep & The Lost Coin - Lu. 15:3-10

It is interesting that of the nearly 40 parables Jesus spoke, only 10 are recorded in more than one of the gospels.

To reach an accurate and complete understanding of the point being illustrated in a parable, it is helpful, even necessary, to consider:

- content (what is written)
- context (the setting and background)
- culture & customs (the common beliefs & practices of the day)
- current day application

Discussion Questions

1. Read Ps. 78:1-2 and Hos. 12:10. Were parables a strictly New Testament tool? Can you recall or find one from the Old Testament?
2. Read Mt. 13:10-17. Based on this passage, what was one of the purposes for Jesus' use of parables?
3. In addition to the main meaning that is obvious, parables often have additional deeper points. Choose a parable to illustrate how this is true.

Notes