

THE PARABLES OF JESUS SERIES

Midwest City Free Methodist Church

The Wise and Foolish Builder **Matthew 7:24-27/ Luke 6:46-49**

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.

But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

Luke 6:46-49

I. Introduction to Parables

A. Jesus taught the disciples and the crowds in Parables

1. Something thrown along side something else.
2. Earthly story with a heavenly meaning.

B. Jesus used subversive stories about everyday life

1. People listen to stories - narratives
2. People were familiar with parables - 20 parables in Old Testament
3. People were compelled to think - process

II. Wise and Foolish Builders

A. Obedience

1. We must hear the Master speak to us: waiting/ listening/watching
2. We must do what the Master tells us: Choice of all choices
3. The Gospel must be real to us
 - a. Live what we believe –faith and action must go together
 - b. Develop a long obedience in the same direction

B. Preparation

1. Look at what we have - past
 2. Look at what we need - present
 3. Look at what we want/don't want - future
- *What is the most important thing in building a house?*

C. Practice

1. Law of Undulation - there are ups and downs for all things.
2. Life brings with it tests, trials and temptations –no exceptions.
3. One course of action - what is right in God's eyes?
4. Remember eternity *sub specie aeternitatis*.
5. Remember the Christian faith offers grace and glory, not ease.
6. Remember the end is worth the journey.

“My great concern is not whether God is on our side,
my great concern is to be on God's side.”

Abraham Lincoln

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The Sower and the Seed

“The same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: ‘A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear.’”

Matthew 13:1-9

I. Background to the Parable

- A. Jesus is speaking of the kingdom
 - 1. The comparison made is of spreading the kingdom.
 - 2. Was an open lesson for all to hear.
- B. Jesus is looking for devotion in His parable
 - 1. The parable follows the passage “Who is my mother and brothers?”
 - 2. The meaning of the parable was not revealed
 - 3. Much was expected of those who knew the meaning of the parable—v. 12

II. “The Sower and the Seed”

- A. Sharing (Sowing) - *Hebrews 4:12-13*
 - 1. We must be sowers of the seed.
 - 2. The seed must be allowed to fall where it may.
 - 3. Seed should not scattered carelessly.

**Danger: Tunnel vision; focus solely on the good soil*
- B. Nurturing (The Seed) - *Romans 15:1-3*
 - 1. We need to care for the crop.
 - 2. Plants should not be over-watered.
 - 3. Pruning and pest control may be required.
 - 4. We cannot be afraid to get dirty.

**Danger: Misconception that we need not do any work*
- C. Receiving (The Harvest) - *Matthew 9:36-38*
 - 1. We must believe and look toward the yield.
 - 2. Crops are often harvested before fully ripened.
 - 3. Outward appearances can be very deceiving.
 - 4. We should not discard anyone.

** Danger: Become judgmental and selective*

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The Harvest

Matthew 13:24 - 30, 36-43

Parables - combination of two Greek words: para and ballo. Literally "to throw along side."

- Why parables?
1. To reveal the mysteries of God and Heaven
 2. To hide the truth from unbelievers.
 3. To fulfill Isaiah 6:9-10. To hear but not understand.

I. The Allegory - v. 24-30

A. The Kingdom of Heaven

1. The Kingdom of God - never includes the unsaved
2. The Kingdom of Heaven - includes the saved and professors
 - a. Begins with the 1st Advent and ends with the 2nd Advent.

B. The Wheat and the Cheat - v. 24-28

1. Good seed/Bad seed
 - a. Sown by man and his enemy
 - b. Bad seed sown while everyone was sleeping
2. Growing Seed/Hidden Weeds - dandelion looks like wheat when young
 - "brought forth fruit" KJV
 - "formed heads" NIV
 - "grain began to form" Message
 - a. Insidiousness of Satan
3. Growing Together
 - a. The patient Master
 - b. What's best for the wheat
 - c. Burning the Cheat

II. The Attribution - v. 36-43

A. The Sower: Son of Man - v. 37, *Daniel 7:13-14*

1. Jesus uses this term 81 times to describe himself
 - a. His most common title for himself.

B. The Same Soil

1. The soil is the same fertile, rich soil with the same conditions and opportunities.
2. Different fruit.

C. The Seed

1. Good Seed - sons and daughters of God - v. 38
 - a. Fruitfulness with great potential - *Galatians 5:22-23*
2. Weed Seed
 - a. Sons of the evil one - v. 38, *Galatians 5: 19 - 21*

D. The Harvest - v. 39-43

1. End of the Age - v. 49
2. The Fiery Furnace - v. 42 (NIV)
 - "burned in the fire" KJV
 - "pitched into the trash (Message)
 - a. *Revelation 19:20*
 - b. *II Thessalonians 1:7-10*

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3. What goes into the fire - those who don't know God and don't obey
 - a. Things that "offend." KJV
 - b. Things that cause sin and all who do evil
 1. Causes of Sin - Lust and Covetousness - *James 1:14, Matthew 15:19, James 4:1, Romans 7:7*

*"Apart from the succinct, surgical command 'You shall not covet' I could have dressed covetousness up to look like a virtue and ruined my life with it."
The Message*

III. The Application

- A. In which Kingdom are you?
 1. Do you profess to be saved or are you truly saved?
 2. Do you look like wheat when you are really chaff?
 3. Do you know God? Are you intimate with Him?
 4. Are you sleeping while the enemy sows weeds?
- B. How's your fruit?
 1. *Galatians 5:22-23*
 2. Are you wheat or chaff? *Matthew 25:31-46*

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The Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 13:31-35;44-52

I. Kingdoms Theology

A. Kingdom Teaching from Jesus Christ

1. “Kingdom of Heaven” - a Jewish view from *Matthew*
2. “Kingdom of God” - a Gentile view from *Luke*
3. “The kingdom is near” - a call to repentance - *Matthew 4:17*
4. “Seek first the kingdom” - setting priorities - *Matthew 6:33*
5. “The kingdom is advancing” - going onward - *Matthew 11:12*
6. “The kingdom of God is within you” - God in us - *Luke 17:21*
7. “My kingdom is not of this world” - radically different - *John 18:36*

B. Kingdom Teaching for the Apostles

1. “The kingdom is not a matter of eating...” - different values - *Romans 14:17*
2. “The kingdom is not a matter of talking...” - different means - *I Corinthians 4:20*
3. “We are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken” - stability - *Hebrews 12:28*
4. “Eternal kingdom”- for ever and ever - *II Peter 1:11*
5. “The kingdoms of this world...” - advancement - *Revelation 11:15*

II. What is the Kingdom of Heaven Like?

A. KOH Begins Small - *Matthew 13:31-32*

1. Great things must first start with small things.
2. There is the potential for exponential growth.

B. KOH Changes Everything - *Matthew 13:33-35*

1. The power of Christ makes bad people good.
 2. The power of Christ turns victims into victors.
 3. The power of Christ changes the ordinary into the extraordinary.
- * It only takes a little grace and sometimes it is well hidden.

C. KOH Is Hidden - *Matthew 13:44*

1. There is joy in the discovery of God’s love.
2. There is sacrifice in the discovery of God’s grace.
3. There is work in the discovery of God’s gift.

D. KOH Is Priceless - *Matthew 13:45-46*

1. Salvation is an awesome thing - God’s love to us.
 2. Salvation is a great thing - our faith in God.
- * It is worth searching for.

E. KOH Comes with Judgment - *Matthew 13:47-50*

1. There will be a time of harvest - this is the Church’s work.
2. There will be a time of separation - this is God’s work.

F. KOH Connects All Things - *Matthew 13:51-52*

1. God uses everything in our lives - past, present & future
2. God redeems our past and uses it for His glory.
3. God gifts our future and prepares us for greater works.

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The Good Samaritan

Luke 10:25-37

I. Introduction

A. Questions - about Life

1. "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" - lawyer
—Minimum requirements for maximum reward
2. "What is written in the law?"/ "How do you read it?" - Jesus
—Asking for a personal application of God's Word

B. Answers - about Love

1. Love the Lord your God - heart, soul, strength and mind
2. Love your neighbor - before self
3. Love yourself - important aspect
*“Do this and you will live”

C. Test

1. "Who is my neighbor?" - Love God and love self - benefits who?
2. Self-Justification
 - a. Loving self for self-sake - most people can do this
 - b. Loving God for self-sake - saves self from hell.

II. The Good Samaritan

A. Characters

1. Traveler - traveling alone on a dangerous road - *Numbers 19:11*
2. Priest - wanting to remain pure and clean
3. Levite - seeing the victim passed on the other side
4. Samaritan - showing mercy to his enemy

B. Practical Christianity

1. "Who is my neighbor?" - anyone who needs our help
 - a. Beware of those who swindle - real needs
 - b. Beware of those who don't work - real life
2. "What then should we do?" - live like Jesus Christ
 - a. Do what you can anywhere, anytime
 - b. Do the next right thing
3. "What is true religion?" - faith and works - *James 1:27*
4. "How then should we live?"
 1. Live in love - *Romans 12:9-21*
 2. Preach forgiveness - *Luke 24:45-49*
 3. Promote reconciliation - *II Corinthians 5:16-21*
 4. Please God - *Ephesians 5:8-16*
 5. Imitate Christ - *I Thessalonians 2:13-14*
 6. Serve others - *John 13:12-17*
 7. Show mercy - *Luke 10:37*

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The Rich Fool **Luke 12:13-34**

I. Introduction

A. Conflict Over Money - *v. 13*

1. Produces stressed, fear, anger and resentment: family, friends, strangers
2. Competition feeds the conflicts over money
3. Consumerism feeds the competition - 1980's "Consumerism is crushing America. There must be more than birth, consumption and death."

B. Warning Over Money - *vv. 14-15*

1. "Watch Out!" - urgent call to warn each of us
2. "Be on Your Guard" - all kinds of greed
 - a. The need of possessions - **having** more and more
 - b. The need of possessing - **controlling** more and more
 - c. The need of status - **showing** more and more
 - d. The need of waste - **exploiting** more and more
3. "A Person's Life" - *v. 15* - more than what we have, own, desire, want

II. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

A. The Rich Man is Blessed with a Good Crop - *vv. 16-17*

1. Who blessed the rich man?
2. Who sent the sun, the rain and earth for the crops?
3. Who kept the evil away from the crops?

B. The Rich Man is Preoccupied with His Blessing - *vv. 18-19*

1. Bigger barns for bigger blessings - self-centered
2. Easy life on easy street - self-absorbed

C. God Speaks to the Rich Man - *v. 20*

1. The Rich man never saw beyond himself.
2. The rich man never saw beyond this world.

III. Good Stewardship

A. Do Not Worry - *vv. 22-26*

1. Life is more than food, body, clothes
2. God works in all creation - God works in us.

B. Seek the Kingdom - *vv. 27-31*

1. God will take care of us - lean into His grace
2. God know what we need - learn to trust Him

C. God and Money - *vv. 32-34*

1. God gives us the Kingdom - sons/ daughters of God
2. Give to the poor - help those less fortunate
3. Serve God and humanity in gracious ways - heavenly treasure is to serve God
4. Set your heart on the things of God - priorities and focus

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The Narrow Road

Luke 13:22-30

- I. The Way to God
 - A. Devote your life to God.
 - B. Set your mind to living with God — this is the goal
 - C. Search for the Way
 - 1. Your efforts must be purposeful — strive for it with true earnestness
 - 2. It is hard — the way is difficult — gain it at all costs *Mark 8:36*
 - 3. It requires your full attention
 - 4. Only a few find the way *Matthew 7:13-14*
 - D. There is only One Way! *John 6:28-29, 10:7-9, 14:6*
 - 1. It is a single gate — any other way is invented or imagined
 - 2. It is narrow — too narrow for swelling robes and phalacteries of Pharisees
 - 3. Too narrow for the philosophy of the intellectual
 - 4. Too straight for the self-righteous
 - 5. Wide enough for the penitent and faithful one
 - 6. High enough for the humble to bend over to enter
- II. The Guest List
 - A. Hanging around doesn't give you an automatic entrance (v. 26)
 - 1. Eating and drinking with the Master — fruitless life
 - 2. Received teachings from Jesus — did not listen *Matthew 25:34-46*
 - B. Believing there is a god doesn't put you on the list *James 2:19, Mark 12:29-31*
 - C. There is an open invitation but the door will shut *Matthew 25:10-12*
 - 1. They knock and call but there is no answer — too late
 - 2. Their appeals go unnoticed
- III. The Great Reversal
 - A. First in natural giftedness — not spiritually gifted
 - B. First in opportunity — last in improvement
 - C. First to start the race — last to finish

*It is far better to stand alone, than to fall into the pit.
Run, then, with patience the race which is set before thee,
Though thy companions therein are but few.
John Wesley*

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The Vineyard **Mark 12:1-12**

I. Last Words

A. Psalm Sunday - *Mark 11:1-11*

1. Jesus enters Jerusalem on a colt
2. Many people spread on the road cloaks and palm branches

B. Holy Monday - *Mark 11:12-19*

1. Jesus curses the fig tree
2. Jesus clears the Temple of money changers

C. Holy Tuesday - *Mark 11:20-13:37*

1. The authority of Jesus questioned by the leadership
2. Jesus teaches the Jewish leaders in parables *
3. Jesus questioned about taxes, marriage and religion
4. Jesus comments on spiritual leadership
5. Jesus delivers the "Little Apocalypse"

II. Familiar Picture - *Mark 12:1-12*

A. The scriptural images of the vineyard - *Isaiah 5:1-7*

1. God planted Israel as a vineyard for His purpose
2. God judged Israel as a vineyard for their lack of faith

B. The reality of the landlord

1. Paid in cash or with crops or fixed opportunities
2. Renters refused to pay and resorted to violence

III. The Meaning of the Parable

A. Who's Who

1. Vineyard is Israel
2. Landlord is God
3. Renters are the Jewish leaders
4. Son is Jesus
5. Murder is the Crucifixion
6. Revenge is the Judgment

B. Responsibility

1. We are responsible for the **grace** God has given us.
2. We are responsible for the **work** God has given us.
3. We are responsible for the **sin** we commit.
4. God is responsible for the **salvation** from our sin.
5. God is responsible for the **judgment** of our world.

C. Final Thoughts

1. God is patient with humanity - much grace
2. Jesus claims sonship from God - wild revelation
3. Humanity can ultimately reject the Savior - salvation or rejection
4. The Kingdom is given to those who will receive it - faithful obedience

