

The Wedding Banquet

¹Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: ²'The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. ⁴'Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'
⁵'But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. ⁶The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. ⁸'Then he said to his servants, 'the wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. ⁹Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.'¹⁰So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. ¹¹'But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹²'Friend, he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speechless. ¹³Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'
¹⁴'For many are invited, but few are chosen.' Matthew 22:1-14

I. Background

A. Gospel composed between A.D. 80 and 90

1. The destruction of Jerusalem occurred in A.D. 70
2. The temple was burned and the city destroyed - *Matthew 24:2*

B. Local Context

1. Invitations to wedding feasts were often made - *Matthew 25:1-13*
2. No date or time specified - *Matthew 24:36-42*
3. Summons sent in the form of verbal messages
 - a. Preparations are in place and ready - *John 14:1-4*
 - b. Wedding garments were worn as entry

II. Invitation to Life, Joy and Peace

A. Jews were invited as God's chosen people

1. They refused to come - declined the call
2. They were waiting for the king to call them - not recognizing his servants
3. They went about their business and daily activities - their own work

B. Invitation extended to all others

1. Gentiles, the good and bad - *Romans 11:11-23*
2. Separation will come at the bridegroom's entry - *Matthew 25:31-33*

C. The Church is the middle ground — invitation of the grace and good news - *Romans 1:14-17*

III. The Lord's Table

A. Open to all who will receive by faith

B. Examination of heart, soul, mind and strength before approaching the table

1. Think about the things of eternity than the things of time
2. Focus on things unseen rather than a preoccupation with things seen
3. Listen to the still small voice of God rather than the claim of the world
4. Do not become so busy in making a living you fail to make a life

C. Live as Expressions of God's grace - *Ephesians 2:6-10*

1. Love God with all heart, soul, mind and strength
2. Love your neighbor as yourself

*As the bridegroom to his chosen, as the king unto his realm,
As the keep unto the castle, as the pilot to the helm, so, Lord, art Thou to me.*

~Cuthbert

THE PARABLES OF JESUS SERIES

Men's Ministries International

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

"To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Luke 18:9-14

Two Men Called to Worship — *Isaiah 56:7*

A. The Pharisee

1. Outward piety — his right to offer his prayer of thanksgiving
2. Self-Righteous — To the Jews righteousness consisted of two things:
 - a. Doing no harm to others
 - * not unjust
 - * not an adulterer
 - * not taking or seizing another man's property
 - * not taking advantage of others in buying or selling goods/property
 - * avoiding uncleanness
 - b. Attended to all the Ordinances of God
 - * Fasted twice a week (Mondays and Thursdays)
 - * Gave a tithe on everything he owned
3. Looks disdainfully on others — they do not deserve mercy
4. Result of Prayer — not accepted as righteous and charged with "concealed hypocrisy"

B. The Publican or Tax Collector

1. Inward piety
2. Penitent — humbly seeks mercy and grace from God
 - a. Shameful for his conduct
 - b. Afraid of his judge
 - c. Confesses his offenses
 - d. Reveals his need to be cleansed and healed
 - e. Prays for mercy
3. Result of Prayer — received as righteous and the man is justified by faith

II. A Righteousness Not Our Own

- A. Accept that we are sinners saved by grace — *Ephesians 2:8-9*
- B. Accept that we can not merit salvation — *Titus 3:5*
- C. The true work is to believe in Jesus Christ — *John 6:28-29*
- D. Righteousness comes through faith in Jesus Christ — *Romans 3:22-23*
- E. Salvation comes by faith in Jesus Christ — *Romans 10:9-10, 13*

The Prayer of a Saint is the Prayer of a Sinner

"Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner."

- A. We surrender our lives to the Lord
- B. We know we need a Savior and we look to Him
- C. We are dependent on God's grace — it is God who has the power to grant mercy
- D. We acknowledge that we are in need of mercy for we have sinned

THE PARABLES OF JESUS SERIES

Men's Ministries International

Seeds

He also said, 'This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.' Mark 4:26-32

I. Background - Mark 4:26-29

- A. This parable is only recorded by Mark
- B. The Kingdom or Reign of God
 - 1. John the Baptist - kingdom of heaven is at hand - *Matthew 3:2*
 - a. The coming of the kingdom - futuristic
 - b. God intervenes for His people
 - c. God restores their wealth
 - d. God liberates his people from their enemies
 - 2. Jesus - kingdom of God
 - a. It is near - it is within you - *Luke 17:20-21*
 - b. It has come - it is present - *Luke 7:18-22*
 - *in the manifestation of Christ
 - *in the preaching of Christ
 - *in the ministry of Christ
 - c. Jesus intervenes forgiving sin - *Mark 2:1-12*
 - d. Jesus reconciles/restores his people to God - *II Corinthians 5:18-19*
 - e. Jesus sets people free from the bondage of sin and death - *John 8:36*

II. Kingdom Growth - "Growing Seed" - vs.26-29

- A. The parable is about the gospel message
- B. Man sows the seed - the Good News - *Luke 8:5-15*
- C. The seed grows without perception - the mystery of God's work and power
- D. The stalk reveals steady growth - spiritual maturation - *Hebrews 6:1*
- E. The head - prepared for good works - *Ephesians 4:12*
- F. Fruit - profligation -
- G. Harvest - Judgment and Reward- *Matthew 13:24-30*
 - 1. As we prepare for harvest—we cultivate patience
 - 2. As we prepare for harvest—we hope in spite of despair
 - 3. As we prepare for harvest—we become ready for what is to come

III. Kingdom Growth - "Mustard Seed" - vs.30-32

- A. The parable is about the church
- B. Seed is small and insignificant without much value - dependence on God - *Psalms 62:7*
- C. When bruised causes sharp and pungent odor - healing for brokenness - *Isaiah 30:26*
- D. Resists infection - awareness/prayer - *I Peter 5:8-9*
- E. Grows into a tree and birds rest in its branches - Sanctuary for all nations - *Ezekiel 17:22-23*

“Never be daunted by small beginnings.”

William Barclay

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

SERIES

Men's Ministries International

The Talents

Matthew 25:14-30

I. The Tale of Three Servants

A. First Servant

1. Believed and received - relationship with the Master and His business
2. Traded and gained - risked his life and talents
3. Rewarded - "Well done my good and faithful servant"

B. Second Servant

1. Believed and received - relationship with the Master and His business
2. Gained - invested his life and talents
3. Rewarded - "Enter the joy of your Master"

C. Third Servant

1. Believed and received - relationship with the Master and His business
2. Ran and hid - wasted his life and talent
3. Judged - lost talent/lost position/lost eternity

D. Limited Defense

1. "I knew that you are a hard man" - limited view of God
 2. "You harvest where you have not sown" - holy expectations
 3. "You gather where you have not scatter seed" - holy standards
 4. "I was afraid" - limited love of the Kingdom
 5. "I went out" - limited vision of the future
 6. "I hid your talent" - limited faith to see change
 7. "I have returned your talent" - limited offering to God
- *Unprofitable for others and useless for himself

II. Entrusted Property - Gregory the Great

A. Five Talents - a gift of wisdom

1. Hearing God's Word - *Romans 10:17*
2. Seeing God's grace - *II Corinthians 9:8*
3. Smelling God's life - *II Corinthians 2:16*
4. Tasting God's goodness - *Psalms 34:8*
5. Touching God's people - *Luke 6:19*

B. Two Talents - a gift of understanding

1. Theory - understanding the nature of repentance and faith - *Mark 1:14-15*
2. Practice - preaching the Word of God boldly - *II Timothy 4:2*

C. One Talent - a gift of knowledge

- *Theory - understanding the nature of God - *Romans 1:18-28*

III. Settling Accounts

- A. God gives different people different gifts - not the gift, but the service
- B. God rewards work well done with more work - kingdom never ends
- C. God punishes those who will not try to live life - no excuses
- D. God will return and judge each person for their actions/inactions