

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: [Matthew 13:10-17](#).
- B. This is the 16th in a series of 17 sermons about Jesus.

I. WHY PARABLES?

- A. What a is a parable?
 - 1. The Greek literally means "to throw alongside."
 - 2. A common definition is, "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning."
 - 3. It is not an allegory, in which every part has a corresponding meaning.
- B. Why did Jesus teach in parables?
 - 1. Jesus did not invent the parable, they were used in the OT (2Sam. 12:1-4).
 - 2. Jesus fulfilled prophecy in using parables (Isa. 6:9,10; Psa. 78:2).
 - 3. Jesus used parables to awaken spiritual senses that had grown dull (Mt.13:12-15).
 - 4. Parables excite the concerned and stimulate more learning for some, while they blind the hearts of those who are careless and unspiritual.
- C. Why study the parables?
 - 1. We are live by every word of the Bible (Mt. 4:4).
 - 2. At least one-third of X's teachings are found in the parables.
 - 3. They are "born out of life" and have a way of touching us unlike other methods of teaching.
 - 4. They are mirrors which allow us to see ourselves.
 - 5. They are windows which help us to see life and God. '
- D. How should one study the parables?
 - 1. Study each parable in its own context.
 - 2. Look for the central or main truth that the parable teaches.
 - 3. Don't try to make the parables "walk on all fours, " in other words the details aren't always important or uniform.
 - 4. Parables should be used to illustrate and support doctrinal statements, not necessarily declare them. They are windows to see deeper into spiritual concepts, not foundations that declare spiritual truths.
 - 5. Ask God for wisdom in understanding the parables (Jas. 1:5).
 - 6. Pay attention to Jesus' explanation of the parable of the tares to help one to know-how to explain and understand all of the parables (Mt. 13:36-43).

II. DIFFERENT PARABLES.

- A. The parables can be grouped under subject -headings as follows. There are several -- parables under each heading:
 - 1. Preparedness for the kingdom. The sower or soils (Mt. 13:3-23).
 - 2. The growth and spread of the kingdom. The leaven (Mt. 13:33).
 - 3. The growth of both good and evil. The tares and the wheat (Mt. 13:24-30).
 - 4. The value of the kingdom. The pearl of great price (Mt. 13:45-46).
 - 5. Christian forgiveness. The unmerciful servant (Mt. 18:23-35).
 - 6. Christian prayer. The persistent widow (Lk. 18:1-8).
 - 7. Christian service. The talents (Mt. 25:14-30).
 - 8. Christian watchfulness. The ten virgins (Mt. 25:1-13).
 - 9. Concern for the lost. The lost son (Lk. 15:11-32).
 - 10. Concerning judgment. The barren fig tree (Lk. 13:6-9).

- B. There are also some stories that are taken as parables or as acted stories:
 - 1. The good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37).
 - 2. The wealthy fool (Lk. 12:16-21).
 - 3. The rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31).
 - 4. The sign of the temple (Jn. 2:18-22).

III. HOW SHALL WE BEST USE THE PARABLES?

- A. Realize our responsibility of learning the truth.
Let us not be guilty of holding to dead traditions and forgetting to teach the living truth (Lk. 11:45,46,52). The parables can live in our lives if we will let them.
- B. Realize our responsibility of living the truth.
Learn to balance theory and practice; learning and living; the schoolroom and the marketplace.
- C. Realize our responsibility of sharing the truth.
Money not invested is money wasted. There are always new applications of old truths, new insights into old principles, and new understandings of old relationships.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Jesus was the Master Teacher. Do you have an ear that wants to hear?
- B. The parables will never disappoint if we have a hunger and thirst for righteousness.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.