

## **The New Normal Series# 11, Kingdom Parables**

By: Zach Sloane

### **Recap:**

**Isaiah 45:18** *"For thus says the Lord, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, **Who did not create it in vain**, Who formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is no other."*

Where the Kingdom is embraced a community of *reformers* is established to advance his eternal purpose in the earth.

Impact Church "Transforming Lives To Impact *Their World*."

BEING A KINGDOM PEOPLE LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING ... CULTURE OF LOVE AND HONOUR ... REFROM

The revelation of the kingdom is not just a utopian ideal that we strive for but never realize. The kingdom is not word (or an idea), but power.

### **1 Corinthians 4:20**

*"For the Kingdom of God is not in word (Logos) but in power (Dunamis)."*

### **Intro: Kingdom Parables**

#### **Luke 16:16 (TPT)**

*"The law of Moses and the revelation of the prophets have prepared you for the arrival of the kingdom realm announced by John. And now, when this wonderful news of God's kingdom realm is preached, people's hearts burn with extreme passion to press in and receive it."*

Kingdom Parables were a uniquely powerful method Jesus used to bring this kingdom revelation and draw out of us a passion to "press in and receive."

#### **1. Parables: What are they**

One common description is: "a fictitious story that communicates and teaches a moral attitude or a religious principle."

Others says that parables are metaphors or similes used to describe or make a comparison. e.g *"Life is like a box of chocolates."*

Definition of parable by the scholar C.H. Dodd:

*"[a] metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to tease it into active thought."*<sup>1</sup>

## **2. Why did Jesus Use Parables**

### **Matthew 13:10 (NKJV)**

*"And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"*

### **Matthew 13:13-17 (NKJV)**

*"Therefore I speak to them in parables, because... in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them...'"*

Deliberate ambiguity requires us to avoid rigid, dogmatic and selective literalism, thus preventing us from trusting in our own ability to create what we think is certainty.

The power of story: Quotes from Elizabeth Svoboda in "The Power of Story" published on [www.aeon.co](http://www.aeon.co), accessed Aug. 14, 2020.

*"Across time and across cultures, stories have proved their worth not just as works of art or entertaining asides, but as agents of personal transformation."*

Research done at the National Academy of Sciences that stories, "In certain essential ways, then, stories help our brains map that of the storyteller."

Research out of the University of Southern California by neuroscientist Mary Immordino-Yang demonstrated that through the stories we absorb, our thought processes are shaped in the same way that they are when we actually live out the experience.

What's the power of your story? (testimony).

## **3. Kingdom Parables**

<sup>1</sup> Taken from : Parables of the Kingdom: Jesus and the Use of Parables in the Synoptic Tradition By Mary Ann Getty-Sullivan.

### **Matthew 13:3-9 - Parable of the Sower and the Seeds**

The sower sows the seed and it falls on different types of ground. Seeds that fell on the rocks were eaten by birds (stole by the devil). Some fell on rocky ground and sprang up but had no roots so quickly withered (heat of difficulty or persecution). Some fell amongst thorns and got choked out (by the cares of the world), and some fell on good ground and bore fruit.

The seed that was sown was "*the word of the kingdom.*" Matthew 13:19.

On this side of the cross, don't hear this as a challenge to fix your heart, but when you hear the word of the kingdom let this picture be what shapes and frames your experience. See yourself and your heart as good ground, tilled and prepared by Jesus himself, and therefore expect the seed to bear fruit.

### **James 1:21**

"Receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your soul."

### **Matthew 13:24-30 - Parable of the Wheat and the Tares:**

Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed into a field but while he slept an enemy came and sowed weeds in the same field. When the plants grew it was obvious that there were two types of plants, one good one bad. The servants said, how could this be, why are there weeds with the wheat? Let's cut the weeds out. But the boss said:

### **Matthew 13:29-30**

"...*No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.*"

The presence of some bad stuff does not negate the presence of the good.

The kingdom and the manifestation of the sons and the daughters of the kingdom is going to happen no matter what "grows up alongside it." Stop fretting about what's growing up alongside you! Instead:

### **Colossians 2:6-7**

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, **rooted** and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving."

**Matthew 13:39** - "... the harvest is the end of the age..."

Our expectation for the end, for harvest, is the full expression of the seed of God in us. If the harvest is the end of the age, "wow!" We will collectively reap all that God sowed... his son!

### **Matthew 13:31-32 - The Parable of the Mustard Seed**

*Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."*

Starts off small, inauspicious. But, know that the Kingdom is not growing in stature or power or ability. It exists fully. You got the full thing! It is the expression and influence that is growing.

### **Zechariah 4:10**

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin, to see the plumb line *in Zerubbabel's hand.*"

Don't stress small beginnings and don't stress about making it grow.

### **1 Corinthians 3:7**

*So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.*

### **Matthew 13:33 - The Parable of the Yeast**

*Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."*

A small amount of yeast is included into a lump of dough. It gets worked into the dough and through chemical reactions causes the whole thing to expand and rise. Once started it's an unstoppable process.

Jesus brought the yeast of the kingdom into contact with the dough of the cosmos. Though his incarnation, death, burial, resurrection and ascension he has woven the kingdom into the very fabric of creation, heaven and earth, seen and unseen. Its our job to set off the chemical reaction that causes elevation by seeing, proclaiming, and living it!

This is the way the kingdom is coming. It's not going to come from another outside event (judgement, tribulation, second coming) Even Jesus second coming is not going to inaugurate the kingdom, it will be the consummation of something that already started 2000 years ago.

How can we read the parables and have such a hope-filled expectation?

**Matthew 25:1 & 14-29 — Parable of the Talents**

*"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this...14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them...Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; 25 so I was afraid and went and hid your talents"*

**Matthew 25:26 -27**

*But his master replied, You wicked and lazy slave! **You knew**, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest.*

Through a lens of fear, even our right knowledge of the kingdom will cause us to come to some very erroneous and unprofitable conclusions that cause us to run, hide, and bury what we've been given! Instead:

**Luke 12:32**

*"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

**Hebrews 12:26-29 (NKJV)**

*"...but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.*

*28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire." (What's your lens? Fire of love or judgment?)*

We are receiving a kingdom. Let us have grace and a love inspired, fear-free approach to walking it out and let's see what God would do!