

5. You in the Parables - A short moral story. Stories told by Jesus to convey His religious message.

Jesus used parables to teach spiritual lessons. Though they may appear to just be stories, they are actually lessons on our salvation and spiritual walk. Some parables teach Jesus' role and purpose. Jesus explained the meaning of 'The Sower' parable. That explanation can help us when deciphering the spiritual meaning of the other parables.

Here's a list of parables you may want to read and think and pray about.

The Sower Luke 8:5-8 & 10-15 Matt 13:3-9 & 18-23 Mark 4:3-8	The Weeds Matthew 13:24-30
The Good Samaritan (neighbor) Luke 10:30-36	The Mustard Seed Matt 13:31-32 Mark 4:30-32
The Rich Fool Luke 12:16-21	The Yeast Matthew 13:33
The Vineyard Luke 13:6-9	The Hidden Treasure and the Pearl Matt 13:44-46
The Great Banquet Luke 14:16-24	The Net Matthew 13:47-51
The Lost Sheep Luke 15:4-7	The Wandering sheep Matthew 18:10-14
The Lost Coin Luke 15:8-10	The Unmerciful Servant Matthew 18:22-35
The Prodigal (Lost) Son Luke 15:11-32	The Workers in the Vineyard Matthew 20:1-16
The Shrewd Manager Luke 16:1-13	The Two Sons Matthew 21:28-31
The Persistent Widow Luke 18:2-8	The Wedding Banquet Matthew 22:2-14
The Pharisee & the Tax Collector Luke 18:10-14	The Ten Virgins Matthew 25:1-13
The Ten Minas Luke 19:12-27	The Bags of Gold Matthew 25:14-30
The Tenants Luke 20:9-16 Mark 12:1-10 Matthew 21:33-40	The Growing Seed Mark 4:26-29
The Fig Tree Luke 21:29-36	The New and Old Luke 5:36-39

Some parables may seem unfair, but when you put your spiritual life in the parable, you can see how beautiful it is. Are you the prodigal son? If you're the figtree, how much fruit have you grown? Where did the sower throw your seed and where did you land? What time of the day did you start working, yet got paid a full day's pay? Where do you fall in these parables?

One of my favorite parables is The Persistent Widow. God never gets tired of us. He wants us to bug Him about the same thing over and over again until it's not an issue anymore. It may seem like the Lord is not answering our prayers, but when we pray persistently, He is actually working with us, teaching us to wait, and molding us spiritually.

The Lord brought me my personal parable to mind and here it is:

There was a girl walking down a path. There were many paths going different directions and many people. Though there were many people around her, she walked alone. Now and then she would stumble and fall. Someone would run over to her and help her up. That person would say "come with me – follow Him" and point to a man that people were following. She'd say, "no thanks" and go on her own way alone. One day she fell in a pit. The pit was deep. She could barely see the sky and she was stuck. There was no way out. She cried out for help. The man that people followed came and said, "I will help you". But instead of just throwing a rope down and pulling her out, He climbed all the way down to the bottom of the pit. He didn't bring any tools that could help them climb out. He said, "we will climb out of here together. I will help you". The climb was slow and exhausting. He'd say, "ok, reach up and grab that ledge". She'd say, "I can't, it's too far away", but he would give her a push and she was able to grab it taking one more small step up. Every now and then she would complain that he should have just thrown her a rope and how much easier that would have been. Then she would slide down. He just climbed down to her and asked if she was ready to carry on. With every step, she learned to trust Him more. When they were finally out of the pit, he looked at her and said, "follow me". She said "yes, I will follow you anywhere", and she never looked back. She would see someone fall and run to them, help them up, and say "come with me, follow Him".

What is your personal parable? We all have a story to tell. Share your story with others and be a testimony. Jesus teaches us great things in His parables. Don't take the parables for granted. Read them, put yourself in them, pray about them, share them with others, and you will grow spiritually.