



PARABLES – The Stories Jesus Told

Jesus sometimes taught in parables because these vivid stories engage us in thought, emotion, and sensation. They impact us. They force us to go away and ponder, struggling with the meaning perhaps, feeling struck by the truthful and accurate perspective on life they offer. A parable compares something familiar to something unfamiliar. It helps us understand spiritual truth by using everyday objects and relationships. Parables compel us to discover truth, while at the same time concealing the truth from those too lazy or too stubborn to see it. To those who are honestly searching, the truth becomes clear. This series invites transformation as you discover fresh truth about Jesus, yourself, and others.

The Keys to Cultivating Growth Luke 13:6-8

Highland Colony Men's Roundtable
www.MensTable.com

Bible Verses: Luke 13:6-8; James 4:7-11; James 5:16; I Peter 4:1-11

Music: Willow Creek Worship – Do What You Want To

Videos: The Shack - Judgement

Resources: *Parables—The Mysteries of God's Kingdom Revealed Through the Stories Jesus Told* - John MacArthur
10 Parables of Jesus: Poking Holes in Religious Balloons - Jamie Buckingham

Jesus Told Stories

1. _____ > When telling people about God's Kingdom, Jesus told stories – stories with meaning. His stories grew out of real-life situations. They were designed not only to be remembered, but to stimulate his listeners to think. Many stories closed with a question – rather than an answer.
2. _____ > God has many ways of teaching us. Jesus taught by example. Men looked at how He lived and decided to walk that way also. He also taught by percept. He often spoke directly to people. We might even call it preaching. But his favorite way of teaching was through the use of the parable. He loved to tell stories—stories with spiritual meanings.
3. _____ > Jesus told stories to teach. He wanted His listeners to learn about God, about God's Kingdom, about God's Son, and about themselves. The stories He told were filled with humor, common sense, biting satire, and deep spiritual truth. They prodded. They stimulated. They raised questions. They answered questions. But always, they pointed the listeners towards God's highest way for their lives.
4. _____ > As simple yet profound as Jesus stories were, they are still speaking to the hearts of all those who have "ears to hear." May you allow God's Spirit to speak directly to your heart, change your understanding of God and improve the quality of your life.

How Do We Make Things Grow? – Luke 13:6-8.

1. _____ > The Vineyard owner had a view of what he wanted. He believed in the Ideal. God has wired our mind/brain for what ought to be. We Judge others by our own expectations.
2. _____ > Every system reveals this. We see it everywhere. We are born under this. We think this is the Christian message. See James 4:7-11.
3. _____ > The Gardener spoke to the Judge and said, "Wait!" Why did Jesus come? See James 5:16. Growth does not come through judgment. Where do you have an Advocate? Where do you go to talk about your struggles?
4. Dig/Fertilize/Year > No such thing as "self-help". What about "self-discipline" – which self do you get it from? See I Peter 4:1-11.
 - a. Dig > _____.
 - b. Fertilize > _____.
 - c. Year > _____.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. What area do you need to address in your life or work?
2. How do you plan to address this area?
3. What are your resources?

Bible Verses – New Living Translation

Luke 13:6-8: **6** Then Jesus told this story: “A man planted a fig tree in his garden and came again and again to see if there was any fruit on it, but he was always disappointed. **7** Finally, he said to his gardener, ‘I’ve waited three years, and there hasn’t been a single fig! Cut it down. It’s just taking up space in the garden.’ **8** “The gardener answered, ‘Sir, give it one more chance. Leave it another year, and I’ll give it special attention and plenty of fertilizer.’

James 4:7-11: **7** So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **8** Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. **9** Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. **10** Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor. **11** Don’t speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God’s law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you.

James 5:16 : **16** Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

1 Peter 4:1-11 : **1** So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. **2** You won’t spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. **3** You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols. **4** Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you. **5** But remember that they will have to face God, who stands ready to judge everyone, both the living and the dead. **6** That is why the Good News was preached to those who are now dead—so although they were destined to die like all people, they now live forever with God in the Spirit. **7** The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. **8** Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. **9** Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay. **10** God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. **11** Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

Willow Creek Worship Do What You Want To

It's Your heart we're searching for
We want You and nothing more
Let Your glory fill this place
We're alive in Your presence
We surrender all to You
Do what You want to,
Do what You want to
God we long to see You move
Do what you want to,
Do what You want to
We are standing in Your light
And our hearts are open wide
Let us see more than before
Lord, come have your way here
All consuming fire fall,
Fall on us

Philip K. Hardin, M.A., M.Div.

Director of Business & Professional Outreach, Intl.

Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist & Licensed Professional Counselor

Email: phil@bpintl.org

Webpage: www.bpintl.org

par • a • ble(s)

an earthly story

with a spiritual truth



PARABLES – THE STORIES JESUS TOLD

Jesus sometimes taught in parables because these vivid stories engage us in thought, emotion, and sensation. They impact us. They force us to go away and ponder, struggling with the meaning perhaps, feeling struck by the truthful and accurate perspective on life they offer. A parable compares something familiar to something unfamiliar. It helps us understand spiritual truth by using everyday objects and relationships. Parables compel us to discover truth, while at the same time concealing the truth from those too lazy or too stubborn to see it. To those who are honestly searching, the truth becomes clear. This series invites transformation as you discover fresh truth about Jesus, yourself, and others.

The Keys to Cultivating Growth

Luke 13:6-8

Jesus Told Stories

1. **Stories** > When telling people about God's Kingdom, Jesus told stories – stories with meaning. His stories grew out of real-life situations. They were designed not only to be remembered, but to stimulate his listeners to think. Many stories closed with a question – rather than an answer.
2. **Teaching** > God has many ways of teaching us. Jesus taught by example. Men looked at how He lived and decided to walk that way also. He also taught by percept. He often spoke directly to people. We might even call it preaching. But his favorite way of teaching was through the use of the parable. He loved to tell stories—stories with spiritual meanings.
3. **Master Storyteller** > Jesus told stories to teach. He wanted His listeners to learn about God, about God's Kingdom, about God's Son, and about themselves. The stories He told were filled with humor, common sense, biting satire, and deep spiritual truth. They prodded. They stimulated. They raised questions. They answered questions. But always, they pointed the listeners towards God's highest way for their lives.
4. **Stories to Change You** > As simple yet profound as Jesus stories were, they are still speaking to the hearts of all those who have “ears to hear.” May you allow God's Spirit to speak directly to your heart, change your understanding of God and improve the quality of your life.

How Do We Make Things Grow?

Luke 13:6-8

1. **Expectation** > The Vineyard owner had a view of what he wanted. He believed in the Ideal. God has wired our mind/brain for what ought to be. We Judge others by our own expectations.
2. **Legal Response** > Every system reveals this. We see it everywhere. We are born under this. We think this is the Christian message. See James 4:7-11.

How Do We Make Things Grow?

Luke 13:6-8

3. **Advocate** > The Gardener spoke to the Judge and said, “Wait!” Why did Jesus come? See James 5:16. Growth does not come through judgment. Where do you have an Advocate? Where do you go to talk about your struggles?

How Do We Make Things Grow?

Luke 13:6-8

4. Dig/Fertilize/Year > No such thing as “self-help.” What about “self-discipline” – which self do you get it from? See I Peter 4:1-11.
 1. Dig > Tell the Truth.
 2. Fertilize > The Need for Grace.
 3. Year > Give it time.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. What area do you need to address in your life or work?
2. How do you plan to address this area?
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