

SRMBC FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

THE GREATEST STORIES EVER TOLD: THE PARABLES OF JESUS

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Study Schedule November 2020

Date	Topic	Scriptures
10/28/2020	Parable of the Sower	Matt. 13: 1-23
11/4/2020	The Wheat & the Weeds	Matt.13: 24-30, 36-43
11/11/2020	The Unforgiving Servant	Matt. 18: 21-35
11/18/2020	MIT Chambers	Trial Sermon
11/25/2020	Break	Thanksgiving

THE GREATEST STORIES EVER TOLD:
THE PARABLES OF JESUS

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This Week's Lesson – October 28, 2020

Parables: The Greatest Stories Ever Told

Lesson 1:

The Parable of the Sower

Matthew 13: 1-23



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Group Discussion: What does soil do for a plant's ability to thrive?

- **Foundation**: Root systems extend outward and/or downward through soil, thereby stabilizing plants.
- **Oxygen**: The soil particles contain air that provides oxygen, and the energy needed to live and grow.
- **Water**: The spaces among soil particles also contain water that cools and carries essential nutrients into plants.
- **Temperature**: Soil insulates roots from drastic from temperature changes - especially during excessively hot or cold times of year.
- **Nutrients**: Soil supplies nutrients, and also holds the nutrients that we add in fertilizer.



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What Is A Parable?

PARABLE = a story used to illustrate a spiritual lesson or moral (told by Jesus in the Gospels)

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Introduction to Mathew 's Gospel

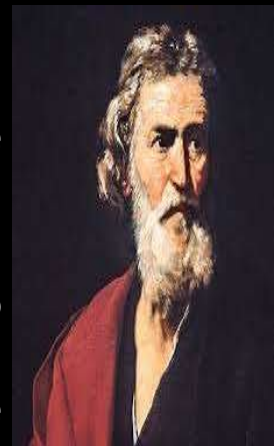
Author: Matthew (Levi) the disciple and former tax collector.

Date of Writing: probably in A.D. 55-65.

Purpose of Writing: Matthew intends to prove to the Jews that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah.

Practical Application:

- Matthew's Gospel is an excellent introduction to the core teachings of Christianity.
- The logical outline style makes it easy to locate discussions of various topics.
- Matthew demonstrates how Christ fulfills OT prophecies.



The Apostle
Matthew



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Read Matthew 13: 1- 9

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1. What immediate responses might you have to Jesus' use of images of seeds and soil?

- **Familiarity**: An agricultural community, would all be familiar with farming, seeds, sowing and reaping.
- **Commonality**: Everyone would have an understanding about the process of how when you plant seeds you reap a harvest (most of the time).
- **Reality**: They would understand there are factors that enable or hinder the growth of the crop.



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Read Matthew 13:10 – 17

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2. The disciples ask Jesus, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” How would you summarize his answer (vv. 11-16)?

- **Clarity When Close To Truth**: Those who know and follow Jesus closely will be able.
- **Opportunity To Seek The Truth**: Those who have a heart that may turn toward Jesus have an opportunity to know Him
- **Identity Of Those Who Reject The Truth**: Speaking in parables, identifies those with hard hearts who reject truth

Note: The crowd is a mixture of devoted followers, of those mildly interested and perhaps drawn by curiosity, and even of religious leaders who oppose Jesus. (D.A. Carson)



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3. How do parables help Jesus' followers understand his kingdom but hinder those who don't follow him closely (vv. 12-17)?

- **Parables Enlighten Open Hearts:** Those with a sincere desire to know and do the will of God in the parables and will be open to know more.
- **Parables Harden Closed Hearts:** Unbelieving hearts will be blinded to the truths hidden in parables and will increase in their opposition.

Note: Jesus explained preaching in parables as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy of the preaching of the Messiah's coming (Isa 6:9 – 10)



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Read Matthew 13:18 – 23

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4. In vv. 18-23 Jesus explains the meaning. The seed is the message (v. 19). Who is the farmer, and who is the soil?

The Seed: The Message Of The Gospel: The Word of God (Not man's opinions or worldly wisdom).

The Farmer/The Sower: Jesus Christ Himself (cf. Mt. 13:37 – 38) but also His representatives: disciples, preachers, teachers...

The Soil: The different states of the Human Heart: Wayward/Rejecting, Stony/Obstructed, Fertile/Receptive

Note: However faithful, the preacher and how pure his message, the effect of the preaching of the Word depends upon the state of the hearer's heart. (David Brown)



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5. Satanic “birds” destroyed the value of God’s word. Why? What did these hearers lack (v. 19)?

“19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.”

- **Opposing The Word: The “birds” snatches the truth – before a person allows the Word to do its good work.**
- **Understanding The Word: When people don’t have a plain, spiritual understanding of the Word of God, they fail to appreciate its power.**



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6. Vv. 20-21 describe the kind of person as stony or rocky soil. What kinds of people respond this way?

20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

Description Of "Stony Hearts"

- **Superficial/Emotional:** One who hears the Word and rejoices but does not fully make a mental and personal commitment

"Stony Hearted" People:

- **Uncommitted:** People who always have other priorities for their lives – rather than the priorities of the Word of God.
- **Unreliable:** As soon as there is any opposition, difficulty or cost, these people will not stand up and be counted.



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7. What kind of person does the third type of soil describe?

22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

- **Somewhat Intentional:** A person who most likely attends church, enjoys worship and a good sermon.
- **Secretly Lustful:** Has an internal desire for the things of world "The deceitfulness of riches"— and care of the world.
- **Spiritually Unfruitful:** Seemingly prosperous and successful on the outside, but shows no spiritual fruit or effectiveness.



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8. What are some practical examples of how we can become “good soil”?

23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

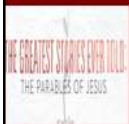
- **A Desire to Hear the Word:** The heart of a person open to the Spirit of God loves to hear the Word (preached, taught, sung...).
- **A Desire to Understand:** the Word: Personal devotions actively praying, studying, knowing the truth for themselves.
- **A Desire to Do the Word:** To put the Word into practice in everyday living – becoming more and more Jesus while helping others to do the same.



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Keys For Living

- Parables are natural stories that Jesus uses to explain and illustrate profound spiritual truths we can apply to our lives.
- The effectiveness of God’s Word in our lives is directly related to the condition and willingness of our hearts to receive it.
- Or challenge is to daily ask Jesus to keep our hearts prepared to hear and to walk out His Word.



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