

A study of

The Life of Christ

part 4

The Parables

BY

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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST MEETING

AT

OAK GROVE - JENNINGS, FLORIDA

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~ A NOTE ABOUT THIS MATERIAL ~

This material, as arranged and printed by Richard K. “Dick” Ward was published and taught at one or more of the local congregations during the preaching years of his life. There is no claim of “originality” *per se*. Knowing the instruction of James 3:1 and other passages along the line of teaching ONLY the truth of God’s Word, there was much diligence and care in personal study time in the Scriptures, as well as time consulting various biblical reference works, lessons by others, Bible dictionaries, lexicons, commentators, etc. to ensure that well-studied and discerned conclusions were formed before sharing. It is my hope as the printed material was prepared for electronic use, that “no errors” were caused by my hand. Please use this content without charging or changing it to the glory of God in your personal spiritual growth, edification, and in spreading the gospel of Christ. If you have questions about the material, please contact me and I will do my best to answer any questions you may have.

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The number of parables depends upon the definition used for the word, "parable". Some contend for as high as 51 parables while others have them numbered as low as 27. Most listings show from 30 to 35 parables. The word, PARABOLE is translated "comparison" in Mark 4:30; "figure" in Hebrews 9:9; 11:19; "proverb" in Luke 4:23 and "parable" some 46 times. Of the many parables spoken by Jesus, less than 20 are **specifically** called "a parable" in the context. Also, on a few occasions the word "parable" is used in the sense of a pithy or obscure saying. Of the many parables, Jesus explained the meaning of The Sower and The Tares - herein is our guide and standard for the interpretation of the parables! Most of Jesus' parables are recorded in Matthew and Luke with the Book of John not having a single one.

PARABLES FOUND IN ALL THREE SYNOPTICS

THE SOWER - MT. 13:23; MK. 4:2-20; LK. 8:4-15

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ Sower - not specifically identified
 - Δ Seed - identified as the Word of God
 - Δ Soils - identified as different kinds of people
2. One of the parables wherein the meaning is given to us

THE MUSTARD SEED - MT. 13:31,32; MK. 4:30-32; LK. 13:18,19

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ Grain of mustard seed - its size
 - Δ The plant - from the very small to a large plant
 - Δ The birds - assist to show the developed size
2. The principle of expansion - growth of the kingdom

THE NEW CLOTH, NEW WINE - MT. 9:16,17; MK. 2:21,22; LK. 5:36-38

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ New cloth and old garment - idea of inappropriateness
 - Δ New wine and old bottles - idea of inappropriateness
2. The old prejudices would not accept Jesus' new doctrine

THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN - MT. 21:33-44; MK. 12:1-12; LK. 20:9-18

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The owner of the vineyard - the Father in heaven
 - Δ The husbandmen - the Israelites
 - Δ The servants - possibly, the prophets sent to Israel
 - Δ The son - Jesus, the Son of the Father
 - Δ The other husbandmen - possibly, the Gentiles
2. The picture of how the Jews had acted toward the Christ

THE FIG TREE - MT. 24:32-35; MK. 13:28-31; LK. 21:29-33

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ Trees and their cycle - new foliage in summer

- △ Those who had learned to read nature's signs
- 2. The nearness of the kingdom and the fall of Jerusalem

PARABLES FOUND IN TWO OF THE THREE SYNOPTICS

THE BUILDERS - MT. 7:24-27; LK. 6:47-49

- 1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The two builders - one wise the other foolish
 - △ The different foundations - one sound the other not
 - △ The forces of nature - work hardship on houses
- 2. The need for the proper foundation

THE LEAVEN - MT. 13:33-35; LK. 13:20,21

- 1. Constituent Elements
 - △ leaven - how it works
 - △ the measures of meal - permeated
- 2. The spread of the kingdom throughout the world

THE LOST SHEEP - MT. 18:11-14; LK. 15:3-7

- 1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The flock - stay together for safety
 - △ The lost sheep - straying
 - △ The sheep owner - interested in each one in the flock
- 2. The value of one soul to God

PARABLES IN MATTHEW

THE TARES - MT. 13:24-30; :36-40

- 1. Constituent Elements
 - △ Field - the world
 - △ Sowers - good and bad
 - △ seed - good and bad
 - △ plants - useful and useless
 - △ harvest - separation and keeping and destroying
- 2. Evil exists and creates multiple problems
 - The final separation at the judgment

THE NET - MT. 13:47-50

- 1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Net - kingdom is like a net
 - △ Fisherman - implied since net was cast
 - △ The sea - the world
 - △ The catch - collection of good and bad in kingdom
 - △ The separating - the final judgment
- 2. The net draws various kinds of people into the kingdom
 - Within the church there is often a separating process
 - The final judgment will be handled by God

THE TEN VIRGINS - MT. 25:1-13

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Ten Virgins
 - △ The Lamps and Oil
 - △ The Bridegroom
 - △ The Delay of the Bridegroom's return
 - △ The Marriage and the Closed Door
2. The importance of being ready

THE TALENTS - MT. 25:14-30

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The talents - measurement of weight of money
 - △ The servants - men of diverse abilities
 - △ The Master - the demanding God
 - △ Answerability - all men must give account
 - △ Rewards - entering the joy of the Lord
 - △ Punishment - cast into outer darkness
2. All must use the abilities we have

THE SHEEP AND GOATS - MT. 25:31-46

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The separation - the sheep from the goats
 - △ The goats - the sinful on the left hand
 - △ The sheep - the godly on the right hand
 - △ The King - the Son of God
 - △ The verdict - "come" sheep; "depart" goats
 - △ The basis of the judgment - the "little" deeds
2. The judgment which determines eternal life or destruction

THE LABORS AND THE VINEYARD - MT. 20:1-20

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Owner of the Vineyard
 - △ The need for Workers
 - △ The Contract for their labor
 - △ The different hours of hiring
 - △ The Payment for their Work
 - △ The Reaction to the Payment
2. God's favor is not owed by our work and we should not be discontent with the grace others receive.

THE TWIN PARABLES - MT. 13:44-46

1. Treasure Hid in a field
 - △ The Treasure
 - △ Hidden in Field
 - △ Accidentally found
 - △ The Value of the treasure
 - △ The possession of the treasure

2. The Pearl of Great Price
 - △ The Merchant Man
 - △ Seeking Pearls
 - △ Finding one Pearl of great value
 - △ The possession of the Pearl

THE HOUSEHOLDER - MT. 13:51-53

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Question
 - △ The Householder
 - △ The Treasury containing the old and the new
2. Using what has been learned

THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT - MT. 18:23-35

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Forgiving King
 - △ The Unforgiving Servant
 - △ The Fellow Servant
 - △ The Debts
 - △ The Other Servants
 - △ The Punishment
2. Since God forgives so much, we must learn to forgive also

THE TWO SONS - MT. 21:28-32

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Father's Request - go work
 - △ The Sons' Verbal Statements - I will/ I will not
 - △ The Question - Who did the Father's will?
2. Pretending to be willing to do vs. repenting and doing

THE MARRIAGE FEAST - MT. 22:1-14

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The King
 - △ The Son
 - △ The Marriage Feast
 - △ The Invited Guests
 - △ The Treatment of the Invitation
 - △ The Treatment of the Servants
 - △ The Reaction of the King
 - △ Others Invited
 - △ The Man without a Wedding Garment
2. Of the many invited, only a few enjoy the benefits

PARABLES IN MARK

THE GROWING SEED - Mark 4:26-29

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The Sower
 - Δ The seed
 - Δ The ground
 - Δ The mystery of the growing process
 - Δ The steps - blade, ear, full corn
 - Δ The harvest
2. The growth of the Kingdom

THE PORTER ON WATCH - Mark 13:34-37

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The man going into a far country
 - Δ The distribution of duties
 - Δ The porter to watch
 - Δ The need for watching
2. The need to be properly prepared

PARABLES IN LUKE

THE TWO DEBTORS - Luke 7:41-43

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The Creditor
 - Δ The two Debtors
 - Δ The question - Which loved the Creditor the most?
2. Gratitude is proportionate to extent of forgiveness

THE GOOD SAMARITAN - Luke 10:30-35

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The wounded man
 - Δ The thieves
 - Δ The priest, the Levite
 - Δ The Samaritan and his actions
2. The one giving help is the neighbor

THE FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT - Luke 11:5-8

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The persistent friend
 - Δ The traveling friend
 - Δ The friend with the bread
2. The persistence in prayer

THE RICH FOOL - Luke 12:16-21

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The rich man's prosperity
 - Δ The rich man's plans
 - Δ His soul is required
2. The warning against covetousness

THE WATCHFUL SERVANT - Luke 12:35-40

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The lord of the house
 - Δ The men (servants) waiting
 - Δ The various watches
2. Be prepared and always be ready

THE BARREN FIG TREE - Luke 13:6-9

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The tolerant owner
 - Δ The barren fig tree
 - Δ The dresser of the vineyard
 - Δ The extra effort before destruction
2. The consequences of fruitlessness

THE CHIEF SEATS - Luke 14:7-11

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The chief seats at the wedding
 - Δ The lowest seats at the wedding
 - Δ The rearranging of the seating order
2. The danger of self-exhortation

THE GREAT SUPPER - Luke 14:16-24

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ The Invitations to the Supper
 - Δ The many excuses offered
 - Δ Others invited to the Supper
 - Δ The rejection of the original guest list
2. God does not accept excuses

THE TOWER AND THE KING - Luke 14:28-33

1. Constituent Elements
 - Δ Making plans to build a tower
 - Δ Making plans to conquer
 - Δ Embarrassment from failure
2. The importance of counting the cost

THE LOST SHEEP - Luke 15:3-7

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Safe sheep
 - △ The Lost sheep
 - △ The Concerned Shepherd
 - △ The Joy at the return of the Lost Sheep
2. The importance of one lost Christian and the joy at his restoration.

THE LOST COIN - Luke 15:8-10

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Secure coins
 - △ The Lost coin
 - △ The Joy at finding the Lost coin
2. The importance of one lost Christian and the joy at his restoration.

THE TWO LOST SONS - Luke 15:11-32

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Younger son's riotous life
 - △ The Younger son's return home
 - △ The Father's joy at the return
 - △ The Older son's improper attitude
 - △ Reasoning with the older son
2. The fatherly love toward erring children

THE UNJUST STEWARD - Luke 16:1-13

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The wasteful steward
 - △ The loss of his position
 - △ His plan for future security at his master's expense
2. The wisdom of preparing for the future

THE SERVANT'S DUTY - Luke 17:7-10

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The servant's duty
 - △ The servant's station
 - △ The servant's treatment
2. The proper attitude toward our duties as servants of God

THE UNRIGHTEOUS JUDGE - Luke 18:1-8

1. Constituent Elements
 - △ The Judge and his attitude
 - △ The widow and her cause
 - △ The widow's perseverance
 - △ The widow's success
2. The power of persistent prayer