


Summer in the Parables  
 Class I: Overview  
 Grace Church Bellingham, July 9, 2024

## WHAT IS A PARABLE?

- **Parable**
  - *mashal [OT] (proverb, satire, riddle)*
  - *parabole [NT] (figurative saying, extended simile, story, example, allegory)*

A placing beside, a comparison; proverb, symbol, type;  
 a relatively short narrative with symbolic meaning;  
 figure, allegory; an illustration that teaches



35-60 depending


## ACADEMIC CLASSIFICATION

Herrick

- *Simple simile (Matt 13:33)*
- *Simple metaphor (Matt 7:8)*
- *Extended simile (Matt 20:1-16)*
- *Extended metaphor (Luke 15:11-32)*
- *Example stories (Luke 10:30-37)*

Snodgrass

- *Similitudes*
- *Interrogative parables*
- *Double indirect narrative parables*
- *Judicial parables*
- *Single indirect parables*
- *"how much more" parables*



Allegory?

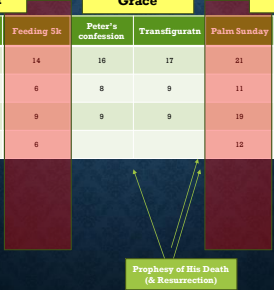
## INTERPRETIVE THOUGHTS

- **Listen**
- **Identify frame (givens)**
- **Original hearers**
- **Context (near & far)**
- **End stress**
- **Main points (one, two, three)**

Chapter Numbers of Some Pivotal Events in the Gospels														
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	
Gospel	Total No. of Chaps.	Jesus' Baptism	Jesus' Temptation	The Parable of the Sower	The Feeding of the 5,000	Peter's Confession	Jesus' First Prophecy of His Death	The Transfiguration	Jesus' Second Prophecy of His Death	Jesus' Third Prophecy of His Death	Palm Sunday	Jesus' Death	Jesus' Resurrection	Jesus' Ascension
Matt	28	3	4	13	14	16	16	17	17	20	21	27	28	(28)
Mark	16	1	1	4	6	8	8	9	9	10	11	15	16	(16)
Luke	24	3	4	8	9	9	9	9	9	18	19	23	24	24 (+ Acts 1)
John	21	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	12	19	20	-

## LIFE OF JESUS

	Kingdom			Grace			Judgment		
	Baptism	Temptation	Parable of Sower	Feeding 5k	Peter's confession	Transfiguration	Palm Sunday	Death	Resurrection
Matt 3	4	13	14	16	17	21	27	28	(28)
Mark 1	1	4	6	8	9	11	15	16	(16)
Luke 3	4	8	9	9	9	19	23	24	24
John			6			12	19	20	



Prophecy of His Death (& Resurrection)

## PARABLE TRANSITIONS IN LIFE OF JESUS

**Kingdom**

First parables, up until feeding of 5,000  
 What is the kingdom of heaven?

**Grace**

Mid-ministry parables, up until passion week  
 Death-resurrection and the kingdom

**Judgment**

After triumphal entry  
 Judgment and the kingdom

## Matthew 13:1–23

**13** That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. <sup>2</sup> And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. <sup>3</sup> And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup> And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. <sup>5</sup> Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, <sup>6</sup> but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup> Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup> Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup> He who has ears, let him hear.”

<sup>10</sup> *Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?”* <sup>11</sup> *And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. <sup>12</sup> For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>13</sup> This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. <sup>14</sup> Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: “ ‘You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.”*

<sup>15</sup> *For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.’*

<sup>16</sup> *But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. <sup>17</sup> For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.*

<sup>18</sup> “Hear then the parable of the sower: <sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. <sup>20</sup> As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, <sup>21</sup> yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. <sup>22</sup> As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. <sup>23</sup> As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

### WHY PARABLES?

- *Kingdom is God’s work – Jesus is here!*
- *Sowing seed of Christ indiscriminately* Worldwide (Jew, Gentile!)
- *Small insignificant seed, huge response* Mystery (seemingly weak)
- *Seed does the work, not the soil* Actual (seed works)
- *Will be response – mostly hostile* Response (hostile!)

“Yet for all their charm and simplicity, his story-parables are not one bit less baffling. Once again, they set forth comparisons that tend to make mincemeat of people’s religious expectations. Bad people are rewarded (the Publican, the Prodigal, the Unjust Steward); good people are scolded (the Pharisee, the Elder Brother, the Diligent Workers); God’s response to prayer is likened to a man getting rid of a nuisance (the Friend at Midnight); and in general, everybody’s idea of who ought to be first or last is liberally doused with cold water (the Wedding Feast, the Great Judgment, Lazarus and Dives, the Narrow Door)” (Robert Capon)

### Resources:

Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*; Capon, *Kingdom, Grace, Judgment*; McArthur, *Parables*; Mohler, *Tell Me The Stories of Jesus*; Scott, *Hear Then The Parable*; Snodgrass, *Stories With Intent*