

The Parables of Jesus

by Wayne Goff

We were blessed with the privilege of studying five of the parables of Jesus this past week. Jesus did not invent the parable, but He used it extensively in His public ministry and more effectively than anyone ever has. There are some parables in the Old Testament. The story Nathan told David to convict him of his sin with Bathsheba is a notable example (2 Samuel 12:1-4).

The gospel of Matthew contains *ten parables* found only in his book. The gospel of Mark contains *only one* parable peculiar to his writing (Mark 4:26). Luke's gospel contains *eighteen parables* of Jesus found only in his writings. Twenty-nine parables of Jesus recorded in the synoptic Gospels — and we could only study five this past week.

When the disciples asked Jesus **why** He began to speak to the public in parables (sometime in His second year of work), He replied: *"Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given"* (Matthew 13:11). Simply put, parables kept the *uninterested* from learning valuable truths. But those who *truly wanted to know* could study the parables, discern their proper interpretation, and learn the intended lesson.

Those who did not get to know the mysteries of the kingdom were those who did not want to know them! *"...Because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. . . . For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them"* (Matthew 13:13, 15). God does not force His saving truths upon anyone. But those who seek shall find. Those who knock shall have the door opened. It's all about the will.

It is the same today with every sermon preached. Those who desire to know more of God's will are those who listen intently, take notes, study it on their own and assimilate the eternal truths taught. How sad that so many hear lessons that they will never appreciate and understand.

302801