

KINGDOM PARABLES –Week 1 - Study Guide

Matthew 13:44-46 and Luke 12:13-34

1. The Kingdom of Heaven, Kingdom of God –

Both of these terms are used in Scripture to refer to the rule and reign of God in heaven and on earth. Jesus called his listeners to “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near (Matt. 4:17).” He called them to change their way of thinking and to recognize that what God had spoken through the prophets was here, and present in Him. He had come to invite them to join him and be a part of that kingdom.

What does the Bible tell us about the Kingdom of heaven?

Matthew 3:2 and Mark 1:14 –

Luke 4:43

Luke 10:9

Luke 17:20

John 18:36

The Kingdom of God is both “now,” present among us, and “not yet;” It came in the person of Jesus Christ, and is established in us as we come to know Jesus as our Savior. It will fully be revealed in all its glory when Jesus returns and takes us unto himself and establishes his eternal kingdom. Philippians 3:20-21 reminds us that we will someday live forever in heaven with Him.

2. Parables – A Method of Teaching

As Jesus began his ministry among the people, he began by teaching them how to live in the kingdom of God. That is his message; He teaches the life he knows – the life of the kingdom. To do that, Jesus frames his message in parables, a familiar form used by the Jewish Rabbis and one the people would understand.

A Parable is _____

The Parables we will look at this week are stories that introduce us to the costs and rewards of being a disciple in God’s Kingdom. The first two are found in Matthew 13:44-46:

45"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. 46"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 47When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

The two stories are told together; we must keep them together. They both describe the value of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to two different kinds of people, and discovered in different ways. As you study these short verses, think about the differences you note in the parables as well as their similarities.

3. The Hidden Treasure – Matthew 13:45

The kingdom of heaven is like a _____

In this parable, a man “finds” the “treasure.” What details does this parable leave out? What details does it include?

What motivated the man to buy the field? Why would the man hide the treasure and then buy the field?

How is it possible that this treasure is “like” the kingdom of heaven? Can you explain the parable?

4. The Pearl of Great Value – Matthew 13:46-47

The kingdom of heaven is like..._____

What does this parable include that the first one omitted?

What is the same about these two stories?

What do you think is the interpretation of this parable?

5. Who do you think these 2 men represented?

What did each find?

What was the cost to each?

This next parable continues the same theme as the first two stories. Jesus is teaching his disciples as the people in the crowd listen in.

6. The Rich Fool – Luke 12: 13 – 21

¹³Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”¹⁴ Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” ¹⁵ Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

V. 13-15 – As Jesus is preaching, someone in the crowd calls out a request to him. What is the man’s problem/situation?

Instead of addressing the man’s request, Jesus cautions the man. What does he want the man to be aware of? _____

¹⁶ **And he told them this parable:** “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. ¹⁷ He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’¹⁸ “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. ¹⁹ And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’²⁰ “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’²¹ “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

V. 16-21 Re-read the parable as Jesus told it. As you read, circle all of the personal, first person pronouns that Jesus uses as he tells the story of the rich man in his parable.

Who or what was the *center of the rich man’s universe* in the story Jesus told?

With whom did he discuss his dilemma or share his plans?

When God addressed the man in the story, what issue did he address?

What place did his possessions have in his life? What was the problem with that?

V. 21 – What is the **heart of the message** that Jesus has for the Rich Fool as he tells this parable?

How does the message of the Rich Fool relate to the message of the other two parables we studied today?

7. Read Luke 12:22-34 from your Bibles – In these verses Jesus speaks to his disciples and extends his message of the parable above. In it he directs his listeners to focus not only on earthly things, but on his larger message:

V. 22 - 26 – According to Jesus, what are the earthly concerns that tend to fill the lives of all of us? What is our focus?

V. 27-31 – Jesus presents an argument that moves from “lesser to greater.” His theme is “How much More” will God supply our needs as we place our faith in him. How does he use earth as a visual aid to illustrate how God will graciously supply our needs?

How does he use the Pagan world as a counter point to the behavior of believers?

V. 31-34 – Jesus combines the earthly with the heavenly in these verses. The Kingdom of God is invisible, but we are told to “Seek the Kingdom” and the effects will be seen in the physical, visible realm. What is Jesus point to us in these verses? Where does he want us to place our hearts?

8. PICK A TITLE - Which of these statements would be the best Title for this week’s Lesson? Explain your pick!

The Kingdom will cost you Everything

Everything we have for Everything Jesus is

Jesus addresses Heart Issues, not Legal issues

God invades the circumstances of Earth

You cannot be a tourist in the Kingdom of God; you must be a subject