

T H E

K I N G D O M

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H E A V E N

&

T H E

P A R A B L E S

BY

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The KINGDOM of HEAVEN & The PARABLES

(All Scripture passages are taken from *The Amplified Bible*, unless otherwise stated)
(‘Young’ refers to Brad Young, “*The Parables, Jewish Tradition & Christian Interpretation*”)
(‘Rufus’ refers to contributor Rufus Talent)
(In most cases the **bold type** & *italics* is my emphasis)

I - Purpose:

To understand the ***True, Proper & Deeper meaning*** that God intended for us when Jesus spoke about The Kingdom of Heaven & illustrated it by speaking in Parables as recorded in *Matthew 13*.

II - Objective:

To ***derive the maximum blessing, joy & edification*** that a believe can achieve ***through an accurate interpretation*** of The Kingdom & The Parables.

III – General Introduction:

A. In my opinion, there are many ***mistakes*** and/or ***inaccuracies*** made in the ***interpretation & application*** of ***parables*** that tend to ***rob*** us of ***huge benefits & blessings***. And we all know where theft comes from! The devil! *John 10:10a*

B. The ***devil*** is ***furious (angry)*** at ***God*** for casting him out of Heaven. And since he can’t retaliate against God directly, he does so by ***attacking us, His prize creation made in His “likeness & image”***. In creating problems for us and in us two things happen...

- 1. We don’t reach our full potential & enjoyment*** of being a child of God...and,
- 2. God gets robbed*** of the ***honor & glory*** due to Him.

C. While ***I’m not a theologian*** I believe God has given me ***certain insights*** that can help us ***get on the right track to restore*** the real meaning & cause us to experience more of the fullness of His blessings for us.

D. ***Those who teach & interpret...are “like a householder who brings forth out of his storehouse treasure*** (I’ve been interpreting parables for over 40 years) ***that is new and...old (the fresh as well as the familiar)***. - *Matthew 13:52*. It is my goal for us to ***confirm & establish some*** of the accurate ***‘old’ truths*** we’ve learned; and ***add ‘new’ insights***.

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IV – Definitions:

A. General

- 1. The definition & understanding*** of what parables are & what the Kingdom of Heaven is, are both ***absolutely critical to gleaning*** the ***maximum benefit*** of what these teachings are attempting to convey.

2. There are many truths in the Scriptures that are said to be “*secrets & mysteries*” that were not revealed to “prophets & righteous men” for many years, but then were revealed to specific men after Jesus arrived on the scene.

a) *Matthew 13:11*...Jesus, to the disciples, “to you it has been given to know the secrets and mysteries of the **Kingdom of Heaven**...”

b) *Ephesians 3:1-11*...Paul repeatedly wrote regarding God choosing him to take the Gospel to the Gentiles, “...*the mystery (secret) was made known to me and I was allowed to comprehend it by direct revelation... was never disclosed to human beings in past generations as it has now been revealed...kept hidden through the ages and concealed until now...that through the Church...might now be made known...in accordance with the terms of the eternal and timeless purpose...*” Also *Colossians 1:25-27*.

3. “The *New Testament* is in the *Old, concealed*. The *Old Testament* is in the *New, revealed*.”

a) Not only can we not understand the N.T. unless we understand the O.T. accurately; we also cannot appreciate all the *tremendous aspects & intricacies* (details) of *God’s Ultimate Plan for our lives* through Jesus Christ.

b) *Jesus* said, “I came that they *may have and enjoy life*, and *have it in abundance* (to the *full*, till it *overflows*).” *John 10:10b*.

In saying that, Jesus was going back to the *principles of God recorded in the Old Testament Law* that stated that if anyone ever “*robbed, killed or destroyed*” anything belonging to anyone else, he would be required to make *restitution* by giving back to that person in multiples...2-fold (times), 4-fold, or more...of what was originally robbed, killed or destroyed. *Exodus 22:1*.

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Luke wrote, “*God anointed and consecrated Jesus of Nazareth ...He went about doing good and...curing all who were harassed and oppressed by (the power of) the devil.*” *Acts 10:38*.

Through the *accurate interpretation* of the *parables* we will also

destroy the works of the devil, making it possible for us & others to *live the full and victorious Christian life!* “*You will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.*” – *John 8:32*.

B. What is a Parable? (About 1/3 of the words that Jesus spoke are in parables”.)

1. A **parable** is an **illustration from nature explaining a spiritual truth**. Many of Jesus' teachings are **earthy, agricultural, simple, everyday, practical**. That's probably **why I relate** so much to them, and see them from a different perspective compared to many others.
 - a) I was born and **raised on a farm**, and am a **gardener**.
 - b) I have a **prophetic gifting** on me, and so am a **"see-er"** into truth with special **in-sight**.
 - ☞ This all provides for an **interesting understanding & interpretation** of the parables.

2. "The **word parable** means to **lie alongside**, and is from the same root as **parallel**. A parable is a **fictional story** using **symbolism** to represent **spiritual truths**." – Rufus.

3. In **Hebrew culture: Story telling**, to **"reach the heart through the imagination... a proverbial saying, to a fictitious story**. It may refer to a **proverb, riddle, anecdote, fable, or allegory...defines the unknown by using what is known"** - Young.
 - a) The **Jewish language is a pictorial language**; it **paints pictures**. I met a Jewish photographer in 1985 who produced two volumes on the **Land of Israel – all pictures**, no words.
 - b) As human beings we **think in pictures**, not words.
 - ☞ Unfortunately the Church has never embraced & practiced the divine tool of **meditation** and **visualization** in **overcoming**

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temptations & problems, and **achieving victory** in our lives.
 - ☞ So the **enemy has stolen it** away from us & **perverted it** (example: transcendental meditation, etc.), robbing us of this vital truth in our Christian experience.
 - ☞ **The truth...**
 - ☐ "**Fix (NIV...focus) your eyes on Jesus...**" - *Hebrews 12:2*. Focus firmly on Jesus...
 - ☐ Our Shepherd - *Psalms 23*.
 - ☐ Our Healer - *Isaiah 53:5*.
 - ☐ Our Provider - *Philippians 4:19*, etc.
 - ☐ Also, **meditating on the truth of Scripture in picture form** (visualization) - *Joshua 1:6-9; Psalm 1; Philippians 4:6-9*.
 - ☐ Application to areas of need in our lives...

- ❑ Loneliness
- ❑ Fear
- ❑ Stress, anxiety
- ❑ Guilt, Condemnation, shame
- ❑ Temptation
- ❑ Our position in/with Christ - *2Corinthians 2:14-16*.

👑 For more on this, go to www.restoration101.org, Restoration101 Manual, Lesson 8: *Soul – Mind, Emotions & Will*.

4. ***Many other cultures used this medium.*** In many cultures this is how *history* has been *recorded* for future generations before the craft of writing was invented. Men told it to their children in stories; but as vividly as possible so that they would remember them - accurately. The more vivid the picture painted, the more accurate the remembrance!
5. ***Practically speaking...*** We retain many times more what we *see & hear* compared to what we just hear.

C. *What is The Kingdom of Heaven?*

1. In the O.T. *Jesus* was prophesied to be the *coming King sitting on the*

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throne of David. The Gospel of *Matthew was written to the Jews* to show the *fulfillment* of that prophecy. However, the Jews were expecting a 'Knight in shining armor'.

2. The Gospel of Matthew is filled with specific references to "***The Kingdom of Heaven***"... from God's perspective, not according to the Jews' expectations. It is a ***kingdom postponed***, but surely to come into being during the millennium.
3. ***Children*** are part of The Kingdom of Heaven...or at least those with the ***simple faith of a child*** - *Matthew 19:14*. Not surprising, since Jesus came as a child not a warrior on a horse.
4. The Kingdom of *God*... "...is ***within you*** and ***among (around) you...***" - *Luke 17:20-37*. Have you ever tried to imagine what that really means? That, with ***Jesus & the Holy Spirit of God living within your spirit***, you have the ***fullness of the entire Kingdom of God within you*** as well? I still can't, and I've been trying for years. What would it do for us if we could get a ***divine revelation*** of what that really means?!
5. The ***difference*** between ***The Kingdom of Heaven & The Kingdom of God***. Some scholars don't think there is a difference. I do.
 - a) ***The Kingdom of Heaven*** is the ***general realm of King Jesus***, the '***King-dom***', ***the King's domain/dominion***, everything under ***His***

jurisdiction including the *good, bad & ugly*...the *believers*, the *unbelievers*, and the *demonic realm in the heavenlies*.

☞ Is a king, president, etc. only the head of those who agree with and are pleased with him?

☞ Or *everyone in the territory he has responsibility over*, whether they submit to him or not?

☞ God has *general control*, but not *ultimate control* until all things are placed under the feet of Jesus – *1 Corinthians 15:25*.

b) *The Kingdom of God* has to do with the *relationship of God* with *His children* and *His specific reign of righteousness* within the *hearts & lives of believers*...

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☞ As we *voluntarily submit* to Him,

Initially, at the time of *coming into faith in Christ*,

And as we continue to *yield to Him* on a day by day, moment by moment basis.

☞ *Eventually*, even the *unbelievers & demonic forces* will all *come under the ultimate control* of the *righteous rule of the Kingdom of God, and the Kings of Kings & Lord of Lords* – *Philippians 10-11*. (For *judgment*, not salvation.)

V - Types of Parables...

A. *General Parables*...a few examples of the many parables contained in the Scriptures.

1. *A man hiring workers to work in his vineyard* - *Matthew 20:1-16*. As a young boy growing up on the farm we had threshing crews that went from farm to farm helping neighbors harvest their grain.
2. *Sewing a new patch of cloth onto an old garment* – Julie is a seamstress, and really understands that.
3. *New wine & old wineskins*.
4. *Traveler knocking on a door, needing food at midnight*.
5. *Persistent Widow* - *Luke 18:1-8*.
6. *King & debtor* - *Matthew 18:23-35*.

7. *King & His son's wedding banquet invitations - Matthew. 22:2-14.*
8. *Ten Virgins - Matthew 25:1-13.*
9. *Man on a Journey & Talents - Matthew 25:13-30.*
10. *Being 'Born Again' - John 3:1-8.*

a) How many of you have ever thought of this as being *a parable*?

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b) It's a natural illustration explaining a spiritual truth. When you take the natural process of birth and lay it along the spiritual birth process, being 'born again' really comes alive & is *so much more meaningful!*

B. Specific Parables......that we will be studying in these lessons in a solid block of *seven parables within one chapter - Matthew 13.*

1. This is the *main passage of Scripture we will be studying.*
2. *“The Kingdom of Heaven' is like...” & “the Kingdom”* are referred to about a dozen times in this chapter.

VI - Rules for Interpreting a Parable

A. Culture:

👑 *Examples...*

1. *Abraham/Sarah & Zacharias/Elizabeth being childless...*serious cultural issue: man could divorce his wife for not bearing him a child.
 - a) *Scriptural/Cultural Truth:* children are a *blessing* (of God). However, it is not necessarily a *curse* (of God) to be barren, scripturally. Yet culturally, it was thought to be so.
 - b) *Problem:* Jewish leaders kept adding more & more rules & regulations to God's laws as time went along (worse by Jesus' time)...and became strict about their adherence
2. *Why did Jesus take dirt & spit on it*, then place it on the blind man's eyes?
 - a) In Jewish cultural the *spittle* of the *'first-born son'* was thought to have *healing powers* - *John 9:6.*
 - b) That's why *Jesus* incorporated that *little bit of culture* into healing the blind man. He was the *'Eldest/only begotten Son'* of the *Heavenly Father.*

- c) **John's focus** was proving that **Jesus was the Son of God** (His deity).
By comparison...

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- Matthew** wrote to the **Jews: Jesus is the King of the Jews.**
- Mark** wrote of **Jesus as The Servant of God.**
- Luke** (as a physician) depicted Him as **the Son of Man** (His humanity).

- d) Spend some time going through the entire chapter observing how the Pharisees kept quizzing the man & his parents, back & forth, trying to find some way to disprove that Jesus was God. Both an enlightening & humorous scene!

3. **Luke 10:4...**“**refrain from** (retarding your journey by) **saluting** and **wishing anyone well along the way.**”

- a) This doesn't mean don't talk to anyone at all, and be a snob. Culturally, saluting entailed a lengthy conversation/discourse. It was an event that took time.
- b) In other words, **be focused on your mission & don't allow yourself to be distracted** by the normal, daily details of life.
- c) “A soldier is not allowed to become entangled with the affairs of business while on duty” – 2Timothy 2:4.
- d) This is very appropriate for **our modern day & society/culture**. We're way **too busy**, and way **too involved** in too many things. We **must clearly understand our purpose/mission/calling/gifting/anointing**. Narrow it down! And **stay focused!**
- e) **My personal experience...**God has been narrowing my calling & ministry over the past 30 years. He just did it again, telling me the main things He wants me to concentrate on are **writing & teaching**.
- f) **Principle:** ...there is **no anointing** and **no protection** if we're **functioning outside** of the **narrow confines** of our **calling & anointing**.
 - We **don't succeed** because there is no anointing. As a result we **fail**.

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- And because we're **outside the umbrella of God's protection**, the devil beats our brains in with **defeat, failure, guilt & condemnation**. Not good! Stay focused...and in the Will of God.

B. Context:

1. The ***same words & concepts must be interpreted to mean the same thing***
2. Example: all **7 *parables*** in the same chapter, *Matthew 13* as Jesus enumerated them, one after another in ***a cluster*** ...the ‘man’, the ‘field’, the ‘seed’, the ‘leaven’, ‘birds’, etc., must refer to the same thing in each separate account.

C. Continuity: (“...the principal of expositional constancy” – *Rufus.*)

1. As a General Rule: the same words & concepts must be interpreted to mean the same thing in a ***broader context*** and in ***related illustrations & parables*** that Jesus, and others taught & were understood in other settings.
2. Example:
 - Jesus, in all the Gospels.
 - Paul

VII – Application

A. Literal Interpretation or Application

- What was the primary message/meaning/purpose? Typically a parable should emphasize only one main truth, not many or several.

B. Inspirational Interpretation or Application

- What could be a secondary possibility...that doesn’t violate the rules/guidelines of proper interpretation...but can still be used as an encouragement & blessing?

C. Why is it so Important to know all this? So who cares?

1. To ***Destroy*** the ***works*** of the ***devil***.

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- a) In my Restoration101 classes & in the beginning of these lessons (III – General Introduction) I teach that the ***devil is mad at God*** for evicting him from Heaven. I believe it’s important to repeat this truth here.
- b) Since he ***can’t retaliate against God***, his focus & strategy is to ***negatively impact us***, God’s ***Prize Creation, made in His Likeness***

& **Image** so we can't become everything God has designed for us to be. Thus...

- **Robbing God** of the *Honor & Glory due to Him*, and
- **Robbing us** of the *fulfillment & joy* of serving God wholeheartedly & unaffectedly!

c) **Knowing all this & knowing specifically what Jesus was saying in these parables can “destroy the works of the devil” & bring us deliverance & healing, releasing us to become all He has planned for us.** “You shall know the Truth and the Truth will set you free.” – John 8:32.

2. Be **Accurate** in our **Faith** and **What we Believe**.

a) “Always be ready to give a logical defense to anyone who asks you to account for the hope that is in you” - 1Peter 3:15.

b) “Study to show yourself approved unto God...not being ashamed...correctly analyzing and accurately dividing (rightly handling and skillfully teaching) the Word of Truth.” - 2Timothy 2:15.

c) Paul the Apostle often said, “I would not have you be ignorant...”

3. For our **Personal Encouragement & Edification**.

a) “...**not to lose heart** (not to faint or become despondent through fear) at what I am suffering...” - Ephesians 3:10-13. That is, ‘**understand this is a spiritual warfare: one Kingdom against another.**’

b) Understand “**We are more than conquerors**”. - Romans 8:37.

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c) “**The Kingdom of God is within us...**” - Luke 17:21.

d) “**He Who lives in you is greater (mightier) than he who is in the world.**” - 1John 4:4. Otherwise, we **don't know what is really happening**, and we're merely “**shadow boxing**”. – 1Corinthians 9:26.

4. To **Experience** the **Joy of Knowing...**

a) **How much God really loves us!**

b) **Our true value in His eyes!**

c) *Who we are in Christ!*

- We've referred to some of these truths earlier & will be addressing them more in future parables.

D. What's the Real Problem in our Modern Society? (Many believe that in some parts of the world we are now living in a *Post Christian Era*.)

1. Why? What's the Problem?

- a) Many believers just *don't know & understand* the **Real Truths** of **Scripture** and **The Faith**. There's such a *shallowness & disregard* for the **Truth** of **Scripture**.

👑 **Examples:**

- **Doctrine: Universalism**...believing that eventually everyone will be saved whether they believe in Jesus or not.
- **Practice:** Many believers are *undisciplined, living in sin & carnal lifestyles*.
- There's more, but these are just two examples of *faith & practice*.

👑 **Scriptures:**

- “My people are destroyed for **lack of knowledge**.” - Hosea 4:6.

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- “‘Behold, **the days are coming**’, says the Lord God, ‘when I will send a **famine** in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but a (famine) **for hearing the Words of the Lord**...shall wander from sea to sea...**run to & fro to seek the Word of the Lord, but shall not find it.**’” - Amos 8:12.
- “For the **time is coming** when (people) will **not tolerate (endure) sound and wholesome instruction**; but, having ears itching (for something **pleasing** and **gratifying**), they will gather to themselves one **teacher** after another...to **satisfy their own liking** and to **foster the errors they hold.**” – 2Timothy 4:3.

2. What's the Real Solution?

- a) “Herald and **preach The Word** ...whether the opportunity seems favorable or unfavorable (whether it is convenient or inconvenient,

whether it is welcome or unwelcome).. **convince them, rebuking and correcting, warning and urging and encouraging them, being unflinching and inexhaustible in patience and teaching.**” – 2Timothy 4:2.

b) **Study the Word** (back to 2Timothy 2:15).

“You will **know the Truth and the Truth will set you free.**” – John 8:32.

c) What’s the **other condition of this last statement?**

Obedience. “If you abide in My Word (hold fast to My Teachings and live in accordance with them ...” - v. 31.

d) **Engage...like shifting gears in a car.**

Charisma Magazine editorial, January 2011.

“...we must interlock with God’s Word as it comes into ‘frictional driving contact’ with our flesh...wrestling with Scripture...”

Pour ‘New Wine’ (divinely revealed Truth) from vessel to vessel (fellow believers – Ephesians 4:11-16), and as “**Iron**
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sharpens iron.” – Proverbs 27:17.

e) **Hope...** the Truth sets you free from the **bondage**, the **lies**, the **doubt**, the **guilt & condemnation** of the **enemy**...and gives incredible **hope!**

But...

f) **The believer must have a...**

A **teachable spirit**...taught all through the Proverbs.

Fear of God - Proverbs 1:7, and other passages.

Love of the Truth - 2Thessalonians 2:10

👑 “We must Fear God, Love the Truth, and Implicitly Obey Absolute Truth without rationalization; for Rationalization leads to Deception.” (This is a very strong, important word God gave me several years ago...about 2005.)

g) This **Truth delivers believers...**

- *Out of the closet of darkness...confusion...uncertainty... doubt ... guilt...and defeat: the vacuum where the enemy lives and thrives...and*
- *Into the Light of God's Truth where the enemy's lies & deceptions are exposed...and the strength of his bondage is broken.*

VIII – The Interpretations of the Parables:

A. The Sower, The Seed & The Soil - Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23; Luke 8:5-8, 11-15; Mark 4:3-8,14-20. (Adapted from www.restoration101.org, 'The Manual', Lesson 4).

1. Preliminary Deliberations & Observations

a) This is the only parable in Matthew 13 that Jesus did not refer to as 'The Kingdom of Heaven', yet it sets the pattern for the rest...in words used, etc.

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b) **"Soil"** - Specific plots, parcels or areas of land or soil, but not 'a field' – v. 38, 44. Hence, it is not referring to 'the world', but to **types of character or condition of individual person's heart.**
"While anyone is hearing...what was sown in his heart" - v.19.

c) **Hand-sown seed** (seed scattered by hand). *"Semetic & Aramaic love idioms...mention the hand."* – (Young)

- A loving term. God is lovingly sowing the seed of His Word into our hearts.
- Compare this to the harsh, cruel work of satan, 'choke and suffocate' in the third category of soil - v.22...choking by holding two hands around a throat.
- Harvesting 'pearls' in later parable – v. 45-46. The loving Hand of God carefully & gently removes us from the mass of sinful humanity, while He Himself becomes bruised, torn, and bleeding in the process. *"He Who knew no sin became sin for us."*

d) **All of the different soils** basically have the **same potential for good productivity.**

- **Not all soil is the same.** *In the natural*, some is loam, some clay, some sand, etc.

- **However**, all soil in the **same general plot, or parcel or acreage would be the same type**, more or less...just not all of it would be properly cultivated and prepared for planting seeds.
- But **other conditions** in the soil could exist to **affect healthy** productivity...
 - ▣ Trees
 - ▣ Hard & uncultivated
 - ▣ Rocks
 - ▣ Weeds
- Yet **something can be done** (in most cases) to prepare and improve the soil for a good harvest.

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👑 **My experience from my childhood farming days** of watching **my father prepare wooded/uncultivated soil for planting seed...**

- ▣ Bulldoze trees, place on large piles and burn them.
- ▣ Remove large boulders.
- ▣ Break ground with a breaking plow, disc, cultivate & harrow (rake) soil back & forth.
- ▣ Pick up smaller rocks & haul them off.
- ▣ Fertilize.
- ▣ Cultivate, spray for weeds.

e) **Spiritually...**

- Since we **are all created in the “likeness & image of God”**, we can all become spiritually productive & useful to the Kingdom of God.
- We are all **negatively affected**, causing no, or poor productivity - *Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 5:12*.
- **God provided the solution to change our hearts.** - *John 3:16; Romans 5:6,19; Ephesians 2:1-9*.

2. **Categories of Soil**

a) **Soil #1**

- The **soil is trodden down** under foot, a pathway, uncultivated, and also hardened by the sun.

- The *seed* that falls on it is *stolen*... ‘*birds of the air*’. That is significant! Only *Luke* adds ‘*of the air*’; *Matthew* & *Mark* say only ‘*birds*’.

☞ The seed *strewn on the hard, rocky & thorny soils* is not done so *on purpose*, but lands there in the process of broadcasting the seed by hand on the good soil; though they were *quite careful & proficient* in their planting. Seed was very precious.

- There was *no germination, no life, no productivity*.

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b) Soil #2

- *Good soil*, but *shallow* due to *rocky sub-surface* (some say ‘*rocks*’ - *Luke*; *Matthew* ‘*rocky ground*’; *Mark* ‘*ground full of rocks*’)

- *Brief life* is ‘*evidenced*’. How?

- ▣ *Germination*

- ▣ *Plant stalk* (stem)

- But “*dried up and withered away*”. Why? Due to...

- ▣ *Shallowness of soil*

- ▣ *Inadequate root structure*

- ▣ *Tall spindly, weak plant stalk*

- ▣ *Exposure* to the *elements* – sun, wind, etc.

- *No* actual, long-term *productivity*

c) Soil #3

- *Good Soil* with ability to put down *good roots*...deep & wide.

- There definitely is *life* here.

- ▣ “...*thorns grew up & choked them out.*” – *Matthew 13:7*.

- ▣ “...*thistles grew and pressed together and utterly choked and suffocated it, and it yielded no grain.*” – *Mark 4:7*.

- ▣ “...*thorns grew up with it and choked it (off).*” – *Luke 8:7*.

▣ *What's to choke* if there's *no life*? So, there's life...that lasts.

- Plant receives some good *nutrition & moisture*.
- Develops fairly *strong, sturdy stock* able to withstand harsh elements.

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- But, only *moderately productive* in terms of *quality & quantity*...not much, good fruit. Why? Due to...
 - ▣ *Infested* with *weeds, thorns & thistles*, causing...
 - ▣ *Limited* life flow of *moisture & nutrients*, because the thorns use up most of it.
 - ▣ *Limited* access to *healthy, direct rays* of sun.
 - ▣ *Limited (restricted) space* to *grow, develop & produce fruit* – no 'elbow room'.

d) Soil #4

- *Good, deep soil & roots*.
- *Sustained life, healthy plants*.
- *Very productive* because *all hindering elements* have been *removed*.

3. Interpretations

a) General Interpretation

- There is *Potential for spiritual life in all hearts*, but *evidence* of it *varies* from person to person.
- Most are *negatively affected* by the *devil*.
- Each can be *spiritually plowed, cultivated* and *properly prepared* for the *spiritual seed of the Gospel & greatest possible productivity*.

👑 How?

👑 Through *prayer intercession* (2Corinthians 10:3-5), and *loving & serving* them through *friendship evangelism, etc.*

b) *Specific interpretations*

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□ *Soil #1: Unbeliever*

- ▣ The *heart* is *hardened* by the *devil's lies, deceptions, attacks* - 2Corinthians 4:3-4.
- ▣ The *Seed* of the *Word* is *stolen* [“*out of their hearts*” – Luke 8:12; “*at once and (by force)*” – Mark 4:15] by *satan, prince* of the ‘*power of the air*’ because the *Word does not penetrate the heart* (is not *received*). *Birds* in scripture often represent *demonic spirits*.
- ▣ *Our spirit* is our (The Bride of Christ) *spiritual womb* (*Restoration101 manual, Lesson 1- Assurance of Salvation*). In the case of the unbeliever there is *no spiritual ovulation*, no *germination/conception*, *no life*... the person is *not born again*.
- ▣ *The soil of the unbeliever's heart can be cultivated & prepared* through *intercessory prayer & acts of love*.
 - ☞ It is my conviction that we then *ask the Holy Spirit* to *reveal* to us when *He is stirring the unbeliever's heart & depositing a spiritual egg* in their spirit, making them *ready to receive the “seed of the Word”*.
 - ☞ That is *true evangelism*, rather than just *scattering the Gospel here, there & everywhere*. Jesus said we shouldn't “*cast our pearls before swine*” – Matthew 7:6. He said He “*did only those things He saw the Father doing*”.

□ *Soil #2: Addictive Personalities.*

- ▣ *Good, receptive heart*, but *shallow* due to a ‘*rocky*’ condition *below the surface*. What is that condition?
- ▣ I believe it is *addictions*...that prevent a deep, solid, grounding spiritually.
- ▣ *Enthusiastically responsive* to the *Gospel*...
 - ☞ Because of *desperate need* & the *promise of personal*

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victory.

- ☞ It's *Good News*. So they *grasp* after it and *hold on to it for dear life!*
- ▣ *The issue of "life"*.
 - ☞ Is this a *believer* or an *unbeliever*? *Was there ever any spiritual life?*
 - ☞ Some teach that there is no life here, but in the natural parable there was evidence the seed germinated and produced a plant. That's evidence of life. So spiritually.
- ▣ There is *evidence* of...
 - ☞ *Spiritual ovulation* (desire for God – "welcomes" the Word).
 - ☞ *Conception* (belief in Him – "accepts" the Word).
 - ☞ *Life* ("with joy").
- ▣ But there's *no fruit*. Some teach that *if you don't win people to Christ* you are *not a believer* because there is *no fruit in your life*.
 - ☞ *What is fruit?* We sometimes get confused between 'fruit' & 'reproduction' - *John 15:1-8; Galatians 5:22-23*.
 - ☞ *Fruit is character, the quality of Jesus, the "fruit of the Spirit"*.
 - ☞ *Winning souls to Christ is reproduction...new life*. The *fruit is not the seed that produces life*. But the *seed is in the fruit*. When people see the fruit in our lives...*"love, joy, peace..."* it appeals to them, they *partake of the fruit* by asking *"the reason for the hope that is within us"* (*1 Peter 3:15*), and *the seed* in the fruit *produces life*.
- ▣ *Spiritual life doesn't last!* Why?
 - ☞ These are very *shallow Christians, no staying power, no lasting life, easily swayed & drawn back* into *addictions*

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when things become difficult.

 - ☞ They are *selfishly pre-occupied with personal needs* and

👑 are *dependence on external & artificial sources to meet needs*, instead of going down deep into the *power of Jesus within them*

👑 For years I struggled with understanding *what* the *rocky ledge* represented. I thought it was *lack of discipline*. But then I saw a lot of *naturally, well-disciplined, successful people* just fall apart from within. For example:

- ▣ *Athletes*
- ▣ *Actors*
- ▣ *Business people*
- ▣ Even *Ministers of the Gospel*

👑 So it's the *lack of 'self-control'* rather than *'discipline'*. Many people can discipline themselves to be *very productive and successful* in society overall, but they *lose* the *inner battle* in the area of *personal, self-control*.

▣ **Definition of Addiction:**

👑 Anytime we are *not able to go down* into the *deep reservoirs* of our *personal character within* us (*naturally*), or *Jesus Christ (as believers)*, but instead *reach out* to *external & artificial means* to meet our *personal needs* of *comfort, security, happiness*, etc.

👑 When this is *done* on a *regular & continual basis*, it becomes a *habit*; then, an *addiction*.

👑 That can be *anything that controls us* rather than *we being in total control!* (*Of course, as believers, it's only through dependence on the Power of Christ within us*).

▣ **Characteristic of Addiction:** The *lack of depth* of *self-control* is both...

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👑 The *underlying cause or reason* for the addiction to begin with, and

👑 The *hindrance* in *overcoming* it once we become addicted. - *Matthew 13:5-6*.

👑 What are the *limitations or hindrances* to *vibrant Christian living*?

❑ *Wounded emotions.*

- ❑ *Involuntary victimizations* – what someone does to you...*inflicted upon us* in the normal, daily pursuit of life. Example : genocide, verbal & physical abuse, theft from you, gossip & false accusations against you.

- "...*but the cares of the world*" - *Matthew 13:22.*

- "*Then the cares and anxieties of the world...creep in and choke...*" – *Mark 4:19.*
'Creep' – *subtle!*

- "*Choked and suffocated with the anxieties & cares...of life*" - *Luke 8:14.*

- ❑ *Voluntary victimizations* – caused by *our own bad decisions*...*inflicted upon us as we 'pursue' personal fulfillment and happiness* in the *things of this world* - *1John 2:15-17; James 1:14-16.*

- "*Pleasures of life*" - *Luke 8:14.*

- "*The pleasure and delight and glamour & deceitfulness of riches*" - *Matthew 13:22; 1Timothy 6:9.*

- "*Distractions of the age, and the pleasure and delight and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches, and the craving and passionate desire for other things.*" – *Mark 4:19.*

***How often, in your opinion, would *emotional*

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wounding take place *in this type of pursuit of "worldly things"* to satisfy personal needs? *Always!!!*

👑 *Why don't* so many people/believers *do what they already 'know' they should do*?

❑ *Wounded emotions!*

- ❑ In the *normal process of decision making*, the *mind*, with influence from the feelings (*emotions*), considers the information; then *commands the will* to do what has been decided.

- ❑ *If there is a great deal of pain in the emotions, it interferes with that communication from the mind to the will...and kicks it out.*
- ❑ *The decision* is then made as a...
 - Reaction to the pain*, or out of...
 - Deep-rooted personal selfishness.*

❑ *Removal of hindrances...*

👑 Is achieved by *weeding* the *spiritual garden*.

👑 This can be accomplished in *any number of ways*.

- ❑ *God* can *sovereignly reach down, pull out the root causes of the pain, and heal the emotions.*
- ❑ The *believer can fast & pray, and seek God for divine intervention.*
- ❑ Someone, or a number of believers can anoint with oil, lay on of hands & pray for deliverance & inner healing.
- ❑ *My approach* is to *invite Jesus* as the *Master Gardener* to walk through the *garden* of a *believer's heart*, and...
- ❑ *Pull up all the spiritual weeds & thorns* starting with the *original seed* (how the pain was first

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inflicted); then the *roots* (how the problems became a *foothold*; then the entire thorn (the *stronghold*).

- ❑ *Cleanse & bind up the wounds.*
- ❑ *Release the healing, resurrection power of Jesus* to “*heal the “broken-hearted” – Luke 4:18.*

❑ *Creates a category #4 soil* with *all the great results* of that soil.

❑ *Extra Note:*

👑 All too often *when dealing* with our own *problems* or those we minister to...

- ❑ we don't realize we are *dealing with...*
 - ❑ *The symptoms* (the surface, what we see, the obvious) of the problem, not the *root cause* (what's hidden & unseen)
 - ❑ The “*fruit*” of the problem rather than the “*root cause*” of the problem
- ❑ *If we minister to the symptoms* (the fruit) of the problem, and not the root, *the problem will keep coming back* (“*see that no one falls back...that no root of bitterness springs up*” – Hebrews 12:15)
- ❑ *If we remove the root, the symptoms disappear & don't keep coming back up!*
- ❑ It takes *more time & patience* to...
 - ❑ *Wait on the Lord*, and
 - ❑ *Dig beneath the surface* to
 - ❑ *Discover what the real problem is*
 - ❑ But the *results* are far *more lasting*, and *more fulfilling & encouraging* than just *quickly praying* for the *surface problem & moving on*.

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- ❑ To *understand* this and *practice this principle* will *change ...*
 - ❑ *Your entire ministry*, and
 - ❑ The *spiritual health & success of your church believers!*
- ❑ *Soil # 4: Fully victorious Christian*
 - ❑ *Receptive, teachable spirit*, causing *spiritual conception*.
 - ❑ *Addictions are broken & removed*.
 - ❑ *Damaged emotions are healed & restored*.
 - ❑ *Productive, victorious Christian living*...the way God designed it.
 - ❑ *Holy Spirit* has *free flow* to *produce fruit & manifest gifts*.

👑 **Question:**

If all the above is true, and there are *no serious problems*, why do some believers...

- ❑ *Produce 100%* fruit
- ❑ While others only *60%*, and
- ❑ Still others *only 30%*?

👑 **Possible Answer:** It depends on what part of the world you live in.

- ❑ In countries like *The United States of America* (and many others), we have...
 - ❑ *Too many distractions*, and
 - ❑ *Plenty in material goods*
 - That makes us *selfish* and *lazy*
 - And we are *too busy* with *things that aren't eternally important!*

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- ❑ In *many other countries* in the world, believers
 - ❑ Live a much *simpler life*
 - ❑ Are *more dependent on God* for all their needs
 - ❑ Are *more grateful* to God, and
 - ❑ Are *more willing to serve God more wholeheartedly*.

B. Parable of the Wheat & Tares Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

👑 There appears to be a *more specific* 'cut & dried' approach to the interpretation of this parable, leaving little doubt as to what's what & who's who... with some *minor differences in interpretation*.

1. The Sower...

- a) The *first parable* doesn't specifically say who *the sower is*; just that he 'went out to sow'. And the *interpretation* revolved more around *how much each soil produced*; and *why*, or *why not*.

- b) In *this parable*, the interpretation *specifically states* that the *sower* is the *Son of Man*. I don't think there's any doubt that refers to *Jesus* Himself, a common title He gave Himself.

2. *The Field...*

☞ There appears to be a *definite difference* between the '*soil*' in the *first parable* & the '*field*' in this one.

- a) "*The Soil*" is the *heart* (spirit/soul) of an individual.

☐ The *emphasis in the first parable* was on the *different types & conditions of soil*.

☐ There were *four different types*:

☐ *One, unbeliever.*

☐ *Three, believers.*

- b) "*The Field*" is the *world...* similar to '*the sea*', meaning the *masses of humanity*. 26

☐ The emphasis now is on only *two types of people*:

☐ *Believers*

☐ *Unbelievers.*

3. *The (good) Seed...*

- a) In the *first parable* it is obviously the *Gospel*, the Good news of the Kingdom.

- b) Here He says it's "*the children of the Kingdom*". The Kingdom of *God*, not of Heaven.

☐ The *Kingdom of Heaven is the world* in which both *believers and unbelievers exist together*.

☐ *The Kingdom of God is the believers in God who are living in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

☞ We talked about "*continuity*" as an *important key to proper interpretation*. BUT sometimes it *just doesn't fit*. Can you see where *seed being The Gospel wouldn't fit here*? Unless...the seed is the Gospel & the plant that springs up from it is the individual believer, as the result of the Gospel being planted in his heart. Anyway, the *focus here is on people...the believer*.

4. *The Tares/weeds/darnel (bad seed)...*

- a) “Children of the evil one.”
- b) *Amplified Bible*, “resembling wheat”. They *looked the same*. Sometimes it’s *hard to tell the difference* between a *believer* & an *unbeliever*. It shouldn’t be that way; but sometimes it just is.
- c) “While he slept” *...in the dead of night...* when evil is usually perpetrated... “Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” – John 3:19.
- d) “Servants...Do you want us to go and *weed them out?*”
- e) “No...Let them *grow together* until the harvest. “

👑 Why is all this mentioned?

- ❑ If you *start* with the *wrong interpretation* that the seed is the

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The Gospel, then this part *wouldn’t make sense*.

- ❑ *Would God insist that both good & bad seed producing good & bad fruit exist in the same believer until the Day of Judgment?*

- ❑ *No!* His plan is *Sanctification! Separation!*

👑 So this means that *both believers & unbeliever live together in the same world until The Judgment Day*, and God doesn’t always kill or take out the unbeliever before then.

f) How can we *tell the difference between the two? Discernment!* In the natural, “Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” – 1 Samuel 16:7.

5. The Characteristics...

👑 In *both parables* it is at *harvest(ing) time*.

a) In the *first*, the *entire emphasis* was on *spiritual fruit*, and the results at harvest were different *depending on the condition of each heart*; with the ultimate goal being an *abundance of good fruit*, but...

- ❑ *Not* necessarily at the *End Times*, the *final Judgment*, but

- ❑ Just *after a certain Season of Growth & Production*.

b) The *second*, is *definitely* the *Final Judgment*, “*the close (end) and consummation of the Age (world)*”. We aren’t looking for fruit here, but *relationship* and *legal standing with God*.

- **Children** (believers), *of the Kingdom* (of God)
- **Children** (unbelievers) *of the evil (wicked) one* (the *enemy*, the *devil*).

6. *The Reapers* “are angels”

7. *End Results*.

- ☞ *Two destinations... Matthew 25:31-46...“sheep” & “goats”.*
- ☞ “*Gather out of His Kingdom*” (of Heaven) – 13:41... both good & evil residing (growing) together.

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a) *Heaven* - “good seed”, believers, “sheep”, ...

- “...*the righteous* (upright and in right standing with God) *shine forth like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.*” – 13:43.
- *Sheep.* “Come, you blessed of My Father (you favored of God, and appointed to *eternal salvation*), inherit (receive as your own) the *Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...those who are just and upright and in right standing with God* (will go away) into *eternal life.*” – Matthew 25:34,46b.
- *Bride.* “a new heaven and a new earth...the Holy City, the new Jerusalem...*arrayed like a bride...The abode of God is with men...God will wipe away every tear...death shall be no more, neither...anguish (sorrow and mourning), nor grief, nor pain...*” - Revelation 21:1-4.

b) *Hell* - “darnel (the weeds, the wild wheat”, unbelievers, “goats” ...

- “...*gathered and burned with fire... cast them into the furnace of fire; there will be weeping and wailing and grinding of teeth*” – 13:40-42.
- *Goats.* All **who offend**, “(by whom others are drawn into error or sin).” - [“causes one of these little ones...to stumble and sin...have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be sunk in the depth of the sea” – Matthew 18:6] and all who do *iniquity and act wickedly*” –13:41.
- “Be gone from me, you *cursed*, into the *eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels!*...Then they will go away into *eternal punishment...*” – Matthew 25:41, 46..

- “..*the devil was hurled into the fiery lake of burning*

*brimstone...where the **beast and false prophet** were; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.. And if **anyone’s (name) was not found in the Book of Life, he was hurled into the lake of fire.**” –Revelation 20:10-15.*

8. **Application.** What’s the real reason & purpose for Jesus telling this parable?

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a) For us to *not be judgmental...* too *quick to judge* & sentence people, and pray *God’s judgment on the unbeliever.*

- *James & John* wanted to *call fire down from Heaven.* - Luke 9:54

- We could *cause a lot of damage* in the process.

b) *To teach the holiness & justice of the Father? That there is a real and literal Heaven & hell!*

C. The Grain of Mustard Seed & The Birds. *Matthew 13:31-32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18-19.*

1. **Typical Interpretation:** Everything here is good, great, wonderful...a desired result.

a) **Man** is God, preachers, believers...

b) **Seed** is the gospel.

c) **Field** is ‘good soil’ hearts.

d) **Mustard tree** is the combined believers, The Universal Church, the Kingdom of ‘God’.

e) **Birds** are unbelievers coming into The Church, becoming born again, finding refuge in it, and being disciplined.

2. **Proper** (possible other) **interpretation:** Something is wrong here!?
...“sowed in his **field**...when it **has grown** it is the **largest of the garden herbs and becomes a tree***, so that the birds of the air come and find shelter in its branches.” (Matthew).

a) **Man** – Jesus “Son of Man” - v.37.

- b) **Seed** – the Gospel planted in many individual good heart soils to produce the Church the world.
- c) **Field** – the world - v.38...“*The Kingdom of Heaven*”.

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d) **Mustard *‘TREE’** – something is wrong here! Why?

- Normally** the mustard seed is **planted in a field or garden** “largest of garden **herbs**” – v.32.
- But in this parable it grows into an **abnormal size** (something it is not intended to be)...**a tree!** A tree is not something you plant in a field or your garden, but on the edge for shade, a windbreak, etc.
- e) **Birds...Luke**, “‘wild’ birds found **shelter and roosted and nested in its branches**” – **reproduced!**
 - Birds in **first parable** are referred to as **demons**.
 - Culturally...**
 - Birds were considered to be **scavengers**, and **unclean**.
 - Chickens** were **not allowed in the city of Jerusalem** because there was always a possibility they would get loose & ‘fly’ into the **Temple area & defile it**.

3. **So everything is not good, great and wonderful here; and this is not the Father’s desired result. So what’s the real meaning?**

4. **God planted His Church in the world to be...**

- a) **Separated, sanctified unto Himself, righteous & holy.**
- b) It was supposed to be **small**, a minority, a **remnant**.
- c) To be **salt & light** in the world.

5. **But we have allowed it...**

- a) To **grow** into a **monstrosity**, an **abnormality**.
- b) By **compromising God’s standards, lack of discipline & correction, and allowing sinners & sin** to be a part of our **Body**. “My House... made it a den of thieves.” – Matthew 21:13; “...spots in your feasts of charity...” – Jude 12.

6. *Examples in History & Today...*

a) *Constantine*...making Christianity the State Religion.

b) *England*...making the Anglican Church the State Church.

c) *Modern Day Churches*...

- Allowing *church leaders*: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors & Teachers, etc. to remain in office when *living in sin...or reinstating them too soon*.
- Allowing *business people* with *unscrupulous practices* to *remain in office* in the local church because they are *heavy financial contributors*.
- Allowing *parishioners* to live in *secret or open sin* without “*reproof*”, “*correction*” & “*discipline*” - 2Timothy 3:16.

D. *Three Measures of Meal & Leaven Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21*

👑 This parable, in my opinion, is *very similar* to the last one.

- ❑ In ‘The Mustard Seed’ the emphasis was on *individual evil ‘people’ (sinners – ‘birds’)* taking refuge & positions in the church.
- ❑ In this one, it has more to do with *‘sin’ itself being tolerated* in the church.
- ❑ The two are related because in both cases *the effect is that sin spreads throughout the entire church*. There’s just a different focus in each.

👑 *Yeast in bread dough*. I can still see, in my mind, *my mom* putting *yeast in huge quantities of dough in making bread*...mixing it all up, letting it rise, kneading it down, then allowing it to rise again, breaking chunks of it off, forming them, putting them in pans, then putting the pans in a hot, wood-stove oven to bake.

1. *Questions...*

- a) Who is the *woman*?
- b) What is the *dough*?
- c) What is the *leaven*?

- d) What does it mean that the woman ‘*hid*’ or ‘*covered over*’ the ‘*leaven*’ in the ‘*meal*’? Or does it have any significance?
- e) Is there any significance that it was ‘*three measures*’ of meal or dough?
2. **Typical Interpretation...** Like in the previous parable, everything here appears to be good, great, wonderful...a desired result.
- a) I’m not sure who the *woman* would be. Maybe the church or individual believers.
- b) The *dough* would be a person’s, or the people’s, hearts (like soil)...I guess.
- c) The *leaven* would be the *gospel* or *faith* “*the size of a mustard seed*”.
- d) The main teaching would be: the seed of the gospel is planted or simple faith is exercised...producing a great harvest!
- e) This just *doesn’t seem right*, and is very confusing.
3. **Proper (possible other) interpretation:** something is wrong here like in the other parable!
- a) The *woman* in this case represents ‘*wickedness*’, ‘*uncleanness*’ & ‘*unfaithfulness*’. In a *good sense* a woman represents ‘*Israel*’; *never the church*. The *Bride of Christ* is *never* referred to as *a woman*, but an unmarried *virgin*.
- b) The *dough* is the *individual congregation* of believers or the *Universal Church* (the entire church worldwide).
- 👑 I heard not too long ago that *3 measures of meal* equaled approximately *65 lbs*...a *massive amount* of meal. That alone would make us want to believe it is the Universal Church of Jesus Christ.
- c) *Leaven* generally refers to ‘*evil*’, ‘*sin*’, ‘*false doctrine*’ & ‘*hypocrisy*’. This might be interpreted *as the effect*, the *corruption* that evil persons or unbelievers have on the Church of Jesus Christ.

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- This is all the more reason to interpret the woman like I just did.
- She ‘*hides*’ or ‘*covers up*’ the sin...“*deception*”!
- The teaching here is that if we *allow sin in the church* to go *unchallenged, undisciplined and uncorrected*, in time it will *affect every aspect of the church*.

- **Jewish ‘bread’**, in general, and especially in sacrifices and feasts, etc., was ‘**unleavened**’ bread, signifying **purity, un-adulteration**, etc. **Leaven was not allowed!**
- **Examples:**
 - **Jesus...** Recorded by 3 out of 4 Gospel writers! Repetition signifies importance.
 - “*Jesus said to them (disciples) ‘Be careful & on your guard against the leaven (ferment) of the Pharisees & Sadducees...the teaching of...’*” - Matthew 16:6, 11-12.
 - “*Jesus (repeatedly & expressly) charged & admonished them, saying, ‘Look out; keep on your guard and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees & the leaven of Herod...’*” - Mark 8:15.
 - “*Be on your guard against the leaven (ferment) of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy (producing unrest & violent agitation).*” - Luke 12:1. [personally & corporately].
 - **Paul...**
 - **Original sin...** “*as sin came into the world through one man, and death as the result of sin, so death spread to all men, (no one being able to stop it or to escape its power)*” - Romans 5:12.
 - Talking about a problem of **incest** in the Corinthian Church Paul writes, “*Do you not know that (just) a little leaven will ferment the whole lump (of dough). Purge (clean out) the old leaven that you may be fresh (new) dough, still uncontaminated...not with old leaven, nor with leaven of vice & malice & wickedness, but with the unleavened (bread) of purity (nobility, honor) and sincerity and*
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(unadulterated) truth.” - 1Corinthians 5:6-8.
 - “*A little leaven (a slight inclination to error, or a few false teachers) leavens the whole lump (it perverts the whole conception of faith or misleads the whole church).*”- Galatians 5:9.

4. Application:

- a) Again, this parable is very **similar** to what we just studied in the previous parable.
- b) The **Contrast** (difference):
 - The ‘mustard seed’ parable speaks of something that **starts off being good**; then **gets perverted into something abnormal**.

- The ‘leaven’ parable speaks of *an intrusion of evil right from the beginning*.
- *Both eventually completely infiltrate & adulterate the purity & holiness of the church.*

E. The Treasure in a Field - Matthew 13:44

1. Typical Interpretation...

- a) The *Treasure* is Jesus.
- b) The *Field* - ? With this interpretation I have no idea what the field would be. Again, it just doesn’t make any sense.
- c) The *Man* is the unbeliever.
- d) “*Buried...found...hid again...sells all he has and buys that field.*”

- So he can possess the special treasure, Jesus.
- In other words, the sinner gives up (sells) everything he has to gain Jesus Christ & eternal salvation.

▣ There is *some truth* in this.

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▣ ***But, we have nothing of value to sell or give up in exchange for Jesus!***

👑 “*Since all have sinned and are falling short of the honor and glory of God*” – Romans 3:23.

👑 “*All our righteousness is as filthy rags*” – Isaiah 64:6.

2. Proper (possible other) interpretation:

- a) The *Treasure* (‘something precious’) is us, as *individuals* & corporately, ***The Church***.
 - Some believe it is Israel, God’s earthly treasure.
 - I prefer to believe this is the fulfillment of *John 3:16* – “*For God so loved the world*”.
- b) So the *Field* is *the world*.

- c) The *Man* is *Jesus*, the “*sower*”, “*a man*” in other parables. We must be *consistent in our interpretations*.
- d) “...*buried...found...hid again; then in His joy He goes and sells all He has and buys that field*” ...to acquire the *precious treasure – US!*

☞ *God, the Father* initially planted (“*buried*”) the Church in the world. That was *His Plan from before the foundation of the world*.

☞ *Jesus*... “*He, for the joy (of obtaining the prize) that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising and ignoring the shame...*” – Hebrews 12:2.

- ▣ *He saw us, The Church, The Bride hidden in the world, and*
- ▣ *He gave up all He had: the riches of Heaven, to come to earth & die on the cross for the entire world...*

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- ▣ *Just so He could purchase & possess us for the Kingdom of God!*

☞ *That’s how much God loves us, and how valuable we are to Him!*

****As in parables 3 & 4 being similar...so the previous one (#5) & the next one (#6) are very similar as well.*

F. The Pearl of Great Price – Matthew 13:45-46

1. Typical Interpretation...

- a) The *Man* is the unbeliever in search of satisfaction & fulfillment.
- b) The single *Pearl of Great Price* is Jesus.
- c) The unbeliever *sells, or gives up all* he has *to possess Jesus & eternal life*.

☞ *But!* We have *nothing worth anything to sell or give in exchange*. Compare *E. 1. d)* in previous parable.

2. Proper (possible other) interpretation:

- a) The *Man* (as in the other parables) or *dealer in fine & precious pearls* is *Jesus!*

b) The *single Pearl* is Us, The Church, The Bride!

c) The *Sea*.

Although not specifically mentioned, that's *where pearls are found*.

Interpreted generally as *the masses of humanity*.

d) He sold all He had & bought it, us!

Same application as in the *last parable*. Compare *E. 2. d)*.

Some claim...

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▣ The *Treasure* is *Israel, God's earthly treasure, His special People in all the world!*

▣ The *Pearl of Great Price* is *The Church, God's Heavenly Treasure, or Jesus' Bride* extracted *from all the peoples* who *believe in Jesus* as *The Christ, the Son of the Living God!*

▣ Hence the repetition. Otherwise, *why repeat?*

▣ Possibly. I agree to a point, but I'm not totally convinced, personally. But *I'm not a theologian*, just a teacher, so maybe there's something here I don't yet completely understand.

***It's interesting that *no interpretation* is given for the *past 4 parables*; but *in the next* he goes back to giving *an interpretation*. I wonder *why?* Rather curious.

G. The Dragnet – Matthew 13:47-50

1. *Simple, straight to the point*. Or not?

2. *Appears the same* as the '*wheat & tares*'. Is it? Or *is there a difference?* It's really hard to tell.

a) "...a *dragnet*...". A tool of *harvest*. Is this *evangelism* or *judgment?*

b) "...the *sea*..." – the *masses of humanity*...compare to...

"...the *field*", which is *the world*,

..."*The Kingdom of Heaven*".

□ What is *the difference* between the three?

□ There are only *small* differences!

▣ The *Kingdom of Heaven* includes *all the people of the world* and all the demonic “*principalities & powers of the ‘air’*”.

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▣ The *Field* involves *all the people of the world* only; and the *good seed* was the *children of the Kingdom planted in the world by God*.

☞ *Only good seed is planted* by the sower.

☞ *God doesn’t plant His Good Seed in the kingdom of satan*.

▣ *Sea* also refers to the *existence of both believers & unbelievers* together like the wheat & tares, but...

☞ *It deals with the harvest only*.

☞ *No mention* is made of *planting & growing seasons*.

c) “*Fish of every sort*” – believers & unbelievers.

d) “*Men*” – “*angels*”.

e) *Sorted out good & bad fish* - “...*good fish into baskets, but the worthless ones they threw away*.”

□ “...*sat down*...” To the best of my knowledge, *sitting* has to do with a *position of rulership & presiding in judgment*.

▣ City fathers “*sat*” at the gates to a city, etc.

□ “...at the *close & consummation of the age*.” The *final judgment*.

□ “*The angels will go forth and separate the wicked from the righteous*,

▣ “*And cast them (the wicked) into the furnace of fire: there will be weeping and wailing and grinding of teeth*.”

3. *Final Application:*

a) Refer back to *The Parable of the Wheat & Tares* for the *detailed application* and *passages of Scripture* on the *final destinations of Heaven & Hell*.

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b) Note that in *that parable* the *righteous & Heaven* are *mentioned first*. In *this parable* the *wicked & Hell* are *mentioned first & in detail*; the righteous are referred to once, and that is it.

c) It's curious that *reference isn't even made to Heaven* at all, as compared to v. 43 and *Matthew 24:33-34*; just that the "*wicked are separated from the righteousness*". It deals with the *final end* of the *unbelievers only*.

👑 These are *just 7 parables of many* found in the *New Testament writings*. I chose these 7 because they were *clustered, concentrated & located in one chapter*...making it *more convenient to deal with & focus in on* in my *desire & attempt* to teach the *proper rules of interpreting and understanding parables*; and deriving *maximum benefit from their truths*.

👑 If one would *wish to continue* on with the *theme of The End Times*, a *natural & logical next step* would be to *process to Matthew 24 & 25*, and study *The Parable of the 10 Virgins*. There are other passages & parables related to The End Times as well.

👑 But for me & for now, we will *conclude our journey here*...and wish you *God's unbounded joy & fulfillment* as you *unearth hidden truths* possible because you have *taken the time to learn* how to *glean God's best* through *correct interpretation* of these *valued nuggets of scripture - Parables !*