

Next Steps with the Bible

Going Deeper and Growing Stronger

Week 8: Understanding Jesus' Parables

For my thoughts,
are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,
declares the Lord.

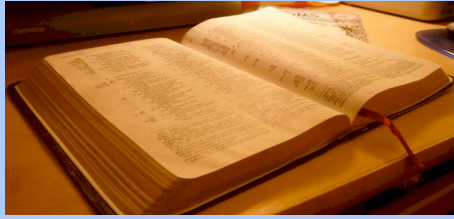
For as the heavens are
higher than the earth,

so are my ways higher

than your ways and
my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8-9

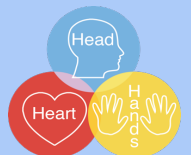


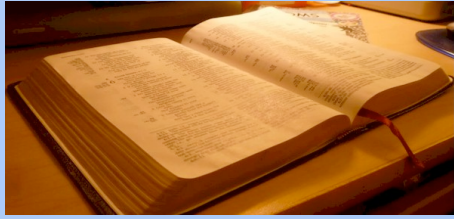


Understanding Jesus' Parables

1. Review of Week 7: Poetry

- Prose and poetry: *Vive la différence!*
 - Imaginative use of **metaphor** (comparison)
- Pairing/**parallelism** not rhyme: “. . . what’s more . . .”
- What do you **think**/how do you **feel** when you read . . .
 - *Every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping. (Ps 6:6 ESV)*
 - *Does anyone know where the love of God goes
when the waves turn the minutes to hours?
The searchers all say she’d have made Whitefish Bay
if she’d put 15 more miles behind her. (Lightfoot)*
- Poetic speech in Jude?

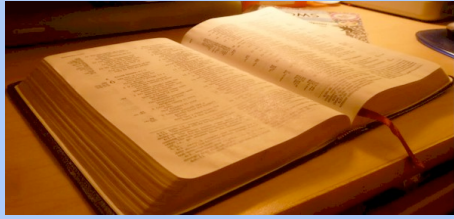




Understanding Jesus' Parables

2. What is a parable?

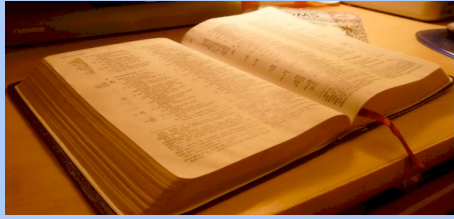
- A parable is an extended or narrative simile
 - *The kingdom of heaven is **like** . . .* (Matt 13:24 ff.; 20:1; 25:1 etc.)
- ***A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.***
- Jesus' parables are drawn from the real world of first century Palestine, but with occasional hyperbolic elements.



Understanding Jesus' Parables

3. Where do we find parables in the Bible?

- Matthew, Mark, Luke (about 30 in all)
 - [<https://www.jesuschristssavior.net/Parable.html>]
- John 10:1-5; 15:1-4?
- Old Testament
 - Jdg 9:7-15; 2 Sam 12:1-4; Isa 5:1-7; Ezek 17)

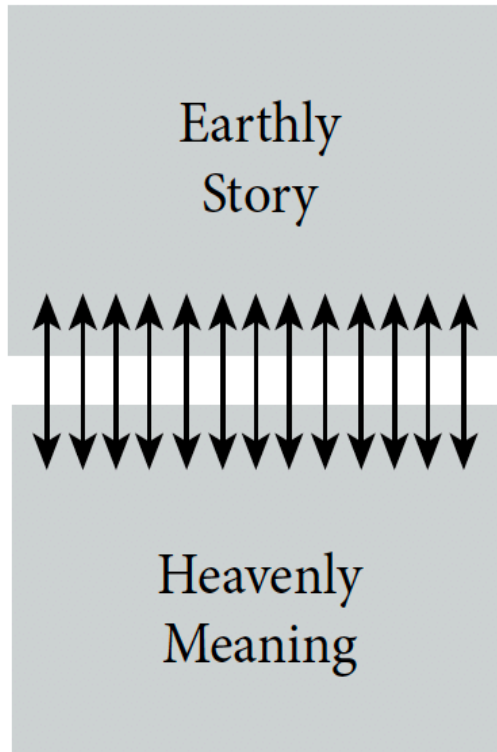


Understanding Jesus' Parables

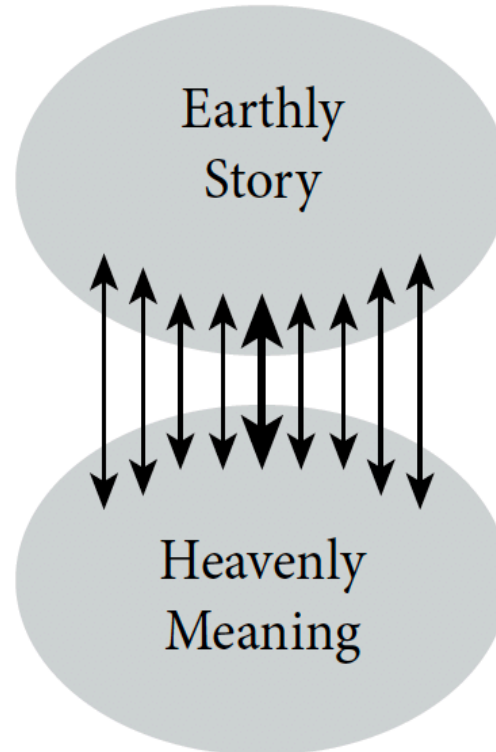
4. How do we interpret parables?

- **Historical** context: ancient culture and customs
- **Literary context**: how does the parable contribute to the episode in which it occurs?
- Parables have their own plot, characters, point of view, suspense, crisis, resolution.
- To what extent do we press the **details**?

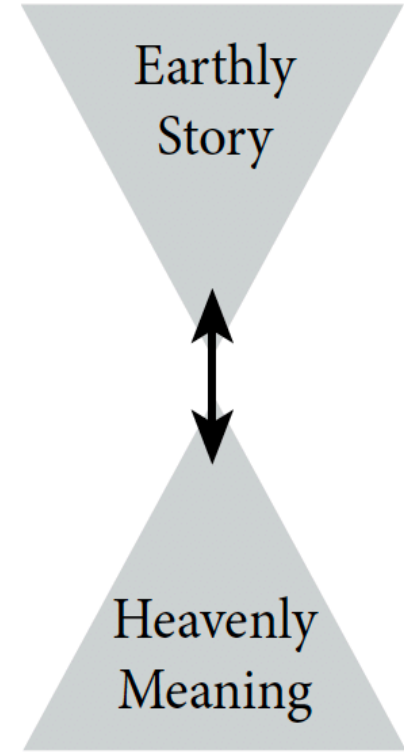
Three Ways of Interpreting Parables



Alegorizing:
Every Detail Matters



Contextual
Flexibility



One Main Point:
The Moral of the Story

6. Worksheet: Luke 18:9-14 (observations, interpretive questions, correlated Scriptures, and application)

Read the parable a few times. Literary context? Cultural setting? Plot, characters, tension? Correlate Luke 3:12; 5:27-30; 7:29; 34; : 15:1; 19:2 on tax collectors and 1 Sam 2:7; Ezek 21:26; Matt 23:12; Luke 14:11; Jas 4:10; 1 Pet 5:6 on pride and humility. What's the main point?

ESV	NIV	NLT
<p>⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, <u>extortioners</u>, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."</p>	<p>⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'</p> <p>¹³ "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'</p> <p>¹⁴ "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."</p>	<p>⁹ Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: ¹⁰ "Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: 'I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, <u>adulterers</u>. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! ¹² I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.'</p> <p>¹³ "But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.' ¹⁴ I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."</p>



Understanding Biblical Poetry

4. So What? How does all this impact us?

Information

Transformation

Action

Accurate knowledge

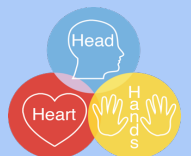


Wise values



Missional Lifestyle

- We are richly blessed to have the Bible in our language, along with the freedom and opportunity to study and teach it.
 - **Are we faithful stewards of this blessing?**
- Jude saw his church's situation in continuity with Israel's history as the ongoing one people of God.
 - **Do we read the OT like Jude did?**
- Jude speaks frankly and clearly about dangerous teaching and its judgment.
 - **Are we following Jude's example?**





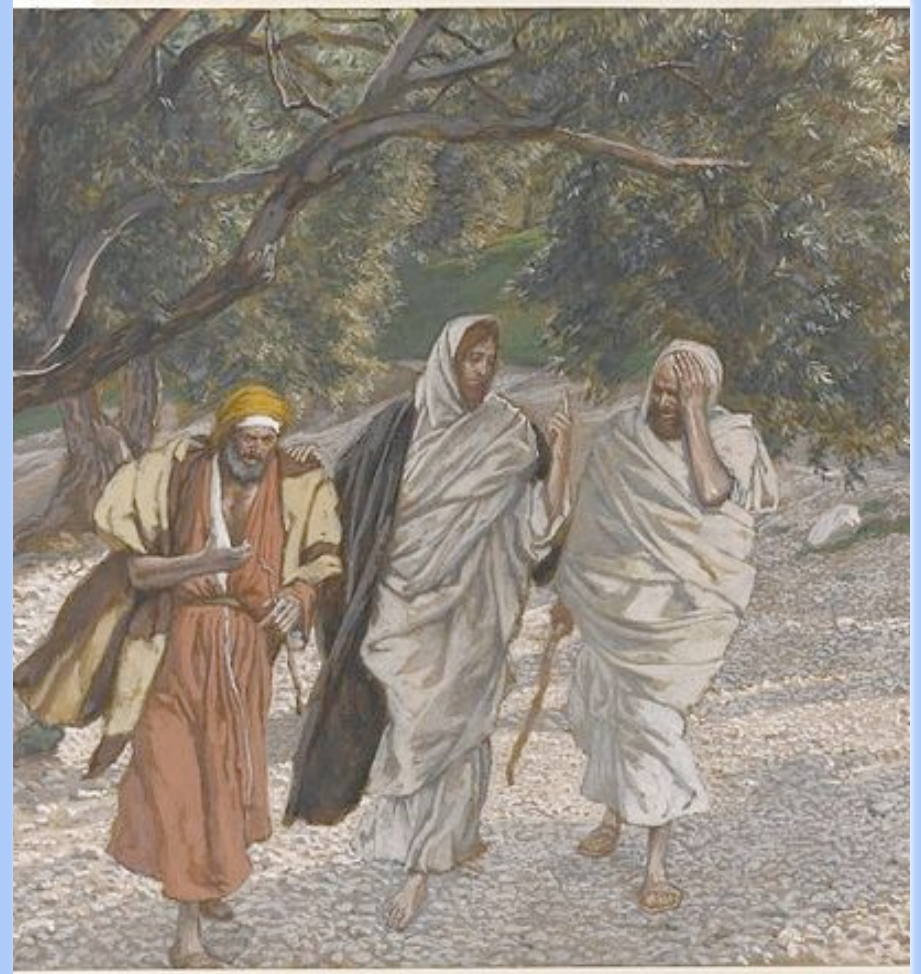
Understanding Biblical Poetry

Luke 24

²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, **he explained to them** what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. . . . ³² They asked each other, “**Were not our hearts burning within us while he . . . opened the Scriptures to us?**” . . .

⁴⁴ He said to them, “. . . **Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me** in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

⁴⁵ **Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.** ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ **You are witnesses of these things.**



James Tissot (1836-1902)