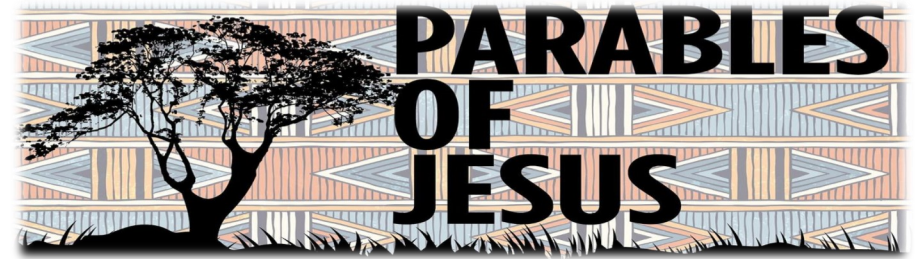


Reflection Questions: Although the Sabbath laws are no longer binding on Christians, is it still good for me to have a rhythm of work and rest? Why? What role does work play in my life? What role does regular rest have in my life?

How can we pray for one another this week?



Why Parables?
Matthew 12-13

Sermon
Notes

February 16, 2020

Quotes to Ponder

There are two extremes to be avoided in the interpretation of parables. One extreme is to make too much of them — The other to make too little of them.

The parables of Jesus stand alone and defy comparison. “Aesop’s Fables” and “The Canterbury Tales” of Chaucer pale into insignificance alongside the matchless stories of Him who remains “the unrivalled Teller of stories.
Herbert Lockyer

Jesus chose the parable as a teaching method, a strategy by which He separated those who were honest and sincere about understanding the Kingdom from those who were only curious or critical of His ministry.

The unpardonable sin is not simply an act which makes God so disgusted that He cuts one off, but rather is a sin which so changes the person’s stance toward God that the one places himself outside of the experience of pardon—forever.
Myron S. Augsburger

Even a Pharisee such as Saul of Tarsus could be forgiven for speaking “against the Son of Man” or persecuting His followers, because his unbelief stemmed from ignorance.... But those who know His claims are true and reject Him anyway sin “against the Holy Spirit.”
John MacArthur

The teacher sat, and the people stood: we should have less sleeping in congregations if this arrangement still prevailed! (Matthew 13:1-2)
Charles Spurgeon

The parable conceals truth from those who are either too lazy to think or too blinded by prejudice to see. It puts the responsibility fairly and squarely on the individual. It reveals truth to him who desires truth; it conceals truth from him who does not wish to see the truth.
William Barclay

1. What in the text/sermon impacted you most? Encouraged you? Convinced you? Challenged you? Confused you?

2. What are the Old Testament commands concerning the Sabbath (*Exodus 20:8-11; 35:1-3; Leviticus 23:3; Deuteronomy 5:12-15*)?

3. What had the Sabbath observance become in Jesus' day?

4. How does Matthew end *chapter 11* (verses 28-30)? How does this contrast with what follows in *Matthew 12:1-8*?

5. What did Jesus say about the Sabbath in *Mark 2:27* and *Matthew 12:8*?

6. How is it different to think about the Sabbath as made for man, as opposed to man for the Sabbath? How would this change one's approach to the Sabbath?

7. Read *Matthew 12:8*. Is this a claim to deity? Explain.

8. Why do the Pharisees want to *destroy* Jesus (*Matthew 12:14*)?

9. Read *Luke 13:10-17*. What is the synagogue official's attitude toward healing on the Sabbath? Why?

10. Why did the Pharisees' words in *Matthew 12:24* constitute a blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (*Matthew 12:31-32*)?

Explain the Pharisees' calling Jesus *Beelzebub* (*Matthew 12:24; cf. Matthew 10:25*).

What is the unpardonable sin?

11. According to *Matthew 12:31-32*, what sins are forgivable? What sin isn't forgivable? Why?

12. What sins do you have trouble imagining God can forgive, that you don't want Him to forgive? Why?

13. According to *Matthew 12:33-37*, why was it inevitable that the Pharisees would say falsehoods about Jesus?

14. Read *Matthew 13:1*. What all happened with Jesus this day?

15. Since Scripture says Jesus began speaking in parables here (*Matthew 13:3, 34*), how do you explain the story of *Matthew 7:24-27*?

16. Why did Jesus begin speaking in parables at this point (*Matthew 13:10-17, 34-35*)?