

The
Parables
of the
Lord
Jesus
Christ

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PARABLE

MATTHEW

MARK

LUKE

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The Lord Jesus often used illustrations in His teaching called parables. At the root of the Greek word "parabole" is the idea of comparison. A parable is a kind of "expanded metaphor," a comparison; an illustration of that which is spiritually based on an example from the everyday. It is characteristic of the eastern cast of mind to speak and teach in the form of comparison. It is also characteristic of it to express itself by means of riddles, which stimulates inquisitiveness and disposes one to reflect. It is necessary to understand a parable as a kind of utilization of symbols, that is, images, taken from earthly realities, in order to designate by them realities divinely revealed and in need of a profound explanation. In these parables, the Lord Jesus not infrequently took examples from nature or from the social, economic and religious life contemporary to the people.

The Saviour set forth His teaching in the form of parables for several reasons. He spoke of profound spiritual truths, which were not easy for His hearers to comprehend. But a concrete and vivid story, drawn from life, could long be remembered, and a man, trying to understand the meaning of this story, could reflect on it, delve deeply into its content, and in this manner, gradually understand the wisdom concealed in it. The Lord Jesus also used parables partly in order to conceal the true meaning of His words, and to create the impression of a double meaning, in order to conceal for the time being that which it behooved Him to disclose. The Kingdom, which Christ was going to create, differed sharply from all that the Jews expected of the Messiah and so He hid the meaning until the Spirit of God came. The Lord made use of parables in order to illustrate the true origin, development, mixed character and the responsibility of those connected with the Kingdom.

Another advantage that parables have over direct instruction is that they not only contain the general divine truth, but they demonstrate its applicability in both private and public life. Christ's parables are also remarkable in that they have not in the least lost their clarity, actuality and beauty, despite the passing of centuries even though they were spoken in another civilization and in another tongue. The parables are living witnesses of the close unity which exists between the spiritual and the physical worlds, between the inner cause and its manifestation in life.

Whatever character a parable allegory might bear, in the end, the central personage must personify most often the Father or Christ Himself either in His earthly mission, or in His future glory. Truly, the Father's love, evidenced to men by the sending of His Son, is the main revelation brought by the Lord Jesus. The parables show the ultimate completion of God's plan for the world with Christ reigning over the Kingdom of the heavens.

The number of parables depends on what one calls a parable and what one calls a metaphor. It is possible to divide the parables in several different ways. They can be divided into groups depending on the geographical location where the Lord gave them (Galilea, Perea or Judea) or arranged into three groups corresponding to different periods of the Lord's ministry. I have chosen to arrange them into **four groups** in accordance with the Saviour's earthly preaching regarding the setting aside of Israel, the setting up of the kingdom and Satan's opposition, God's way into the kingdom and the responsibility of those who enter into the kingdom. This is more of a moral arrangement and gives an important overview of what our Lord was teaching us about the kingdom of God. This is the arrangement seen in **Scott's Handbook, New Testament, pages 86-91**.

May God bless our study of the parables of our Lord, and enable us to understand the secrets of the kingdom and thus cause us to be watching, waiting, occupying and worshipping as we wait for our Lord from heaven for "so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" **2 Peter 1:11**.

The various views of the Kingdom ruled by the Lord Jesus Christ*

In **Daniel 2: 44** it is predicted that "In the days of these kings (the ten divisions of the fourth kingdom, the revived Roman Empire) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed. It shall break in pieces and consume all these other kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever:" cf. also **Dan. 7**. The '**kingdom of heaven**' was announced by John the Baptist and by the Lord as 'at hand' **Mt. 3: 2**; **Mt. 4: 17** but the Lord declared that the 'kingdom of God' had come **Mt. 12: 28**. In many respects the two expressions are identical, but the 'kingdom of heaven' occurs in the gospel by Matthew only, and stands in contrast to the Messiah on earth. It refers to the *rule* of that which God has set in heaven, and commenced when Christ went to heaven. It may be illustrated by the lights which God set in the heavens to give light on the earth. The '**kingdom of God**' is more connected with the moral state established.

The kingdom was not set up in manifestation because the Jews had refused their king and it is still held in abeyance. Meanwhile it is '**the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ**' **Rev. 1: 9**. Christ is represented as having gone to receive a kingdom, and to return **Luke 19: 12**. The kingdom has been begun and goes on for now in its *mysterious* form: cf. **Mt. 13: 11**. There are multitudes who profess obedience to God and to the Lord Jesus, and who look to heaven as the throne from whence come all their blessings. This is while they are even passing through a world of which Satan is the god and prince. To the saints the kingdom of God is very real. They anticipate by faith the kingdom in power. Righteousness, peace, and joy are the characteristics of the kingdom and these characteristics are already theirs in the Holy Ghost **Rom. 14: 17**. In this sense the kingdom of God is often referred to in the Epistles. A person must be born again to enter into it **John 3: 3, 5**.

The parables in the gospels describe the form and objects of the kingdom while the Lord is away. In **Mt. 13** the Lord spoke four parables to the multitude; then He dismissed the people and explained the parable of the 'Wheat and the Tares' to His disciples where He added three parables bearing on the secret character of the kingdom. It is shown that evil would be found in the kingdom, but that Christ will eventually send His angels to gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and then it will be established in power by the Lord Jesus sitting on His own throne, and reigning supreme as Son of man over the earth. This will end with His ultimately giving up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all **1 Cor. 15: 24, 28**. The moral characteristics suitable to the kingdom are given in the Sermon on the Mount **Mt. 5, 6, 7** and its principles and order in **Mt. 18**.

The kingdom must not be confounded with the church. In the kingdom the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest; but in the church a wicked person is to be put out **1 Cor. 5: 13**. There may appear to be a similarity between the professing church and the kingdom; but the ideas are not the same. **The kingdom is the sphere of Christ's rule; whereas the church is the dwelling place of God by the Spirit**. Neither will the duration on earth of the church and the kingdom be the same as the kingdom which will be set up in power after the rapture. The kingdom will continue during the millennium. The Christian, besides sharing in the privileges of the church, has also the privileges and responsibilities attached to the kingdom. To each individual is entrusted a pound **Luke 19: 12-27** when man's responsibility is the focus; or when God's sovereignty is emphasized one or more talents **Mt. 25: 14-28**. He is responsible to use the pound/talent(s) for his Lord and Master and he will have to give an account in a future day. His place in heaven is by grace apart from his works, but his reward in the kingdom will be according to his faithfulness to his Lord.

The Kingdom under the heavens ruled by the Lord Jesus Christ is viewed in Matthew in its two components:

1. **The Kingdom of the Father, Mt. 13:43** (Heavenly part of the Kingdom)
2. **The Kingdom of the Son of Man, Mt. 13:41** (Earthly part of the Kingdom)

* Reference Morrish's Dictionary

The following are a few thoughts regarding each parable in each of the four groups mentioned above to stimulate a deeper meditation by the reader into these blessed and important truths.

(A) THE SETTING ASIDE OF ISRAEL

1. The Two Sons (Mt. 21:28-32)

The Lord's own explanation for this parable leaves no doubt as to its meaning. It focuses on the most responsible in Israel namely the chief priests and the scribes. The Lord had just gone into the temple and overthrown the tables of the money-changers and the chief priests were very displeased. They asked by what authority the Lord did this and the Lord posed a question to them first, which if they answered He would then answer their question. When they thought it better not to answer the Lord's question the Lord then gives this parable to speak to their consciences. They were the ones who by profession said "I will go" but didn't and the Publicans were those who said "I will not" and then changing their minds went and did their master's bidding. This is true today as well with those who profess to be leaders and teachers but do not teach or practice the truth. How this should exercise us that we do not just have an empty profession and remember that to whomsoever much is given of him shall much be required. [Luke 12:48](#)

2. The Wicked Husbandman (Mt. 21:33-46; Mk. 12:1-12; Lk. 20:9-19)

This parable is also explained by the Lord..."The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you (Jews) and given to a nation (true believers) bringing forth the fruits thereof". This parable is recorded in all three of the synoptic gospels and carries the solemn message of setting the Jews aside because they did not bring forth fruit for God even though they were given all they needed to do so. How true this is of us who have been saved and the Lord warns us; "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. "Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, lest He spare not thee". [Rom. 11:20, 21](#)

3. The Barren Fig Tree (Lk. 13:6-9)

Some told the Lord of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. The Lord asked them "suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered these things"? The Lord answers, "nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The Lord then tells of a man who had a fig tree (a national emblem of Israel) in his vineyard which did not bring forth fruit. It was therefore to be cut down but one answered the Lord, "let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it." Judgment fell on Jerusalem some time after Stephen was stoned and the testimony of the Holy Spirit was rejected as the testimony of the Lord had been rejected before. We are instructed in [Col. 1:10](#) to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing being fruitful in every good work". What a solemn lesson this is therefore for us!

(B) THE SETTING UP OF THE KINGDOM AND SATAN'S OPPOSITION TO IT

1. The Sower (Mt. 13:3-9; Mk. 4:3-9; Lk. 8:5-8)

With the setting aside of Israel God goes out as a sower and has marked this parable as a key parable in the understanding of the others. "Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables?" [Mk. 4:13](#). Man has been tried by God and failed so the Sower (God) goes out to sow His seed (the Word) and His servants sow in this wide world. The Lord explains this parable referring to the Kingdom and He brings before us the obstacles which lie in the way of man's reception of it. The chief opponent is Satan and he snatches away the seed before it can take root (birds snatching the seed by the wayside). The stony ground pictures people who hear and receive the Word with joy but persecution arises and as the Word does not have root, has not touched the conscience, it is given up.

The hearers who receive the Word among thorns are those who hear the Word but it is choked out by the ordinary cares of life, the deceitfulness of riches and lust.

At last we see the Word fall on good ground bringing forth fruit in varying amounts. The good ground had to be prepared by God in sovereign grace as there is no good in man's fallen nature.

2. **The Wheat and the Tares** (Mt. 13:24-30)

In this parable we see Satan's opposition seeking to spoil God's work in building His Kingdom. The Lord explains that he is the Sower, the field is the world, the good seed is the children of the Kingdom and the tares are the children of the wicked one. Ungodly people led by Satan mingle with the saints and they are let go on in this world until the end of the age. "Then the Son of Man will send forth His angels and they will gather all things that offend and them that do iniquity, out of the kingdom". They shall be cast alive into a furnace of fire. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun. This tolerance of the evil ones and their work is in marked contrast to the assembly which is required to deal with evil before it spreads. **1 Cor. 5:13**

3. **The Growth of Seed** (Mk. 4:26-29)

In this parable we learn the important fact that the seed has power to produce fruit. Man places it into the ground but he cannot make it grow nor does he understand how it grows. He sleeps at night and the growth occurs. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but cans't not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" **Jn. 3:8**. To Him be all the praise and glory! The growth of the seed is alone accomplished by the sovereign work of God's grace.

4. **The Grain of Mustard Seed** (Mt. 13:31, 32; Mk. 4:26-29; Lk. 13:18, 19)

This parable shows that the Kingdom of heaven begins as a small and insignificant thing in the eyes of the world but it grows into a large tree with great branches. The branches are seen to be the perch of birds, unclean fowl which want to devour the good seed sown by the wayside. The Lord points out that this is the work of Satan. Those in the higher branches represent those unconverted religious leaders in high places who mislead people. They lay on hands, pretend to give forgiveness, collect vast sums of money as well as excommunicating people who resist them. This parable shows that as time goes on the tree becomes large and more corrupt until the end.

5. **The Leaven** (Mt. 13:33; Lk. 13:20, 21)

"Leaven is uniformly in Scripture a type of evil (Mt. 16:15; 1 Cor. 5:6-8) and in this parable signifies evil **DOCTRINE** just as the tares and birds signified evil **PERSONS**. It works slowly and is secretly mixed with meal. Many false doctrines regarding the person and work of Christ Jesus have arisen which without doubt are pictured in this parable and higher critics attack the precious Word of God. The leaven continues to work to spoil the whole. This parable refers to the Kingdom of Heaven but the truth of the leaven at work is also true of the assembly as we see in **1 Cor. 5:13**. It is quite easy if we are not reading the precious Word and abiding in the love of God that we will not detect the subtleties of the leaven and some will be deluded. We are instructed therefore to examine everything by the Word of God and to try the spirits, for many false prophets are gone forth into the world. **1 Jn. 2:18**. By abiding close to the Shepherd we will discern His voice and be protected from this insidious evil. May we be prayerfully found examining the Word of God, dwelling on the perfections of our Lord Jesus and faithfully contending against any false doctrine that would dishonour Him.

6. **The Hidden Treasure (Mt. 13:44)**

This beautiful parable speaks of the Lord Jesus seeing a treasure in His people and therefore with joy sells all that He hath that He may obtain possession of it [Heb. 12:2](#); [2 Cor. 8:9](#). The Creator of all went into death and that the death of the cross, being made sin and forsaken of God that he may purchase the field and gain the treasure. In the parable of the Sower the Lord Jesus states that the field is the world [Mt. 13:38](#). The Lord in His death bought all man-kind but man unless moved by the sovereign grace of God will not come to Him. Compare [2 Pet. 2:2](#) with [1 Pet. 1:18-20](#). This explains the difference between buying and redeeming. Only those who come to Him are redeemed [Eph. 2:8](#). Thus Christ is the purchaser of the treasure which is all the saints of God.

7. **The Pearl of Great Price (Mt. 13:45, 46)**

Unlike the previous parable here it is only the pearl that is mentioned. Christ is the merchant man, one who knows value and He seeks the pearl of great price and finds it and purchases it with His own blood. There may be many pearls ([Rev. 21:21](#)) but the one of great price is felt to be the Church [Eph. 5:25](#). A pearl is formed in the bottom of the sea in an oyster away from all that man could spoil. It is formed by the hand of God through judgment [Psa. 42:7](#).

8. **The Net Cast into the Sea (Mt. 13:47-50)**

In this parable the gospel is the net and the people are the fishes in the sea. The Lord Jesus interprets this parable and states that the angels will go forth and sever the wicked from the just and the wicked will be cast into a furnace of fire. This is similar to the parable of the Wheat and the Tares. The wicked are allowed into the net but it is mere profession. This is a solemn consideration as we look at Christendom today that there are many who are empty professors and some even teachers of a false gospel.

9. **The Pharisee and the Publican (Lk. 18:10-14)**

This parable is told by the Lord Jesus to the people who trusted in themselves. They prided themselves in being more righteous, exalting themselves above others, and even despising others. Like these people the Pharisee speaks repeatedly of himself while the publican had not a word to say in his favour but rather standing afar off, not worthy to look up to heaven, cries for mercy. This parable gives the divine principle that all who justify themselves shall be abased and those that humble themselves shall be exalted. We see all of mankind exalting themselves in Adam but Christ humbling himself. We do not have to cry to God for mercy because it is assured when there is true repentance a gracious God is waiting to forgive. That being said man is a debtor to mercy and to the One who made Himself of no reputation and who is now exalted on high. The Son of God became the Son of Man that we the sons of men might become the sons of God. What a wonderful plan! What enormous cost! All praise be to His blessed Name.

10. **The Two Debtors (Lk. 7:41-43)**

This parable is in response to the Lord attending a meal at the home of Simon the Pharisee and having a poor sinner woman wash His feet with her tears. She was forgiven by the Lord and Simon said within himself, that "this man if he were a prophet would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner." The Lord explains she is forgiven much because she loveth much.

Power and grace are fully displayed by the Lord here. Simon had not provided even water so the Lord could wash His own feet. It is noteworthy that no matter how great the debt the debtors both had nothing to pay. The proud one is humbled and the humble one is exalted. This is ever the way of God and a lesson we must all learn and exercise continually.

11. **The Unjust Judge (Lk. 1-18)**

This parable was given to emphasize that all men ought always to pray and never to faint. Man usually is slothful when the going is smooth and does not pray and when the going is tough he prays as a last resort. The parable shows that a judge who does not even fear God will listen to an importunate widow rather than be wearied with her repeated appeals and thus if that is so then may we not expect that God who is merciful and longsuffering will answer our prayers? This parable refers to Israel in a future day when the Son of Man will set up His kingdom in power and he will avenge His elect that cry to Him. See **Psalm 79:5-9; Zech. 12:10-14.**

12. **The Labourers in the Vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16)**

This parable is explained by one phrase, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? It is God who dispenses His gifts as it pleases Him and what had been given to the last in no way infringed on what had been given first as they had agreed on a penny a day. This brings out the discontent of man and the Lord says "Is thine eye evil because I am good?" We can be sure the God of all the earth will do right and he will reward as He sees fit according to His sovereign will. God states that the last shall be first and the first last emphasizing the fact that the Jews who were first would be last. Let us thank God for what he has dispensed to us in His sovereign grace and never be jealous or discontent. In Matthew the sovereignty of God is emphasized and in Luke it is the responsibility of man.

(C) THE WAY OF GOD IN BRINGING INTO THE KINGDOM

These parables relate to the way into the kingdom and the ones following that relate to the responsibilities of those connected with the kingdom, give a broader and more moral order and thus of the 14 parables 9 are found in Luke and all of the rest in Matthew.

1. **The Lost Sheep (Mt. 18:12, 13; Lk. 15:4-7)**

This parable, and the two following, come after Jesus is accused of receiving sinners and eating with them. How wonderfully true this is. The people in this parable are compared to sheep, as elsewhere in the Word, **(Is. 53:6)** who are lost in the wilderness. The emphasis here is on the Owner (the Lord Jesus) of the sheep and how happy He is to find a single sheep who has been lost. The parable emphasizes the Shepherd's love, His search until He finds the lost sheep. This is true of all sinners even Israel in a future day who being lost **(Matt. 15:24)** are found and brought into the Kingdom.

2. **The Lost Piece of Money (Lk. 15:8-10)**

The sinner is pictured as a piece of silver which is lost in the house and a candle (the Word) is lit to search in the midst of darkness. The woman searching is a picture of the Spirit of God. She searches and with diligence finds the lost piece of silver and rejoices. Such will be true of Israel also as the Word of God applied by the Spirit of God will bring His chosen people back and into the Kingdom. This parable shows the diligence of God in seeking and finding that which is lost.

3. **The Prodigal and Elder Son (Lk. 15:11-32)**

This well know parable shows the Prodigal, a picture of the gentile who has gone far from God the Father, falling into sin but then through the goodness of God begins to be in want. The Elder Son is a picture of the unrepentant Jew. The goodness of the Father and the plenty of His house is brought back into the mind to begin a work of repentance. With a true confession which is only partially stated the Father commands that the "best robe", the "ring", the "shoes", the "fatted calf", be brought forth and the millennial feast begins and the sinner (believing Gentile and Israel) is displayed in all the perfection of Christ and merriment with music and dancing begins without end. The self-righteous elder son does not repent and is a picture of the sinner (unbelieving Israel) who relies on works to be received. This is a sad picture and shows the natural mind which is at enmity with God and cannot enter into His grace and ways [Mt. 7:21-23](#).

4. **The Marriage of the King's Son (Mt. 22:2-14)**

God is pictured as the King who makes a marriage feast for His Son, the Lord Jesus, and invites all beginning at Jerusalem but some make light of the invitation being occupied with their farm and merchandise. Not only so but they mistreated the servants and slew them. This calls forth God's wrath and His armies destroy the ungracious people. This is similar to the parable of the "Wicked Husbandman". The Lord came to His own and His own received Him not [John 1:11](#). A second invitation goes forth bidding the bad and the good to come in from the highways of men and the wedding was furnished with guests. They were furnished with wedding garments, a picture of Christ, but there was one who did not have on such a garment. Religion without Christ will not do and yet many are sadly misled and fall into this class. These are cast into the lake of fire. The parable ends with the difference between God's call (invitation) which is to all and those who are (chosen) according to the sovereign grace of God [Eph. 2:4; 2:8](#). This parable in contrast to the following one emphasizes the marriage to the King's Son.

5. **The Great Supper (Lk. 14:16-24)**

This parable is very similar to the preceding one but here it is for a great supper rather than a marriage feast. There is no maltreatment of the messengers here, and the invitation goes out in a broader way into the streets, the lanes, the highways and the hedges. There is no guest without a wedding garment in this parable but the same indifference to the invitation of grace is seen. This feast is viewed as never ending just like the feast prepared for the Prodigal. Both this and the preceding parable picture the invitation into the kingdom and the fact that although all are invited only those chosen come and are blessed. The poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind pictures man in his totally degradation and sin but made fit in Christ. Man and his occupations and works have no part. God emphasizes this from the beginning of His Word as we see Adam and Eve clothed in the fig leaves and then needing the skins prepared by God. We also Cain's way of coming to God with works of his hands rather than through sacrifice like Abel. Man has not changed and how sad the end. This parable also brings out how the Father's house will be filled. Some from every tribe and nation will be there. How wonderful.

High, in the Father's house above,	With Him we love, in spotless white,	All taint of sin shall be removed,
Our mansion is prepared;	In glory we shall shine;	All evil done away:
There is the home, the rest we love,	His blissful presence our delight,	And we shall dwell with God's Beloved,
And there our bright reward.	In love and joy divine.	Through God's eternal day.

Little Flock hymn #48

(D) THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE CONNECTED WITH THE KINGDOM

1. The Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-37)

A certain lawyer tempts the Lord Jesus by asking Him how one could inherit eternal life. The Lord points him to the law which he states in summary. He is told that he has answered correctly and if he would do this he would live. Trying to justify himself he questions the Lord as to who his neighbour is and the Lord gives him this parable. The man journeying away from God's centre at Jerusalem is headed into the world (Jericho) and falls among thieves (Satan) who beat him, strip him and leave him half dead. The **PRIEST** is seen passing by on the other side. This represents the fact that the law cannot save as man has no power to keep it. Even if he could it would lead only to life and not eternal life. The **LEVITE** chosen for God from Israel to serve Him could not help either as natural heritage and service for the Lord could not give eternal life. Only the Good Samaritan, representing the Lord Jesus, could come to where the poor half dead man was, and pouring in the oil and wine (the anointing and joy of the Holy Spirit), give eternal life. The man is set on the Good Samaritan's beast and brought to the inn and his lodging is paid for with the two pence. This made provision for the two days of absence and gives assurance of His return. The beast represents also the Holy Spirit in power bringing the sinner now a saint into the kingdom. The inn also represents the protection and care of the assembly. We are responsible to stay close to the Lord, dwelling in the assembly enjoying the power and joy of the Holy Spirit as we show forth His fruit (Christ likeness).

2. The Foolish Rich Man (Lk. 12:16-21)

The background of this parable relates to a brother coming to the Lord and asking if he would sort out an inheritance dispute. The Lord rather than do this gives this parable which emphasizes the sin of covetousness; "for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." The parable follows showing the covetous spirit of the foolish rich man emphasizing that we are the same if we have self as our object and not God. The foolish man states "my" goods, "my" "fruits, "my" barns and what he would do independent of God with them. Such a one is a fool. How this speaks to the conscience! Oh that we who have been brought to God at such a price should be exercised about all we have been entrusted with to use it for God directed by Him.

3. The Unjust Steward (Lk. 16:1-13)

A certain unjust steward is commended by his lord for settling the debts owed to him quickly even though he received only part payment. He is commended by his earthly master for sacrificing the present for future advantage. The Lord then gives His advice stating we should make friends with unrighteous mammon (worldly possessions) that when they fail we may be received into everlasting habitations. This carries the same thought as "sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" **Mt. 19:21**. The Lord goes on to state that if we are not faithful in the use of worldly possessions how can we be trusted with spiritual things or the true riches. As those in the kingdom we have that which belongs to another and if we are to be faithful we cannot serve God and mammon. This parable is thus very closely related to the previous one involving the covetous, foolish rich man. The true spirit is so beautifully displayed in the Lord Jesus in **2 Cor. 8:9**. He is the rich One who became poor so that we who were destitute could become rich. This was motivated by a desire to bring glory to God and blessing to man. May we as we journey home use our worldly possessions for the Lord, showing grace to the needy, as directed by the Lord and motivated by love for Him.

4. **The Rich Man and Lazarus** (Lk. 16:19-31)

This parable emphasizes that riches are of no help in coming into the kingdom and indeed may be a hindrance. The rich man who fared sumptuously ended in torments and the beggar who desired but the crumbs from the rich man's table was comforted. The lesson of this parable is important because in the Old Testament earthly blessings and prosperity are emphasized for faithfulness. This is therefore a new way to look on riches as they are of no value when it comes to eternal things and indeed may be a hindrance. The Lord tells us it is harder for a rich man to be saved than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Also again we see if we are given riches we must be ready to give to the poor and needy as directed of the Lord. This rich man did not do this even as the beggar laid at his gate full of sores. It is instructive that the Lord calls the beggar by name, Lazarus "whom God aids" but does not name the rich man - **John 10:3**.

The rich man is told that if his brethren would not believe the Word of God it would not be of any help to have a message from someone even if he went to them from the dead. Such is our instruction as those who have been brought into the kingdom.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.." 1 Tim. 6:16-18

5. **The Pounds** (Lk. 19:12-27)

This parable is told by our Lord because He was near Jerusalem and they thought that the kingdom was imminent. He is the Nobleman who would go away to receive the kingdom and then return but while He is away He would give instruction about occupying til He comes back. This is the appearing and not the rapture. This is when He comes to reward faithfulness. The chief difference between this parable and the one in **Matthew 25** is that here each is given the same amount, and there different amounts, according to the sovereignty of God. Here the emphasis is on faithfulness and man's responsibility while the Lord is away and there it is the sovereignty of God giving to whomsoever He wants and requiring faithfulness according to the amount of gift that is given. Some like the unfaithful servant are not real.

6. **The Unmerciful Servant** (Mt. 18:23-35)

This parable follows Peter's question about how many time he should forgive. He is told he should forgive seventy times seventy or in perpetuity. We who have been forgiven our ten thousand talents should forgive another who owes us but 100 pence which is 1:1,140,000 as much. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged" **Matt. 7:2**. Professed servants like this unmerciful one who are not real are given over to the tormentors. We who are the Lord's should forgive others just as we have been forgiven so great a debt.

7. **The Ten Virgins** (Mt. 25:1-13)

This parable emphasizes that those in the kingdom should be waiting for the Bridegroom for we know not when the Lord will come. It is sad to see that all fell asleep, both the wise and the foolish and at midnight the Lord comes. Profession was not enough for the indwelling of the Spirit of God (the oil) was evidence of reality. The door was shut and not opened for another chance. How solemn and final.

8. **The Talents** (Mt. 25:14-30)

This parable is similar to the pounds described above and the differences already mentioned. Here the different abilities are emphasized and the sovereignty of God. May we seek to use what we have been given to the glory of God and for his people while we wait for the Lord to appear!