



MATTHEW

The Savior-King and His Kingdom

The King's Secrets!

Matthew 13:1-23

Message #35 of 80 – S1065

Sermon given on October 1, 2023



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The King's Secrets!

Matthew 13:1-23

Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Matthew 13**
- Today, we continue a series through the gospel of Matthew – **The Savior-King and His Kingdom**
- Let's open this time in our service with a word of prayer. - **Pray**

Teaching

- **The King's Secrets!**
- One of the things that made Jesus' earthly ministry memorable was His teaching (**Mark 1:22**).
And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.
- Jesus' miracles were evidence that His words and teaching were from God.
- All through Jesus' time in public ministry He was dealing with people who struggled to believe or refused to believe He was who the Scripture predicted He was.
- Jesus had a style of teaching that was unlike anything the people had seen before.
- Today we look at one of the ways Jesus taught that we still marvel at two thousand years later.
- **Matthew 13:1-3a**
- Chapter 13 contains 8 parables though it is highly likely there were many more than eight in this seaside sermon.
- **Albert Barnes** defines a parable as:
"...a similitude taken from a natural object to illustrate a spiritual or moral subject."
- Parables are tools for illustrating a point or subject.
- It is the message of the parable that matters.
- A parable is designed to make a single point.
- We must be careful not to look for anything but that one point.
- It is also important to remember that a parable was best understood by the culture it was given to.

- We can't try to force it into our cultural reality.
- But the point of the parable is timeless.
- We will look at just the first of the eight parables today.
- **Matthew 13:3b**
- Everyone listening to Jesus would understand this image – they all knew what a sower was and knew what they did.
- It is possible that they all passed by one as they followed Jesus from the house down to the sea.
- **Matthew 13:4-8**
- If you were anything like me, the first time I heard this, I couldn't figure out what the point was.
- Thankfully for us this is one of the parables that Jesus explains for us.
- Only two of the eight parables in this chapter are explained by Christ.
- We'll get to the explanation a little later.
- **Matthew 13:9**
- Jesus is saying that it is the hearer's responsibility to pay attention and understand.
- The disciples are curious about this style of teaching.
- **Matthew 13:10-11**
- If you would, please turn to **Ephesians 1**
- When the Bible refers to a mystery it is referring to those things God kept hidden until such time as He deemed the time was right to reveal them to the people He chose to receive them.
- These mysteries cannot be solved using human logic or ingenuity – God must reveal it.
- What are the mysteries they were given?
- **Ephesians 1:7-10**
- The mysteries are those things revealed in the person, words, and works of Christ Jesus.
- You can turn back to **Matthew 13**
- **Douglas O'Donnel** tells us that parables have two purposes:
"Parables have two primary purposes: parables conceal and reveal. First, parables conceal the truth from those who will not submit to Christ and His rule; and second, parables reveal the truth to those who by God's grace will submit to Christ and His rule."

- The reason some were given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven is because of their willingness to believe and yield their lives to Christ.
- To those who are unwilling to believe and yield their lives to Christ the mysteries are hidden.
- **Matthew 13:12-15**
- The seed is the Word of God.
- They all heard it but only some received it.
- The same thing is true today – people see the truth of God through the lives Jesus is changing but they choose not to see Jesus in those changed lives.
- They hear the truth of God's Word from the lips of God's messengers, but they refuse to accept it as truth.
- The same seed from the same sower – different results based on the condition of the hearts of the hearers. **Douglas O'Donnell**
"In these verses we are unashamedly presented with the tension, often given in Scripture, between divine sovereignty regarding election and human responsibility regarding rejection."
- It is a choice!
- Jesus then commends His disciples for making that choice.
- **Matthew 13:16**
- Because they were willing to believe and receive God's truth, and because they were willing to receive Jesus as their Savior-King, they were able to see the truth in Jesus' parables.
- That doesn't mean He didn't have to explain the parables to them, but they could understand.
- Not only are they blessed but they are also privileged.
- **Matthew 13:17**
- We should consider ourselves highly blessed and privileged that we can comprehend the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.
- We should rejoice and praise God with great enthusiasm and passion.
- Jesus then explains the meaning of the parable.
- **Matthew 13:18-19**
- This is the indifferent hearer.
- This person's pride and self-righteousness will not allow them to hear.

- I was like this – I didn't need the gospel because I didn't need God.
- My heart was hard to the things of God.
- But God in His grace broke up the hard ground of my heart.
- **Matthew 13:20-21**
- This is the shallow hearer.
- They love the idea of the gospel and the Kingdom of God.
- But they want the gospel without a commitment to God.
- They want an easy gospel – a Joel Osteen type of gospel.
- But as soon as life gets hard because of God and His Word, they fade away.
- Jesus told us that being a Christian might be hard and then Paul said (**Acts 14:22**).

“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”

- The third type of soil.
- **Matthew 13:22**
- This is the cluttered hearer.
- The gospel is just one of many things that clutter their lives.
- It is no less or more important than anything else.
- And because the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches are relentless, they will eventually choke out everything else.
- The fourth type.
- **Matthew 13:23**
- This is the responsive hearer.
- My guess is that this describes almost everyone here today.
- The key to this parable is understanding God's Word.
- The same sower with the same seed on the same good ground bears variation in harvest.
- The degree to which we accept and understand God's Word determines how much fruit is borne.
- Only one type of soil produced fruit.
- All others depict those who by reason of unbelief do not receive Christ Jesus as their Savior-King and will not produce good fruit.
- Even as believers we must watch out for areas in our heart that might be unproductive for Christ-Jesus.

- Watch out for areas of indifference, shallowness, or clutter.
- We play a role in preparing the soil of our heart.
- As we spend time in God's Word, in prayer, in community with God's people in praise and worship, or in service God will reveal things to us about the state of our heart.
- Don't resist God when He does.
- Trust Him and let the Holy Spirit go about the work breaking up the hard parts of your heart, or pulling the weeds of worldly things, or putting the priorities of life into their proper place.
- Only God the Holy Spirit can do it, but He won't do it if you won't let Him.
- By letting God do a work in your heart, He will bear more fruit through your life.
- That will bring much more glory to God and will result in God's increased blessing in your life and greater rewards in heaven.
- What is the fruit of a life devoted to Christ?
- Here are just a few: **Fruit of a Godly Life**
- Holiness - Romans 6:22
- Christian Character - Galatians 5:22-23
- Good Works - Colossians 1:10
- Winning Others to Christ - Romans 1:13
- Sharing What We Have with others - Romans 15:25-28
- Praising God - Hebrews 13:15
- In John 15 we are told that if we abide in Christ, God will make it so that we are more fruitful.
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to do that today.
- And then David and the team will lead us in one last song of praise. - **Pray**