



ASKING BETTER
QUESTIONS -
PARABLES 4

A thick black L-shaped frame surrounds the text. The top horizontal bar is on the left, the left vertical bar is on the left, and the bottom horizontal bar is on the right, with a vertical bar on the right side.

WELCOME TO “PARABLES”

Each week we will delve into the background, imagery and challenge of the parables of Jesus..



Tonight



- **Parable of the yeast**
- **Treasure and Pearls**



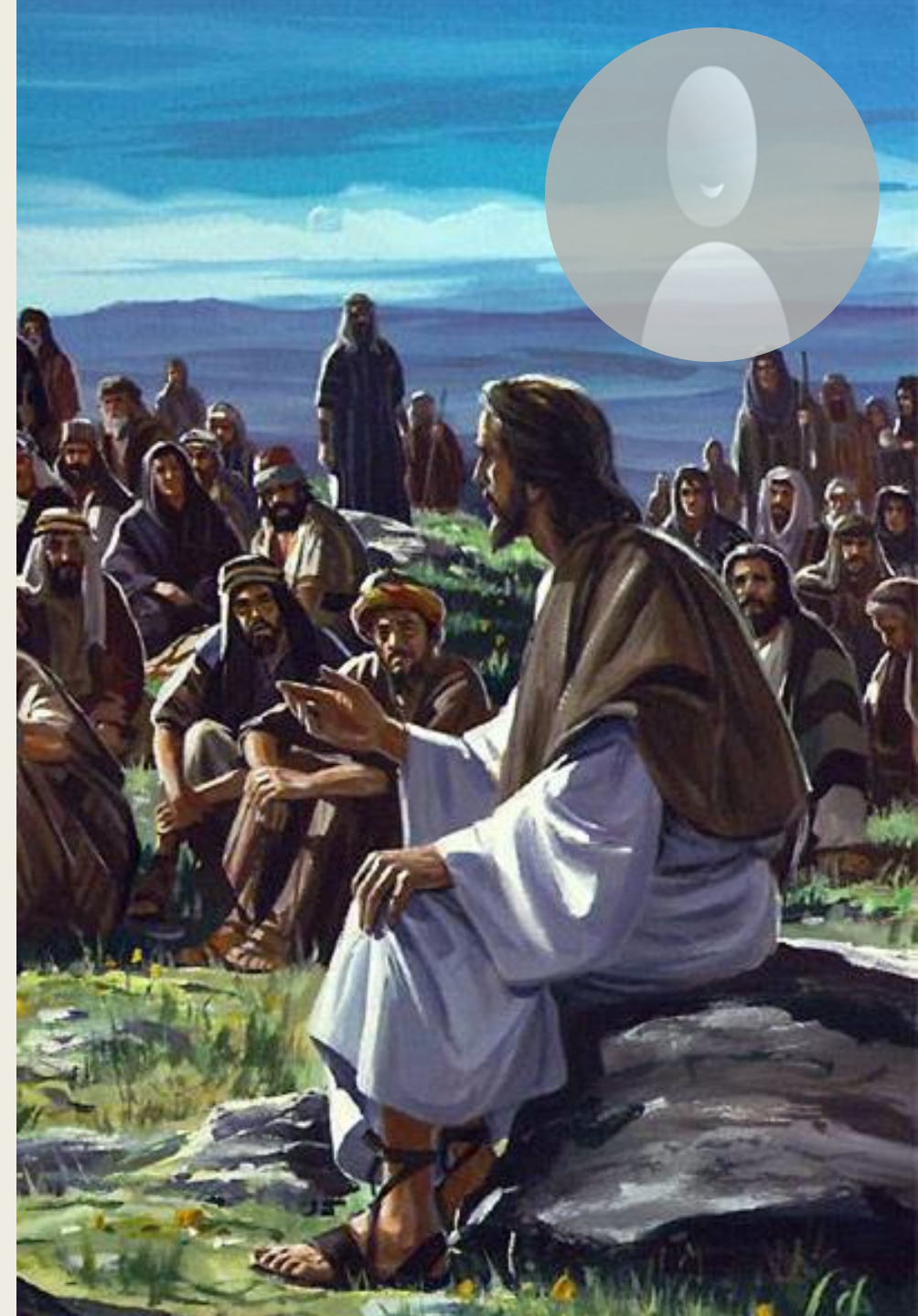
Reflection preview!



- What have I learnt about God's kingdom tonight?
- How do I feel about **time**, **permeation** and **value** when thinking about the Kingdom of God?

Thinking about parables...

- Parables turn out to be doorways leading into a beautiful and loving reality, yet they also disrupt our comfortable notions about God and heaven. Once we hear them and begin to think about them, they revolutionize and reorganize the inner fabric of our life. (Dallas Willard, *The Scandal of the Kingdom*).
- What do you think about that?





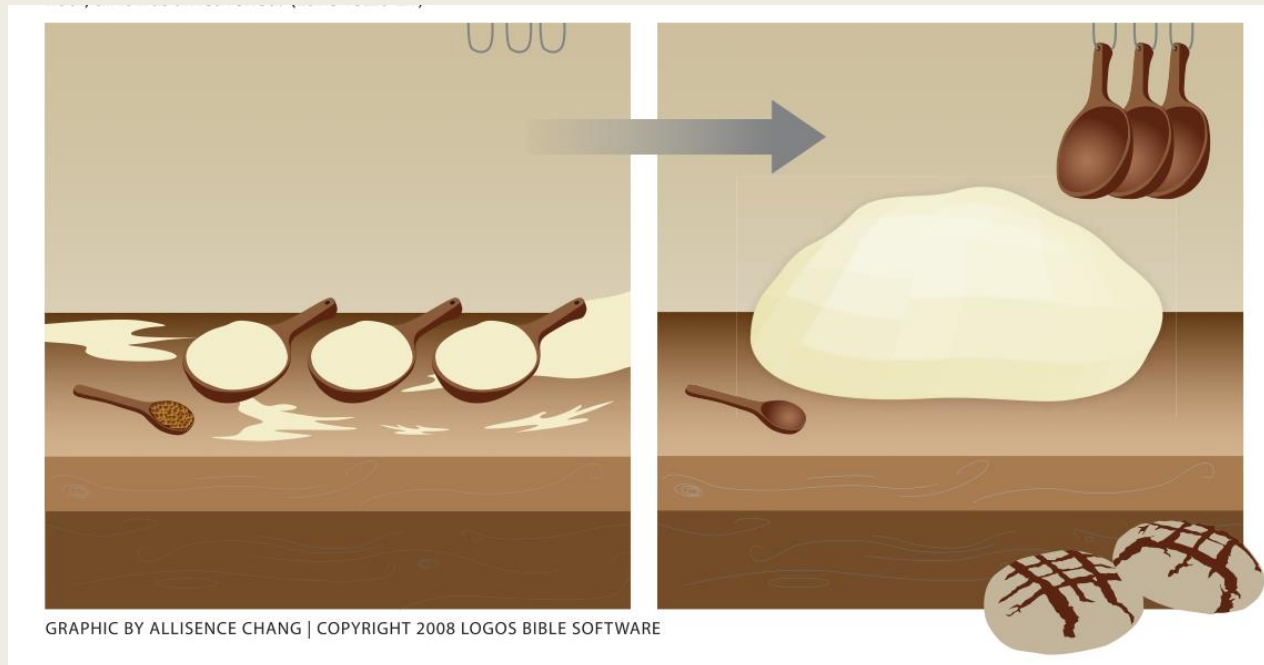
So, how to listen to a



- **Ask** questions of course!
- **Ask:** What are the corresponding features talking about? (Sower, seed, pearl, banquet etc)
- **Ask:** What is Jesus wanting to teach about his kingdom that is *different* to the accepted wisdom?
- **Ask:** What would have surprised or shocked the original hearers?
- **Ask:** How might this parable be challenging me or my understanding of God's kingdom?

Parable of the yeast.

- (Mt 13:33, Lk 13:20-21) And again he said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹ It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened.”
- What is the main point?



Parable of the yeast

- Mt 13:33, Lk 13:20-21) And again he said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened.”
- 3 measures = enough food for ~100 people. Estimates vary. 23kg? A lot!
- The kingdom takes time to take effect and spread.
- But ultimately, it really permeates through and has a profound effect.



Parable of the yeast

- Compare to the bread baked at Passover in haste – no yeast.
- Compare this to typical thinking about church growth. What do you see?
- So how do you think the kingdom of God works like parable?
- Over time, it permeates and transforms its host.



Since we are talking about bread...

- (Mt 26:5-12) When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. ⁶ Jesus said to them, “Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” ⁷ And they began discussing it among themselves, saying, “We brought no bread.”
- ⁸ But Jesus, aware of this, said, “O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? ⁹ Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered?”
- ¹¹ How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” ¹² Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the **leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducee.**



Since we are talking about bread...

- So, in what way was the teaching of the Pharisees and Saducees like leaven?
- It spreads also.
- Deceptive teaching = teaching to bolster their agenda.
- How to guard against falling into this today?



The Pearl and the Treasure

- ⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.
- ⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶ who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.
- So how is the kingdom of heaven like these things?
- What happens to people when they find it?
- Is it just about value, or could it be something else?
- The uniqueness? There’s only one.



The Storeroom

- (Mt 13:51-52) Do you understand all these things?”“Yes,” they said, “we do.”Then he added, “Every teacher of religious law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a homeowner who brings from his storeroom new gems of truth as well as old.”
- What do you think that means?
- Perhaps Matthew is hinting – only he, after all, has this saying about the householder – that this is his own special vision of what a Christian scribe should be like. Perhaps, in fact, he means it not least as a description of the book he’s writing, in which precisely this combination of old and new is what strikes us again and again. Jesus and his kingdom-message are meant to startle us; but part of the really shocking thing is that, when we blink and rub our eyes, we see that they are the true fulfilment of the long story of God and Israel, and indeed of God and the world. (NT Wright – Matthew for Everyone)
- What do you think?





Reflection



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Next time



- Losing things....
- **Lost sheep**
- **Lost son**
- **Lost coin**