



FIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN READING CHRIST'S PARABLES

A parable is a story in which something familiar explains something unfamiliar. Each time you read a parable, try to answer each of the following questions:

1. What does this teach me about the Kingdom of God?

2. What question does it answer?

Many of Jesus' parables include a question and the story is the answer to the question. So to understand we need to determine what the question is...either expressly stated or inferred through the story itself. Generally those that do not have a question are intentionally harder to understand. In most cases parables are intended to make something clearer. However, like the parables in Matthew 13, Jesus uses His short stories to obscure the truth from unbelievers.

3. What is the closing punch line?

4. What does Jesus want the original hearers to learn?

5. What action does Jesus expect from me/us?

CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS

1. In this chapter, Jesus describes people's responses to hearing the message of the Kingdom of God. Rick made the statement, "Listening that makes a difference is engagement." How can we tell the difference between merely hearing and truly listening?

2. Throughout the message we heard, "To the degree I engage God's Word, I make a difference in this world." What does this mean to you?

3. How do I engage God's Word?

4. Jesus uses a familiar metaphor with soil to describe four types of LISTENERS to God's Word. What are the four types of soil Jesus mentions and give an example of what each of those soils represent.

5. Which soil do you more closely resemble right now and what needs to happen to be the "good-hearted" soil?