

The 8 Parables of the Kingdom... of the Church

Matthew 13

The Kingdom of God

Jesus came to earth to establish "his Kingdom", the "Kingdom of God", the "Kingdom of Heaven" says Matthew, who does not say "God" in respect to the Jews who did not mention the name of God, out of respect to Him... but the "Kingdom of God" is the same as the "Kingdom of Heaven", or just "the Kingdom".



Only in Matthew the Kingdom is mentioned 55 times, 35 times as the "Kingdom of Heaven"... it is the revolutionary event brought by

Jesus, "*repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand*", announces his cousin the Baptist, and so repeats Jesus (Mat.3:3, 4:17, Mr.1:15).

... But after the Gospels, the Kingdom is not mentioned anymore, only 3 times... why?... what is this Kingdom?...

What is the "Kingdom of God"?

A Riddle:

The Gospels never define the Kingdom, rather they present it as "a riddle":

... 1- It is something "so big" that the whole world can enter into it... each one of us has to enter into it (Jn.3:3,5, Matt.18:3).

... 2- But it is "so small" that he enters into each one of us, it is within us (Luk.17:21, Matt.6:10).

The answer is "Jesus Christ":

It is so big, that it is the "Mystical Body of Christ", his Church... and it is something so small, that it is the same Jesus in our hearts.

The "Kingdom" and the "Church" are considered the same thing in Mat.16:17-18. This is why the apostles never mentioned the Kingdom after the Gospels, because when they

mentioned the Church, or simply Jesus Christ, they were preaching the Kingdom, their task (Matt.10:7, Lk.9:2).

The "Kingdom" is the "Church"

The "Kingdom of God" is identified with the "Church of Christ" in Mt.16:18-19: *"on this rock I will build my church... I will give you, Peter, the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven"*.

Some people believe that Jesus is to come again to establish his Kingdom... it is already established!... it is his only Church!... and if you abide in the Church of Christ, and Christ abides in you, you are in the Kingdom of God now!, doing on earth marvelous wonders, even greater than those of Jesus himself, and you live with the love and joy and peace that no one and nothing can take away... now, on earth!.

In his Second Coming, Jesus will not come to "save" but to "judge", to bring those who have done good to Heaven and those who have done bad to Hell... but now, and only now is the time of salvation! (2Cor.6:2)...

The 3 Stages of the Kingdom:

In his Second coming Jesus will establish his definitive Kingdom, or Church, "only in Heaven"... because right now there are *"3 stages of the Kingdom"*, 3 stages of the Mystical Body of Christ, of his only Church:

1- The "Militant Church":

Those Christians who live on earth. They are not in Heaven yet, and they still can go to Hell.

2- The "Triumphant Church":

Those who died and their "souls" are already in Heaven for eternity... and their "bodies" will be resurrected glorious and go to Heaven on the Second Coming... now the only ones in Heaven in body and soul are Jesus and Mary (Dogma of the Assumption of Mary).

3- The "Purifying Church":

Those who died and are in "Purgatory", and they will go for sure to Heaven after they have been totally purified.

The 8 Parables of the Kingdom: Matthew 13

Jesus never gives a definition of what is the Kingdom of Heaven, but here He tells us 7 Parables about the Kingdom, *This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.* (Matt.13:13).

There are eight parables recorded in this chapter, which are designed to represent the kingdom of heaven, the method of planting the gospel kingdom in the world, and of its growth and success.

1- The parable of the Sower, and the four sort of grounds: Mat.13:3-23:

It shows what are the great hindrances of people's profiting by the word of the Gospel, and in how many it comes short of its end, through their own folly.

The seed sown is the word of God, here called *the word of the kingdom*.

The sower that scatters the seed is our Lord Jesus Christ, either by himself, or by his ministers.

The ground in which this seed is sown is the hearts of men and women, which are differently qualified and disposed, and accordingly the success of the word is different.

It is a prophecy of the Gospel's reception:

- The Seed along the Path: Some will not even listen.
- On Rocky Ground: Some will accept it, but soon fall away... They have no root in themselves, when times of trial come, they come to nothing.
- The Thorny Ground: Some will hold on longer, but gradually lose interest. The stones spoiled the root, the thorns spoil the fruit.... The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches or honors or pleasures or power...
- On Good Soil: Producing a good crop, in varying degrees.

2- The parable of the Weeds, the Tares: Matt.13:24-30 and expounded in 36-43:

Intended to show that there would be a mixture of good and bad in the Kingdom on earth, in the Church on earth, true and false prophets, which would continue till the great separation between them in the judgment day... it shows also that in our life as Christians we will have good and bad things, good deeds and sins... we are still sinners, up to our death!

The Weeds, the character hypocrites, and all profane and wicked people... The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil.

3- The Fishing Net into the See: Matt.13:47-50:

Same intentions as the parable of the Weeds... it's so important!

Every Christian must be an evangelist, an apostle, a *fisher of men*, employed in casting and drawing his net. This net gathers of every kind, as large dragnets do. In the visible church there is a deal of trash and rubbish, dirt and weeds and vermin, as well as all kind of fish.

When the net is full and drawn to the shore, there shall be a separation between the good and bad that were gathered in it. Hypocrites and true Christians shall then be parted; the good shall be gathered into vessels, as valuable, and therefore to be carefully kept, but the bad shall be cast away, as vile and unprofitable; and miserable is the condition of those who are cast away in that day.

4- The Mustard Seed: Matt.13:31-32:

It illustrates the small beginning of Christ's Kingdom, its gradual and imperceptible growth, both in the individual and in the world at large, ultimately reaching vast

proportions, leavening institutions, philosophies, governments... in our lives too, it may start small but it should grow up to fill our entire life, on earth and in eternity.

5- The Yeast, the Leaven: Matt.13:33 (16:11-12):

With similar meaning as the Mustard Seed... again, two parables to remark similar important fact.

The leaven hid in the dough, works there, it ferments; *the word is quick and powerful* (Heb.4:12). The leaven works speedily, so does the word, and yet gradually... yet strongly and irresistibly: it does its work without noise, for so is *the way of the Spirit*, but does it without fail. Hide but the leaven in the dough, and all the world cannot hinder it from communicating its taste and relish to it, and yet none sees how it is done, but by degrees *the whole is leavened*.

6- The Treasure Hidden in the Field: Matt.13:44:

The Kingdom is so great and wonderful that we must be willing to venture all, and quit all, in the prospect of it, and we will be big winners!... the priceless value of Jesus Christ in your heart!

Jesus Christ is the true Treasure; in him there is an abundance of all that which is rich and useful and glorious.

The Field in which this treasure is hidden is the Church, with its Bible, and Sacraments and teachings and preaching, and millions of fellow Christians living the glorious life of Christ.

7- The Pearl of Great Price: Matt.13:45-46:

As the one of the Treasure, we must sell everything to get it!... it's most important!... again, two parables with the same very important issue... what Christ offers is worth giving up everything, even life itself, to obtain.

All men and women are busy, seeking goodly pearls: Riches, honor, culture, pleasure, power...but the most are imposed upon, and take up with counterfeits for pearls... Jesus Christ is the *Pearl of great price*, a Jewel of inestimable value, which will make those who have it rich, truly rich, enough to make us happy here and for ever.

8- The Householder: Matt.13:51-52:

For direction to the disciples, to make use of the instructions he had given them for the benefit of others.

He compares them to a good householder, who *brings forth out of his treasure things new and old*... Old experiences, and new observations, all have their use; and we must not content ourselves with old discoveries, but must be adding new.

The right understanding of one good sermon, will very much help us to understand another; for good truths mutually explain and illustrate one another.