I. A **Parable** is a comparison,usually a short fictitious story that teaches a moral.

 A. A **simile** is a parable which uses (usually) **like** or **as** to compare two unlike things.

 B. The lessons of Matthew 13 use parables and similes to teach the secrets of the Kingdom of God, the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven.

 C. There are **Seven Parables in Matthew 13.**

 1. **The Parable of the Four Soils**, vv. 3-23, is one which He explains.

 a. Here Jesus is asked and He answered **why He teaches in Parables***.*

 b. Jesus’ explanation yields key secrets of comprehending spiritual truth.

 2. There are far more than four spiritual secrets.

a.***The Four Spiritual Secrets***are the four found in John 15, The

 Parable of the Vine and the Branches.

 3. **The Parable of the Weeds,** vv. 24-30, which Jesus also explains in vv. 33-43

 a. A **key component** of Jesus’ worldview is found here; note v. 39. 3. **The Parable of the Mustard Seed,** vv. 31-32

4. **The Parable of the Yeast,** v. 33

 5. **The Parable of the Hidden Treasure,** v. 44

 6. **The Parable of the Pearl Merchant,** vv. 45,46

 7. **The Parable of the Fishing Net,** vv. 47,48

II. At the end of this Sermon, Jesus does not offer an invitation; rather, He makes an inquiry.

 A. **The Great Inquiry** is, **“*Have you understood all these things*?”**

 B. Their naive reply, “Yes,” exposes other spiritual secrets.

 1. The secrets of the kingdom of heaven have to be given to us by Him. 13:11.

 2. Whoever has this gift of comprehension will be given more. 13:12

 3. Whoever does not grasp it will get no more and what he has will be taken away. 13:12

 4. We have not because we ask not or ask for the wrong reason; or just don’t

 want to know; and don’t want to change. (See James 4:2)

 5. The Disciples nor we make friends with God. He makes friends with us.

 a. Faith is a gift of God, lest any man should boast. See Ephesians 2

 b. Jesus asks us to do what they did, “Follow me.” Listen, look, try it.

 (1) Examine our spiritual habits. We are what we eat, n’est pas? 6. Jesus promises that if we respond to the light He gives, He’ll give us more.

 7. The effect will be continual, as new treasures are found in a storehouse.

 a. An illustration would be discovery of pictures uncovered in house cleaning,

 opening drawers, going through the family tree or estate.

 b. This is what listening to God and His word are meant to resemble.

 c. Is our contemplation yielding the amazement and wonderful grasp of

 who He is, what He’s like, what He expects, what He’s teaching me?

 C. These exhortations warrant a brief Greek word study of the verb, **understand.**

1. The Greek word is, ***suniemi***. Easy to remember; rhymes with *tsunami.*

 a. Might we add, we’ll have a tsunami if we don’t have a suniemi!

 2. **Suniemi** from the **Greek Lexicon:** as a **verb, noun,** and **adjective.**

 a. To send together, to understand, to comprehend thoroughly

 b. To perceive clearly

 c. To be well-judging, sensible

 d. To be spiritually intelligent

e. Noun: A sending together, a junction as of streams.

f. Noun: Discernment, sagaciousness, intellect, mind. g. Adjective: Intelligent, discerning, sagacious, wise, prudent.

D. A Parable was recently offered and presented to the whole world.

 1. A picture was painted.

 2. Nothing like it has ever occurred in the history of the world.

 3. Do we see the picture for what it is?

4. Do we hear the message and recognize the opportunity we have to receive our

 own message of redemption, rescue, sacrifice, selfishness, joy of salvation, and to convey

 this Good News to the lost, the trapped, the hopeless of this world with the selfless love so

 clearly portrayed recently?

I. The Path between Sermon Three and Four is set with important relationship steps.

 A. One, our **relationship with spiritual authorities**, is addressed in chapter 15.

 B. Jesus’ impression of the elders in spiritual community is contrary to tradition.

 C. Here’s the **foundational thought, “The precepts of men are not doctrine.”**  Matthew 15:9

D. The powerful **application** is, “What precepts are doctrinal for you?”

II. In Chapter 16 we need to note three steps in developing Jesus’ worldview.

 A. Faith’s Foundation is addressed in a famous request by both liberals and conservatives

 (Sadducees and Pharisees) in verse one.

 1. The severity and sarcasm of Jesus’ response is notable.

 B. Peter’s confession is a key ingredient in the view of the origin of sound faith: Matt. 16:13-20

 C. Christ’s Death is declared and Satan is again exposed in the juxtaposed reality of competing

 worldviews prevalent then and now.

III. **Sermon Three: Chapter 18, “Is There A Child Among Us?”**

A. Rank and file within the Kingdom of Heaven is always of great interest.

 1. Who even makes it and who are the winners?

 a. Note the request of the mother of James and John regarding this.

 2. Jesus proffers an unexpected answer to this question.

 a. What’s yours?

 B. Sermon three also reminds us of eternal stakes. What’s at stake?

 1. Old-time religion needs to be reconsidered in our modern age of **feeling-driven**

 **thinking**,working like a devastating virus among us.

a. Eternal Damnation is no longer considered valid and is not vogue.

 b. People’s souls are at risk at all times.

 C. **Compassion and Confrontation in Relationships** are addressed in 18:10-20.

 1. Priorities, Principles, and Patterns are established.

 a. They teach us how to think and act when offended.

 D. **Forgiveness-Based Relationships** are declared in 18:21-35.

 1. Here’s the 70x70 rule.

 2. Forgiveness is presented in a business model.

 a. This is sound doctrine that overrides emotion regarding forgiveness.

 b. Do we have this worldview? Is forgiveness still emotional for us?

 c. If so, you know what to change. It’s your head, rather than your heart first.

**Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1.** Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise. Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above. Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy redeeming love.  | **2.** Here I raise mine Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come; and I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home. Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God; he, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.  |

**3.** O to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter,
bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
prone to leave the God I love;
here's my heart, O take and seal it,
seal it for thy courts above.