

## *Parables Confronting the Pharisees*

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**Introduction:** Why did Jesus speak in parables?

- A. Jesus wanted all men *to think and to turn to God!* (Mt 13:10-13)
  - 1. To have someone really hear is *not a common thing!* (Mt 13:15)
  - 2. Real hearing takes *time, thought and application.*
  - 3. Sometimes parables can open unwilling hearts!
- B. Jesus often warned about *the influence of the Pharisees.* (Mt 16:6, 12)
  - 1. That influence consisted of *a pattern of thinking* that shut down the mind to God's truth. (Mt 15:12)
  - 2. How do you help the blind? Jesus wanted to open their hearts but He also knew the blessings of most of his parables *would be missed by them.*
  - 3. Many of Jesus' parables revealed the pattern of thoughts of these men so that His disciples *would be able to fight that influence.*

### ***I. Parables Exposing Self-Righteousness***

- A. What is self-righteousness? (Lk 18:9)
  - 1. The essence of self-righteousness is a man had *stopped looking at God.*
  - 2. In this state of mind these men *could not find* the true righteousness of God. (Rom 10:1-2; 4:1-4)
  - 3. How could a man actually think he could earn salvation?
  - 4. The Pharisees often associated "righteousness" with their man-made *traditions and their party affiliations.* (Jn 5:42-44)
- B. Jesus revealed this kind of "righteousness" in a parable. (Lk 18:10-14)
  - 1. The Pharisee could not imagine any tax collector as being righteous. *Why?*
  - 2. Jesus contrasted a Pharisee specifically with a tax collector!
  - 3. The Pharisees did not know *how a man is righteous before God.*
- C. The *parable of the two sons* to reveal the kind of "righteousness" the Pharisees taught.
  - 1. The Pharisees were enraged over Jesus *cleansing the temple again.* (Mt 21:12-13)
  - 2. In their confrontation with Jesus, they showed they *feared the people* more than they loved God's truth. (Mt 21:23-26)
  - 3. In response to this He told a parable. (Mt 21:28-32)
  - 4. The religion of God is more than a "talk religion."
    - a. Some of the *hardest hearts* can tell you what the Bible says.
    - b. They sat in the audience and *refused to open their hearts* to the creator of the universe while thinking: "I am righteousness".
    - c. Sadly can be so satisfied in their own "righteousness" that they fail to see *what is plain to God.* (Mt 23:4)
    - d. Which son are you and me?

## ***II. Parables Exposing Hypocrisy***

- A. What is a hypocrite? (Lk 11:44-47)
  - 1. **Hypokrites** 1) one who answers, an interpreter 2) an actor, stage player 3) a dissembler, pretender, hypocrite.
  - 2. You are in essence *playing a part*; your heart is somewhere else. (Mt 15:8)
- B. The *parable of the good Samaritan* exposed one lawyer.
  - 1. The lawyer wanted to “test” Jesus. Jesus shows him *the hidden content of his own heart!* (Lk 10:25)
  - 2. Jesus in turn *tests the lawyer!* (Lk 10:28-29)
  - 3. This question is to a man *who does not want to see!* Some love to ask questions but rarely try to answer them.
  - 4. Here is a picture *so plain anyone could see.* Notice who was the hero! (Jn 8:48, Lk 10:30-35)
  - 5. Now for the question! (Lk 10:36-37)
  - 6. Exposing hearts is a dangerous business.
- C. The parable of the wicked vine-dressers was also *presented to a hostile group.*
  - 1. This is in the *same context* as the parable of the two sons.
  - 2. How would you and I answer the Lord? (Mt 21:33-40)
  - 3. They answered correctly. Watch out! (Mt 21:42-45)
  - 4. Most people who fail to understand *do not lack an ability to think.*
  - 5. Did they see Jesus’ point? (Mt 21:45-46)

## ***III. Parables Exposing Blindness***

- A. The Pharisee’s were made blind *because of their pride.* This was seen when Jesus healed a blind man. (Jn 9:35-41)
- B. The parables of *the lost sheep and the lost boy* were spoken in controversy.
  - 1. Jesus *responded* to this criticism. (Lk 15:1-2)
  - 2. In the parable of the lost sheep *men rejoiced!* The Pharisee’s could not because of their blindness. (Lk 15:3-7)
  - 3. We often focus on the prodigal son and his relationship to the father. This is *not the point of the parable.* (Lk 15:11-24)
  - 4. The point of the parable is *the elder son.* Who do he represent? (Lk 15:25-32)
- C. The *parable of the great supper* also was an answer to the Pharisees.
  - 1. They were very critical of Jesus. They looked only to find fault. (Lk 14:1-4)
  - 2. While Jesus was in their midst there was opportunity. These blind men were to fulfill the parable Jesus now tells. (Lk 14:15-18, 24)
  - 3. How sad to be so blind as to pursue something only to reject it when it is offered!

**Conclusion:** Outward activity and one’s religious “heritage” is meaningless without a right heart before God.