

A Different Kingdom

The Parables of the Kingdom Matthew 13:1–58

“The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you....” Matthew 13:11a

1. Read Matthew 13:1–58. Jesus explains aspects of the kingdom of heaven through parables. The first one in this week’s passage is the parable of the sower. Fill in the table below.

Verse(s)	Types of soil	Condition of soil	What happens to the seed
4			
5, 6			
7			
8			

2. Jesus clarifies the meaning of this parable in verses 18–23. What explanation does he make about the following?
the seed:

the lack of productivity of the first three soils:

the fruit of the good soil:
3. The parable of the sower helps the disciples (and us) see why some people don’t accept the message that Jesus brings (verses 10–17). Why do some reject the message? (verse 15) What prevents faith from growing and flourishing? (verses 20–22)
4. Share about a time in your own life when one or more of these soil conditions described your own heart. Is it possible for good ground to have thorns and stones?
5. The secrets of the kingdom are being revealed to the disciples. What is the central truth that they (and we) must understand? (Matthew 3:16–17; 16:16–17) Do you believe this? What has the Lord used in your life to increase your understanding of this truth?

6. Read Matthew 13:24–30 and 36–50. The two parables of the weeds and the net describe a battle between what two opposing forces? (verses 24–28; 48, 49)
 - a. What is the destiny of the weeds/bad fish? (verses 30, 40–42, 48–50)
 - b. What is the destiny of the good seed/fish? (verses 30, 43, 48, 49)
7. The common belief during Jesus' time was that when the Messiah came he would immediately bring the present evil age to an end and usher in the new age of righteousness. How do these parables show that God has a different plan?
8. How do these parables address the tendency we as Christians sometimes have to isolate ourselves from the world and associate only with other Christians?
9. Read Matthew 13:31–33, 44–45. What is Jesus teaching us about his kingdom through the parables of the mustard seed and the tiny grains of yeast? How do these two parables give us hope as we seek to preach the kingdom and make a difference to this world?
10. To what is the kingdom compared? (verses 44–46) What did it cost to purchase these things?
11. What are some of the great treasures of the kingdom that you as a believer now possess? Which one is particularly meaningful to you? Why? (Romans 5:1–11; 6:23; Ephesians 1:3–8)
12. Have you ever enjoyed a time when you knew Jesus was more precious to you than anything else in your life? If you are comfortable, share this experience with the group.