

BA Commentary: Matthew 13–16

Matthew 13 – Parables That Divide, Not Entertain

Jesus doesn't start telling stories to make things easier to understand. He tells parables to **separate** the seekers from the spectators.

"This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear..." (Matt. 13:13)

The parables are a **filter**. If you want truth, you'll lean in. If you want comfort, you'll tune out.

The **Parable of the Sower** (vv. 1–23) isn't about the seed—it's about the soil. Four types of hearts:

Hard soil – The Word bounces off. Satan snatches it instantly.

Shallow soil – Emotionally responsive, but no root. Falls under pressure.

Crowded soil – Worldly worries and deceit choke the Word.

Good soil – Hears, understands, obeys—and *multiplies*.

Application: Don't just ask, *"What did I learn?"* Ask, *"What kind of soil am I?"* If you're not bearing fruit, something's wrong in your root system.

Jesus also calls the kingdom a **hidden treasure** and a **costly pearl** (vv. 44–46). Both are worth giving up *everything*. He's not interested in partial obedience or convenient discipleship. He's after *total surrender*.

Matthew 14 – Provision and Power in the Storm

Jesus feeds the five thousand in verses 13–21—but don't miss the context. He had just heard that John the Baptist was murdered. He was *grieving*—and the crowd showed up anyway.

Jesus didn't send them away. He met their need. He multiplied what the disciples *gave* Him—not what they held back.

Principle: Jesus multiplies what you surrender, not what you control.

Then, He sends the disciples into a storm (vv. 22–33). It's not punishment—it's **training**. Jesus walks on water, and Peter joins Him... until fear overcomes focus.

"You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Jesus wasn't angry Peter sank. He was calling him deeper.

Application: Storms are not a sign of God's absence. They're proof that He's calling you out of the boat.

Matthew 15 – Religion vs. Real Faith

The Pharisees call out Jesus for breaking man-made traditions (vv. 1–9). Jesus responds with a surgical strike:

“You nullify the Word of God for the sake of your tradition... You honor Me with your lips, but your heart is far from Me.”

It’s possible to look religious and still be far from God. Performance isn’t obedience. Routine isn’t surrender.

Then Jesus honors a **Canaanite woman**—an outsider—with one of the highest compliments in the Gospels:

“Great is your faith.” (v. 28)

She wasn’t religious. She wasn’t in the club. But she was **desperate** and **relentless**. And Jesus *loved it*.

Application: God’s not impressed with your spiritual résumé. He honors humble, hungry, persistent faith—no matter where you come from.

Matthew 16 – The Confession and the Confrontation

Jesus asks His disciples a question that every man must answer:

“Who do you say I am?”

Peter says, *“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

Jesus affirms him and says He’ll build His church on that confession. But moments later, Peter rebukes Jesus for saying He’ll suffer and die.

And Jesus turns and says:

“Get behind Me, Satan! You’re not thinking about the things of God, but of man.” (v. 23)

Same man. Same mouth. Two radically different responses.

Principle: It’s possible to say the right thing about Jesus and still oppose His mission if you’re clinging to your own agenda.

Jesus then gives one of the most critical calls to discipleship:

“If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.” (v. 24)

This isn’t an Instagram verse. It’s a death sentence to your pride, comfort, and control.

Theological Themes and Kingdom Warnings

The Word divides – Those with ears will hear. Those with pride will walk away.

Faith must be rooted – Emotion and enthusiasm aren't enough. Obedience is the fruit of true faith.

Tradition without surrender is empty – God wants your heart, not your spiritual reputation.

Jesus demands a verdict – You can't coast in the kingdom. You must answer: *Who is Jesus to you?*

Final Application for Men

Stop coasting on shallow faith. Plant deep roots.

Stop asking for miracles while avoiding obedience.

Answer Jesus' question honestly: *Who do you say I am?*

If He's King—live like it. No backup plan. No divided loyalty.



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