

# Kingdom Expansion through Multiplication

## Part 3

### PARABLES OF MULTIPLICATION

#### KEY VERSE:

**And with many such parables spake He the Word unto them, as they were able to hear it. (Mark 4:33)**

#### INTRODUCTION

This lesson focuses on principles of multiplication taught by Jesus during His earthly ministry.

A parable is a story that uses an example from the natural world to illustrate a spiritual truth.

The actual meaning of the word "parable" is to "lay beside, to compare."

In parables, Jesus compared natural examples with spiritual truths.

A parable is an earthly story with a Heavenly meaning.

#### WHY PARABLES?

The disciples once asked Jesus why He used parables to teach spiritual truths:

**And the disciples came, and said unto Him, Why speaketh thou unto them in parables? (Matthew 13:10)**

Jesus answered:

**...Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given. (Matthew 13:11)**

Understanding of spiritual truths taught in parables was given to the disciples because **they had spiritual minds.**

Those without spiritual minds heard the parables and failed to understand them.

**Spiritual truths can only be understood by a spiritual mind:**

**But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (I Corinthians 2:14)**

A spiritually minded man is one who has been born again spiritually.

Those with spiritual minds understand the principles revealed in parables.

Those with carnal, sinful minds cannot understand.

## **THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM**

When Jesus commissioned His followers to reach the world with the Gospel message, He said...

**And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come. (Matthew 24:14)**

The Gospel you are to spread to the world is **the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.**

Its message includes the birth, life, and ministry of Jesus.

It includes His death for the sins of all mankind and His resurrection from the dead.

You are to tell people how to enter the Kingdom of God through spiritual rebirth and teach them how to live the new life of the Kingdom.\*

## PARABLES OF MULTIPLICATION

Jesus told many parables about the Kingdom of God.

Among them were parables about how the Kingdom would spread throughout the world.

The following parables about the growth of the Kingdom reveal basic principles of multiplication.

Look up each reference in your Bible and read the parable:

- **The Lost Sheep: Matthew 18:12-14; Luke 15:4-7**

12 “What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off?

13 And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off.

14 In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.

- **The Lost Coin: Luke 15:8-10**

8 “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?

9 And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’

10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

- **The Lost Son: Luke 15:11-32**

### **The Parable of the Lost Son**

11 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons.

12 The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

13 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.

15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!

18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’

20 So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21 “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate.

24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

25 “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.

27 ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

28 “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.

29 But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.

30 But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

31 “My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.

32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”

These parables reveal God's concern for the lost and the urgency with which you should seek to bring them into the Kingdom of God. It does not matter why they are lost. The sheep had wandered away.

The coin was lost through carelessness.

The son was lost through his own rebellion.

You are to make every effort to find those lost in sin.

You are to go where they are, not wait for them to come to you.

God is not concerned with how men are lost, only that they be found.

### **The Empty Banquet Table: Luke 14:15-23**

Multiplication should not stop just because some refuse to respond to the invitation of the Gospel.

You are to seek the spiritually hungry and bring them into the banquet prepared by the Lord.

### **The Barren Fig Tree: Luke 13:6-9**

Jesus told a parable about a barren fig tree.

The fig tree is a natural symbol of the nation of Israel.

God raised up Israel as the nation through which He could reveal the Kingdom to the world.

God tried to get the "tree" of Israel to bring forth "fruit" among heathen nations by sharing their knowledge of the true God.

**But Israel remained barren and unfruitful.**

**Now God has raised up the Church for this purpose.**

God nurtures believers in an attempt to make them productive, just as He did the nation of Israel.

His purpose is the same: We are to bring forth fruit among the heathen by sharing our knowledge of the true God.

**God is not pleased with trees that do not produce fruit.**

- **The Talents: Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27**
- **The Man On A Long Journey: Mark 13:34-37**
- **The Servants: Matthew 24:43-51; Luke 12:39-46**
- **The Watching Servants: Luke 12:36-38**

**The Faithful Manager: Matthew 25:14-30**

These "servant" parables emphasize wise stewardship of the message of the Kingdom which has been entrusted to believers.

Each believer is given "talents" or special abilities to use in spreading the Gospel.

Whether your abilities are great or small, you must multiply what God has given you.

Each servant is required to multiply.

When Jesus returns to earth, those who have properly used their abilities will be rewarded (Luke 16:10-12).

**Those who have not multiplied are considered unfaithful:**

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works.

(Matthew 16:27)

**Jesus recognized the principle of percentage in the multiplication process:**

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. (Luke 12:48)

The Kingdom of God is spread by wise use of the spiritual talents given by God.

If you use what God has given you, your talents will increase.

If you do not use it, you will lose it.

**The Sower: Matthew 13:3-8; Mark 4:3-8; Luke 8:5-8**

The Gospel of the Kingdom is spread by sowing the seed of the Word of God.

**There can be no multiplication without the Word.**

The fruit depends on the life that is in the seed itself (the Word of God) and the response of the soil (man's response to the Word of God).

There will be varied responses to this sowing of the Word.

**Your responsibility is to sow.**



As you sow the seed of the Word of God, some soil is ready and yields a harvest.

Other soil is not responsive and yields very little.

Even Jesus encountered unresponsive soils in His earthly ministry:  
And He could do there (his own country) no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them.

**And He marveled because of their unbelief...(Mark 6:5-6)**

## **The Tares And The Wheat: Matthew 13:24-30**

As you multiply the Kingdom by adding new believers, Satan will try to defeat the process.

He will sow people described as weeds among the good seeds of God's Kingdom.

Some of the people who profess to be believers and come into the church through multiplication are not sincere.

They are weeds planted by Satan.

Jesus does not want you to spend time and effort trying to separate the weeds from the wheat.

Keep sowing the seed and multiplying.

In the day of harvest when Jesus returns, the weeds will be separated from the harvest.

### **The Fishing Net: Matthew 13:47-50**

Jesus compared the growth of the Kingdom of God to a great net thrown into the sea.

All kinds of fish enter, but when the net is drawn to shore the good fish are separated from the bad.

The Kingdom will draw in men and women from all nations.

Many will enter.

Some will be sincere, others will not.

In the final day of judgment when God draws in the net, the good and bad "fish" will be separated.

**You are not called to separate, you are called to fish.**

### **The Mustard Seed: Matthew 13:31-32; Mark 4:31-32; Luke 13:19**

The Kingdom of God will multiply like mustard seed.

The mustard seed is very small in the beginning, but in maturity it grows to great size.

The Kingdom of God on earth had a small beginning.

When Jesus returned to Heaven after His earthly ministry, He left behind a small group of followers to spread the Gospel.

That small group of believers has multiplied to thousands of followers in many nations.

### **The Leaven: Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:21**

Like leaven in a lump of dough, the Kingdom of God will multiply to spread throughout the whole "lump" of the world.

Like leaven, the power of the Kingdom is not external but it is internal.

### **The Vine And The Branches: John 15:1-16**

This parable describes the relationship between Jesus and the fruit-bearing process.

He is the spiritual vine and we are the branches.

#### **You cannot bear fruit alone.**

You are reproductive only as you are attached to the life flow of the branch, Jesus.

Jesus wants to prune your life of everything that is not reproductive so you will bring forth spiritual fruit that remains.

### **The Harvest: Matthew 9:37-38; Luke 10:2**

In this parable, the field is the world.

The harvest is the multitudes of men and women ready to respond to the Gospel message.

A great harvest waits to be reaped by the spiritual laborers of God.

### **OTHER MULTIPLICATION PRINCIPLES**

Jesus taught other multiplication principles in brief statements:

**Light Of The World: Matthew 5:14-16; Luke 8:16**

The Kingdom will multiply as believers appear like lights from a city located on high ground which can be seen from miles around.

We are to bring the light of the world (Jesus) to a world filled with spiritual darkness.

**The Kingdom will multiply as people are drawn to the light.**

**Salt Of The Earth: Luke 14:34**

In Bible times, salt was rubbed into meat to preserve it from decay.

Believers are the "salt" to be rubbed into the world with the message of preservation (salvation).

The Kingdom will multiply as men are saved from the "decay" (spiritual death) of sin.

**Treasures In Heaven: Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12:15**

Believers are not to be concerned with multiplying treasures of the world.

The multiplication to which you are called is spiritual multiplication.

As you share the Gospel, you multiply your spiritual treasures in Heaven.

**The Broad Gate: Matthew 7:14**

You cannot judge the right way in terms of numbers only.

The way to Hell draws many while the way to eternal life is found by few.

### **Many Works: Matthew 7:22**

Many wonderful works will be done by many people.

On the surface there will be growth and multiplication.

But doing many great works is not necessarily the same as doing God's will and accomplishing His purposes.

God's work must be done by His people in His way.

### **Little Is Much: Matthew 10:42; Matthew 14:15-21**

Everything done in the name of Jesus, even that which seems small, is productive.

The miracle of the loaves and fishes illustrate how God multiplies and uses what little we have to offer.

### **Growth Requires Change: Mark 2:21-22; 7:13**

New growth requires change.

You cannot contain the new in old vessels of tradition and sinful lifestyles.

The powerful potential of the Word of God is hindered by men who cling to traditions and refuse to change.

### **Gain By Losing: Mark 8:34-37; 10:29-30**

### **Receive By Giving: Luke 6:38**

Worldly principles teach that you gain by obtaining more and more. Jesus taught that you gain everything when you lose everything.

What appears to be loss in the natural world is gain in the spiritual world.

### **Death Brings Life: John 12:24**

Through the death of Jesus, many received eternal life.

To multiply, a seed must die.

Through death comes life.

To be a reproductive disciple you must die to the desires of your flesh.

You must be "dead" to sin.

You must abandon your own way to follow Jesus.

### **The Church On The Rock: Matthew 16:18**

The Kingdom of God is founded on the rock Christ Jesus.

There is no growth without Him.

Jesus said, "I will build my Church." He said no man could enter into it unless the Father draws him (John 6:44).

Opposition was to be expected, but the "gates of Hell" cannot defeat the plan of God for the growth of His Kingdom:

**With men, this is impossible; but with God, all things are possible.**

**(Matthew 19:26)**

...all things are possible to him that believeth. (Mark 9:23)

## THE GREATEST PRINCIPLE OF MULTIPLICATION

The greatest principle of multiplication taught by Jesus was given in His final words to the disciples.

His command revealed the basic plan for the spread of the Gospel and the multiplication of converts and disciples:

**Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;**

**Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.**

**(Matthew 28:19-20)**

**Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. (Mark 16:15)**

### **Luke 24:46-48**

46 He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,

47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 You are witnesses of these things.

### **Acts 1:8**

**But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

## **SUMMARY**

The teachings of Jesus reveal that He is not pleased with:

- Fishing without catching.
- An empty banquet table.
- Sowing without reaping.
- A tree that does not bear fruit.
- Lost sheep that are not brought into the fold.
- A lost coin that is sought but not found.
- Lost sons that do not return.
- Unproductive servants.
- Unresponsive spiritual soil.
- Ripe harvests that are not reaped.

**Our Father, who is not willing that one person should perish, is interested in results through spiritual multiplication:**

### **Matthew 18:14**

**Even so, it is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish.**

### **2 Peter 3:9**

**The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**