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Introduction To Parables

The Meaning of the Term Parable

One of the greatest teaching methods in the Scriptures is the use of parables. They are not only found in the New Testament, but also in the Old Testament. The specific term “parable” is used 17 times in the Old Testament and 32 times in the New Testament. “Parables” is found once in the Old Testament and 15 instances in the New Testament. According to Webster, a parable is, “A fable or allegorical relation or representation of something real in life or nature, from which a moral is drawn for instruction”. Evidently, parables are an important part of the Word of God and are to be studied properly. Let us further learn more about the parables of the Bible.

Many times when we think about a parable, we contemplate the parables of Jesus in the Gospels. As we view the Bible in its entirety, we find many uses of parables by various people at different times. Such instances are those of Balaam (Numbers 23:7), Job (Job 27:1), Asaph (Psalm 78:2), and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 17:2). In each case, God used these men, and others, to relay figurative language to present a spiritual truth. Imagery is the robe that clothes the body of truth and thoughts.

Simply put, parables are stories comparing two objects or elements. They present the likeness and similarities of two items by placing the two together and revealing the parallel. Herbert Lockyer, in his writings, describes a parable as “an outward symbol of an inward reality”. It illustrates a spiritual truth with an earthly narrative. God has so designed nature that it is able to produce spiritual realities to hearers (Psalm 19:1). Parables are conveyed in stories, sermons, and symbols.

Several times parables are so spiritual, that they are only meant for born again believers. It presents spiritual truths to the hearts of saints. This concept is found in Matthew 13:10-11. Jesus’ disciples asked Him why He spake to them in parables. His response was, “...it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.” Seemingly, parables are truths for saints to understand, not sinners.

One final thought about parables is that the interpreter should not stretch the main emphasis of the narrative too far. Many times this will result in false doctrine. Every parable should be understood in light of the whole counsel of God’s Word. No interpretation should conflict with other parts of the Scriptures. Parables are to be taken in their context and the subject at hand should be the interpretation.

The Manifold Phases of Figurative Speech

To state that there are only parables in the Bible would be an incorrect statement. As the Scriptures present figurative language, it takes on many forms. We should be careful not to group all narrative comparisons into one category. These other representations are similitudes, proverbs, metaphors, allegories, fables, types, and finally parables.

Our first figure of speech found in the Word of God is a similitude. Webster defined “similitude” as, “Likeness; resemblance; likeness in nature, qualities of appearance; as similitude of substance. Let us make man in our image, man in our similitude;

Comparison; simile". Therefore, a simile is a likeness or resemblance of one object with another. Many times, in detecting a simile from a metaphor, similes will use the words "like" or "as". We see a simile in Psalm 1:3 as the Bible compares the blessed man with a tree. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season"

Secondly, proverbs are not necessarily lengthy stories, but short utterances with comparisons. Simply, they are wise sayings such as Proverbs 1:1, 1:6, 10:1, Luke 4:23, and John 16:25. Webster classified "proverb" as, "A short sentence often repeated, expressing a well known truth or common fact, ascertained by experience or observation; a maxim of wisdom."

Thirdly, metaphors distinctly state that one object is another. One element is given the equal qualities of another. Webster stated that a "metaphor" was, "A short similitude; a similitude reduced to a single word; or a word expressing similitude without the signs of comparison. Thus 'that man is a fox,' is a metaphor; but "that man is like a fox," is a similitude or comparison." We find this aspect in John's gospel. The metaphors of Jesus reveal him as being a piece of bread (John 6:35), the light (John 8:12), the door (John 10:7, 10:9), the good shepherd (John 10:11, 10:14), the resurrection (John 11:25), the way (John 14:6), the truth (John 14:6), the life (John 14:6), and the true vine (John 15:1, 15:5).

Fourthly, the Bible presents allegories. These teach one thing by the use of another while both objects remain separate from each other. To distinguish an allegory from a simile and metaphor let us restate their meanings. A simile (resemblance) is a comparison stated, metaphors (representations) are comparisons substituted, and allegories (implications) are comparisons implied. Webster defined "allegory" as, "A figurative sentence or discourse, in which the principal subject is described by another subject resembling it in its properties and circumstances. The principal subject is thus kept out of view, and we are left to collect the intentions of the writer or speaker, by the resemblance of the secondary to the primary subject." An allegory can be seen in Galatians 4:22-26. Keep in mind that allegories are always presented in the past while prophecies are views of the future.

Fifthly, "fables", according to Webster, is, "A feigned story or tale, intended to instruct or amuse; a fictitious narration intended to enforce some useful truth or precept." An example can be found in II Kings 14:9. Believers are warned about Jewish fables and others in the New Testament (I Timothy 1:4, 4:7, II Timothy 4:4, Titus 1:14, II Peter 1:16).

Sixthly, typology is very prominent in the Scriptures. Types are examples and copies revealing the resemblance of two objects. Our Bible presents types and antitypes. Although the word "type" is not found in the Word of God, its meaning is portrayed in other words such as "examples" (I Corinthians 10:6), "figure" (Romans 5:14, Hebrews 9:9, I Peter 3:21), "pattern" (Hebrews 8:5), "fashion" (Acts 7:44), and "form" (Philippians 2:7). Webster labeled "type" as, "The mark of something; an emblem; that which represents something else." He also stated, "type" was, "A sign; a symbol; a figure of something to come; as, Abraham's sacrifice and the paschal lamb, were types of Christ. To this word is opposed antitype. Christ, in this case, is the antitype." Four main types found in the Scriptures are rituals, material items, events, and people. Some well-known

types are the brazen serpent (Numbers 21), Passover lamb (Exodus 12), and the Tabernacle in the Wilderness (Exodus 25-40).

Finally, the last form of figurative language is parables. Simply, a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Webster defines “parable” as, “To represent by fiction or fable.” Several times Jesus would use parables to teach truths to believers (Matthew 13:3, 13:34-35, Mark 3:23, 4:2, 4:11, Luke 8:10).

The Mission of a Parable

One final analysis of parables is their mission. Why do we even have parables in the Bible? What is their significance and importance? Using this style of figurative language protects the truth from scoffers while revealing light to those who desire it. They allure the attention and mind of the listeners that the simple story can easily be remembered, which is the goal of effective preaching. Seemingly, the facts presented are forever planted into the intellect. Now, the mind becomes the seedbed of spiritual thoughts. As a hearer of the parable begins to meditate on the hidden truths, it leads to a more “in depth” interpretation. It is so useful because it imbeds a picture into the mind of people. Telling parables is also effective because it will hold the attention of people because they do not want to miss the story.

Perhaps the most informative reason for giving parables was given by Jesus in Matthew 13:11 and Matthew 13:35. In Matthew 13:11, parables were to *fool the scoffers*, while in Matthew 13:35 they were to *fulfill the Scriptures*.

As we view Matthew 13:11, we must remember the setting of the parable. Jesus was sitting by the seaside until the multitude assembled around him. Immediately, Jesus went into a ship, and, from there, taught the assembly. In the crowd were unbelievers. Our wonderful Lord knew this and fooled the scoffers by telling secret narratives (Matthew 13:13). They failed to comprehend the spiritual secrets Jesus was proclaiming. Only those who could have spiritual discernment would understand the meaning. Even some needed further explanation (Matthew 13:36).

Secondly, the parables of Jesus were to fulfill the Scriptures. This thought is seen in Matthew 13:13-14. Jesus was fulfilling prophecies that Isaiah prophesied (Isaiah 6:9-10). Then, in Matthew 13:35, Jesus plainly stated to the disciples that He was fulfilling prophecy.

In conclusion, the main mission of parables is to capture the attention of the audience with something that relates to them. Once their interest is arrested, then the story proceeds. After the illustration is told, then the meaning behind it begins to sink into the hearts of willing listeners. Then the listener decides what to do with the truth presented. One thing is certain, if the hearer chooses to reject or accept the reality, the parable remains in their mind because of the graphic picture planted.

“There Was A Little City”
Ecclesiastes 9:13-18

Introduction: In our text, we see a parable that Solomon gave that may refer back to II Samuel 20:14-26. We find, in this chapter, how the sword never departs from the house of David. Sheba rose up a rebellion against King David (vs. 1-2). David put Amasa in charge to assemble the men of Judah to battle against Sheba (vs. 4-6). Due to his delay, David sent Abishai, with Joab’s men and others, to get the job done. During the pursuit of Sheba, Joab grabbed Amasa (one of his family members) by the beard and slew him (vs. 7-13). David (I Kings 2:5-6) condemned this action. Joab and his men continued to pursue Sheba, and finally caught him in Abel of Beth-maachah (vs. 14-15). While in the city, a wise woman cried out to Joab. She asked him not to destroy the city. Joab informed her that he was not coming to ruin the city, but to capture Sheba. The woman announced this in the city and they delivered up the head of Sheba (vs. 16-22). This chapter concludes with a review of David’s officers (vs. 23-26). Although the story varies some, there are a few similarities.

1. The Battle of the City II Samuel 20:14- “they were gathered together”
2. The Besieging of the City II Samuel 20:15- “besieged him in Abel of Beth-maachah”
3. The Building around the City II Samuel 20:15- “they cast up a bank against the city”

Body: Not only does this have an earthly story, but it also contains a heavenly meaning. This city represents the world and the citizens are the sinners in it. The “great king” typifies Satan and the “poor wise man” is a type of Christ. These sinners were besieged by sin and Jesus is the mighty deliverer that rescues them. After the great deliverance, they do not return to thank the poor man. His words were not heeded and his character was blighted.

- I. The Calculation of the City 9:14- “a little city”
 - A. Notice Its Size- “little” (small)
 - B. Notice Its Status- It was very unimportant and insignificant to some.
- II. The Citizens of the City 9:14- “few men within it” Luke 13:22-23
 - A. They Were Few
 - B. They Were Feeble
 - C. They Were Fearful
- III. The Conqueror of the City 9:14- “there came a great king against it”
 - A. The Battle of the City- “came a great king against it”
 - B. The Besieging of the City- “and besieged it”
 - C. The Building around the City- “built great bulwarks against it” II Corinthians 10:4 (Why did the “great king” build such a battlement against the city? Maybe he knew that the “poor wise man” was in it.)

- IV. The Campaign for the City 9:15-16- “a poor wise man” Zechariah 9:9, Mark 6:3, II Corinthians 8:9
- A. The Deliverance of the Poor Man 9:15- “by his wisdom delivered the city”
Luke 2:40, 46-47, 52, Colossians 2:3
 - B. The Disregarding of the Poor Man 9:15- “no man remembered” Luke 17:11-19, Luke 22:19, I Corinthians 11:24
 - C. The Despising of the Poor Man 9:16- “the poor man’s wisdom *is* despised”
Isaiah 53:3
 - D. The Disrespect of the Poor Man 9:16- “his words are not heard”

Conclusion: It is amazing that such a small city was spared from the “great king” by a “poor wise man”. We know that Jesus possesses all power, both in heaven and in earth. Saints should praise Him for this and His mighty deliverance. Solomon truly said it best when he stated, “Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war” (9:18).

“Obedience”

Jeremiah 13:1-11

Introduction: In dealing with the sin of Israel, God chose to use His willing vessel, Jeremiah. This time, the Lord decided to manifest His parable in an unusual manner. It consisted of a purchased white linen girdle, which signified the holiness of Israel and their redemption. The girdle was placed upon the loins indicating the close relationship between Israel and their God. Shortly, the girdle became defiled because Jeremiah was not to put it in water. Further, he was to hide it in a hole of the rock typifying their future captivity. Because of the atmosphere the girdle was placed in, it began to rot and decay much like Israel would during their captivity. Finally, the girdle was good for nothing because of the defilement. This reveals to us the horrible effects of sin, thus revealing how it disqualifies God’s people from blessings. Notice the life of Jeremiah and his message to Israel.

1. The Molding of Jeremiah 1:5- “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee...”
2. The Meaning of Jeremiah 1:5- “I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations”
3. The Ministry of Jeremiah
 - a. His Command 1:7- “whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak”
 - b. His Cry 2:2- “Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, thus saith the LORD”
4. The Might of Jeremiah 1:8- “I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD”
5. The Message of Jeremiah 13:1-11- “Go and get thee a linen girdle”

Body: As Jeremiah came into town, a crowd gathered around him. “What is that crazy prophet doing now?” someone asked. Another person shouted, “Look! He has got a filthy girdle around him and has not even taken a bath!” Shortly, everyone hushed and the man of God began to speak. His sermon was short and it was about a dirty girdle. Many people misunderstood the meaning and message that God was trying to convey to them. Several looked on Jeremiah with disdain and contempt. Why would he say those things about God’s people? Jeremiah’s parable could be summed up in one word, obedience. This man of God was simply obeying his Lord in the message he had been given. This is the key to the Christian life, complete obedience. If we would only learn to obey, God would bless us tremendously. Notice Jeremiah’s obedience.

- I. I Heard 13:1, 3, 6, 8
 - A. “Thus saith the LORD unto me” 13:1
 - B. “And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time” 13:3
 - C. “And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me” 13:6
 - D. “Then the word of the LORD came unto me” 13:8
- II. I Got 13:2- “So I got a girdle according to the word of the LORD”

- III. I Went 13:4, 6- “go to Euphrates”
 - A. “So I went” 13:5
 - B. “Then I went to Euphrates” 13:7

- IV. I Did (He did not just want to do it; he did it.)
 - A. “put *it* on my loins” 13:2
 - B. “hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me” 13:5

Conclusion: Through this parable, Jeremiah was trying to bring the people to a place of repentance. The prophet was willing to do anything to affect the people with the Word of the LORD. He did not have to understand what he was doing; he just needed to obey. Simple obedience to what God said will unlock a storehouse of blessings to the believer. What would happen to Israel if Jeremiah were disobedient?

“The Parable of the Anointed Cherub” **Ezekiel 28:1-19**

Introduction:

In Ezekiel 28, we find two prophecies about Tyre (vs. 1-19) and Zidon (vs. 20-26). These cities are in the top left hand corner of old Israel situated on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. They were commercial cities, which drew wealth from the merchants every day. Jesus spoke of these cities in the gospels (Matthew 11:21-22, 15:21, Mark 3:8, 7:24, 31, Luke 6:17, 10:13-14).

The prophecy of Tyre deals with King Ithobah (v. 2, v. 12). Ithobah, much like Herod (Acts 12:21-23), suffered from pride because of his prosperity and power. He became so vain in his mind that he thought that he could sit upon his throne ruling his land like God. Seemingly, he felt invincible. Ezekiel rebuked him for such an attitude (v. 9). The prophecy that Ezekiel gave revealed that he would lose his power, and before other kings be cast down. Notice a few facts about Ithobah.

1. His Intention 28:2- “I *am* a God”
2. His Intellect 28:3-4- “wiser than Daniel”
3. His Inheritance 28:5- “thy riches”
4. His Insufficiency 28:6-10- “thou *shalt be* a man”

Body: Although this prophecy concerns Tyre and Zidon, it also is a parable about Satan (vs. 11-19). Much like pride entered into the heart of Ithobah, pride also entered into the heart of Satan. His pride brought great destruction to his blessings and character. See how this wicked sin ruined one of God’s created beings.

- I. Satan’s Completion 28:12- “perfect in beauty”
- II. Satan’s Composition 28:13- “the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes”
- III. Satan’s Covering 28:14- “the anointed cherub that covereth”
- IV. Satan’s Corruption 28:15- “till iniquity was found in thee”
- V. Satan’s Calamity 28:16- “I will destroy thee”
- VI. Satan’s Casting 28:17- “I will cast thee to the ground”
- VII. Satan’s Condemnation 28:18- “I will bring thee to ashes”
- VIII. Satan’s Consummation 28:19- “never *shalt* thou *be* any more”

Conclusion: What is the lesson of this parable? The message that Ezekiel is trying to convey is that no matter who you are pride will ruin you. If pride will cost a king his empire, and Satan his position, then pride will wreck our lives too. May we never let this wicked sin into our heart! Notice the cost of pride.

1. The Persecution of Pride Psalm 10:2
2. The Possession of Pride Psalm 73:6
3. The Product of Pride Proverbs 13:10
4. The Pathway of Pride Psalm 10:4
5. The Peril of Pride Proverbs 16:18

“The Parable of the Dry Bones”
Ezekiel 37:1-14

Introduction: As we view this chapter, we see the future restoration of Israel (v. 14). Due to the captivities, Israel was scattered by barbarous nations (v. 11). This idea is seen in the valley being full of dry bones, and that it was not in a pile. Not only were these bones dead, but they were also dry, which points to their withered spiritual life. The Lord asked Ezekiel if these bones could live again. His response was, “O Lord God, thou knowest.” Next, we see the remedy to restoration. It is summed up on the word “prophesy”. Preaching is the only hope for Israel (vs. 12-13). If they would repent, then God would restore them to their land and rebuild them. Notice how the Lord would restore Israel.

1. The Scattering of Israel v. 1- “midst of the valley which *was* full of bones”
2. The Spirituality of Israel v. 2- “*they were* very dry”
3. The Summons of Israel v. 4- “hear the word of the LORD”
4. The Stimulation of Israel vs. 5-6- “ye shall live”
5. The Standing of Israel v. 10- “stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army”

Body: Not only does this parable portray the restoration of Israel, but it also describes the resurrection of the dead. Another view is that of the regeneration of sinners. Yet another observation is that of the revival of the church. Look at the situation of the bones. They were dead (v. 1), dry (v. 2), divided (v. 7), and desperate (v. 8). Let us notice the last view as it deals with the revival that every church needs.

- I. The Sight of the Church v. 1- “set me down in the midst of the valley”
 - A. Humbling the Preacher- “set me down” (The burden comes when you get to where the people are at. God’s work cannot be accomplished from a distance.)
 - B. Humbling the People- “midst of the valley” (A valley is as low as you can go.)
- II. The Sadness of the Church v. 1- “full of bones”
- III. The Satisfaction of the Church v. 2- “*they were* very dry”
- IV. The Saving of the Church v. 3- “can these bones live”
 - A. The Impossibility- “bones live” v. 11
 - B. The Inquiry- “O Lord God, thou knowest” Matthew 19:26, Mark 9:23
- V. The Servant of the Church v. 4- “Prophesy upon these bones”
 - A. The Preacher’s Direction v. 1- “The hand of the LORD was upon me”
 - B. The Preacher’s Duty- “Prophesy” (Preach to dead bones?) Romans 4:20-21
 1. Honesty about the Situation- “O ye dry bones”
 2. Hearing of the Scriptures- “hear the word of the LORD”
 - C. The Preacher’s Destitution- “breath” (Without this breath, there will be no results!) Zechariah 4:6, John 6:63
- VI. The Sermons of the Church v. 4- “hear the word of the LORD”
- VII. The Solution to the Church v. 5- “breath to enter into you, and ye shall live”
- VIII. The Shrouding of the Church v. 6- “bring flesh upon you, and cover you with skin” (They looked better, but they were just as dead as before. This covering would make the bones capable to move.)

- IX. The Sound of the Church v. 7- “there was a noise”
 - A. It Moved the Bones- “behold a shaking”
 - B. It Merged the Bones- “the bones came together, bone to his bone”
- X. The Dilemma of the Church v. 8- “*there was no breath in them*” Genesis 2:7
- XI. The Spirit of the Church v. 9- “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe”
(Ezekiel went from preaching in verse four to praying in verse nine. Only Divine power can meet a Divine emergency.)
- XII. The Standing of the Church v. 10- “stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army”

Conclusion: In these last days, can the church still see revival? We must remember that all things are possible with God, even revival. The God of revival is still alive, and if we seek Him, we can experience revival. Let us plead with the great God of heaven to cause us to live again! May our prayer be like Psalm 85:6!

1. The Prayer for Revival- “Wilt thou not revive us again”
2. The Prayer for Rejoicing- “that thy people may rejoice in thee”

“The Parable of the Rising Waters”

Ezekiel 47:1-5

Introduction: Ezekiel presents to us the prophecy of the millennial kingdom. Theocracy will be the type of government established. Jesus Christ will sit on the throne of David ruling with a rod of iron. A new environment will be brought in which will make even the deserts blossom. The curse will be lifted, causing the animal and plant life to flourish. There will be a river flowing from the Temple of God that will refresh the sin stricken land. It is so abundant that Ezekiel was able to swim in it. From this river, the Lord blesses the land and the inhabitants of it. Notice the function of this river during the millennial reign.

1. The River Sustains Life v. 7- “at the bank of the river *were* very many trees”
 - a. It Produces Meat v. 12- “the fruit thereof shall be for meat”
 - b. It Produces Medicine v. 12- “the leaf thereof for medicine”
2. The River Supplies Life v. 8- “down into the desert” Isaiah 35:1
3. The River Sends Life v. 8- “the waters shall be healed”
4. The River Supports Life v. 9- “every thing shall live wither the river cometh”

Body: Not only does God use this river during the millennial reign, but He also uses it as a parable. It teaches about the Church and the Christian. The church, after Pentecost, began to flourish and get “deeper and deeper”. Likewise, the Christian, after salvation, began to grow “deeper and deeper” in their Christian life. A believer steps out by faith in the life giving water, such as Ezekiel did. It took faith for Ezekiel to continue deeper, and it takes faith for the saint to walk deeper. Notice the levels of the water as it hits the different body parts. Each member had to be dealt with before further progression could be made. Let us look at each part and learn the lesson of the parable.

- I. The Saint Must Be Saved v. 3- “the waters *were* to the ankles”
 - A. Salvation Will Cleanse Revelation 1:5
 - B. Salvation Will Change II Corinthians 5:17
 - C. Salvation Will Convert Matthew 18:3
- II. The Saint Must Be Surrendered v. 4- “the waters *were* to the knees” Rom. 12:1-2
- III. The Saint Must Be Sanctified v. 4- “the waters *were* to the loins” I Thess. 4:3
- IV. The Saint Can Be Serving v. 5- “*it was* a river that I could not pass over”
 - A. The Water Is Progressing- “the waters were risen”
 - B. The Water Is Plentiful- “waters to swim in”
 - C. The Water Is Powerful- “a river that could not be passed over”

Conclusion: We must be careful to make known this river to others. It is only at this river that others can draw life. In verse one, the river came from a *dwelling* (v. 1- “the house”), out of a *door* (v. 1- “unto the door”), and was *dispersed* (v. 1- “issued out from under the threshold”). Jesus is the fountain of life and well of living water that sinners can have. Now, out of the believer flows this living water (John 7:37-39). Will you share Jesus with others?

“The Candle and the Christian”
Matthew 5:14-16

Introduction: In His sermon, the Lord continues to show disciples their responsibility of being a light to this world of darkness. He did this through the image of a candle shining. We understand that a candle is useless until it is aflame. Likewise, the Christian is ineffective until he or she is burning with the fire of God in their lives (Hebrews 1:7). No one tries to conceal the light of a burning candle, and, equally, believers should not try to obscure the light of the gospel (II Corinthians 4:3). As we view the candle, we see similarities between it, the Christian, and the Church. Notice the typology of the candle.

1. Type of the Christian Matthew 5:14- “Ye are the light of the world”
2. Type of the Church Revelation 1:20- “seven candlesticks...are the seven churches”

Body: The Christian’s holy conversation should be a faithful witness and instruction to those seeking the truth. Many times, the only trace of God that a sinner sees is manifested in the life of a believer. This is why it is so important to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. All of our life should bring glory to God and not to us. Jesus was trying to convey this truth to the listeners gathered around him. He described the candle and its attributes that resemble the Christian and their walk. Notice a few elements about the candle that relate to the saints of God.

- I. The Purpose of the Candle 5:14- “the light of the world” Philippians 2:15-16
 - A. The Candle Must Glow 5:16- “Let your light...shine before men” Luke 11:36
 - B. The Candle Must Guide 5:16- “that they may see your good works”
 - C. The Candle Must Glorify 5:16- “glorify your Father which is in heaven”
- II. The Priority of the Candle 5:14- “cannot be hid”
 - A. The Bushel Matthew 5:15- “Neither...put it under a bushel”
 - B. The Bed Mark 4:21- “*or* under a bed”
 - C. The Bakery Luke 8:16- “covereth it with a vessel”
 - D. The Blindness Luke 11:33- “putteth *it* in a secret place”
- III. The Power of the Candle 5:15- “light a candle” Psalms 18:28
- IV. The Position of the Candle 5:15- “on a candlestick”
 - A. The Support of the Candle Mark 4:21- “set on a candlestick”
 - B. The Sitting of the Candle Luke 11:33- “on a candlestick”
- V. The Practice of the Candle 5:15- “it giveth light unto all that are in the house”
 - A. Light to the Family Matthew 5:15- “unto all that are in the house”
 - B. Light to the Friends Luke 8:16- “they which enter in may see the light”
 - C. Light to Find Luke 15:8- “seek diligently till she find *it*”
 1. The Loss of the Careless Luke 15:8- “if she lose one piece”
 2. The Lighting of the Candle Luke 15:8- “doth not light a candle”

3. The Looking of the Concerned Luke 15:8- “seek diligently”
4. The Lauding of the Content Luke 15:9- “I have found the piece”

Conclusion: From this parable, we learn the importance of being a light for direction. Like candles, Christians should shine regardless of their appearance, criticism, afflictions, and even if they are not recognized. The most important part of the candle is the flame. It should never be hid or put out. May the Lord help us to continue to shine for His glory!

“Corneas, Camels, Cups, and Coffins”
Matthew 7:3-5, 23:24-28

Introduction: We are living in days of baby spirituality. Jesus was dealing with this same condition in His days. There are groups of people that are religious, but they are not spiritual enough to maintain their lists of standards. They condemn everyone else, but neglect to straighten out their own life. It is almost as if their measure of spirituality is based on them being better than others are. They compare themselves amongst themselves (II Corinthians 10:12). This method is very hypocritical. Notice what Jesus confronts as He deals with the hypocrites.

1. The Deception of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:13- “shut up the kingdom of heaven”
2. The Devouring of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:14- “devour widows’ houses”
3. The Discipleship of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:15- “make one proselyte”
4. The Dealings of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:16-24- “ye blind guides...Ye fools”
5. The Defilement of the Hypocrites Matthew 23:25-32- “hypocrites”

Body: Jesus is dealing with a people that are continuously judging others. The only problem is that they are guilty of the same sins, and even worse. They are guilty of the same things (Romans 2:1, 14:10). Most of the times, those that are very critical are the ones that have more sin in their lives. Notice the problems with such people as illustrated by Jesus in the Corneas, Camels, Cups, and Coffins.

- I. Corneas- A Problem With Ambitions Matthew 7:3-5, Luke 6:41-42
 - A. The Investigation Matt. 7:3- “And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye”
 1. The Meditation- “beholdest thou”
 - a. The Pharisees only saw the sin of others, and not theirs.
 - b. How many times do hypocrites inspect others life? Doing so changes the need to purify from self to others.
 2. The Mote- “the mote”
 - a. “mote” (Strong’s)- “a dry stalk or twig, a straw; chaff”
 - b. “mote” (Webster’s)- “A small particle; any thing proverbially small; a spot.”
 3. The Mischief- “in thy brother’s eye”
 - B. The Ignoring Matt. 7:3- “considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?”
 1. The Consideration of the Beam- “considerest not the beam”
 - a. “beam” (Strong’s)- “a thick plank”
 - b. “beam” (Webster’s)- “Any large piece of timber, long in proportion to its thickness, and squared, or hewed for use.”
 2. The Constant Battle- “in thine own eye”
 - C. The Intention Matt. 7:4- “Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye”
 1. The Promotion of Self Shown- “Let me”
 2. The Power of Self Sought- “pull out the mote”
 3. The Problem of Self Seen- “thine eye”

- D. The Ignorance Matt. 7:4- “a beam *is* in thine own eye”
 - 1. Notice the Hindered Sight- “a beam”
 - 2. Notice the Hypocrisy of Self- “in thine own eye”
 - E. The Instruction Matt. 7:5- “cast out the beam out of thine own eye”
 - 1. The Casting of Sin- “cast out the beam”
 - 2. The Consideration of Self- “out of thine own eye” James 1:22-24
 - a. Examine Our Salvation II Corinthians 13:5
 - b. Examine Our Sin I Corinthians 11:28
 - F. The Issue Matt. 7:5- “then shalt thou see clearly”
 - 1. Concerning Sinfulness of Self- “then shalt thou”
 - 2. Concerning Spiritual Sight- “see clearly”
 - G. The Involvement Matt. 7:5- “cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye”
 - 1. A Humble Removal- “cast out the mote”
 - 2. A Helping Responsibility- “out of thy brother’s eye”
 - a. The eye is a very sensitive area.
 - b. When removing debris, we should be careful and have compassion. Being harsh could create more damage.
- II. Camels- A Problem With Acceptance Matthew 23:24
- A. The Sightlessness Matt. 23:24- “blind guides”
 - 1. Their Purpose- “guides”
 - 2. Their Problem- “blind”
 - B. The Straining Matt. 23:24- “strain at a gnat”
 - 1. The Straining of the Product- “strain”
 - a. This deals with the custom of straining out a gnat or dregs from wine.
 - b. Due to the hot climate of the Middle East, gnats were abundant. Therefore, they would get into foods and drinks. Before people would drink wine, they would strain it.
 - 2. The Smallness of the Pollution- “at a gnat”
 - a. Both the camel and the gnat were considered unclean. Jesus is describing the two extremes.
 - b. The Pharisees were careful about avoiding little defilements, but when it came to major ones, seemingly they swallowed them whole.
 - c. They were very inconsistent in their lifestyle and were disgusting in the sight of God.
 - C. The Swallowing Matt. 23:24- “swallow a camel”
 - 1. The Allowance of a Catastrophe- “swallow a camel”
 - 2. The Acceptance of a Camel- “swallow a camel”
- III. Cups- A Problem With Attitudes Matthew 23:25-26 (Mark 7:1-9, 14-23)
- A. The Inspection of the Cup Matt. 23:25- “ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter”
 - 1. The Personal Sanctification- “ye make clean”
 - 2. The Prioritized Sanitation- “the outside of the cup and of the platter”

- B. The Inside of the Cup Matt. 23:25- “within they are full of extortion and excess”
 - 1. The Enclosure of the Cup- “within” Romans 2:16
 - a. This presents a problem.
 - b. Anything you put in the cup will become defiled.
 - 2. The Evil of the Cup- “they are full of”
 - 3. The Extortion of the Cup- “extortion”
 - a. “extortion” (Strong’s)- “the act of plundering, robbery”
 - b. “extortion” (Webster’s)- “the act or practice of wresting any thing from a person by force, duress, menaces, authority, or by any undue exercise of power; illegal exaction; illegal compulsion to pay money”
 - 4. The Excess of the Cup- “and excess”
 - a. “excess” (Strong’s)- “want of self-control, incontinence, intemperance”
 - b. “excess” (Webster’s)- “In morals, any indulgence of appetite, passion or exertion, beyond the rules of God's word, or beyond any rule of propriety; intemperance in gratifications”
- C. The Intervention of the Cup Matt. 23:26- “cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter”
 - 1. The Cleaning Needed- “cleanse first that *which is* within”
 - 2. The Contamination Noticed- “and platter”
- D. The Improvement of the Cup Matt. 23:26- “the outside of them may be clean also”
 - 1. The Results of Washing- “the outside of them”
 - 2. The Revelation of Washing- “may be clean also”

IV. Coffins- A Problem With Appearance Matthew 23:27-28

- A. The Comeliness of the Sepulcher Matt. 23:27- “whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward”
 - 1. The Application to the Outside- “whited sepulchers”
 - a. Anyone that touched a dead body was considered unclean. Numbers 19:11, 16
 - b. This is why they would make the outside of the sepulcher “whited”. This process was done with lime.
 - 2. The Appearance of the Outside- “appear beautiful outward”
 - a. Due to the rain and soil, the lime would rinse off and become stained.
 - b. It became necessary to replenish the lime that rinsed off.
- B. The Contents of the Sepulcher Matt. 23:27- “within full of dead *men’s* bones, and of all uncleanness” I Samuel 16:7
 - 1. The Fullness of Bones- “full of dead *men’s* bones”
 - 2. The Foulness of Burial- “of all uncleanness” Ephesians 2:1
 - a. We must keep in mind that only the inside was unclean. They spent all their time cleaning the outside and did not regard the inside.

- b. The external beauty could not hide the internal corruption.
- C. The Countenance of the Sepulcher Matt. 23:28- “outwardly appear righteous unto men”
 - 1. Determined Method- “outwardly appear”
 - 2. Display to Men- “righteous unto men”
- D. The Compaction of the Sepulcher Matt. 23:28- “within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity”
 - 1. The Show- “hypocrisy”
 - a. “hypocrisy” (Strong’s)- “the acting of a stage player”
 - b. “hypocrisy” (Webster’s)- “Simulation; a feigning to be what one is not; or dissimulation, a concealment of one's real character or motives. More generally, hypocrisy is simulation, or the assuming of a false appearance of virtue or religion; a deceitful show of a good character, in morals or religion; a counterfeiting of religion.”
 - 2. The Sin- “iniquity”
 - a. “iniquity” (Strong’s)- “the condition of without law; because ignorant of it; because of violating it”
 - b. “iniquity” (Webster’s)- “Injustice; unrighteousness; a deviation from rectitude”

Conclusion: The sum of the message deals with people majoring on the minors (Matthew 23:23). Seemingly, hypocrites have guidelines and rules for everyone, but do not follow them personally. They forget the most important items of Christian living, which is law, judgment, mercy, and faith. We are quick to judge the small offences of others while allowing large offences in our lives to continue.

“The Forgotten Field”
Matthew 9:35-38

Introduction: In this unique parable, our Lord compares the shepherd/sheep relationship with the laborer/harvest relationship. Both illustrations reveal what position the Lord holds in soul winning and our responsibility as believers in witnessing. Unless someone comes to their rescue, the sheep and the harvest are almost to the point of destruction. This is the situation of the sinner in the world. There is no hope apart from the lovely Lord Jesus. We hold the answer to their problems. It is our obligation to tell them before it is too late. Observe the duty of the Christians in relation to the field.

1. We are to Labor in the Field I Corinthians 3:8-9- “we are labourers”
2. We are to Love this Field Jude 1:22- “of some have compassion”
3. We are to Lunge into this Field Mark 16:15- “Go ye into all the world”
 - a. Because the Field is Vicious I John 3:13- “the world hate you”
 - b. Because the Field is Vile James 4:8- “Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts”
 - c. Because the Field is Valuable John 3:16- “For God so loved the world”

Body: Jesus, a sincere servant, went to the villages as well as the cities. He came to the poor and rich. His realm of service did not only extend to a select people. Contrary, it reached everyone that would hear. In each instance, the heart of Jesus broke for the scattered sheep and the plenteous harvest. Who would help them? Does anyone care? Hopeless sinners were the fuel that fed the fire of soul winning. Who will go? The Lord tries to convey this important practice to His disciples. He attempts to show them the burden for others in relation to the field. Notice four things that Jesus taught about the field.

- I. The Seeking of the Field Matthew 9:35- “all the cities and villages”
- II. The Sheep in the Field Matthew 9:36- “when he saw the multitudes...as sheep”
 - A. Their Strength- “they fainted”
 - B. Their Separation- “were scattered abroad”
 - C. Their Shepherd- “as sheep having no shepherd”
- III. The Sorrow over the Field Matthew 9:37- “the labourers *are* few”
 - A. The Harvest- “truly *is* plenteous”
 - B. The Helpers- “labourers *are* few”
- IV. The Sending into the Field Matthew 9:38- “Pray...send forth labourers”
 - A. Where are we to send? John 4:31-38
 1. We are to Lift v. 35- “Lift up your eyes”
 2. We are to Look v. 35- “look on the fields”
 3. We are to Labor vs. 36-37- “One soweth, and another reapeth”
 4. We are to Launch v. 38- “I sent you to reap”

- B. How are we to send? Psalm 126:5-6
 - 1. We must Sow v. 5- “sow in tears”
 - 2. We must have Sympathy v. 6- “weepeth”
 - 3. We must have the Seed v. 6- “bearing precious seed”
- C. Why are we to send?
 - 1. Their Need of the Saviour Romans 5:12- “for that all have sinned”
 - 2. Their Necessity of the Saviour Psalm 9:17- “wicked...hell”
 - 3. Their Neglect of the Saviour Jeremiah 8:20- “we are not saved”
- D. When are we to send? (NOW!) Romans 13:11-12- “the day is at hand”

Conclusion: Hundreds of lost sinners are dying daily. Who is showing them their need of a Saviour? Does anyone have a burden to see sinners made free from their bondage? Are we content with our four, and no more? Seemingly, the church is at ease in Zion while unbelievers are perishing minute-by-minute. It is time that the church awake out of sleep and go into the field to labor. God help us to grow (Matthew 16:18), go (Mark 16:15), show (II Corinthians 4:3), glow (Matthew 5:14), sow (Matthew 13:3), flow (John 7:38), and bestow (Malachi 3:8-10) our finances to reach sinners with the gospel!

“A Sower Went Forth To Sow”
Matthew 13:1-9

Introduction: Why did God leave the Christian on the earth after salvation? The simple answer to this question is found in Matthew 28:19-20. It is wrapped up in one word, “go”. The reason saints are on the earth is so that they can tell others about the good news from glory. God has given the church the obligation to reach this world with the Scriptures. Jesus stresses this important task in Matthew 13 in the parable of the sower. Notice how His message is disguised to the sinner and unfolded to the saint.

1. The Movement v. 1- “out of the house...by the sea side”
2. The Multitudes v. 2- “great multitudes were gathered together”
3. The Message v. 3- “he spake many things unto them in parables”
 - a. The Mystery vs. 10-11, 16-17 “given unto you to know the mysteries”
 - b. The Misunderstanding vs. 13-15
 - (1) In Speech vs. 13- “speak I to them in parables”
 - (2) In Sight v. 14- “seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive”
 - (3) In Senses v. 15
 - (a) Heart- “heart is waxed gross”
 - (b) Ears- “ears are dull of hearing”
 - (c) Eyes- “their eyes they have closed”

Body: In this parable, there are three characters depicted. The Sower represents the servant of God that is laboring in the field. Scriptures typify the seed and the heart of man is seen in the ground. This shows the believer what he is to expect during his mission of fulfilling the great command. Although none may receive the Word, we should still sow as we go. Observe how this parable unfolds in this great lesson on soul winning.

- I. The Sower—Servant I Corinthians 3:5-9
 - A. Their Burden Psalms 126:5- “They that sow in tears”
 1. A Burden to Depart Mark 4:3- “there went out a sower to sow”
 2. A Burden to Deliver Mark 4:14- “The sower soweth the word”
 - B. Their Bringing Psalms 126:6- “bearing precious seed”
 1. Way Side Matthew 13:4- “some *seeds* fell by the way side”
 2. Stony Places Matthew 13:5- “Some fell upon stony places”
 3. Thorns Matthew 13:7- “some fell among thorns”
 4. Good Ground Matthew 13:8- “other fell into good ground”
- II. The Seed—Scriptures Luke 8:11- “The seed is the word of God”
 - A. Precious Seed Psalms 126:6- “bearing precious seed”
 - B. Perfect Seed I Peter 1:23- “incorruptible”
 - C. Preserved Seed I Peter 1:25- “the word of the Lord endureth for ever”
 - D. Powerful Seed Isaiah 40:8- “the word of our God shall stand for ever”

- III. The Soil—Sinner Matthew 13:38- “The field is the world”
- A. Hard Heart—Way Side Matthew 13:4, 19
1. The Street Luke 18:5- “it was trodden down”
 2. The Snatch
 - a. By the Wicked One Matthew 13:19- “catcheth away”
 - b. By Satan Mark 4:15- “taketh away”
 - (1) Why does Satan try to steal the seed? Luke 8:12
 - (2) Keep in mind that the seed is in danger unless it is hid. Psalm 119:11
 - c. By Fowls Luke 8:5- “devoured it”
- B. Haphazard Heart—Stony Place Matthew 13:5-6, 20-21
1. The Scarcity Matthew 13:5- “they had not much earth”
 2. The Springing Matthew 13:5- “they sprung up” v. 20
 3. The Sun
 - a. Tribulation Matthew 13:21- “tribulation or persecution ariseth”
 - b. Troubled Mark 4:17- “immediately they are offended”
 - c. Temptation Luke 8:13- “in time of temptation fall away”
- C. Half Heart—Thorns Matthew 13:7, 22
1. The Cares Matthew 13:22- “the care of this world”
 2. The Choking Matthew 13:22- “choke the word”
 3. The Ceasing Matthew 13:22- “he becometh unfruitful”
- D. Healthy Heart—Good Ground Matthew 13:8, 23
1. The Perception Matthew 13:23- “heareth...and understandeth”
 - a. Because they Receive Mark 4:20- “and receive *it*”
 - b. Because they Retain Luke 8:15- “keep *it*”
 2. The Production Matthew 13:8, 23

Conclusion: Christians should never forget their most important assignment of sowing the seed. We must be doers of the Word, and not merely hearers only. Keep in mind that our labor is not in vain. One of the greatest delights to a sower is seeing the one that they witnessed to saved and becoming fruitful.

“The Wheat and the Tares”
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Introduction: The parable of the wheat and the tares presents to us the Devil’s desire to infiltrate the church. It depicts his ambition to corrupt the church from within. All of the sowing that Satan does is done in secret and is strategic. This is one way that he resists the work of Christ. Satan opposes the church in three ways.

1. He Steals Matthew 13:4, 19- “catcheth away that which was sown in his heart”
2. He Spoils Matthew 13:33- “till the whole was leavened”
3. He Sows Matthew 13:39- “enemy that sowed them is the devil”
 - a. False Disciples II Corinthians 11:26, II Peter 2:1-3, I John 4:1, 5
 - b. False Development Romans 10:1-3- “establish their own righteousness”
 - c. False Doctrine Galatians 1:6-9- “another gospel”

Body: This parable is different from the previous one describing the sower and the seed. In this one, evil is depicted. We see the intermingling of Satan’s seed with Jesus’ seed. It is almost as if the Devil has the attitude, “If you can’t beat them, join them.” The method that he chose to do so is by counterfeit Christianity. His goal is to destroy the church. Notice the plan that he construes in his attempt to thwart the cause of Christ. Keep in mind that all of his efforts are in vain!

- I. The Characters vs. 37-39
 - A. The Sowers
 1. Saviour v. 37- “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man”
 2. Satan v. 39- “The enemy that sowed them is the devil”
 - B. The Seeds
 1. Precious Seed v. 24- “good seed” (Children of the Saviour v. 38)
 2. Poisonous Seed v. 25- “sowed tares” (Children of Satan v. 38)
 - C. The Sphere v. 38- “The field is the world”
- II. The Concept vs. 24-30
 - A. The Sower’s Diligence v. 24- “a man which sowed good seed in his field”
 1. Type of Building Matthew 16:18- “I will build my church”
 2. Type of Burden Matthew 9:38- “labourers into his harvest”
 - B. The Sower’s Discovery vs. 25-27- “from whence then hath it tares”
 1. Of the Sleep v. 25- “while men slept”
 2. Of the Sowing v. 25- “his enemy came and sowed tares”
 3. Of the Similarity v. 26- “when the blade was sprung up”
 4. Of the Separation v. 26- “brought forth fruit”
 - C. The Sower’s Discernment v. 28- “An enemy hath done this”
 - D. The Sower’s Dilemma v. 29- “ye root up also the wheat with them”
 - E. The Sower’s Decision v. 30- “Let both grow together until the harvest”

III. The Conclusion vs. 39-43

- A. The Summons of the Corrupt v. 40- “the tares are gathered”
- B. The Sentence of the Corrupt v. 40- “burned in the fire”

Conclusion: Is there any hope for the wheat? The only chance that a tare stands is to be thoroughly changed. Jesus Christ is in the converting business! If a sinner repents and puts their faith in Christ, then our wonderful Lord will change them from a tare to wheat.

“The Parable of the Good Samaritan”
Luke 10:25-37

Introduction: In this parable, Jesus focuses on the conduct of the religious crowd of that day. As the story unfolds, we begin to see the selfishness of those that were supposed to be benevolent. When confronted, Jesus never backed down to the religious twists of the present hour. In the context, Jesus is about to teach the lawyer about what a neighbor is.

1. The Temptation of the Lawyer vs. 25, 27, 29 (Keep in mind, it was the lawyers that were supposed to know the Mosaic Law.)
 - a. His Desired Inheritance v. 25- “what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”
 - b. His Direct Insight v. 27- “Thou shalt...”
 - c. His Determined Ignorance v. 29- “willing to justify himself” (The lawyer, being a Jew, tried to justify himself because he excluded the Gentiles as neighbours. He tried to get Jesus to define His terms.)
2. The Testimony of the Lord vs. 26, 28
 - a. His Discrete Inquiry v. 26- “how readest thou?” (Lawyers used this phrase.)
 - b. His Developed Intention v. 28- “Thou hast answered right” (Jesus used the Law, because the Law is a schoolmaster. Galatians 3:24)
3. The Truths about Love vs. 30-37 (Leviticus 19:33-34)

Body: The lawyer tried a feeble effort in trapping the Lord in His words! Instead, our Lord placed the yoke of self-sacrifice and mercy upon the lawyer’s shoulders. He did this by displaying how a Samaritan had more compassion than the religious Jewish leaders. The priest passed the yoke off to the Levite, and then the Levite passed it on to someone else. This is usually the case. God reveals to us how this practice is against Scripture and that we should bear the problems of those around us. It is amazing that the color of a man’s skin or his background would hinder some people from giving them the gospel.

- I. The Condition of the Robbed v. 30- “half dead”
 - A. The Cities- “went down from Jerusalem to Jericho” (About 15 miles)
 1. The Center of Worship- “Jerusalem”
 2. The Center of Wickedness- “Jericho” Joshua 6:26
 - B. The Capture- “fell among thieves”
 - C. The Conflict- “stripped...wounded...departed”
- II. The Consecration of the Religious v. 31- “priest...passed by”
 - A. Concerning the Beast Exodus 23:4-5
 - B. Concerning the Beaten v. 31- “passed by on the other side” (Evidently, he left God at the church.)
- III. The Carelessness of the Religious v. 32- “Levite...looked *on him*”
 - A. His Service (Levites were to serve in the Temple in worship and interpreting the Law.)
 - B. His Sight- “came and looked *on him*”

- C. His Straying- “passed by on the other side” (This reveals the heartless routine that organized religion contains.)
- IV. The Compassion of the Rejected vs. 33-37- “Samaritan...had compassion” Jn. 4:9
- A. His Compassion v. 33- “he had compassion *on him*”
 - B. His Care v. 34- “took care of him”
 - 1. Helping- “bound up his wounds”
 - 2. Healing- “pouring in oil and wine” Isaiah 1:6
 - 3. Hiding- “brought him to an inn”
 - C. His Counting v. 35- “he took out two pence” (This was two days wages.)

Conclusion: Because of the tactic that Jesus used, the question of the neighbor came back to the lawyer. What else could the lawyer conclude but that a neighbor is anyone around that needs help? It enforces what the lawyer should have known in Leviticus 19:18. We are to love our neighbours as ourselves, which the Samaritan demonstrated. What blight on the Jewish religious system of that day!

- 1. The Pondering v. 36- “Which now of these three...was neighbour”
- 2. The Point v. 37- “shewed mercy”
 - a. The Mercy of Going v. 34- “went to *him*”
 - b. The Mercy of Gracefulness v. 34- “took care of him”
 - c. The Mercy of Giving v. 35- “he took out two pence”
- 3. The Practice v. 37- “Go, and do thou likewise”

“A Fruitful Death” **John 12:23-26**

Introduction: One of the greatest lessons that a Christian can learn is the school of death. This is not the death of the body, but the death of self. The Bible teaches us that the way up is down (John 3:30). So many believers will not fill out an application to this school. Altars are a place of death and until you are ready to die, leave it alone. Jesus is the great example of death. He died that we might live as seen in Revelation 22:16.

1. The Creation Revelation 22:16- “I am the root”
2. The Incarnation Revelation 22:16- “the offspring of David”
3. The Exaltation Revelation 22:16- “the bright and morning star”

Body: In the text, Jesus is trying to teach us the importance of dying to self (vs. 25-26). We can learn this lesson from the caterpillar and the process of metamorphosis (II Corinthians 3:18). When a person consumes his time with self, he loses the important elements in service for God. Jesus revealed to us the tremendous blessings of surrender and service to God. This is also seen in the “corn (a grain) of wheat”. Let us notice:

- I. The Hindrance of the Wheat v. 24- “Except” (“Except”-“unless”)
- II. The Humility of the Wheat v. 24- “fall” (“fall”-“to descend from a higher place to a lower, fall prostrate”)
- III. The Hiding of the Wheat v. 24- “into the ground”
- IV. The Hope of the Wheat v. 24- “and die”
- V. The Help of the Wheat v. 24- “it abideth alone” (“alone”-“destitute of help”)
- VI. The Honor of the Wheat v. 24- “but if it die” (“if”-“in case”)
- VII. The Harvest of the Wheat v. 24- “it bringeth forth much fruit” I Corinthians 15:35-37

Conclusion: Is this death fair? Keep in mind that Jesus set the example. Notice what this prophecy was about (v. 23). This is an illustration of the future death of Jesus Christ. Even Jesus realized the glory that comes from death. The glory and fruit that came from Jesus’ death was the birth of sinners into the family of God! Notice this principle in Philippians 2:5-11.

1. The Realization of Jesus v. 5- “Let this mind be in you”
2. The Representation of Jesus v. 6- “in the form of God”
3. The Reputation of Jesus v. 7- “made himself of no reputation”
4. The Resemblance of Jesus v. 7- “took upon him the form of a servant”
5. The Righteousness of Jesus v. 8- “he humbled himself”
6. The Resurrection of Jesus v. 9- “God also hath highly exalted him”
7. The Recognition of Jesus v. 9- “given him a name which is above every name”
8. The Royalty of Jesus vs. 10-11- “every knee should bow...every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord” Hebrews 2:9