

Introduction: A Teacher Who Spoke Through Stories

Imagine yourself in the middle of a crowd by the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus sits in a boat, and you—among fishermen, farmers, mothers, and children—hear something that doesn't sound like a complex sermon but rather a story. A sower, some seeds, different kinds of soil. Something so ordinary... and yet, that little story keeps you thinking for days.

Why did Jesus, the Son of God, the eternal Logos, choose to tell **parables** instead of simply proclaiming theological truths with academic clarity? What is hidden behind these seemingly simple and yet profoundly powerful stories?

This article will guide you into the deep mystery of parables—their biblical and theological roots, their transformative power, and how you, today, can make them part of your daily spiritual life.

1. What is a Parable?

A **parable** is a brief narrative, usually fictional, that uses common images and situations to convey a spiritual or moral truth. Unlike fables, parables don't typically feature talking animals or explicit moral lessons. A parable invites you to think, to meditate, to discover

The parables of Jesus are not mere tales. They are **gateways into the mystery of the Kingdom of God**, crafted to enlighten the open heart—and at the same time, to conceal truth from those who resist it.

2. Jesus: The Teacher Who Reveals and Conceals

The Key Question

Even His own disciples asked Him:

"Why do You speak to them in parables?" (Matthew 13:10)



And Jesus gave a surprising answer:

"Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given." (Matthew 13:11)

Here, Jesus gives us the **theological key** to His teaching method:

a. Parables Reveal to the Humble and Conceal from the Proud

Jesus didn't use parables because the message was superficial, but rather because it was so profound that it needed to be wrapped in humility. Whoever listens with faith, seeking God, receives light. But whoever listens with pride or prejudice understands nothing.

"Because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand." (Matthew 13:13)

A parable, therefore, inscribes a sacred restlessness in the heart, like a seed sown that only sprouts if the soil is ready.

3. The Historical and Biblical Background of Parables

Jesus wasn't the first to use this method. The Old Testament already contains several examples of parables:

- The prophet **Nathan** tells David the story of the rich man who stole a poor man's only lamb (2 Samuel 12:1-7). David, outraged, pronounces judgment... unaware that **he** himself is the guilty man. The parable confronts him with his sin without humiliating him publicly.
- The books of **Proverbs**, the **Psalms**, and **Ezekiel** also include parables and allegories.



But Jesus elevates this technique to its highest form: He makes parables the main tool of His preaching about the Kingdom of God.

4. Parables as Mirrors of the Soul

Parables are like **mirrors**: they not only reveal who God is but also who **we are before Him**. They are both **divine tenderness** and **veiled judgment**, which is why they pierce deeply.

Let's look at some examples:

a. The Sower (Matthew 13:1-23)

It invites us to ask:

What kind of soil am I? Do I receive the Word deeply, or do I let myself be distracted, closed off, or choked by worries?

b. The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32)

It shows us the Father's mercy... but also the **pride of the elder brother**.

Do I recognize my need for God's forgiveness? Do I resent His generosity toward others?

c. The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37)

It teaches that our neighbor is not just the one close to us but anyone in need, even if they're socially or religiously distant.

Who is my neighbor today? Whom do I ignore along the way?



5. Deep Theology in Simple Words

Each parable is a **crystallization of the Kingdom**. Jesus speaks in symbols (seeds, bread, coins, lamps), but behind each one lies:

- God's action in history
- A call to conversion
- The urgency of the Kingdom
- The struggle between grace and sin
- Divine mercy and justice

Parables reveal that God does not impose the truth. He offers it as a mystery to be freely received.

6. And Today? The Relevance of Parables in Our Time

In a world overwhelmed with information, ideologies, and opinions, the parables of Jesus remain alive. Their narrative power transcends cultures and disarms hearts.

We live in times where:

- The sense of transcendence is fading.
- The logic of instant success and visibility prevails.
- Patience, humility, and interiority are discarded.

Parables bring us back to what matters, to a God who works in the small and patiently waits for fruit.

7. Practical Guide: How to Live the Parables Today



♦ 1. Read One Parable Each Week

Set aside one day a week to read and meditate on a parable. Ask yourself:

- What does this story tell me about God?
- What does it tell me about myself?
- What is it inviting me to change or do?

\$\dagge\$ 2. Pray with Them (Lectio Divina)

- Read the text slowly.
- **Meditate** on the symbols and images.
- Pray with what stirs in your heart.
- Contemplate what God wants to do in your life.

♦ 3. Identify Your "Personal Parables"

Daily life is fertile ground for parables. Ask:

- What situation is speaking to me about God today?
- What hidden lesson lies in my joys or sufferings?

4. Evangelize Like Jesus: With Stories

If you want to speak of God, **do it like Christ**: from the ordinary, with examples, with empathy, without imposing. Stories touch the heart before the intellect.

♦ 5. Let Them Challenge You

Not all parables comfort. Some are **judgment**, like the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14–30) or the foolish virgins (Matthew 25:1–13). Let them **wake you up from spiritual lethargy**.

8. Conclusion: Ears to Hear

Jesus often ended His parables with the phrase:





"He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Matthew 13:9)

This is more than a poetic phrase. It is a **burning invitation** to open your heart, to listen with the soul, and to respond.

Today, you and I are among that crowd. Jesus speaks to us—not from a boat, but through His living Word, through the altar, through every situation in life. He is still sowing.

The question is:

Will you be fertile soil? Or will you let His Word pass by without fruit?

☐ May the Master who spoke in parables teach you to see the Kingdom of God hidden in the ordinary.

And may you, like Him, learn to sow seeds of faith in the souls around you.