

THE VERDICT TEACHING SERIES

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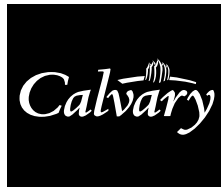
PARABLES OF JESUS

THE VERDICT
WITH PASTOR JOHN H. MUNRO



HE WHO HAS
EARS TO HEAR,
LET HIM HEAR.”

MATTHEW 11:15



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THE VERDICT

WITH PASTOR JOHN H. MUNRO

Thank you for listening to The Verdict

We hope you find this listening guide helpful as you follow along with Pastor John Munro in his current teaching series and continue your study in God's Word.

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DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH READING AND UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE?

Throughout this series, we will see that there are different responses to the Word of God. There were different responses to the teaching of Jesus, and there are different responses when I preach. The Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ offer the power of God for salvation. But the attitude of our hearts is crucial!

As we begin this study on the parables of Jesus, I challenge you to ask yourself, *"What is my personal response to the Word of God?"*

Jesus often taught using parables. A parable is a story from everyday life that helps us understand spiritual truths. It's "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." On one level, the parables may seem easy to understand. But one can hear the parable's story and still miss the spiritual truth and personal significance. Jesus often says, "He who has ears let him hear."

So as we look at these brilliant stories told by Jesus, I pray that you listen humbly with a receptive heart. Hear and obey the Word of God. Repent and believe the Gospel, and ask God to deepen your faith.

As always, the verdict is yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John", with a stylized flourish underneath.

Pastor John H. Munro

The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 1

Sowing Seed

Matthew 13:1–23

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

And he told them many things in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, ⁶ but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.” — Matthew 13:3–8

THIS PARABLE DESCRIBES THE VARIOUS RESPONSES of people to the Word of God as the same seed falls on different soils. Jesus provides the interpretation of this parable in Matthew 13:18–23.

Two important things about seed:

- For there to be a harvest, seed must be sown.
- Every seed sown doesn't produce fruit.

Note that irrespective of the response, we are called to sow the seed.

The soil determines the response.

The sower and the seed are the same for all four soils, but there are four very different responses. What are the characteristics of each?

- A resistant response (4)
- A superficial response (5–6)
- A compromised response (7)
- A receptive response (8)

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

What is the seed?

Where is the power?

Why are there different results?

What is the reality about the growth of God's Kingdom?

THE VERDICT IS YOURS

What is your response to the Word of God? Which soil are you?

The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 2

Dealing with Weeds

Matthew 13:24–43

PARABLE OF THE WEEDS

He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field,²⁵ but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away.²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also.²⁷ And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?’²⁸ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’²⁹ But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them.³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, ‘Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’” — Matthew 13:24–30

PARABLES OF THE MUSTARD SEED & THE LEAVEN

He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field.³² It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”³³ He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.” — Matthew 13:31–33

WITH THE COMING OF JESUS, the Kingdom of Heaven has come to earth. But the Kingdom has not yet come in all its fullness. There is a future aspect to the Kingdom when the whole earth will acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and He will rule with power, majesty, and glory.

In the present age, good seed and evil seed are being sown.

- Good seed is presently being sown by the Lord Jesus (24).
- Bad seed is being sown by our enemy
- God’s judgment will come at the end of the age.

The Kingdom of Heaven begins in a small and seemingly insignificant way, but it has a great future (31–33).

The Kingdom of God grows quietly, but it grows steadily and irresistibly. While God’s Kingdom may presently seem puny compared with the kingdoms of this world, it will fill the whole universe.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Who is the sower? What is the message?

Who is sowing the bad seed and why?

Why is God’s final judgment important to remember? How should it impact our response to evil?

Why are the mustard seed and leaven meaningful illustrations?

Why can it be said that the Kingdom of Heaven “starts small”?

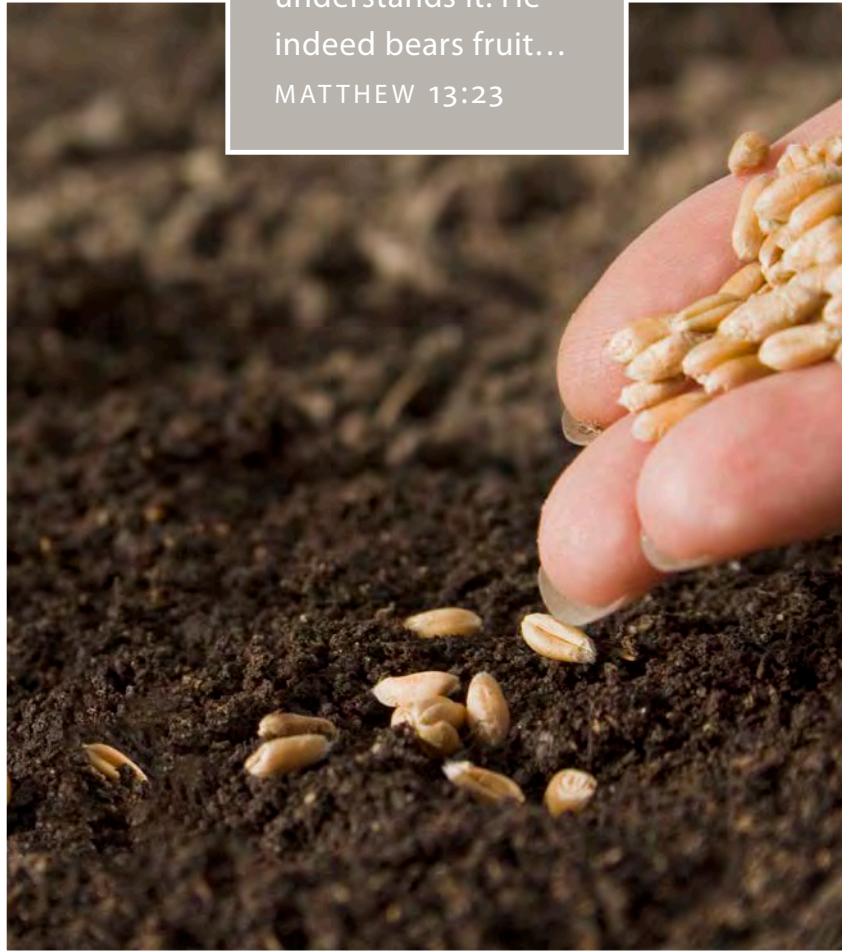
THE VERDICT IS YOURS

Are you part of this eternal Kingdom of Heaven?



As for what was
sown on good soil,
this is the one who
hears the word and
understands it. He
indeed bears fruit...

MATTHEW 13:23



The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 3

Treasure Hunt

Matthew 13:44–58

PARABLE OF THE PEARL OF GREAT VALUE

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls,⁴⁶ who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.” — Matthew 13:45–46

PARABLE OF THE NET

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind.⁴⁸ When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad.⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous⁵⁰ and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” — Matthew 13:47–50

NEW AND OLD TREASURES

“Have you understood all these things?” They said to him, “Yes.”⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old” — Matthew 13:51–52

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS OF SUPREME IMPORTANCE. It is to be our top priority, our all-consuming passion, not simply one of several priorities in our life.

The Kingdom of Heaven has already come in Jesus, but it has not yet come in its fullness.

- Although the Kingdom of Heaven comes into time and space with the coming of Jesus, there is a present aspect of the Kingdom which is largely hidden.
- When Jesus returns, the Kingdom of God will be manifested in glory.
- Entrance into this Kingdom is by repentance and faith in Jesus.

The four parables illustrate the value and implications of the Kingdom of Heaven.

- ***The parable of the hidden treasure (44)***
Despite the treasure being hidden to some, the man stumbles over it and recognizes its value.
- ***The parable of the pearl of great price (45–46)***
The merchant has long been searching for this pearl, then sells all he has to buy it.
- ***The parable of the net (47–50)***
The Kingdom of Heaven has eternal consequences.
- ***The parable of the new and old treasures (51–52)***
Old and new truths come from the treasure of the Kingdom of Heaven. The truth in the Old Testament Scriptures must not be ignored. In the progress of revelation, Jesus is teaching new truths, which are not inconsistent with the old. Pastors and teachers have the responsibility to teach the whole counsel of God.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

How does the man stumbling over the treasure illustrate the way people often come to salvation?

How does the pearl of great price go against practical wisdom about our investments? Why is that important?

How is the parable of the net similar to the parable of the weeds (wheat and tares)?

Why is it significant that Jesus does not “come to abolish the Law or the Prophets”?

What are examples of new truths taught by Jesus?

THE VERDICT IS YOURS

How do you regard God’s Kingdom? What is your personal response?

The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 4

Prayer that Works

Luke 11:1–13

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.”² And he said to them, “When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.³ Give us each day our daily bread,⁴ and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.”

⁵ And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves,⁶ for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’;⁷ and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything?’⁸ I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs.⁹ And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.¹¹ What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent;¹² or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?¹³ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” — Luke 11:1–13

PRAYER IS NOT AN OPTIONAL EXTRA in the Christian life — it is indispensable for your spiritual vitality and growth. However, many followers of Christ find prayer difficult.

The Pattern of Prayer (1–4)

- The pattern of Jesus’ life of prayer
- The pattern of the Lord’s Prayer

Note the five requests in the Lord's Prayer:

1. ***Hallowed be Your name (2)***

We are praying to our Heavenly Father, but it is a relationship characterized by holiness and reverence.

2. ***Your Kingdom come (2)***

The purpose of prayer is for God's will, not ours.

3. ***Give us this day our daily bread (3)***

We often take the material things of life for granted. Yet, we are totally dependent on God's provision.

4. ***Forgive us our sins (4)***

We acknowledge our need to be forgiven and rely on God's grace and salvation through Christ.

5. ***Lead us not into temptation (4)***

We need God's help in living faithful lives.

The Persistence of Prayer (5–8)

● ***The story*** —

The point is not that the neighbor doesn't want to lend the man the bread, but it is a tremendous inconvenience.

● ***Be bold and persistent*** —

If a reluctant and sleepy neighbor will grant a request in the middle of the night, how much more will our gracious and loving Heavenly Father respond to the needs of His children?

The Promise of Prayer (9–10)

- The promise is that those who ask will receive. Keep asking!
- The promise is that those who seek will find. Keep seeking!
- The promise that those who knock will have the door opened. Notice the increasing intensity of ***ask, seek, knock***. In our prayer life, we often give up quickly and easily.

The Privilege of Prayer (11–13)

- Fathers give their children good things.
- If earthly fathers delight in giving good gifts, think of what our loving, all-powerful Heavenly Father will do.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

How is praying from a pattern different from repeating a set prayer or performing a ritual?

How is God different from the neighbor who gives the bread?

What is the promise that Jesus gives regarding prayer?

What are the “how much more” arguments that Jesus uses in the parable and His explanation?

What makes us children of God?

THE VERDICT IS YOURS

Is God your Heavenly Father? Will you listen and obey Jesus' commands and claim the promise of prayer?



Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray.."

LUKE 11:1



The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 5

Use It or Lose It

Luke 19:11–27

PARABLE OF THE TEN MINAS

He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.¹³ Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.'¹⁴ But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'¹⁵ When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business.¹⁶ The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.'¹⁷ And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.'¹⁸ And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.'¹⁹ And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'²⁰ Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief;²¹ for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'²² He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow?²³ Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'²⁴ And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.'²⁵ And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten minas!'²⁶ 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.²⁷ But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.'" — Luke 19:12–27

The Context of the Parable

- This parable is presented after Jesus' encounter with Zaccheus, a corrupt tax collector. Zaccheus came to saving faith in Christ and demonstrated by his actions the reality of his conversion.
- The parable is about the Kingdom of God (11–13). Jesus is about to enter Jerusalem. His disciples expect Jesus to overthrow the Romans and set up His Messianic Kingdom on earth. Jesus is explaining that His Kingdom is not going to be established immediately.

The Content of the Parable

- Ten minas were given to ten servants (13–14).
- After receiving the kingdom, the nobleman returns (15–27). The first servant reports a 1000% return and receives a high commendation and a great reward over ten cities. The second servant reports 500% return and receives a position over five cities.
- Another servant has done nothing with his mina. As a reason, he attacks the character of the master. This servant is called "wicked," and his mina is taken away and given to the first servant. The masters' enemies who had rejected him and persisted in their hostility are also killed.

The Concepts of the Parable — Five Principles

1. **All followers of Christ are given the same opportunity** to serve their Master. Followers of Christ have different gifts and abilities, but we all have been entrusted with the Gospel and are called to serve.
2. **At Christ's return, each Christian will give an account** of his service. Jesus is coming back, and there will be accountability for all followers of Jesus Christ.
3. **Rewards in the coming Kingdom are based on faithful service** on earth. While all authentic followers of Jesus will receive salvation (eternal life), there are different rewards based on faithful service.
4. **Unfaithfulness will result in eternal loss.** The third servant's actions suggest that he is not an authentic believer. He receives no reward, and his mina is taken away.
5. **Rejection of Christ will result in severe and eternal judgment.**

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

How does this parable emphasize that the Kingdom of Heaven is a future kingdom?

What opportunity is given to all followers of Christ?

Why do the first and second servants receive different rewards? Why is that important?

How does the parable illustrate the two types of unbelievers: (1) those who appear to follow Christ and (2) those who are hostile toward Him?

Have you heard unbelievers portray God as unloving or uncaring? How is this different from the perspective of the believer saved by God's grace?

THE VERDICT IS YOURS

Have you trusted Jesus Christ? How are you using the opportunity of this life to serve the Lord? Are you sharing the good news of the Gospel with others?

The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 6

Getting What You Deserve

Matthew 20:1–16

PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ ⁵ So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ ⁷ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ ⁸ And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ ⁹ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, ¹² saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first last.” — Matthew 20:1–16

REPEATEDLY IN THE GOSPELS, JESUS EXPLAINS that the values of His Kingdom are the exact opposite of those in this world. In life, it may be true that you get what you deserve, but not so in the Kingdom of God.

The Context of the Parable

In the preceding paragraphs, Jesus encounters a rich young ruler who finds it difficult to consider selling all his possessions to follow Jesus and have treasure in heaven (16–26).

Peter asks what there will be for the disciples who had left everything? If the young man was offered treasure, what would the disciples receive? Jesus replies that the disciples will receive a great reward (28). And others who follow Christ will receive much and inherit eternal life (29). “But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” Jesus then tells the parable to explain.

The Content of the Parable

A landowner hires workers throughout the day to work in the vineyard. The workmen hired last are paid at the same wage as those who worked the entire day. Those who worked since morning grumble because “you have made them equal to us” (12). But the landowner reminds them that they have been paid the agreed-upon wage, and he can do what he wants with his own money.

Three Principles of the Kingdom of Heaven

1. *Everyone saved by God’s grace receives the same gift of eternal life.*
Whether someone is saved at the end of their life or the beginning, they are just as saved.
2. *God is never in debt to us.*
We may be used to having a commercial attitude (we get what we earn and what we “deserve”), but God is not obligated to anyone.
3. *God deals with us on the principle of sheer grace.*
The men who worked a partial day did not deserve full pay, but the landowner acted towards them based on his generosity and graciousness, not based on their work.

Reminders about Grace

Grace comes down from God. It is, by definition, undeserved kindness. Salvation is not like making money the old-fashioned way — it is not earned. We are saved by grace, not by anything that we have done.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

If you are a longtime follower of Christ, how do you feel toward those who receive salvation at the end of their life?

Do you ever bargain with God? Do you ever approach God suggesting that He is in your debt, that He owes you something?

How does God “surprise” us with His grace?

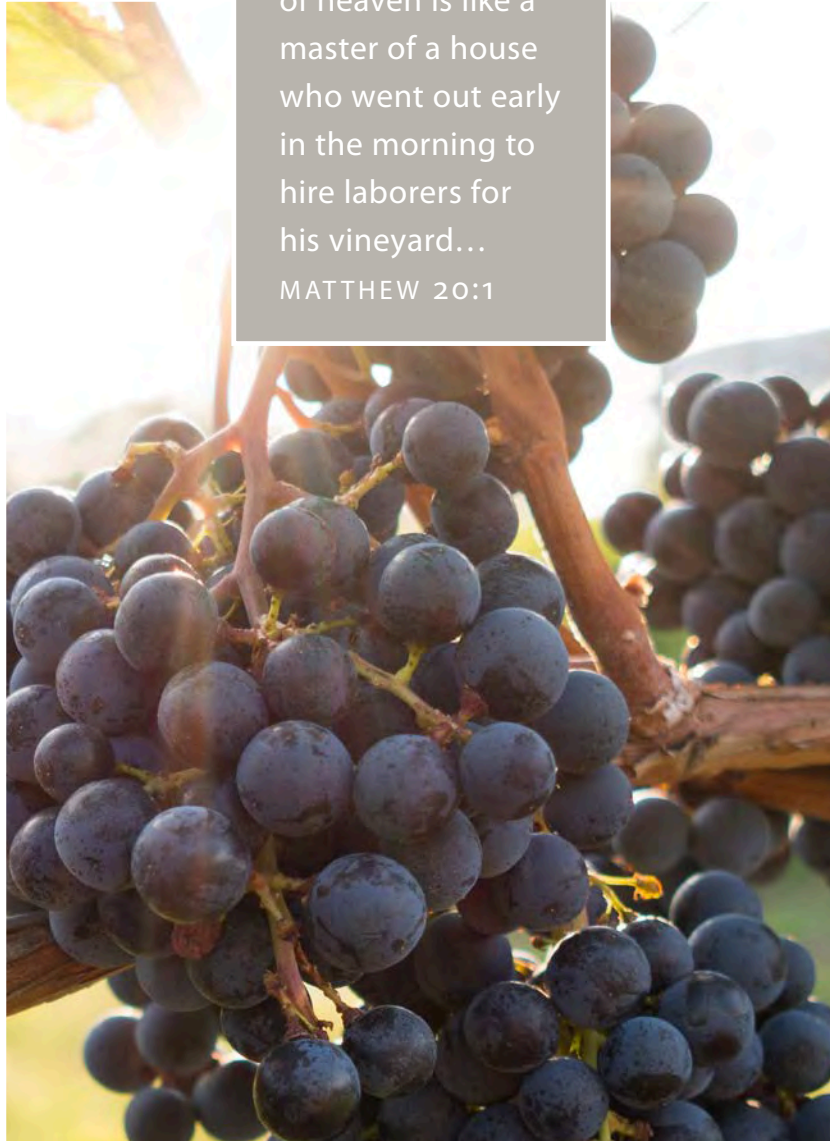
THE VERDICT IS YOURS

Have you received God’s grace? If you are a follower of Jesus, are you living a life of grace — serving God out of a heart of love and thankfulness?

“

For the kingdom
of heaven is like a
master of a house
who went out early
in the morning to
hire laborers for
his vineyard...

MATTHEW 20:1



The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 7

Beating the Stock Market

Luke 16:1–13

PARABLE OF THE DISHONEST MANAGER

“There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions.² And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’³ And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg.⁴ I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’⁵ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’⁶ He said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’⁸ The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.⁹ And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.¹⁰ One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.¹¹ If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?¹² And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own?¹³ No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

— Luke 16:1–13

HOW ARE WE TO HANDLE OUR MONEY, our possessions, and our resources?

The Steward's Problem (1–2)

- The steward is responsible for managing the rich man's interests, but he has "wasted" the possessions of the rich man. On learning of his steward's irresponsibility, the rich man demands a final statement of accounting and informs the steward he can no longer work for him.

The Steward's Solution (3–7)

- *His strategy*
The steward is not paralyzed by his problems and thinks of his future. He knows that his future is not with his former employer but with making new friends.
- *The implementation*
The steward meets with each of the rich man's debtors and reduces each debt. (There are multiple options for understanding the strategy.)

The Steward's Commendation (8)

- The steward is praised because of his shrewdness. Jesus is saying that unbelievers ("sons of this world") often act more wisely than believers ("sons of light") as to their future and resources.

Stewardship Lessons (9–13)

- *Invest resources with the long-term in view (9).*
Invest with eternity in view. Money and possessions will "fail" (9), but Christ-followers can use "unrighteous wealth" (money and possessions) to make eternal investments.
- *Be faithful in managing the small things of life, and you will be trusted with greater responsibilities (true riches) (10–12).*
Our character and values are revealed in how we handle small things — particularly when no one is looking.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Why was the steward commended for his shrewdness?

How is investing for the long view (for eternity) different from investing in the short term?

What are examples of making eternal investments?

Why is it important to be faithful in small things?

What point does Jesus make about divided allegiance?

THE VERDICT IS YOURS

How do you approach your money and possessions? Are you living and investing with eternity in view?

The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 8

Surviving Life's Storms

Luke 6:46–49

PARABLE OF THE STRONG FOUNDATION

“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you? ⁴⁷ Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸ he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹ But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.” — Luke 6:46–49

DOES JESUS CHRIST MAKE ANY REAL DIFFERENCE in your life? Is your life built on a strong foundation? This parable presents a challenge as to whether your faith is truly authentic or superficial and ultimately hollow.

Two Men Compared

- Both men build a house, and both men hear the words of Jesus.
- Once built, both homes are exposed to the same flood, just as problems, difficulties, and devastating situations come into our lives.

Two Men Contrasted

- The man who builds on the rock not only hears the Word of God but obeys it.
- The other man hears the same teaching but does not apply the Word in his life.

The Conclusion

- When exposed to the same flood (the same circumstances) one house stands strong; the other collapses.
- You may say you are a follower of Jesus Christ, but if there is no evidence, you may be like the man who built a house with no foundation.
- Knowledge about Christ without personal trust in Christ as Savior and Lord results in spiritual disaster instead of eternal life and the blessings that come when your trust is in Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

What is represented by the foundation built on rock?

Why would it be appealing to build without a foundation?

Why is it significant to note that the storm impacts both men and both houses? What does this tell us about our lives as followers of Christ? About the reality of God's judgment?

THE VERDICT IS YOURS

Have you not only heard the Word of God but obeyed it? Is your trust in Christ — and can you see the evidence in your life?



This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.” MATTHEW 13:35



The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 9

The Prayer that God Doesn't Hear

Luke 18:9–14

PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE & THE TAX COLLECTOR

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." — Luke 18:9–14

FOR MANY PEOPLE, SELF IS THE CENTER of their existence. Who or what is at the center of your world? You or God?

Contrast the Attitude of the Prayers

The Pharisee:

- Respected
- Focused on religious externals (easy to see in others)
- Self-righteous
- Treats others with contempt
- Proudful

The Tax Collector:

- Wealthy, but despised and corrupt
- Has no faith in himself, but has faith in God
- Realizes his unworthiness
- Humble

Contrast the Content of the Prayers

The Pharisee:

- Focused on others instead of God
- Prayer is all about himself
- Believes God is pleased with him based on his actions
- Religious, but spiritually lost

The Tax Collector:

- Aware of his sin
- Asks for mercy
- Acknowledges that he is a sinner and deserves judgment
- Looks not to himself but to God for salvation

Contrast the Result of the Prayers

The Pharisee:

- Claims righteousness before God based on his own deeds
- Receives no justification

The Tax Collector:

- Looks to God for mercy and grace
- Receives mercy and is saved
- His heart is now right with God — *justified*

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

What does self-absorption say about our view of God?

Would you ever identify yourself as a Pharisee?

Why does the Pharisee think he is a godly person?

What indicates the humility of the tax collector?

What is the significance of the term *justified*?

THE VERDICT IS YOURS

What is the center of your life: self or God? What do you depend on? Your goodness or God's grace?

The PARABLES OF JESUS

MESSAGE 10

One Second After You Die

Luke 16:19–31

PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN & LAZARUS

“There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.²⁰ And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores,²¹ who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.²² The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried,²³ and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.²⁴ And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’²⁵ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’²⁷ And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house —²⁸ for I have five brothers — so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’²⁹ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’³⁰ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’³¹ He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’” — Luke 16:19–31

WHERE WILL YOU BE one second after you die? Where do you get your information about death, eternity, heaven, and hell?

Scene One: Two Men in Life (19–21)

- **The Rich Man:** Wealthy, lived extravagantly, selfish, and without compassion
- **Lazarus:** Poor and disabled, ceremonially unclean, reduced to living off scraps

Scene Two: Two Men in Death (22–23)

- **Lazarus:** Now listed first, receives a heavenly escort, at Abraham's side
- **The Rich Man:** Left all wealth behind, takes nothing to Hades, believed his heritage assured his eternal future

Scene Three: Two Men in Eternity (24-31)

- **The Rich Man's first request:** Asks for mercy, wants Lazarus to help him
- **The Rich Man's second request:** Send Lazarus to warn his five brothers

Conclusions Regarding Life, Death, and Eternity

- Love of money and love of God are totally incompatible.
- The finality of your eternal destiny is sealed at your death.
- When considering your eternal destiny, don't look for signs and wonders but study the Word of God.
- Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Why did the rich man go to Hades? Why did Lazarus go to heaven?

What are the two reasons that Abraham gives as he denies the rich man's first request?

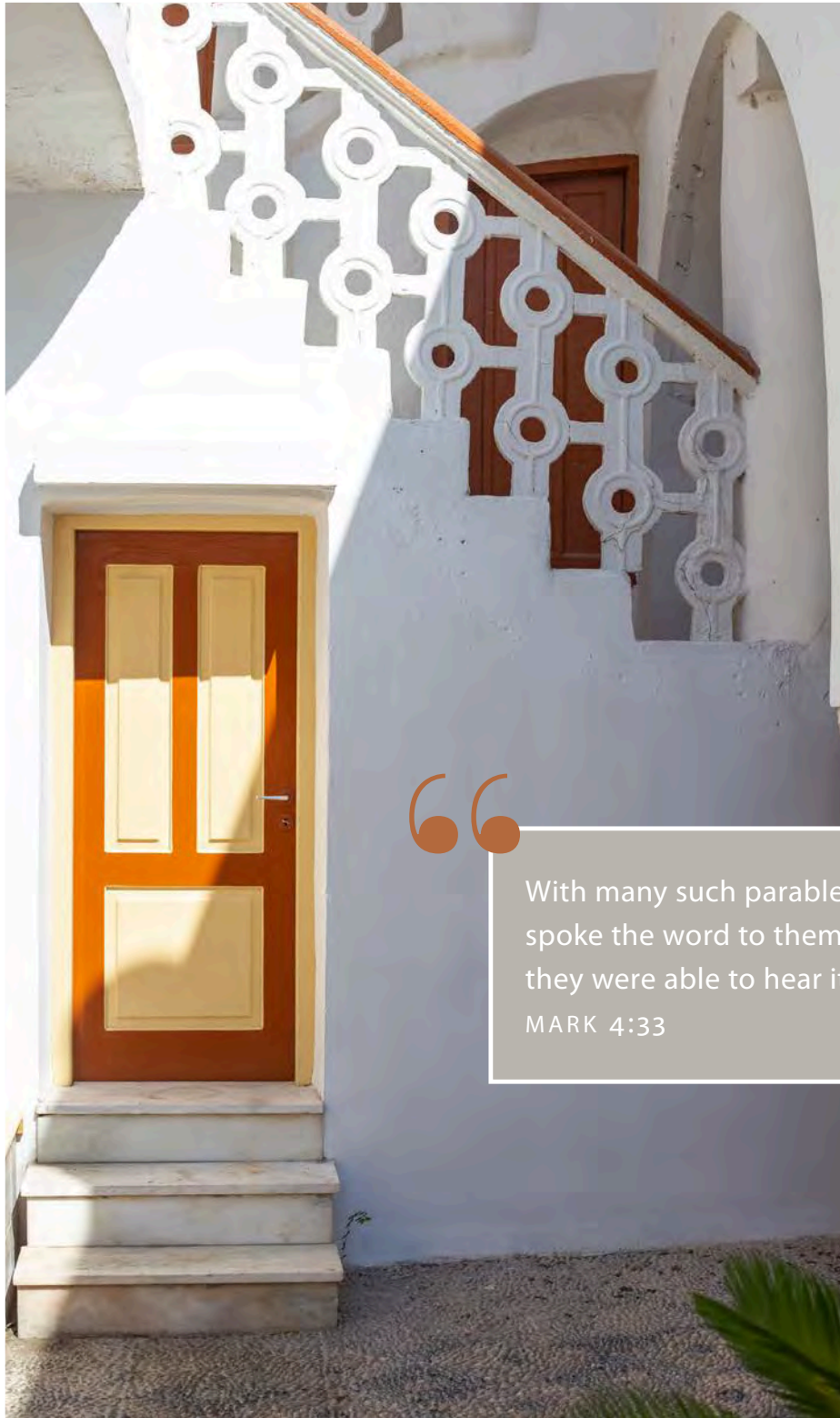
What are the two points made by Abraham as he denies the rich man's second request?

Once we die, is there any way to avoid eternal punishment?

What do we learn about some of the details of death and eternity in the story?

THE VERDICT IS YOURS

Have you taken the Word of God seriously regarding your eternal destiny? Do you have the assurance that you will go directly to be with Jesus Christ in heaven when you die?



“

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it.”

MARK 4:33

THE VERDICT

WITH PASTOR JOHN H. MUNRO

"Where the Gospel is preached, the lives of men and women and boys and girls are transformed. Through His death and resurrection, Christ gives us peace with God, present power for living, and future hope for eternal life." — PASTOR JOHN H. MUNRO



John H. Munro

The Verdict is a daily and weekly radio program featuring the expository Bible teaching of Pastor John H. Munro.

Born and raised in Scotland, John graduated from the University of Edinburgh and practiced law in Scotland before God called him to full-time ministry. He and his wife, Gudny, moved to Texas, where he attended Dallas Theological Seminary.

For more than 30 years, John has dedicated his life to pastoral ministry, preaching and teaching the Word of God. He has served as Senior Pastor in Kalamazoo, MI, Pittsburgh, PA, and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Since February 2006, he has served as Senior Pastor at Calvary Church in Charlotte, NC.

Each day on The Verdict, listeners are challenged to turn to the Bible and render a "verdict" as they consider their personal response to the truth of God's Word. John Munro presents a clear examination of Scripture, offering insight and application for all backgrounds, from those unfamiliar with the Gospel to mature believers following Christ.

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FOR THE WORD OF GOD AND FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST

REVELATION 1:9