

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 6 December 2015..... Matthew 03.....The Preaching of John the Baptist
- 2) 13 December..... Matthew 01..... The Genealogy of Christ
- 3) 20 December..... Matthew 02..... The Magi
- 4) 27 December..... Matthew 04..... The Temptation of Jesus
- 5) 03 January 2016..... Matthew 05:1-16..... The Sermon on the Mount
- 6) 10 January..... Matthew 06..... Benevolence Giving
- 7) 17 January..... Matthew 05:17-45..... Personal Relationships
- 8) 24 January..... Matthew 07..... Judging Others
- 9) 31 January..... Matthew 08..... More Miracles
- 10) 07 February..... Matthew 09-10.....and More Miracles
- 11) 14 February..... Matthew 11..... Tough Questions
- 12) 21 February..... Matthew 12..... Time to Pick a Fight
- 13) 28 February..... Matthew 13.....More Parables

INTRODUCTION

- Matthew records 8 parables in this chapter, and finishes with Jesus in His hometown, where He did few miracles because of unbelief. It wasn't that He couldn't, but they wouldn't.
- Parables were at the core of Jesus' ministry on earth. They delivered the eternal results Jesus wanted more so than all of His healings and miracles, which only provided temporary relief

Passage	Comments
Matthew 13:1-23	<p>Parable of the Sower, The Seed, and The Soil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv8-9. The focus of this parable is not the sower nor the seed, but the soil – which equates to the heart <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Road surface – Not open to change 2. Rocky places – Will consider change for a season 3. Thorny places – Prefers the comforts of the world 4. Good soil – Welcomes godly change • v9. "He who has ears, let him hear" – Our will plays a big part in determining our soil type. Do we make the willful effort to be obedient to God's word and to 'break up our fallow ground' and change our soil type? <p>"Why Do You Speak in Parables?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parables were not meant to be understood by everyone, but by those who had ears to hear. IOW, only those whose hearts were leaning in God's direction. <i>"If you listen obediently God will bless you immensely"</i>Deut 15:4-6 • Also, Jesus was not out to force anyone to believe in Him or to cast pearls before swine, so He had to veil His truth so only those whose ears are willfully open would heed His teachings • v12. "For whoever has, to him, more shall be given" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ From a political perspective, Jesus is not a democratic socialist advocating distribution of wealth ♦ The Bible is clear that God rewards the diligent, and at times He even gives the earnings of the wicked to the righteous.....Prov 13:22
13:24-30 13:36-43	<p>Tares and Wheat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The simple truth of this parable is that God allows evil to co-exist with His people for His purpose, and there will come a time when the wicked will be judged • Parables can be erroneously interpreted by reading too much into them. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Calvinist position. Tares cannot become wheat. But Calvinists don't consider "such were some of you".....1Cor 6:11 ♦ Amillennialist position. There is no Rapture since wheat & tares are taken together • God allows the tares to mingle w/ the wheat. Since cream rises to the top, we know who the approved ones are when trouble is brewing.....1Cor 11:19 • Hermeneutic principle. There may be multiple applications, but the author has only one intended meaning

Passage	Comments
13:31-35	<p>The Mustard Seed and Leaven – The Lord's Church is going to experience exponential growth, and it has</p>
13:44-46	<p>Hidden Treasure and Costly Pearl</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many people see the Kingdom of Heaven worth the effort to avoid sin and the wages of death? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Very few, to be honest...BUT WHY? • People prefer to chase the tangibles in life such as possessions and other shiny things • Jesus wants us to focus and pursue the intangibles that are worth so much more now and in the here-after <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ What are these intangibles? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fruit of the Spirit.....Gal 6:22-23 2. Pursue food that endures for eternityJohn 6:27 3. Other: _____
13:47-52	<p>A Dragnet of Fish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus spoke more about Hell than He did of Heaven, possibly to scare the Hell out of people, pun intended • v52. "A disciple of the Kingdom brings out of his house things new and old" What does this mean? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ JFB Commentary: Deliver old truths in fresh new forms, applications, and with ever new illustrations ♦ IOW, never have a boring presentation of God's truth
13:53-58	<p>Jesus Was Unable to Do Many Miracles at Home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was not that Jesus lost any of His power to heal, but few came out to be healed by Him • Their hang up was thinking they knew everything there was to know about Jesus → And that He was normal <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They knew of no miraculous wonders performed by Him as a child, or as a teen, or as a young man 2. They knew Joseph, His dad, had died and Jesus did not raise him from the dead (It was not His time) 3. They probably knew that His own brothers didn't even believe in Him as the MessiahJohn 7:5 • Who are the hardest people for us to witness to? It is usually our own family, because they know us too well • Consider this. Jesus only healed those who sought Him, with few exceptions. For example, at the Pool of Bethesda there were many sick people looking for a healing, but Jesus only healed one man. But none of them sought Jesus for a healing. They probably all heard of Him, but they preferred to be healed by other means. In this case by stirring of the waters..... John 5

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CAN YOU SCROLL BACK UP?

Passage	Did Jesus Have a Sense of Humor? OH YEAH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many of Jesus' parables and discourses contained exaggerations, wit, and sarcasm (all elements of humor), which probably brought smiles to the faces of His listeners (e.g., <i>If you are smart enough to discern the skies for rain, you should be able to discern your spiritual state</i>) Scripture tells us Jesus was quite compassionate, personable, and approachable by all. Which means He probably exhibited joy, a fun-loving spirit, excitement, charm, and humor without losing the serious side of His mission to save the lost Even foreigners, women, and children took to Him readily, which means He was not aloof, prudish, boring, or uppity. Jesus never began a discourse with a joke to warm up the crowd, but throughout his ministry Jesus displayed great wit, a command of the language, a gift for irony and word plays, and impeccable timing — all hallmarks of great comedians If Man has a sense of humor, so does God since we are made in His image. Humor disarms and unites; it sets people at ease and leaves them receptive to the speaker's message.
Matthew 16:18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When Jesus called Peter, "Rocky" it was akin to calling a fat guy "Slim"
Mark 3:17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When He called James & John "Sons of Thunder" it was akin to calling an electrician "Sparky"
John 1:46-47	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When Nathaniel stated "can anything good come out of Nazareth?" It was akin to stating "can anything good come out of New York's Harlem district?" Jesus' response was quite humorous. When He stated "A man with no guile," In essence, He was making light of Nathan being in the lineage of Jacob, the "deceiver"
Luke 6:41-42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> And why do you look at the sliver that is in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the "telephone pole" in your own eye? This would've made many chuckle
Matthew 19:24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also, the incongruous image of a camel going through the eye of a needle contains humor.
Matthew 23:24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an hilarious image of straining out a gnat while eating a camel Jesus' mastery of words is literally lost in translation. Our Scripture is a translation of the Greek, which is a translation of Jesus' own Aramaic. Without knowledge of Jesus' native tongue, certain wordplays, such as oxymorons, are simply lost to us. For instance, in Matthew 23:24 the Aramaic word for gnat is "galma" and the word for camel is "gamla". We are at a loss to this aspect of the exchange.
Mark 9:19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My favorite incident is where Jesus seemingly got so frustrated with some people I envision Him banging His forehead with the palm of His hand as He stated, "How much longer am I going to be with you guys" In our vernacular, Jesus basically said, "Just kill me now and get it over with"
CONCLUSION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's hard to imagine a good storyteller who doesn't know the value of humor. Jesus probably knew that He had to "grab" His listeners. If we look at His human side, it's hard to imagine someone being able to put up with the often spectacularly obtuse disciples without a sense of humor. If we look at His divine side, it's hard to imagine God not smiling at some of the absurdities of the world. (source: http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/deeper-walk/features/28558-jesus-was-funnier-than-we-think#TCkHW4jaRzy2oczw.99) Jesus had a wonderfully vibrant sense of humor, but it wasn't employed merely to "get laughs." It is humor that seeks to inform and convert. Even when the humor is directed at a certain group, such as the Pharisees, it is still a humor born of love and compassion. Jesus mocks the self-righteous even while calling them to open their eyes and repent. (source: https://frtim.wordpress.com/2013/05/30/the-often-overlooked-humor-of-jesus/) 	

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

Since Lifeway is concluding this study in Matthew at chapter 13, and we won't jump back into Matthew to finish the rest of it for another year or so, let me wrap up this study this way:

- Jesus' priority was to teach and preach the Kingdom of Heaven to impact His audience for all eternity.
- In fulfillment of OT Scripture Jesus also healed everyone who sought a healing from Him, whether it was a simple fever or being dead for 4 days (equivalent of being embalmed in our day & age)
- Jesus was no respecter of persons as He and His disciple healed everyone of everything. He did not willy-nilly heal some and not others, but He healed ALL who came out to Him.
 - This is the best way to gauge modern day faith healers
 - If a so-called faith healer cannot heal everyone of everything as Jesus and His Disciples did, after all Jesus is the same today, yesterday, and forever, and we are healed by His stripes (as they claim), their claims are blatantly false
- You and I can definitely pray for people to be healed of various functional ailments (e.g., headaches, backaches, cancers, heart disease, etc). If it's in His will God easily answers such prayers providentially by intervening to allow time and/or the right prognoses and treatments to render such healings.
 - However, since God has turned off the supernatural switch, if it is an organic ailment (e.g., missing limbs, Down's Syndrome, broken bones, an embalmed body, etc.), we need to shift our prayers for the sick & injured (and possibly for us) to cope with such ailments instead of being instantaneously healed of them

NEXT WEEK: Acts 1. The Apostles witness the ascension of Jesus Christ and they select a replacement for Judas. Matthias becomes the next Apostle, and, as we will soon see in the weeks ahead, is also able to heal everyone of everything just like the other Apostles did, but only for a season.

