**Matthew 13-15** - October 5th

The Parable of the Sower - About the WORD

**13**That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. **2**Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. **3**Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. **4**As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. **5**Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. **6**But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7**Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. **8**Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop - a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. **9**Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

**10**The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?”

**11**He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. **12**Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. **13**This is why I speak to them in parables:

“Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

**14**In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

“‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. **15**For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’

16But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. 17For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

**18**“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: **19**When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. **20**The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. **21**But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. **22**The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. **23**But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

The Parable of the Weeds - About the Enemy

**24**Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. **25**But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. **26**When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. **27**“The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ **28**“‘An enemy did this,’ he replied. “The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’

**29**“‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. **30**Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’”

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast - About Faith

**31**He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. **32**Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

**33**He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

**34**Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. **35**So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.”

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

**36**Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.”

**37**He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. **38**The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, **39**and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

**40**“As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. **41**The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. **42**They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **43**Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl - About Obedience

**44**“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. **45**“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. **46**When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

The Parable of the Net - About Discipleship

**47**“Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. **48**When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. **49**This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous **50**and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

**51**“Have you understood all these things?” Jesus asked. “Yes,” they replied. **52**He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

A Prophet Without Honor

**53**When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. **54**Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. “Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?” they asked. **55**“Isn’t this the carpenter’s son? Isn’t his mother’s name Mary, and aren’t his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas (Jude)? **56**Aren’t all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” **57**And they took offense at him.

But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town and in his own home.” **58**And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

John the Baptist Beheaded

**14**At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the reports about Jesus, **2**and he said to his attendants, “This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead! That is why miraculous powers are at work in him.”

**3**Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, **4**for John had been saying to him: “It is not lawful for you to have her.” **5**Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they considered John a prophet.

**6**On Herod’s birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for the guests and pleased Herod so much **7**that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. **8**Prompted by her mother, she said, “Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.” **9**The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted **10**and had John beheaded in the prison. **11**His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother. **12**John’s disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

**13**When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. **14**When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

**15**As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.” **16**Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” **17**“We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered.

**18**“Bring them here to me,” he said. **19**And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. **20**They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. **21**The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Water

**22**Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. **23**After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, **24**and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

**25**Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. **26**When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

**27**But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” **28**“Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.” **9**“Come,” he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. **30**But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” **31**Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

**32**And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. **33**Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

**34**When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret. **35**And when the men of that place recognized Jesus, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought all their sick to him **36**and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

That Which Defiles

**15**Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, **2**“Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!”

**3**Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? **4**For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ **5**But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ **6**they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. **7**You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

**8**“‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.  
**9**They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.’”

**10**Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand. **11**What goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.” **12**Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”

**13**He replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. **14**Leave them; they are blind guides. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.” **15**Peter said, “Explain the parable to us.”

**16**“Are you still so dull?” Jesus asked them. **17**“Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? **18**But the things that come out of a person’s mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. **19**For out of the heart come evil thoughts - murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. **20**These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.”

The Faith of a Canaanite Woman

**21**Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. **22**A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.”

**23**Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.” **24**He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”

**25**The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said. **26**He replied, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.” **27**“Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.” **28**Then Jesus said to her, “Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.” And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

**29**Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down. **30**Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. **31**The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

**32**Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way.”

**33**His disciples answered, “Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?” **34**“How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked. “Seven,” they replied, “and a few small fish.”

**35**He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. **36**Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people. **37**They all ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. **38**The number of those who ate was four thousand men, besides women and children. **39**After Jesus had sent the crowd away, he got into the boat and went to the vicinity of Magadan.