PARABLES
NT708
Spring 2007, Orlando
Tuesdays 6-9 p.m.

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Office Hours: any time

1. Description

The Parables of Jesus are recorded in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). Many parables are paralleled in all three gospels, but Matthew provides stories that reveal financial interests, Mark displays an interest in nature, and Luke is a man for the poor and people of average income. Matthew has the so-called kingdom parables, Mark has only one parable that is peculiar to himself, and Luke has placed his parables in the great insertion section (Luke 9:51-19:27) in which most of them are found only in his Gospel.

The course is a survey of all the parables and most of the parabolic sayings of Jesus. We study the difference in wording presented by the individual evangelists, yet we learn that each writer employs his own skills, insights, and characteristics in recording the parables. The parables belong to Jesus who created them and speaks to us through them. In them we hear the voice of Jesus.

2. Objectives

The first objective is to understand the meaning of the individual parables. The meaning is often hidden and comes to light when we clearly see Jesus’ intent. The next one is to apply the meaning of the parable to the present-day world in which we live. And the third objective is to extend the church and kingdom of the Lord by means of his parables.

3. Requirements

These are the textbooks for the course; assignments are noted in the schedule:

- Kenneth Bailey, Poet & Peasant; Through Peasant Eyes.
- Craig L. Blomberg, Interpreting the Parables.
- Richard N. Longenecker, editor, The Challenge of Jesus’ Parables.
- Robert H. Stein, An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus.

Three one-hour tests are scheduled throughout the semester. In addition you are assigned to present a class presentation that you develop into a paper of some 15 pages (plus bibliography and appendices). The paper is due on Tuesday May 8, 2007.
You are advised to consult with me about the presentation and the progress of your paper. Make use of the book by Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* to write an acceptable term paper.

You are required to do the assigned reading for the course indicated in the schedule. You are encouraged to use Power Point in your presentation.

4. **Evaluation**

The grading of your performance in the course is based on these criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three tests each 25% constitute</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your class presentation and paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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**SCHEDULE**

*February 6*

**Reading:** Bailey, *PP* 15-85; Blomberg, 13-69; Kistemaker, 9-22; Longenecker, 3-49; Stein, 15-81.

**Forms**

*True parables*

*Story parables*

*Illustrations*

**Composition**

*Old Testament*

*Rabbinic parallels*

*Cultural background*

**Purpose**

*Hide the meaning*

*Instruction for followers*

*Teach the meaning of OT*

*Expand God’s revelation*

**Interpretation**

*Allegory*

*One point or more*

*Modern methods: Redaction, Existential, Postmodern*

**Principles**

*History: Geography, Topography, Culture*

*Grammar: Genre, Word Choice, Diction*

*Theology: OT—NT, NT—OT*
Classification

**February 13**

**Reading:** Blomberg, 208-10, 226-29, 258-60; Kistemaker, 21-40; Longenecker, 103-08, 286-91

Salt (Matt. 5:13)

Two builders (Matt. 7:24-27)

Children in the market place (Matt. 11:16-19)

- **Application**
- **Parallels**
- **Conclusion**

Sower (Matt. 13:1-9)

- **Setting**
- **Design**
- **Interpretation**
- **Application**

**February 20**

**Reading:** Bailey, *TPE* 114-26, 142-56; Blomberg, 197-200, 260-63, and 263-66; Kistemaker, 41-50, 202-03, 209-13; Longenecker, 96-98, 108-13, 258-60, 286-87, 295-98; Stein, 142-46, 168-69

Seed growing secretly (Mark 4:26-29)

- **Setting**
- **Interpretation**

Wheat and weeds (Matt. 13:24-30)

- **The Farmer's Field**
- **Interpretation**
- **Application**

Farmer and servant (Luke 17:7-10)

Pharisee and tax collector (Luke 18:9-14)

- **The Pharisee**
- **The Tax Collector**
- **Answers**

**February 27**

**Reading:** Blomberg, 201-03, 240-43, 278-81; Kistemaker, 51-70; Longenecker, 96-97, 137-39, 263-71, 282-84; Stein, 98-106, 140-42

Unforgiving servant (Matt. 18:21-35)

- **The Story**
The Lesson
Application

Mustard seed (Matt. 13:31-32)
   Sowing and Growing

Yeast (Matt. 13:33)

Hidden treasure. Pearl (Matt. 13:44, 45-46)
   Setting
   Application

Fishnet (Matt. 13:47-50)
   Fishing
   Explanation

March 6
Reading: Blomberg, 186-93, 221-25, 294-95; Kistemaker, 71-81, 108-12;
   Longenecker, 286-87, 299-304; Stein, 124-28

Workers in the vineyard (Matt.20:1-16)
   Work and Workers
   Hours and Wages
   Grace
   Application

Two sons (Matt. 21:28-32)
   Interpretation

Servant and authority (Matt. 24:45-51)
   Servant and Authority

Test

March 13
Reading: Bailey, PP 86-118; Blomberg, 203-08, 243-51, and 294-95;
   Kistemaker, 82-90, 187-201; Longenecker, 158-62, 166-67, 217-38

Tenants (Matt. 21:33-46)
   Story
   Meaning
   Theology
   Application

Shrewd manager (Luke 16:1-9)
   Setting
   Critique
   Application

Rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)
March 20

**Reading:** Blomberg, 237-40; Kistemaker, 91-107; Longenecker, 162-68; Stein, 61-62

Wedding banquet (Matt. 22:32-37)

*The Parable*

*Explanation*

Fig tree (Matt. 24:32-35)

Watchful servant (Matt. 13:32-37)

Burglar (Matt. 24:42-44)

Application

April 3

**Reading:** Blomberg, 193-97, 214-21; Kistemaker, 113-25, 215-20; Longenecker, 180-89; Stein, 64-65.

Ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13)

*The Wedding*

*Meaning*

*Interpretations*

Talents (Matt. 25:14-30)

*Entrusted Money*

*Two Servants*

*One Servant*

*The Master*

*Significance*

*Conclusion*

Pounds (Luke 19:11-27)

*History*

*Parable*

*Interpretation*

April 10

**Reading:** Bailey, *TPE* 1-21; Blomberg, 184-86; Kistemaker, 126-39; Longenecker, 189-94; Stein, 130-40.

Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46)

*The Right Side*

*The Left Side*

*Implications*
Two debtors (Luke 7:36-50)

The Setting
The Parable
The Woman
Conclusion

Test

April 17

Reading: Bailey, TPE 33-56; 127-41; PP 119-33; Blomberg, 229-33; 274-77; Kistemaker, 140-50, 158-60, 204-08; Longenecker, 240-58, 263-65, 271-76.

Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

Place and People
Implications
OT Parallels
Application

Friend at midnight (Luke 11:5-8)

Places of honor (Luke 14:7-14)

The Example

Unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8)

Widow and Judge
Application

April 24


Great supper (Luke 14:15-24)

The Story
Interpretation
Setting
Application

Tower builder (Luke 14:28-33)

Parable
Conclusion


The Parable
Conclusion
May 1

Reading: Bailey, PP 142-206; Blomberg, 172-83;
Longenecker, 209-14; Kistemaker, 171-86; Stein, 61-62; 115-24.

Lost sheep (Luke 15:4-7)
  Application

Lost coin (Luke 15:8-10)

Lost son (Luke 15:11-32)
  Historical Setting
  The Younger Son
  The Father
  The Older Son
  Application

Conclusion
  General Characteristics
  Literary Characteristics
  Theological Characteristics
  Recipients and Response
  Representation

May 8

Test