

PARABLE OF THE HOUSEHOLDER: DEVOTION, STUDY AND SHARING MATHEW 13:51–52

Introduction: Householder

This parable teaches a strong truth: the true disciples of Christ had the same privilege and responsibility as Teachers and householders. They were unusually blessed. Throughout their lives, they had been instructed in the old counsel, but now they had been taught by Christ, the Messiah Himself. They now knew the new counsel of God. Thus, they were to be responsible disciples and share the whole counsel of God, both the old and the new.

1. The Jewish Scribe had two unusual traits. He was extremely devoted, and he studied his religion all the time. Christ wanted the disciples to develop the same devotion. He wanted them to study the Kingdom of Heaven (the gospel and His Word) with the same kind of unswerving diligence (Acts 17:11; 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Pet. 2:2-3). Therefore, He questioned them, “Have you understood these things?” No doubt He was referring to the parables He had just shared, but He was probably also referring to all that He had been teaching throughout His ministry. They answered, “Yes, Lord.”

At this point He called them Teachers, hoping to plant an idea that He wanted them to always remember: they must be as devoted as the Teachers. But there was to be one difference: they were not to be devoted to religion but to Him and His kingdom, His gospel, and His Word (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:2-3; see Deu. 17:19; Isa. 34:16; Jn. 5:39; Acts 17:11; Rom. 15:4; Col. 3:16).

2. The householder or head of a house possessed the treasures of food, both old and new. He had two prime duties in dealing with food. He was to store the old food and keep it fresh, and he was to add the new food to the old, serving both at the appropriate time.

Christ was charging the disciples to share what they had learned. They knew the old truths, the message of the Old Testament; and now, since He had come, they were learning the new truths, the message of the New Testament. They were, therefore, responsible to share both the old and new.

- I. The Lord questioned the disciples: did they understand the parables (v. 51)?
 - II. The disciples are compared to Jewish Teachers (v. 52).
 - III. The disciples are compared to the owner of a house (v. 52).
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I. *Mathew 13:51 Disciples were Questioned*

Christ questioned the disciples: did they understand the parables?

1. Note the extreme concern of Christ in making sure that His audience understood. (Did some seem to be disinterested, daydreaming, falling asleep? Was that the reason for His question?)
2. Note the patience of Christ in His teaching. No doubt, Christ would have gone over and over the parables if the disciples had not understood. What a lesson for us in our preaching and teaching.

Thought 1. Note several lessons in this question

- 1) Christ wants us to understand His Word, what He teaches us.
- 2) We should ask for an explanation when we do not understand.
- 3) There is no disgrace or reproach for not understanding.
- 4) We should be ready to help others to understand and be so observant that we can tell when they do not understand. We need to know when others are puzzled or have questions.

II. *Mathew 13:52 Disciples Compared to Jewish Teachers*

The disciples were compared to Jewish Teachers. What did Christ mean?

1. The disciple is to imitate the Teachers' devotion, but there is to be a significant difference. The disciple is to be devoted to Christ, not religion. This means at least three things.
 - a. He is to be "a living sacrifice":

Rom 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

- b. He is to be "crucified with Christ":

Gal 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- c. He is to love God with all his heart.

Mat 22:37 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

2. The disciple is to imitate the Teachers' study. Note three things that characterized the teachers. (Again, there is to be a significant difference. Our study centres around Christ and not religion.)
 - a. The subject of our study. We are to study the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the gospel of that kingdom that we are to teach. Other areas of study such as philosophy, psychology and social justice may help in supporting or illustrating our preaching and teaching; but our prime instruction must be in the Word of our Lord.
 - b. The need for intellect. We must study what Christ has said before we can understand what He says.
 - c. The need for personal application. Christ's concern was that each disciple understand to the point that he could apply the lessons learned. If they were to teach, they first had to understand and live. We must all have a personal knowledge and understanding of God's kingdom to effectively live, preach and teach.

Thought 1. Note two significant things about Scripture.

1) Scripture was given to help man learn and grow.

2 Tim 3:16 *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

1 Pet 2:2-3 *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. (see Acts 20:32)*

2) We are to study and walk in Christ if we want God's approval.

1 Th 2:4 *On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.*

1 Th 4:1 *Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.*

2 Tim 2:15 *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

III. **Mathew 13:52 Disciples Compared to a House Owner**

The disciples are compared to the owner of a house (See Mt. 13:51-52, Mt. 12:33-34.) Disciples are like the owner of a household - extremely responsible. They are responsible for two things.

1. To share the Kingdom of Heaven with all of its riches.

Mat 28:19-20 *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Mark 16:15 *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."*

Luke 19:10 *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

John 20:21 *Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*

Acts 1:8 *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

2 Cor 5:19-20 *That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.*

2. To share what they have, both the old and the new. They are to show just how the new fulfills the old (See Mt. 5:17-18; cp. 1 Jn. 2:7-8.)

Thought 1. The disciple is like the head of a household.

=> The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the Old and New Testament.

Rom 15:4 *For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

1 Cor 10:11 *These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come.*

=> The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the old and new revelation.

John 1:17-18 *For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.*

=> The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the old and new truth.

John 1:17 *For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (see Psa 119:142)*

=> The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the old and new messages of God.

Rom 8:3 *For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man.*

Mat 5:17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.”

=> The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the old and new covenants.

Heb 8:6 *But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.*

Heb 9:14-15 *How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

Thought 2. Heritage is critical. The godly past is not to be discarded. It is to be developed, built upon and fulfilled.

Mat 5:17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them.” ■