

The Ultimate Kingdom

KINGDOM COME: How Jesus Revealed It in Parables #5 - Pastor Jonathan Combs - September 13, 2026 - Matthew 13:47-58

INTRO: Good morning church! We're concluding our 5-part series called "KINGDOM COME: How Jesus Revealed It in Parables" from Matthew 13. The series title comes from Jesus teaching on prayer in Matthew 6:

Matthew 6:9-10 (KJV) Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Every time we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we are praying for His rule and reign to come more fully into our lives. For four (4) weeks now we have explored His Kingdom as being one we must be **Receptive** to, as being a **Patient** Kingdom, as being **Unstoppable**, and indeed **Priceless**. Today, we will see that His Kingdom is **Ultimate**, bringing every person to an ultimate and final response.

NEED: It's easy to hear these parables, nod along, and then move on without allowing what we've heard to change how we live. Today, we will see that Jesus asked the disciples, "Have you understood all these things?" and they simply said, "Yes." But understanding these parables and rightly responding to them are two different things. In fact, as we will see by the end of today's text, knowledge/familiarity didn't produce faith. It produced unbelief.

Friends, we can grow up in church, know the stories, understand the doctrine, even say "yes, I get it" like the disciples did, but still miss what Jesus is actually asking of us. And the stakes are extremely high! These aren't stories we can afford to hear passively. **Jesus didn't tell these parables so we'd feel informed. He told them so we'd be transformed.** So, have we responded to them the way Christ intends?

Trans: As we conclude our parables series, I pray that you may hear and obey the words of our Lord Jesus today, who calls us to take action with what we've received.

BODY: In the Gospel of Matthew chapter 13, Jesus finished His parables about the Kingdom of Heaven with a conclusion that demanded a response. We can rightly respond to Jesus Christ's final parables about the Kingdom of Heaven. How do we rightly respond to Christ's final parables? The text gives three ways to respond to Christ's final parables about the Kingdom of Heaven.

Read text: Matthew 13:47-58 (ESV) 47 "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 righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 51 "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." 53 And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, 54 and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not 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 hometown and in his own household." 58 And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

How to Rightly Respond to Christ's Final Parables about the Kingdom of Heaven:

1. Heed the Warning.

EXP: (47-50) Jesus told yet another, "end of the age" parable to His disciples. The parable of the net reminds us that a day of separation is coming, what looks mixed together now, like the wheat and weeds parable, will one day be sorted for eternity.

"This is a warning parable. It is a clarion call to all who hear not to ignore or reject the call of Christ but to make every effort to enter God's kingdom while you still may." — Ray Fowler

"Kingdom of Heaven" (47) (βασίλεια, basileia) - territory subject to the rule of a king; royal power, dominion, rule. 126 times in the 4 Gospels and "of heaven" is a characteristic of Matthew's Gospel.

"Net" (47) - a large fishing net, a drag net. "Such a net could be quite long with cork floats along the top and lead weights along the bottom. It could be stretched between two boats or laid out from one and then pulled to shore by ropes. Everything in its path would be caught as it was pulled in." (Klyne Snodgrass)

"Gathered fish ... sorted the good" (48) (συνάλλω, sullegō) - to gather up; to collect in order to carry off.

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“Threw away the bad” (48) (βάλλω, *ballō*) - to throw or let go of a thing without caring where it falls; to scatter, to throw, cast out. Who determines what fish is good and what fish is bad?

“So it will be at the end of the age” (49) (συντελεία, *sunteleia*) - completion, end; of the age, of the world

“Angels will come out and separate” (49) (ἀφορίζω, *aphorizō*) - to mark off from others by boundaries, to limit, to separate; divide, sever.

“Fiery furnace” (50) (κάμινος, *kaminos*) - a furnace for smelting. Jesus' image of a 'furnace of fire' fits a broader Jewish tradition that used furnace and fire imagery for Gehenna and final judgment.

“Weeping and gnashing of teeth” (50) - to denote extreme anguish and utter despair of men consigned to eternal punishment in hell; snarling, growling. Repeated from the Parable of the Weeds in Matthew 13:42.

ARG: We will all go before the judgment seat of Christ:

2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Jesus will come and judge all people:

Matthew 16:27 (NLT) For the Son of Man will come with his angels in the glory of his Father and will judge all people according to their deeds.

ILL: **Traffic Warnings.** When you see a sign on the side of the road that says Caution: Road Work, you have a choice. Heed that warning and slow down or make no change and risk the consequences.

Tornado Watch vs. Warning. Watch means the conditions are right for it; be prepared. Warning means it's happening; take action. This parable is a warning so take action.

APP: The net gathered all kinds of fish, but they were not all the same. Don't assume that because you are near the things of God, you belong to the Kingdom. One day, Christ will separate what appears together now.

If the Holy Spirit is exposing sin that you need to repent of, heed the warning. If you have been pretending to follow Christ while privately living in rebellion against Him, heed the warning. If you have been putting off surrendering your life to Jesus because you assume you will deal with it later, heed the warning. The warning is not given to make us panic. It is given to **move us to Christ while there is still time.**

2. Steward the Truth.

EXP: (51-52) Look again at v. 52 and see, “the kingdom of heaven is like a master.” One last parable about the kingdom of heaven that draws all disciples (including us) of Jesus to respond.

“Have you understood” (51) (συνίημι, *sunīēmi*) - to put (as it were) the perception with the thing perceived; to set or join together in the mind; have you connected the dots, have you put it all together?

“They said ... ‘Yes’” (51) - Jesus has been speaking privately with His disciples since Matthew 13:36: “Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him...”

“Therefore” (52) - All of the parables that Jesus has taught up to this point lead to this final parable.

“Every scribe who has been trained” (52) (μαθητεύω, *mathēteuō*) - to be a disciple of one; to follow his precepts and instructions. “Our Lord compares His own work to that of the scribes of the Jewish schools ... He was training the disciples, “unlearned” as they were, to be His successors in that office.” — Ellicott

Matthew 13:52 (NIV) 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.

“Like a master of a house” (52) - master of the house, householder; head of the house.

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"Brings out of his treasure" (52) - a treasury, storehouse; the things laid up in a treasury; a deposit

"What is new and what is old" (52) - "Old" is the substance of established truth (Old Testament, settled doctrine) and "new" is the fresh revelation and application that comes through Christ and the gospel.

Johann Bengel notes the order is significant: "new" is named before "old," implying the new revelation in Christ is what **unlocks and illuminates** the old scriptures, not the reverse.

ARG: **We are stewards of the mysteries of God:**

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 (ESV) 1 This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

We have been entrusted with the Gospel:

2 Thessalonians 2:4 (ESV) But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

ILL: **Parable of the Talents.** Two of the servants steward the treasure and one doesn't. Which are you?

Lego. My brother and I were very careful to keep all of our Lego in one place, never taking it downstairs or outside, for fear of losing pieces. But our kids get a hold of these pieces and scatter them everywhere, even taking them home. They don't see the value in what we had.

APP: Jesus didn't spend all of Matthew 13 revealing the mysteries of the Kingdom to His disciples simply so they could say, "Yes, we understand." These parables aren't lessons to be understood; they're orders to be obeyed. We are not called merely to collect truth. We are called to steward truth.

Sure, we should always want to grow in our understanding of God's Word. But there comes a point where we have to ask: What am I doing with everything God has taught me? Put into practice what Christ has revealed. Bring out treasures new and old for the advancement of the Gospel.

3. Receive the King.

EXP: (53-58) The Kingdom of Heaven parables end with a journey back to Christ's hometown. This ending is a capstone for those who hear Jesus teach, think they know Him, but don't receive Him as Savior and King.

"When Jesus had finished these parables, he went away ... to his hometown" (54) (πατρίς, *patris*) - one's native country; one's fatherland, one's own country, a fixed abode or home

"He taught them in their synagogue ... they were astonished" (54) (ἐκπλήσσω, *ekplēssō*) - to be struck with amazement, astonished, amazed

"Where did this man get this wisdom?" (54) (σοφία, *sophia*) - wisdom, broad and full of intelligence

"Mighty works?" (54) (δύναμις, *dunamis*) - strength power, ability; inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth

- **"Carpenter's son?" (55)** (τέκτων, *tektōn*) - a worker in wood, a carpenter, joiner, builder; craftsman. This and Mark 6 are the only places in Scripture that mention Joseph's profession.
- **"His mother called Mary?" (55)** - We know his momma, she lives right down the street.
- **"His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?" (55)** - One of two places (Mark 6 again) that tells the exact names of Jesus' four brothers. Perhaps there was some mischief from these boys.
- **"His sisters with us?" (56)** - Jesus had sisters also. We know His family. He's one of us.

"They took offense at him" (57) (σκανδαλίζω, *skandalizō*) - to put a stumbling block or impediment in the way, upon which another may trip and fall, metaphor to offend

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“Prophet is not without honor” (57) (ἄτιμος, *atimos*) - without honour, unhonoured, dishonoured

“Except in his hometown” (57) - same word as v. 54. Jesus receives honor in many places, but not in Nazareth. That community could not look past their knowledge of His family.

“He did not do many mighty works there” (58) - same as v. 54. Jesus did some, but not many.

“Because of their unbelief” (58) (ἀπιστία, *apistia*) - unfaithfulness, faithless; want of faith, unbelief

ARG: The World rejected Him, but those who believe have become sons and daughters of King Jesus:

John 1:10-12 (NLT) 10 He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. 11 He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. 12 But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.

He is no mere carpenter's son, He is the King of Kings:

Revelation 19:16 (NIV) On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords.

ILL: **James and Jude.** Two of the four brothers listed go on to be leaders in the Christian church and writers of New Testament Scripture. Though you would expect familiarity from them, they instead write of their allegiance to their Lord Jesus with *doulos* (bondservant, slave):

- James 1:1 (ESV) James, a **servant** of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ ...
- Jude 1:1 (ESV) Jude, a **servant** of Jesus Christ and brother of James ...

APP: The people of Nazareth knew facts about Jesus, but they would not bow before Jesus. As the ancient proverb goes, "familiarity breeds contempt." Their familiarity became a stumbling block because they could not reconcile the Jesus they thought they knew with the King He revealed Himself to be. Has Jesus become too familiar to you? Has His Word become routine? Has worship become something you attend?

Receive Him. Bow before Him. Surrender your life to Him. The King of Kings has come, and to all who believe in His name, He gives the right to become children of God. Have you received Him as your King?

CONCLUSION: Over these last five weeks, Jesus has revealed what His Kingdom is like. It is a Kingdom we must be receptive to. It is both patient and priceless as well as unstoppable and ultimate. A day is coming when the net will be cast and everyone will stand before Christ. So heed the warning. Steward the truth. Receive the King.

As we close this series, don't miss the greatest truth behind every one of these parables: The Kingdom has come and is coming because Jesus the King has come to us and is coming again. King Jesus has willingly gone to the cross for rebels and sinners and then resurrected becoming victorious over sin, death, and hell. And one day, King Jesus will return. Every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Friend, the invitation to the Kingdom is still open today. You can bow before Him today in faith. You can receive the forgiveness purchased through His blood. You can surrender your life to the King and inherit the Kingdom.

Church, Jesus did not tell these parables so that we would simply be informed about the Kingdom. He told them so that we would be transformed by the King. Hear again the question Jesus asked His disciples: "Have you understood all these things?" What are you going to do with what the King has revealed?