

Parables are Confusing

By Bradley Kirsten



I've often longed that the parables of Jesus could be straight forward. I've often read through them and wondered exactly what they might mean. Also, I'm afraid to assume I know the meaning because then I might miss out on the real meaning should I get it wrong. It's all too much. A while back someone wrote a newspaper article that slammed Christianity by quoting certain Old Testament bits and pieces, and a work colleague at the time got all nervous and started to wonder if this article was in fact correct and as someone who was at that stage asking questions about Christianity, this made him all wobbly. He actually seemed very flustered and I reassured him with this piece of seemingly obvious advice: Why not read it for yourself, understand the context, and to whom it is written and why, then get your head around the truth versus what was written in the news article. We ended up doing this together and he felt a lot better knowing that the author of that newspaper article had it all wrong. It didn't take a rocket scientist, it just took some calm and a few minutes. So now I'm trying to use my own advice and go about parable deciphering in the same way. I still wish it were more straight forward. Actually, it would be a whole lot easier if Jesus didn't use parables to start with and just tell us straight. But then again, who am I to question Jesus? Yeah, exactly!

Now we can go and have a gander at Luke chapter 19's Parable of the 10 minas. This isn't the forum to go through an entire exegesis, but I do want to say this, very quickly: Jesus was confusing on purpose. I don't like it, and I can't speak for you, but life is complicated enough; I'm sure instructions for great living should be a little plainer to see, don't you think? You see, Jesus wanted people to be curious and a bit confused. It was a way to separate people into a group of intrigued folks who wanted to know more and so pursued Jesus, and desired to know what he meant

and in the process, discovered more about the Man and what He was like and what the Kingdom of God is like. The other group said something like: "This is all too confusing and I can't be bothered to figure it out, so I'm outta here." The proof is at the end of John, chapter 6.



I want to challenge you to seek the things of the kingdom; to desire to understand what Jesus taught and why, and to purposely read and press on to understand His parables. Allow them to spur debate and discussion and reshape some of your thinking if need be.



The fact that you question is good, means you are seeking after the truth of God and what He desires of us as we pursue His kingdom, its righteousness and sharing the Good News with others. Walking away is the easy way out, and in Matthew 13 Jesus tells His disciples that very thing. I want to challenge you to seek the things of the kingdom; to desire to understand what Jesus taught and why, and to purposely read and press on to understand His parables. Allow them to spur debate and discussion and reshape some of your thinking if need be. Let's desire to be people that have a renewed passion for the words of the Saviour, and as they did 2 thousand-odd years ago, let it cause us to follow him even more fervently, and stop at nothing for more of Him.