

“The Parables of Jesus: An Introduction” **Selected Scriptures**

Things I knew: *connecting the dots...*

- Jesus could be seen and understood *better* as a first century Rabbi.
- Jesus was (obviously) a Torah-observant Jew.
- At some point, to study the parables of Jesus

The purpose of Jesus’ use of parables was (*at least*) two fold:

(1) To reveal realities of life in the Kingdom of God.

(2) Ironically, their purpose was also to conceal what their meaning was.

However, ultimately the purpose and value of this kind of teaching; whether it be a paradox or parable, or a riddle or questions with more questions (*a favorite rabbinical teaching technique*) was that if effectively brought people into what we referred to in the past as “*sacred space*”.

“*Sacred space*,” where the possibility exists for authentic change, or transformation to take place.

The “axis-mundi” – The fact is, *for most of us*, most the time the *center point* of our life – the “axis-mundi” of our life – is *us... we are the center*.

- The upside of being the center –
- The downside of being the center –

When we are the center, we are in “profane space”

Jesus’ rabbinic style of teaching, particularly His use of parables, was perfectly designed (to knock one “off-center”) to create at least the possibility for sacred space, where people actually might change.

In Jesus’ use of parables we find:

- The use of reversal –
- The collision of opposites –
- The use of lost and hidden images –
- He explains what growth and transformation looks like

Application: Question: Are you willing to be disturbed? Are you willing to be knocked off center so that maybe you can enter into a place where real transformation, by the power of God’s Spirit, can actually occur?