

Lesson #3 Jesus the Storytelling Teacher

Appetizer: Master teachers learn how to “draw out.” So Jesus in his parables intrigues us to want to know and grow. Jesus explained things over and over. He did it by using parables that drew out the real seekers and kept away those who were merely curious. A “parable” (literally, something thrown alongside) was a story that both lit up and yet hid truth, depending on the hearer’s response.

Discussion: Describe the best teacher you’ve ever known. How did he or she stimulate you to learn?

Main Course: Read Mark4:1-25

1. What do the illustrations Jesus uses have in common with his hearers?
2. What does Jesus’ choice of illustrations say about him?
3. Jesus gets into a boat because the crowd is large. Who are the two groups listening to him (vv. 1, 10-12), and what makes them different?
4. Look again at verses 3-8 and 14-20. What is the meaning of the various elements in the parable: seed, soils, birds, sun, and thorns?
5. How many times does Jesus talk about “hearing” in this chapter?
6. How does the repetition of this word help us to understand the real theme of these parables?
7. It’s puzzling that Jesus used parables to prevent outsiders from seeing (vv. 10-12). But as a good teacher, he must have had a reason. What do you think that might have been?
8. What is Jesus saying in the metaphor of the lamp (vv. 21-25)?
9. What hides truth, as a bowl conceals light? (Verses 24 and 25 give a hint.)
10. Read Mark4:26-34. Jesus tells two stories about growth. How would you explain each one?

Dessert: Of all you’ve learned about Jesus in this study, what stands out most clearly?