

List of the Parables of Jesus

The parables of Jesus are found in the three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke); none really in the Gospel of John.

New Testament scholars believe that Mark's gospel was used as a (first) source by both Matthew and Luke, so their versions of each parable can be usefully compared to the Markan version to see their editing [or redaction] of the Markan source (though it also possible that they had access to another source in addition to Mark (known as source "Q")). But New Testament scholars also recognize that all of the parables were shaped prior to Mark by years of oral transmission among followers of Jesus and communities of the earliest church -- from Aramaic-speaking communities of Galilee into the Greek-speaking world/s of the Mediterranean, where early Christian apostles preached the gospel message they had heard.

Their activities of preaching, studying, worshipping, and learning together radically shaped the ways the parables were heard and told. In turn, the gospel writers we refer to as Mark, Matthew, Luke, and Thomas also reshaped the ways the parables were told and interpreted. In this course, we'll examine the parables as parts of these gospel texts, but we will also consider their life as parabolic stories both before and after the writing of the gospels through which we encounter them. Most important, we shall consider our own contexts as scholars and interpreters of the parables.

The parables are listed below in four groups: first, those that are found in the Gospel of Mark and other gospels; second, those that are found in Matthew (and sometimes in Luke and Thomas), but not in Mark; third, those that are found in Luke (and sometimes in Thomas), but not in Mark or Matthew; fourth, those that are found only in Thomas.

PARABLES OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK AND THEIR PARALLELS

1. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER
 - Mark 4:1–20, Matthew 13:3–23, Luke 8:5–15, Thomas 9
2. THE PARABLE OF THE SEED GROWING SECRETLY
 - Mark 4:26-29 [unique to Mark]
3. THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED
 - Mark 4:30-32, Matthew 13:31-32, Luke 13:18-19, Thomas 20
4. THE PARABLE OF THE TENANTS
 - Mark 12:1-11, Matthew 21:33-46, Luke 20:9-18, Thomas 65

5. THE PARABLE OF THE BUDDING FIG TREE
 - Mark 13:28-32, Matthew 24:32-36, Luke 21:29-33
6. THE PARABLE OF THE FAITHFUL SERVANT
 - Mark 13:33-37, Matthew 24:42, Luke 12:35-48, Thomas 21, 103

PARABLES OF MATTHEW NOT FOUND IN MARK

7. THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND TARES
 - Matthew 13:24-30, Thomas 57
8. THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN
 - Matthew 13:33, Luke 13:20-21, Thomas 96
9. THE PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE
 - Matthew 13:44, Thomas 109
10. THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL
 - Matthew 13:45-46, Thomas 76
11. THE PARABLE OF THE NET
 - Matthew 13:47-50, Thomas 8
12. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP
 - Matthew 18:12-14, Luke 15:3-7, Thomas 107
13. THE PARABLE OF THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT
 - Matthew 18:23-35 [unique to Matthew]
14. THE PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD
 - Matthew 20:1-16 [unique to Matthew]

15. THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS
 - Matthew 21:28-31 [unique to Matthew]
16. THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING FEAST/BANQUET
 - Matthew 22:1-14, Luke 14:15-24, Thomas 64
- 17a. THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS
 - Matthew 25:1-12 [unique to Matthew]
- 17b. THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS
 - Matthew 25:14-25:30

PARABLES OF LUKE NOT FOUND IN MARK OR MATTHEW

18. THE PARABLE OF THE TWO DEBTORS
 - Luke 10:30-37 [unique to Luke]
19. THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN
 - Luke 10:30-37 [unique to Luke]
20. THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL
 - Luke 12:16-21, Thomas 63
21. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN
 - Luke 15:8-10 [unique to Luke]
22. THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON
 - Luke 15:11-32 [unique to Luke]
23. THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD
 - Luke 16:1-8 [unique to Luke]
24. THE PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND THE BEGGAR LAZARUS
 - Luke 16:19-31 [unique to Luke]