

June 4 | Sunday

Upside Down: Small but Mighty, Hidden but Here

Read [Matthew 13:31-35](#)



05 | Mon – What is a parable? | Read [Mark 4:33-34](#) and [Matthew 13:34-35](#)

Parables are usually short, simple stories with a major point. Kids were told in Sunday school in the 'olden days' that a parable was an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. But the word parable means something deeper. The Greek and Hebrew words indicate a way of speaking that use images to make the hearers think differently. What story has touched your heart recently, affecting you more deeply than a sermon or lecture would?

06 | Tue – Why did Jesus tell them? | Read [Matthew 13:10-16](#)

Experienced teachers know that some students have closed minds and the only way to help them consider a subject differently is to present it in an unexpected way. Teachers also know that concepts must always connect to something a student is already familiar with. Jesus used common objects or ordinary situations to communicate a truth to be considered. What helps you look at something in a new way? Are you open to seeing things from God's perspective? **07**

| Wed – A story of a mustard seed | Read [Matthew 13:31-32](#)

In our culture, Jesus might have used a different seed, maybe an acorn that grows into a huge oak tree, to explain how God's kingdom grows. Many of Jesus' followers believed that he would launch his kingdom in a dramatic, powerful way. Very few understood that it would start small but grow to cover the whole earth. Do you get impatient or discouraged with your own spiritual growth or that of others when dramatic changes don't seem to happen?

08 | Thu – A story about yeast | Read [Matthew 13:33](#)

Do you often feel in the minority, standing for righteousness in a culture where famous people and powerful institutions disparage spiritual values? Jesus' story reminds us how a small bit of yeast changes the characteristics of dough in the baking process. History is full of people whose faithful actions over time changed a nation. Think of William Wilberforce in England or Martin Luther King Jr in America and take heart. Keep living out the words of Jesus.

09 | Fri – A story about hidden treasure | Read [Matthew 13:44-46](#)

This story makes a bold claim. Biblical scholar N. T. Wright puts it this way, "The gospel of the kingdom isn't a pleasant religious idea that you might like to explore some time when you've got an hour or two to spare....It's like a fabulous hoard of treasure, yours for the taking—if you'll sell everything else to buy the field where it's hidden. It's like the biggest, finest, purest pearl that any jeweler ever imagined, and it's yours for the taking—if you'll sell everything else, including all the other pearls you've ever owned, in order to purchase it." How could this challenge play out in your life? What would you consider doing differently?

10 | Sat – A story about sheep and goats | Read [Matthew 25:31-46](#)

This story is a follow up to yesterday's parable. If we are as rich and blessed as Jesus teaches, it is too good to keep to ourselves. This story demonstrates how much value Jesus places on the most 'unworthy' people. Do you? It is tempting to focus on and help people we admire or who seem important but that is not Jesus' way. What unlikely person in your life right now needs the kind of help you would give to Jesus if he were in their shoes?