

## **How did Jesus teach? In Parables, teaching stories, simple illustrations**

### **The Garden of your life: Who you are**

2 realities: A. Our beliefs

Proverbs 14:12 ¶ There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof [are] the ways of death.

Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so [is] he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart [is] not with thee.

Luke 5:5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. (Not doing what we think is best.

2 Kings 5:11-14 But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. [Are] not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, [if] the prophet had bid thee [do some] great thing, wouldest thou not have done [it]? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Naaman and his flesh eating disease. In just doing what God wanted him to do, even though it made no sense to him, healed him

Matthew 12:33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by [his] fruit.

Our thought patterns and life have been formed by past events

A dog and you beat it, will it act the same as one that's loved?

Past input can distort our view of what is true.

B. The truth- John 17:17 ¶ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Psalms 119:160 ¶ Thy word [is] true [from] the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments [endureth] for ever.

There are all sorts of laws in the universe. Name some.

Gravity and being tripped out. It doesn't matter what you believe, there are certain things that are facts regardless if you believe in them

If you don't eat what will happen

If you show up to work late regularly? If you yell at the boss?

Car and little Johnny. Don't play in the road. Is Johnny's view is infinite or finite? Compared to Johnny the parents view is clearer or worse? An infinite God would have a clearer or worse view of reality?

Psalms 119:130 ¶ The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

Psalms 119:50 ¶ This [is] my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.

Psalms 119:105 ¶ NUN. Thy word [is] a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalms 119:133 ¶ Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Psalms 119:162 ¶ I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Isaiah 55:8 For my thoughts [are] not your thoughts, neither [are] your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 55:9 For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

### **Step 1. Acknowledge and choose. Recognition**

If you don't admit that your lost or need help, you can't be helped.

Ask your friends and family what areas you need work in.

What would be the reaction of someone finding a treasure map. Some would believe it and go looking for treasure. Others would feel it was a hoax. What if someone could verify the map was real? A pearl of great price. The Word of God will work if you believe it and put it into action

God's way is easy, your way is hard.

## Proactive vs. Reactive lifestyle

1. On your current path, where are you heading? Is it going to get better or worse?  
Looking at a map upside down (Distorted view of reality) If I go left on I-10 will I get to Houston?  
What do I need to do to get there? A compass to know which way is north.
2. Acknowledge that the path I'm on isn't taking me where I want to go.

String, straw, tape, balloons and target. (Draw a target on a piece of paper, blow up a balloon and hold it about 5 feet away from the target and let it go. Did it hit the target? That's how life will be without making conscious choices along the way. Now tape a piece of a straw to the balloon, hold one end in your hand and have someone else hold the other end on the target and let it go. This is a good example of having a plan based on God's word

3. Just realizing there is a problem is not enough. You must choose to change.

Isaiah 55:6 ¶ Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

Proverbs 3:6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Will I get there immediately? No, but if I start on the right path I have a much better chance

### **Step 2. Clear and plow the ground: Repentance**

Tell God you're sorry for the things that you've done wrong. Turn away from the thoughts that don't line up with what God would want.

Job 4:8 Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

Hosea 10:12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for [it is] time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.

### **Step 3. Planting the seed**

Decide to think God's thoughts. This isn't positive thinking. We should think positively about the things that God's positive about and negative about what He's negative about. The only way that you'll know what he thinks is if you study the Bible.

Psalms 126:5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Matthew 7:17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. vs18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither [can] a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

#### **Step 4. Weeding the Garden: Cleaning up the thought life**

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, **and the unrighteous man his thoughts:** and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

Each time as you apply the discipline of controlling your thoughts, you will catch the thoughts earlier and earlier. Your goal is to catch the initial thought, say no to it and think on something else.

We have ingrained thought patterns. All Satan has to do is start the ball rolling, and we do the rest. We need to retrain ourselves. When the thought of an old offense comes up, instead of dwelling on the offense, immediately begin to pray for the individual. After awhile, when the thought of the person comes up, we won't have the negative emotions, but compassion. If Jesus could pray for the ones that crucified Him, we can pray for those that have wounded us.

Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Colossians 3:5 ¶ Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

1 Corinthians 15:33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble [you], and thereby many be defiled;

Proverbs 14:30 ¶ A sound heart [is] the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.

**WHAT DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME THINKING ABOUT?** What was the initial thought that started the train of thought. Try writing it down.(begin to keep a journal.) Begin to recognize the triggers in your thought processes and where they lead you.

**Other inputs: Music, TV, WHO OR WHAT ARE YOU SPENDING TIME WITH?**

We need to realize that actions follow emotions, which follow thoughts. A great example of this is that you could be feeling happy, put the movie "Old Yeller" in the video player and by the end of the movie, how do you feel? Sad. More than likely, nothing would have changed in your life in that two

hours, but because you were thinking and meditating on something sad your emotions would have changed to being sad.

Now, if at the end of “Old Yeller” you put on the “Three Stooges” you probably wouldn’t laugh right away. But by the end of it your emotions would have changed around and you would be feeling better. What you were meditating on caused your emotions to change. If we don’t like the results that we’re getting by thinking the things that we’re thinking, hit the stop button and put a different thought on.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Matthew 13:3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

Matthew 13:18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

### **Step 5. Water and fertilize the garden: Building a good thought life**

Philippians 4:4-8 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

**8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.**

Keep thinking the right thoughts as well as watching what other inputs you allow

2 Corinthians 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward [man] is renewed day by day.

Ephesians 4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Ephesians 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Psalms 119:9 ¶ BETH. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed [thereto] according to thy word.

Psalms 119:11 ¶ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

AGAIN, WHO OR WHAT ARE YOU SPENDING TIME WITH

Whatsoever is pure Good influences, Church, Bible study, and Godly friends

### **Step 6. The plants grow: How we act and the things we do**

We shouldn't be surprised if we plant a kernel of corn and a corn plant comes up. We will act according to how we've been thinking.

Matthew 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Luke 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Accountability James 5:16 Confess [your] faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

### **Step 7. Bears fruit: Experiences and consequences, both good and bad**

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Psalms 1:3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Proverbs 12:14 ¶ A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of [his] mouth: and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

Proverbs 13:2 ¶ A man shall eat good by the fruit of [his] mouth: but the soul of the transgressors [shall eat] violence.

Isaiah 3:10 Say ye to the righteous, that [it shall be] well [with him]: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Jeremiah 6:19 Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, [even] the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

Jeremiah 17:10 I the LORD search the heart, [I] try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, [and] according to the fruit of his doings.

Matthew 7:16-18 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither [can] a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Jeremiah 32:19 Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes [are] open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:

Matthew 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Do you like the fruit that you're getting?

If you do the same things, you get the same results.

Luke 13:1 ¶ There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.<sup>2</sup> And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 ¶ He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

Instead of reacting to the different events in your life, begin to order your steps according to Gods word. You will bear fruit. Which kind do you want?