

Parable of the Scribe

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 21 May 2017

Preacher: Mike Salvati

[0:00] If you would open up your Bibles to Matthew chapter 13, we're looking at the last of the eight parables of the parabolic discourse in Matthew chapter 13, 1 through 53.

And so if you would look to Matthew 13, 1, or excuse me, 13, 51 through 52, let me read that for us. This is the word of the Lord. This came off the lips of our King Jesus.

Have you understood all these things? Jesus asked his disciples. And they said to him, yes. And he said to them, therefore, every scribe who's been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.

These are the words of the Lord. If you've got your Bible open, would you lift up your open Bible in front of you, and I want you to repeat this one word after me.

It's the word treasure. Ready? One, two, three. Treasure. This book has treasure in it.

[1:27] It's God's Word. It's living and active. God speaking to us. All authoritative, life-giving treasure.

Treasure. That's what this book is. God reveals the kingdom in the book. And in this chapter, in this section, we read about a new kind of scribe.

Therefore, every scribe. It's a new kind of position in the kingdom. Scribes of the kingdom have this growing understanding of the kingdom and have this growing impulse to share something that Jesus calls treasure.

Scribes of the kingdom bring out the treasure of the kingdom. And that the treasure of the kingdom is the life-changing understanding of what God has done for sinners in Jesus.

The saving reign of God. Scribes get it and they give it. They get the treasure and they give the treasure. And this morning, we're going to just walk through these two verses.

[2:53] In verse 51, Jesus asks His disciples a question. Have you understood all these things? And His disciples at the end of verse 51 says, they say, yes.

And then Jesus in 52, He wraps everything up that He's been proclaiming. With a therefore. And He shares with us a concluding parable.

And what He says to His disciples back in the first century, He's saying to us disciples in the 21st century. If you've got the treasure, you give the treasure.

This morning, we're going to proceed by looking at His question about understanding.

Then we're going to take a quick look at the disciples' answer, yes. And then we're going to spend some time in His concluding parable. It's a wrap-up parable.

[3:57] And that word, therefore, in the beginning of verse 52 is a big clue. And then, we're going to bring it to bear on our own lives.

Our present call as kingdom scribes. And what you're going to find there is a help-wanted side. Scribes wanted in Christ the King Church.

There's treasure to be shared. So, let's look at this question in verse 51. Jesus asks His disciples, Have you understood all these things?

And whenever you see something like all these things, you're asking the question, what? What things, Jesus? What are you referring to? What is this all these things business?

And the easy way to answer it, it's just what He's been sharing. It's what precedes it. It's the seven parables with explanations that have gone before. That's what Jesus is referring to.

[4:58] He's talking about the parable of the soils. Four responses, but just two kinds of hearts. The parable of the weeds.

The parable of the mustard seed. And the parable of the leaven. The parable of the hidden treasure and pearl of great price. The parable of the dragnet. These are the things that Jesus is referring to. Have you understood these things?

All these things. And of course, they're all parables of the kingdom. And what I've been wanting to help you understand is when Jesus talks about the kingdom, He's talking about the saving reign of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

God has come and He's seeking to save and bring sinners into His kingdom by His grace. And so these are all parables of different dimensions and aspects of the saving reign of God.

And so Jesus is asking, hey, do you understand all these things I'm telling you in parables about the kingdom? Do you understand that this good news brings about a kingdom produce?

[6:08] Do you understand with the parable of the weeds and of the dragnet that a kingdom perspective yields this understanding that we're moving to a judgment day?

Do you understand that this good news is? Do you understand that this good news is? Do you get with the parables of the hidden treasure in the pearl of great price that the kingdom is of incomparable worth and worth giving everything to have?

Do you get it? Do you get that the parable of the mustard seed and leaven that the kingdom of heaven is hidden in nature but progressing and will eventually be fully seen?

Do you get it? God's at work. All these parables are referring back to some aspect of the kingdom, the saving reign of God.

Jesus isn't talking about geometry here. He's not talking about cooking. He's talking about the kingdom. And so when He says, have you understood all these things?

[7:13] He's saying, do you get the kingdom? Do you get that I've come to save? What you need to understand is what Jesus meant by understood.

Have you understood all these things? It's tied to His use of parables. Now remember, parables are like vertical blinds. You know how you open up a vertical blind and you can see outside the window?

Well, a parable would hide the truth of the kingdom to those with a hard heart, but a parable would be opened to a person that God has softened their heart.

God reveals the truth of the kingdom to those with tender hearts. Now when we use the word understand, we typically use it in terms of figuring something out.

And I think right now I'm going to get a yes and an amen from parents and grandparents. If you buy a dollhouse for your little girl, before your little sweetheart girl gets to play in it, you will need to assemble it.

[8:20] In order for you to assemble it, you will need to figure out the directions. And that is no small thing nowadays. Do I have an amen?

Nowadays, you've got to get some kind of degree in engineering in order to assemble a dollhouse for your little sweetheart. But after you figure out the directions, you have an understanding of things, then you can go about putting it together.

That's not the kind of understanding Jesus is talking about. He's not talking about figured out understanding. The understanding that Jesus is talking about is God-given understanding.

When God gives you eyes to see, when God gives you ears to hear, when God gives you a heart to understand.

And so what we see happening in these parables, these parables reveal the truth of the kingdom, and God gives the understanding to comprehend it. And so we see that being played out in Matthew 13.

[9:37] In chapter 13, verse 10, Jesus has just shared the parable of the soils, and His disciples come up to Him, and they say, hey, why do you speak to them in parables? And in verse 11, Jesus answers them, and He says, to you, disciples, it has been given.

You've got to be thinking grace right there. It's been given to know, understand the secrets, hiddenness of the kingdom.

Understanding is given as a gift, but to them, it's not been given. This understanding is a God-given gift.

What God does is He enables us to actually comprehend the kingdom of God.

That's how sinful we are. He needs to break in and enable us by His Spirit to do this. So Jesus reveals the kingdom in His parables, but the understanding is given by God.

[10:47] Now, if you find yourself, well, I don't buy that self, honey. Flip over to Matthew 11. Is this what Jesus means?

In verse 25, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children, those who are humble.

Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will to reveal them. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.

What we see Jesus saying here is that this understanding all throughout Matthew 13 is a God-given insight into the hiddenness of the kingdom concealed in the parables.

It's a work of God. So Jesus is not asking His disciples, hey guys, have you figured out my parables? He's asking His disciples, do you have eyes to see?

[11:59] Do you have ears to hear? Do you have an understanding that only God gives? And let me just add this, it is a saving understanding.

It's an understanding that makes you realize I need to be rescued. I need to be in the kingdom, and only the King gets me into His kingdom.

And Jesus would die in order to make that happen. So what we're seeing here is this understanding, this when Jesus says, have you understood all these things?

He's not asking them if they've figured it out. He's asking, hey, has God given you the insight into the kingdom, the saving reign of God?

And this is a question that's moving towards a conclusion. He is wrapping up this discourse. You know, I'm an assistant coach for my son's lacrosse team, and what will happen is something happened out on the field, and it's not good.

[13:15] And so what the coach does is like, time out. The players come in, you huddle up, and you're like, okay guys, this went wrong, and this went wrong. Here's what we need to kind of fix it.

Do you understand? And they're like, yeah, yeah, yeah, we get it, yeah, we get it. And then they go out, and you really see if they get it or not. And so what Jesus is doing here is He's bringing His disciples together after His parabolic discourse, and He says, do you get it?

Because if you get it, I'm sending you out to give it. And they're going to reply in just a moment. This morning, I want you to put yourself in the place of these disciples.

Do you understand the kingdom? Do you understand all these things? Do you get that Jesus has come to inaugurate a kingdom of salvation?

Let's look at the end of verse 51 because we see the quick answer of the disciples. And oddly, I think you'll be strangely encouraged. Have you understood all these things, Jesus asks?

[14:37] And they say, yes. Now, we're not told if that was a chorus of yeses, like they look at each other, yes! or if it's kind of popcorn, yes to the yes, yes, yes.

It's just a yes. But what are they saying yes to? Well, if we're understanding what Jesus is asking, right, He's saying, hey, do you understand that the saving reign of God has come in me? and they're saying, yes, we understand these parables are saying the saving reign of God has come. Now, the question, their response, we've got to ask, do they really understand what they're saying?

Because all throughout Matthew, Jesus has this common refrain for His disciples, oh, you of little faith. Oh, you of little faith. Oh, you of little faith.

Oh, guys. Guys. I mean, in Matthew 16, in just a couple chapters out, Peter is going to make the confession. You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

[15:54] And Jesus is going to say, only God reveals that, man. And then within just a few verses from that, Jesus is going to start talking about He's going to go to Jerusalem, He's going to be handed over, killed, and raised again.

And Peter says, no way! That's not going to happen. And then Jesus says, get behind me, Satan. You don't get it.

And so, in the disciples, we see this, sometimes they get it, sometimes they don't. Do they really understand what Jesus is saying here? And what we notice is, Jesus takes them at their word. He takes them at face value. He takes their yes as yes. Hey, they may not understand every detail about the kingdom, but they know enough.

They may have a little faith, but Jesus is a great king. How about you? Do you get everything about the kingdom?

[17:07] Do you have to? You need to know that Jesus is the king, and you need to know that the kingdom is a kingdom of salvation. Maybe the question is, do you want to?

Do you want to know the king? Do you want to be a part of his kingdom? That's the question. And his disciples said yes, they're following him.

And so, Jesus takes their yes as yes, and he goes on to make a concluding parable. And that's where I want to draw your attention to now, verse 52.

Therefore, every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom is like a master of a house. Now, the first thing you need to notice is the first word of verse 52.

Actually, it's the first word in red. Therefore. Now, you've got to ask your question. Whenever you encounter a therefore in the Bible or in a newspaper or in just some book, you've got to be asking the question, what is the therefore?

[18:28] Let me hear it. Therefore. Here enters a little song called Conjunction Junction. Conjunction Junction, what's your function?

Hooking up cars. Wait, hooking up words, phrases, clauses, clauses, clauses, conjunction, junction. Now, this therefore is a conjunction.

It's a coordinating conjunction. It coordinates. And what it's coordinating is what has gone before it and what comes after it.

And so, what has come before it? Jesus asked the question, have you understood all these things? The disciple says, yes! And so, Jesus takes that and coordinates it with His response.

Therefore, if you understand the kingdom, therefore, you are a scribe of the kingdom.

[19:34] That's what He's saying. That's the therefore. That's the connection. Their understanding of the parables results in their becoming disciples which shows up in them being scribes of the kingdom.

If you get it, you give it. If you understand it, you share the understanding. What's this scribe business?

Therefore, every scribe... What's a scribe? Well, a scribe was someone back in Jesus' day who understood God's law as revealed in God's book.

Scribes were a kind of Old Testament specialists. And back in Jesus' day, scribes, their role was institutionalized in Jewish culture.

And so, when Herod wants to know where the Messiah was to be born in Matthew 2.4, He kind of rings a bell for the scribes. And He says, Hey, where was the Messiah to be born?

[20:44] And they respond with Micah 5.2, And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah. For from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.

They knew where to find the answer. There were pros. Experts! Experts! In the Old Testament, Ezra was a priest and a scribe who had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

That's Ezra 7.10, one of my life verses. And so, what we see in the model scribe in Ezra is someone who studied, who applied it, to do it, and then shared it.

The problem with the scribes in Jesus' day is I'll let you look at what Jesus says. Turn to Matthew 23. Matthew 23, verse 1 and 2.

Remember, we're talking about scribes and what scribes do. Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, the scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do.

[22:08] Apparently, the scribes were well-versed in the Bible, but they weren't doing the Bible. And the scribes that Jesus is calling to Himself and sending out, the kingdom scribes, those who have understanding of the kingdom, you know what makes us experts in the kingdom?

We have been personally affected by the king. We've been in His presence and we do what He says.

So scribes were people of the book. They read the book. They studied the book. They taught the book. They were seen as experts because of their understanding.

Scribes were teachers. They shared their understanding of the law. In verse 52, Jesus is calling a scribe all who by God's grace have understood the parables of the kingdom.

The disciples of Jesus are scribes of the kingdom. It's a new kind of scribe. Jesus has brought a new kingdom with a new kind of scribe.

[23:26] They get it and they give it. Now, if you're wondering right now, oh man, scribe, are you kidding me? I barely know where Genesis is.

Come on. Here's something encouraging to remember. Remember who Jesus is talking to. He's talking to his disciples.

And we don't know how many disciples were in this house that he was in right now. We know at least there was the 12. And four of those 12 were fishermen.

They had no formal training as a scribe. One was a zealot. Chances are they didn't have formal training as a scribe in the school of Hillel.

And then there's this guy writing, Matthew, who was a former tax collector. So we know that at least half of the 12 disciples were not formally trained as scribes in the classic sense, but Jesus is calling them a scribe.

[24:33] Do you know why? they're in the Jesus school of biblical interpretation.

In Acts chapter 4, Paul and John, they're arrested and then they're brought before the high priestly council. and Peter's filled by the Spirit and he shares this compelling, compelling word and it kind of climaxes in Acts 4.12 which many of you know by heart and it says this, and there is salvation in no one else for there's no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

And he's talking about Jesus. He's talking about the saving kingdom of Christ. And he's talking it right to the Jewish establishment and hierarchy. That's pretty bold.

Look at verse 13. Now when they, the Jewish council, saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished.

They're not scribes in the formal sense. But then look at this. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. Do you know what makes us experts in the kingdom?

[26:12] Do you know what makes us scribes of the kingdom? We hang out with the king. We belong to him. We're his followers. We're part of his school.

Peter and John just happen to be part of the inaugural class of the Jesus School of Biblical Interpretation. But everyone who's come to understand the saving kingdom of God since, they enter the school as well.

We become followers of Jesus and we become his scribes. So what is Jesus saying to his disciples? Hey, your understanding of the parables authorizes you to be scribes of the kingdom. You're a new kind of scribe. And as scribes of the kingdom, we teach what Jesus taught. So these scribes were understanding, they personally experienced the kingdom, and they are then to turn around and teach others as well about the kingdom.

Therefore, every scribe who's been trained for the kingdom of heaven. That's a really interesting phrase in the original language.

[27:34] Who've been trained for the kingdom of heaven. It's actually, the verb is the word we get disciple from. And so another way to understand this is who have become disciples of the kingdom of heaven.

And so what Jesus is saying here is that scribes are disciples. Followers of Jesus. The king. And then he goes on to the parable.

He then goes into the comparison. Jesus says, hey, you understand it, now give it, you're scribes, and when you do, you're like this.

Master of a house who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old. Jesus is comparing what scribes do with a master of a house who brings out of his treasure new and old stuff.

It's a comparison between the work of a scribe of the kingdom and this guy showing off his treasure. Jesus is saying that his disciples who have a dissaving understanding of the kingdom and therefore

are scribes, they bring out the treasure of the kingdom.

[28:51] They have experienced the treasure and now they bring out the treasure. A master of a house was the owner of a house and so he had the authority and means to buy and sell whatever he wanted.

He could hire and fire as he pleased and so Jesus is saying this guy with authority brings out for all to see his treasure new and old. The picture is of someone with authority bringing out all of his stuff for everybody to look at and be amazed by.

As scribes of the kingdom were authorized to bring out the treasures of the kingdom new and old. If you understand the kingdom you share the kingdom.

If you get it you give it. what's this treasure? What is Jesus talking about here?

The treasure he's already talked about in 1344 it's hidden. So the treasure is the saving understanding of the kingdom.

[30:03] It's getting it. It's understanding that the king has just not come just not setting up a kingdom.

He came for me and he came to bring me into the kingdom. I was in need of being saved and the king came for me.

That's the treasure. The treasure is salvation. The treasure is what God in Christ offers everyone. and those who see it and understand it they're brought into the kingdom.

They know it. They experience it. The question that I want to ask for you this morning is where do we find the kingdom? Where do we look to in order to understand the kingdom of heaven?

Where do we turn to and understand who God is in his work of salvation? where do we look? Right there.

[31:11] This book. This book gives the kingdom. This book reveals the treasure. It makes it known. God reveals himself in this book.

When you open up the Bible you are opening up God's treasure trove of transformational truth. that's what you're doing every time you open it up.

It's God speaking. It's an amazing treasure. And Jesus describes it as a treasure new and old. And the best way to understand that is to remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 5.17 where he says do not think that I've come to abolish the law or the prophets the Old Testament.

I've not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. And so he didn't come to relax the law but to explain the true meaning of the law. And so his new teaching on what the old law truly meant was astonishing to people.

It was treasure. So a way to think about this old and new in a very general sense think about the old treasure as the truths revealed in the Old Testament.

[32:26] It's the treasure of our origins. It explains who we are, where we come from. It explains why there's such a complicated mess of evil in the world.

All throughout the Old Testament there is treasure to be found. God revealing Himself over and over and over again. Steadfast love, faithful, holy, sovereign, all knowing, all powerful, all present, all the time.

Again and again and again, the Old Testament reveals truths, precious truths about God. So think about the old treasure as the Old Testament and think about the new treasure as the truths revealed in the New Testament.

And the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament is Jesus. The Old Testament anticipated Jesus and the New Testament is written after Jesus coming.

The difference that Jesus makes. who is Jesus and why He came? New Testament treasure. God's plan of salvation clarified. God's new people, the church, how Christians are to live for Christ in this world, being prepared for His second coming.

[33:41] It's treasure, treasure, treasure. The Old Testament is absolutely essential to the New Testament and the New Testament is a necessary fulfillment of the Old. You need them both.

It's all treasure. All Scripture is God's breathed treasure. Old Testament and New Testament. It's one big treasure box. So, what is Jesus saying here?

His disciples are scribes of His kingdom who bring out the treasure of God's revelation of His word, old and new.

So, which leads us to our present call. If you're a follower of Jesus, you're a disciple of Jesus, you get the kingdom.

And so, what Jesus is saying to you this morning is, you're a scribe of the kingdom. You get it, now give it. Share it.

[34:41] Make it known. Start bringing out the treasure. Make it known. Proclaim it. Let others know about it. Now, you might be sitting there and you're saying, well, I don't really think that the Bible is that treasurable.

I don't find it that interesting. In fact, I haven't been in the Bible for seven years. You know where to start? Don't wait on a feeling.

Just get into the Bible. In Psalm 19, David likens the Bible to gold.

Fine gold. Psalm 119, verse 127, Oh, the psalmist wants God's instructions more than gold. Treasure.

So, if you are a Christian and you haven't been in God's Word, get into Psalm 19. Get into Psalm 119 and ask God to stir your heart to treasure His Word.

[35:43] Incline my heart to your testimonies and not to selfish gain. Open my eyes that I may behold wonderful treasure things from your law.

Unite my heart to fear your name. Satisfy me in the morning with your un failing love as revealed in the treasure of Scripture. Scripture. I recently teamed up with a friend and we have been sharing a psalm every day through the ESV Bible app.

And we look at the same psalm and then we text each other about it. You know what it does? We treasure God's Word together. As scribes of the kingdom, bring out the treasure.

But you've got to treasure it first. Treasure the treasure by being in the treasure. Parents, be kingdom scribes to your kids.

Bring out the treasure. Dads, your families need you to be a scribe of the kingdom and bring out the treasure for them.

[36:56] New and old. Show them the glories of God in the Bible. Show them the wonders of His salvation. Show them the kingdom. Now you may be wondering, well, where do I start?

Start modest. Be thinking five minutes. Make sure you have a time and a place and a plan. The Salvadis do it. Let me show you ours.

We don't do this every morning, but we're somewhat regular. together. And our time is in the mornings after we eat breakfast together. And the place is our dining room table.

And what is our plan? Right now we're going through this thing called the New City Catechism. And what it is is the bringing out of treasure. And we do that together.

And it is a sweet, sweet thing. So if you're a dad who's not led his family this way before, take a step. Start it.

[37:58] Give it two to three weeks. Let it get into a rhythm. And see the effect that it will have on your family. And you don't need kids. If you're a husband and a wife, whether you're just getting started or you have kids out of the house, use the New City Catechism.

That is a gem. You can download it. Look it up. Google it. Finally, I just want to say this. Christ the King Church has a help wanted sign.

Scribes needed. We need scribes. We need brothers and sisters who want to bring out the treasure of God's Word. New and old.

We need scribes to bring out the treasures to our children on Sunday morning. as a part of the King's Kids Ministry. If you're interested in teaching the treasures of God's Word to our kids, Billy's available.

Danielle Morrow would be the other person to talk to. We need scribes to bring out the treasure of God's Word on Thursday nights as part of our youth ministry. We need scribes to bring out the treasures of the book on Saturday mornings during the men's Bible study.

[39:12] They're in Hebrews bringing out the treasure. treasure. Guys. More guys. Go to that. It's awesome. We need scribes to bring out the treasure of God's Word as part of our life groups.

When you go to your life group and God has put on something in your heart that morning from God's Word, you bring it. Bring the treasure. Share it. Share it. We need people to bring out the treasure at our Sunday morning breakfast.

We've got a group of guys preaching through John and it is a treasure trove, but we also need people around the tables informally bringing out the treasure. But there's one particular place we're in particular need.

We need scribes of the kingdom to bring out the treasure of God's Word at our Wednesday afternoon tutoring program. The name of that is King's Place.

The King's Place After School Mentoring Program. And what we are in great need of is adult men. Brothers, if you have time Wednesday afternoon starting around 4 o'clock, it would be a great investment of your life and eternity to come and bring out the treasure for these kids from Frank neighborhood.

[40:37] We're having 15 or 20 kids come now. And they respond. They're looking for an adult man to build into them. Now can you imagine what will happen if we took Jesus' words to heart as a church and we began bringing out the treasure of His Word, of the kingdom, and we brought it out in our marriages, in our friendships, in our families, in our life groups, our ministries here on Sunday morning.

Do you know what's going to happen? We're going to treasure God. God's Word is going to go out in power. It's going to change lives.

People are going to get drawn into the kingdom and His kingdom is going to spread. Would you lift up your Bible one more time?

Repeat this word after me. Let's say treasure together on three. One, two, three, treasure. God in heaven, we do thank you so much for this book.

We thank you for what you've revealed about yourself and your work of salvation in it. And we pray that you would get this book dwelling richly in us as a church in every nook and cranny of our life.

[42:08] God, would you do it for the glory of your name and the good of your people. Amen.