

Parable Chart Question.

Disclaimer (isn't there one each week 😊 ?) It will come in the answer to the next question.

Parable	What do you think is the specific need, question, problem, situation that Jesus is addressing?	What do you think the spiritual meaning of the parable is?
Sower & Soil Types	Why doesn't everyone "get it"? Why do so many people hear but not so many follow?	God doesn't determine all that we yield. He promises abundant life, but part of getting there is being good soil. We have to do our part.
Wheat & Tares	Why is there such opposition to the message of Jesus and the Kingdom?	We are part of a greater conflict than we can see. At times we'll be surrounded by the results of what the enemy has sown. It's ok, because in the end, we will be with Jesus. We are called to Him for eternity.
Mustard Seed	Need: People don't understand how to "be the Kingdom" without all the rules of religion.	Do little things to be like Jesus. They will grow the Kingdom. What might feel small can reveal the greatness of the Kingdom. (It reminded me of the story of the widow's mite.)
Leaven	We seem to be losing ground. How will the message spread? AND What is the Kingdom like and how do we see it? (they were looking for military victory)	This one is hyperbole with the huge quantity of bread 😊. It shows you will see evidence of Kingdom living even if you don't see what's causing it. It also shows the unstoppableness of the Kingdom. You can't stop the bread from rising and you cannot stop God. His will will be done!
Hidden Treasure	What's it worth? (The disciples knew because they left everything to follow Jesus, but others did not.)	The Kingdom treasure is different from the worldly idea. It's worth giving up what you have. And it is NOT all for you to keep. You are supposed to give it away, too.
Pearl	Just exactly HOW valuable is this Kingdom? How do we find the Kingdom?	You have to look for the Kingdom. Don't just sit around and expect that God will drop a pearl's worth of peace, health and prosperity into your lap. You need to be in His word, be in an active relationship with Him.
Fishing Net	Who's "in" and who's "out"?	There is coming a time when we will all be held accountable for what we've believed and where we have placed our trust.

Level 1 a.

So this is a big step for me, trying one of these level 1 questions. But here we go..... I have learned so much about the parables this week. Parables have always been really hard for me. I have, in the past, been a very very VERY black and white concrete thinker. So the activity that I chose above was really interesting. I started out taking copious notes from the power point and then I stopped, and read the questions and ideas just came for the last column. I have no idea if they are right, nor did I have the courage to read over what I had written. I just typed them in, looked for any red or blue underlines to fix and was done. I tried to just let it flow, which is something that is new for me. So I thank you for the opportunity. I let go of the rigidity and just went with what came into my head (spirit?).

I really liked the parts where you explained the backgrounds for the parables because it helped me continue to see that there were often different points of view not just Jesus and the people hearing like they used to teach us in Sunday School long ago. But I would wonder, what were the disciples thinking? What about the Pharisees? What about the crowd and different types of people within the crowd.

I thought it was interesting the connectivity of the parables, and their placement after Jesus had just kind of debated with the Pharisees and redefined the family of God. It's not so much about the old rules, which makes sense because Jesus is the new covenant, the covenant of grace, not law. I love the scripture that says *the Law came through Moses but grace and peace came through Jesus*. Until about 4 years ago that meant nothing to me, but now it means everything.

I continue to be in awe of how well planned out the Bible is. It is amazing to me that God's scribes were able to write down exactly what everyone needed to read. I think the saying of the Bible is written for all of us, but not to all of us is so true. While Matthew's gospel was written for the Jews to show how Jesus fulfilled the scripture, it sure has a LOT of things for those of us living in 2020!!!!!!

These lessons have been so so so wonderful. The current situation has turned my world inside out and upside down with regard to my job. And I, who barely even used a computer, now stares at one for hours a day. But even though I have to stare at it more for this class it is worth every single retinal cell that is being destroyed. I am learning so much academically and I am also finding things revealed spiritually. I am so grateful for the level of excellence and knowledge you bring to us. I feel like I have no idea what I am doing, but then God works and it gets done. For that alone you and I should be very very grateful!!

PS I hope this is what the question was asking!