



## Inner Growth - Jesus 5

**The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.**

**Matthew 1:1**

**Journey - Luke 9:3**

**Enlighten - Job 33:30**

**Saves - Psalms 18:31, 1 Timothy 1:15**

**Unity - Ephesians 4:13**

**Sinners - Luke 5:32**

Jesus continues His ministry in Matthew thirteen, in the parable chapter, since eighty-seven percent of the verses are moral stories that begin at verses three through nine of **the Parable of the Sower**. The disciples question the Son of God as to why He speaks this way. However, Jesus responds in Matthew thirteen, verses eleven to seventeen, concerning the disciples about the parables. Then Jesus explains the moral story of **the Parable of the Sower** from verses eighteen through twenty-three.

Matthew thirteen, beginning in verse three, details the parables of the kingdom of heaven, describing both the results of preaching the gospels and the spiritual conditions that will prevail on earth within the visible manifestation of the kingdom of heaven, which are the churches until the end of the age. In most of these parables, Christ teaches that good and evil will be present in His visible kingdom throughout the entire age. Among those who profess His name will be compromise and

worldliness that lead to apostasy, while faithfulness and godliness lead to eternal life. However, at the end of the age, the wicked will be destroyed, as in verses forty-one and forty-nine, while the righteous will shine, in verse forty-three.

Christ speaks these parables to alert true disciples to expect the presence or infiltration of evil within His visible kingdom and to teach them how to overcome the influence and opposition of Satan and his followers. The only way to do so is through wholehearted devotion to Christ, as in verses forty-four and forty-six, and lives committed to righteousness. Revelation chapters two and three are examples of good and evil within the churches of the kingdom.

Parables are stories from everyday life that relate to and illustrate certain spiritual truths. Their uniqueness is in revealing the truth to those who are spiritual while at the same time concealing it from the unbelieving, as in verse eleven. Parables may demand a decision, such as in Luke ten, verses thirty through thirty-seven.

Jesus continues giving more moral stories with **the Parables about the kingdom** in verses twenty-four through thirty, then a **Parable about the mustard seed** from verses thirty-one to thirty-two, and then a **Parable of the leaven** in verse thirty-three. Then followed by verses thirty-four to thirty-five, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."

Then Jesus fulfills the request from the disciples concerning the **Parable of the Tares explained** in verses thirty-seven through forty-three of Matthew. Then the Son of God continues with **Further parables of the kingdom** in verses forty-four to forty-six, followed by the **Parable of the net** from verses forty-seven through fifty-two, respectively.

Jesus continued His ministry after He finished these parables. The Son of God taught in His own country in the synagogue and received rejection in Nazareth. Matthew thirteen, verses

fifty-three through fifty-six, gives their response to what they experienced. Christ repeats his offer to those who have repulsed them. They upbraid him, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Yes, he was reputed to be so and no disgrace to be the son of an honest tradesman; they should have respected him the more because he was one of themselves. But they despised him. He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. Unbelief is a great hindrance to Christ's favor. Let us keep faithful to him as the Saviour who has made our peace with God.

Jesus continues His ministry in **the five thousand fed** from Matthew fourteen, verses thirteen through twenty-one. The verse from seventeen through nineteen, "And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." The miracle of feeding the five thousand is in all four Gospels: Mark six, verses thirty-four to forty-four, then Luke nine, verses ten through seventeen, and John six, one to fourteen, respectively. The significance of the miracles points to Jesus as the bread of life in John six, the one who provides for both body and soul. It is a persuasive testimony of Jesus' power to perform miracles. It is an example of Jesus' compassion for needy people, as in verse fourteen, Exodus thirty-four, verse six, and Micah seven, verse eighteen, accordingly. It teaches that the little we have can be made into much if put in the Lord's hands and blessed.

**Jesus walks on the sea** in verses twenty-two, twenty-four through thirty-six. However, before that, the disciple aboard the ship, the Son of God, went alone to pray in verses twenty-three. While on earth, Jesus often sought time to be alone with God, as in Mark one, verse thirty-five, chapter six, verse forty-six, Luke five, verse sixteen, chapter six, verse twelve, chapter nine, verse eighteen, chapter twenty-two, verses forty-one to forty-two, and Hebrews five, verse seven. Time alone with God is essential to spiritual well-being. The lack of desire for solitary

prayer and communion with our heavenly Father is an unmistakable sign that our spiritual lives are in decline. When this happens, we must turn from all that offends the Lord and renew our commitment to seeking God and His grace.

In Matthew four, verse twenty-seven, "But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." In this life, there are many things to fear, yet Jesus wants us to look to Him and not be afraid. The words of encouragement are due to His limitless power and intensely personal love for all who belong to Him. Other examples of "be not afraid" are in Joshua one, verse nine, chapter eleven, verse six, Second Kings nineteen, verse six, Second Chronicles twenty, verse fifteen, chapter thirty-two, verse seven, Nehemiah four, verse fourteen, Psalms forty-nine, verse sixteen, chapter ninety-one, verse five, Isaiah ten, verse twenty-four, chapter thirty-seven, verse six, chapter forty-four, verse eight, Matthew seventeen, verse seven, chapter twenty-eight, verse ten, Mark five, verse thirty-six, Luke twelve, verse four, John fourteen, verses one, and twenty-seven, Acts eighteen, verse nine, and First Peter three, verse fourteen, respectively. Peter, in the following verse twenty-eight, answers. It may yet, he thinks, be a specter or a dream, and therefore he demands a sign. However, Peter, too, must walk upon the waters. At first, his faith sustains him. He is a sharer with his Master in that intensity of spiritual life, which suspends the action of natural laws by one which is supernatural. Jesus replies to come in Matthew fourteen, verse twenty-nine.

Peter, in verse thirty, was in conflict between sight and faith. Since his faith got worse, and with that came fear. The supernatural strength left him, and the swimmer's art would not now avail, and so the waters were closing over him, and he cried out in agony to save him. Even great faith is small in comparison we ought to have. We should also possess constancy. He should not receive blame because he came out of the vessel but because he did not remain in firmness of his faith. He was right in exposing himself to trial. However, they should have persevered. The nature of faith will be seen from its opposites: doubt and fear.

Jesus continues His ministry in Matthew fifteen, verses one through nine, in this section known as **Tradition versus God's commandments**. The Scribes and Pharisees came and questioned Jesus about His disciples' transgression concerning tradition. Some Pharisees invalidated the commands of God for the sake of their traditions and the ideas of humans. Christians today must be alert that they do not nullify the Word of God because of tradition, popular ideas, or present-day cultural norms. To do so is to fall into this sin of the Pharisees and the other religious leaders.

Jesus specifies in Matthew fifteen, verse eight, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me." The Pharisees and the teachers were guilty of the sin of legalism. A legalist substitutes outward acts, rules, or words for proper inner attitudes that come from being born of God and the Spirit.

Jesus continues His ministry in **What defiles a man** from verses ten through twenty, where he speaks to the multitude to listen carefully. In verse eleven, the Son of God is not referring to food we eat but the ungodly and sinful words that come from the heart. The next one is **The faith of a Canaanite woman**, in verses twenty-one through thirty-one continuing in Matthew fifteen. She cried to the Son of God for mercy looking for her daughter to be delivered of a vexed spirit from the devil. The action of the Canaanite woman is she cries out to God seeking Him to help her. "Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me," from verse twenty-five. The following verses from twenty-six through twenty-eight, "But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast *it* to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

To persevere in true faith is to trust God in all circumstances and remain faithful to Him, even when you are in great trouble and he does not seem to answer or care. The test of faith will determine our approach while seeking the help of the Lord. Many fail to overcome

because the natural response would not be like the Canaanite woman. Let this example ponder the hearts of those who desire to have faith and take note of how she dealt with her circumstances.

The final section is **The four thousand fed** in verses thirty-two to thirty-nine of Matthew fifteen. At first, Jesus' miracle of feeding the four thousand may seem the same as the one He performed for five thousand as in Matthew fourteen, verses thirteen to twenty-one. They do have a few similarities. Jesus multiplies loaves and fish, a multitude is fed and the disciples are skeptical and collect leftovers. However, some distinct differences nullify any notion that they are the same: The crowds are of different sizes; the disciples speak first in the first miracle, but Jesus does in the second; they occur in discrete locations; they follow different events; the numbers of loaves and fish differ; the numbers of baskets differ; the baskets themselves are different; and finally, Jesus spends one day with the five thousand, but three with the four thousand.

Jesus Himself removes any doubt by referring to them as two different miracles. He mentions the different numbers of people present at the two events, the different numbers of baskets of fragments gathered afterward, and the different sizes of the baskets as in Matthew sixteen, verses nine to ten.