

**A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS**  
**U. Christ's Insight Due To His Postponed Kingdom**  
**(Matthew 13:1-53; Mark 4:1-34; Luke 8:4-18)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. The day Israel's leaders sinned against the Holy Spirit, claiming that Jesus' miracles were by Satan's power, Jesus began to postpone the institution of His Messianic Kingdom (Matthew 12:24-45; 13:1; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 48). In doing so, Christ also told His disciples formerly hidden truths about God's future plan for believers on the earth in view of His postponement of His Kingdom, Matthew 13:1-3.
- B. Jesus intentionally cloaked these teachings in obscure parables to communicate their truths only to His disciples and not to unbelievers (Matthew 13:10-11), and they provide insight for believers on functioning effectively in the world in view of the postponement of Christ's Messianic (Millennial) Kingdom (as follows):

**II. Christ's Insight Due To His Postponed Kingdom, Matthew 13:1-53; Mark 4:1-34; Luke 8:4-18.**

- A. Jesus' **first four** parables inform believers on the **challenges** they would face on the earth, Matthew 13:3-33:
  - 1. Parable of the Sower – (Matt. 13:3-23) Though most people who hear God's Word will first respond well, their degrees of victory over Satan (hard ground), the sin nature (stony ground) and the world (weedy ground) will leave only a few heeding with varying degrees of spiritual victory and productivity.
  - 2. Parable of the Wheat and Weeds – (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43) Taking advantage of spiritual weakness in groups of believers, Satan will covertly plant unbelievers among them, for unbelievers and carnal believers appear to be similar. Christ's servants will be oppressed by this, but to protect weak believers from discipling harm, God will not immediately remove the unsaved but separate them in the last judgment.
  - 3. Parable of the Mustard Seed – (Matt. 13:31-32) With Satanic influence in groups of unsaved and believers, nothing will hinder such groups' numerical and structural growth, further afflicting God's servants.
  - 4. Parable of the Leaven – (Matt. 13:33) With the unrestrained numerical and organizational growth of groups of the unsaved and weak believers, the groups will be doctrinally corrupted by Satanic influence (cf. Matt. 16:6-12, the only other context in Matthew alluding to leaven), further oppressing believers.
- B. Jesus' **last four** parables inform believers on **overcoming** the **challenges** they would face, Matthew 13:43-53: After Jesus gave the first four parables on the daunting challenges believers would face, His disciples asked Him to explain the Parable of the Wheat and Tares, Matthew 13:34-36. When He did so, Christ added that righteous disciplers in eternity would shine as the sun, referring to Daniel 12:3-4 where the righteous study Scripture and turn many to righteousness. Thus, He gave four more parables to encourage those disciplers:
  - 1. Parables of the Hid Treasure and of the Pearl of Great Price – (Matthew 13:44, 45-46) According to Matthew 13:51, these two parables are to be interpreted along with the other Matthew 13 parables, and the last parable likens a Scribe's knowledge of Scripture to old used and new unused treasures. Thus, the old, used treasure refers to the Parable of the Hid Treasure and the new, unused treasure refers to the new pearl that is purchased from the marketplace in the Parable of the Pearl of Great Price. Therefore, by noting the great value of Old Testament (used) and New Testament (then unused) truths of the Kingdom, Bible teachers like scribes in Jesus' day were to expound Scripture to counter discouragement in discipling that is caused by Satan's opposition that they make every effort to acquire knowledge of these truths and teach them to others, which ministry will gain God's great eternal reward noted in Daniel 12:3 (cf. Matt. 13:43).
  - 2. Parable of the Dragnet – (Matthew 13:47-50) To encourage Christ's servants further in their facing Satanic opposition in service is God's reassurance that, in the end, He will separate the believers from the unsaved.
  - 3. Parable of the Householder – (Matthew 13:51-52) In view of all the previous parables, Christ here taught that God's servants who understood them were to overcome temptations to be discouraged over opposition they faced in ministry by bringing forth (expounding) precious insights on Christ's Kingdom to the minority of truly receptive hearers from both Old Testament and New Testament Scripture revelation.

***Lesson:*** *Jesus predicted that between his postponement of His Millennial Kingdom and its establishment, His servants, like He experienced in His First Advent, would face spiritual opposition, but that there would be varying degrees of precious, positive responses from a minority of listeners. Such servants of God were to be encouraged to weather discouragement in ministry by realizing the great value God puts on the discipling of those who respond so that they study and expound Scripture in view of God's eternal final judgment and their eternal reward.*

***Application:*** *For eternal reward, may we align with God's current program in view of His postponed Kingdom.*