

## How to Interpret Parables November 10, 2024 PM

### *2 Parts in a Parable*

1. **Picture Part (story proper)** – The picture does not describe an actual historical event; it is a fictitious story that came from Jesus' mind.
2. **Reality Part** – The comparison to which the parable is likened.

### *Principles of Interpretation*

1. **A Parable Teaches a Basic Point**
  - a. Not every detail is to be taken allegorically.
    - i. Augustine's interpretation of the Good Samaritan!
2. **What Was the Point Jesus Sought to Make?**
  - a. Jesus told the parable and the Gospel writers included this parable for a particular reason. What was it?
    - i. Prodigal Son
3. **The Purpose of the Parables are to Address Salvation**
  - a. Matthew 13:10-17

### *Guidelines for Arriving at the Main Point*

1. **Who are the Main Characters?**
  - a. There are usually 2-3 main characters (Father, older son, prodigal son).
2. **What Occurs at the End?**
  - a. Good storytelling builds up and focuses interest on the conclusion of the story.
  - b. Prodigal Son

### **3. What Occurs in Direct Discourse?**

- a. Jesus wanted his hearers to focus their attention on the conversation.
- b. Prodigal Son

### **4. Who Get the Most Space**

- a. Usually in a story the major characters get major attention and the minor characters get minor attention.

#### Stein's Conclusion

The key to interpreting the parables is to remember that they are not extended allegories but that they tend to teach a single basic point. We should therefore focus our attention on the basic analogy in the picture part and its corresponding point in the reality part.

#### Examples

##### **1. Good Samaritan - Luke 10:25-37**

*Context*

*Salvific Focus*

##### **2. Parable of the Rich Fool - Luke 12:13-21**

*Context*

*Ending*