

**Week 4 – Parables Specifically About Israel
(Preview)**

Day 1: The Wicked Tenants

Read Matthew 21:33-46, Mark 12:1-12, Luke 20:9-19

1. Summarize this parable.

2. From Matthew, we know that this parable occurs with the telling of the Parable of the Two Sons. In review, who is Jesus's audience? What important things have happened and are about to happen?

3. How is this parable similar to the Two Sons? Do they contain similar messages? Why or why not?

Day 2: The Wedding Banquet and the Feast

Read Matthew 22:1-14, Luke 14:15-24

1. Summarize these parables.

2. What are the similarities and differences between the two parables? Do you think they are two versions of the same parable, or are they different enough to warrant separate consideration? Explain.

3. These parables, especially the one in Matthew, are difficult to understand. What is your initial interpretation of the parables (try to work through the ending of the parable in Matthew as well, vv. 11-14)?

Day 3: The Barren Fig Tree

Read Luke 13:1-9

1. Summarize this parable (verses 6-9).
2. This parable doesn't give an explicit conclusion or explanation. What can we infer from the preceding verses (1-5) to help us understand the meaning of this parable?
3. What does this parable tell us about God's grace and patience?

Day 4: The Kingdom

1. For each of the parables, describe the division that Jesus is creating and how he is inaugurating His kingdom.

2. For each of the parables, how is Jesus seeking to change attitudes and behaviors?

Day 5: Discipleship

1. How does each parable emphasize discipleship and faithfulness?

2. In *The Cost of Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes,

“Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves...Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate. Costly grace is the gospel which must be *sought* again and again, the gift which must be *asked* for, the door at which a man must *knock*. Such grace is *costly* because it calls us to follow, and it is *grace* because it calls us to follow *Jesus Christ*. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life.”

Do you agree with his assessment? Why or why not?

3. In light of these parables, how important is our sanctification through discipleship, what role does discipleship play in our producing fruit, and what does that fruit ultimately point to in our lives?