



The Parables of Jesus

John F. MacArthur Jr.

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Pastor-teacher John MacArthur helps readers understand Jesus' parables and how they relate to the whole of His message.

Jesus was a master storyteller, and the parables He told were ingeniously simple word pictures with profound spiritual lessons. Understanding the parables is a crucial matter for followers of Jesus. Jesus told parables so His people might comprehend His message about the kingdom of God clearly.

Master expositor and Bible commentator John MacArthur has spent a lifetime explaining the Word of God in clear and comprehensible terms. In *Parables* he helps Christians understand the essential lessons contained in the most famous and influential short stories the world has ever known.

The Parables of Jesus Details

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From Reader Review The Parables of Jesus for online ebook

Becky says

I listened to this audiobook while on lunch breaks at work, so it took me much longer to complete. Jesus' parables are awesome spiritual truths hidden in allegories. Jesus' revelations of God's heart and mind are, for want of a better phrase, mind-blowing! I especially liked that the author linked Scripture references and explained cultural references. I will obtain the written version though, as the narrator's voice was a little mismatched in my opinion.

William says

This isn't an exhaustive book about the Parables, as there are more than 40 to cover, by some counts. Instead, MacArthur focuses directly on a few that illustrate the storytelling devices Jesus used to get his points across. He also places them in the context of Jesus' ministry - probably coming in the third year when the threats to his life became more pronounced, and the challenges to his ministry were more dire.

The parables are very simple stories, and it doesn't do to read too much into the smaller details. But MacArthur argues heavily that they do mean specific things and cannot be deconstructed easily. Jesus' aim was to reveal hidden things about the nature of God, life and eternity in simple stories of the rich and the poor, etc.

Natalie Vellacott says

There are whole sections of this book that I probably should print out and post on my wall. We get so caught up in earthly things that we forget that we should be preparing for eternity. *Parables* is a definite reminder as it explains *The Mysteries of God's Kingdom Revealed Through the Stories Jesus Told*.

John MacArthur is the author (and preacher) who has probably had the greatest impact on my spiritual development over the years. He takes complicated or controversial Bible passages and explains them simply for all to understand. He has devoted his life to studying the Scripture and teaching it to others. By joining his *Grace to You* mailing list you can receive every new book or resource free, even study Bibles! That says something about the heart of the ministry and their sincere desire for the truth to be communicated to every soul in the world.

In this book, MacArthur takes several of the best known parables and explains their meaning. He examines the cultural context, the likely observers, who Jesus was speaking to and the intended impact. He explains how the parables apply to us. He also goes into some detail about Jesus' reason for using parables and how post-modernists are twisting this to encompass their methods of story-telling.

I'm not going to reprint all of the spiritual lessons here as there are many. Great book. Buy it and read it. You won't be disappointed.

Maggie Boyd says

I read three books simultaneously on the parables of Jesus. The reason was to get as thorough a view as possible on the teachings available regarding the intriguing and sometimes confusing short stories told by Jesus as a part of his ministry. This seemed especially important to me since many think the parables have no meaning, that the stories are completely open ended and can say whatever we wish.

Of the three books I read this was the least helpful and that was for one simple reason: Whatever the parable said the author took the meaning back to the basic principle of salvation through grace. I am not saying that is not an important or good principle. It is clearly both. However, I believe that the Christian life goes beyond that. Certainly we are saved by grace but Jesus did not intend our learning to stop there. Many of the parables show character traits such as generosity or humility that we are to have. Some warn against selfishness. Many warn against greed or self-righteousness. I felt this author did a poor job of capturing the diversity and raced instead to a simplistic conclusion.

Harrison Meyer says

Awesome!! I had read the parables before and most of the stories were not new to me but after reading this it appears I may have missed some of the most clear points of many of them. MacArthur does an incredible job in using context to show the meaning. He addresses each parable principally with a discussion on what specific questions Jesus was answering. He also pulls multiple scriptures from various parts of the Bible to better understand the law of Jesus' time. There are so many powerful truths in here about evangelism, persistence in prayer, loving neighbors, the distribution of grace and many other things. On top of that, it wasn't very long and pretty easy to follow! I'll probably be re-reading this soon (and I'm not normally one to do that).

Greg Busch says

I was reminded how much I enjoy John MacArthur. This was a good book, but my only desire is that there would have been more. I am moving on to another of his books.

Mark says

I liked this book. It not only tells the meaning of some parables but it gives detailed account of what was going on at the time to explain what was meant. I would recommend this book and I hope he does another book with more of the parables.

Blake says

An excellent book. Very helpful in understanding the various parables given by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mark says

John MacArthur and Parables

I very much enjoyed reading Dr. MacArthur's book just as I have come to expect whenever I read one of his books. Even though I have read the parables of Jesus many, many times this book made them seem new by opening up lanes of thought I had not considered before. I now look at these stories with new appreciation.

Rod Innis says

I have read quite a number of books on the parables of Jesus.
This is one of the best.

Hanzel Carlos says

Revelador, profundo, sensato. Una texto que escudriña las parábolas de Cristo y facilita una interpretación coherente de las Escrituras. La lectura entre líneas del Pr. MacArthur complementada con usos y costumbres de la época de los Evangelios facilita la comprensión del mensaje de Jesús a los fariseos y a los creyentes que le siguieron en aquellos días y en la actualidad. Altamente recomendable.

Kathleen Fuller says

I've enjoyed and learned a lot from John MacArthur's sermons on Grace to You, and decided to read one of his books. I wasn't disappointed. This is an excellent and thought provoking discourse on many of Jesus's parables that gives not only spiritual insight to Jesus' teaching, but also historical and cultural context. My only caveat is that this book does read a bit like a textbook and is densely packed with information. It's not a difficult read, but it does lean toward teaching more than spiritual living. That's exactly what I was looking for, but some readers might be put off by the academic tone of the book. Otherwise, highly recommended.

Christopher says

I read this with my teenage boys during our devotions this past month. I gave them a few options, and they chose this. They ended up not liking it, but we continued on. They complained that MacArthur either did not tell them anything new, or that he was too repetitive. I actually liked this book. MacArthur does a decent job in explaining the cultural context and understanding of the elements in each parable, so I found this to be a worth while book.

lafemmeally says

OK, a good explanation of why Jesus spoke in parables. I mostly agreed with his homiletics (even though I get something slightly different out of many of the parables). Goes off on irrelevant and (truth be told slightly disturbing) tangents about how modern Christians need to stop being so "feel good" (his words) and start re-emphasising the truth of hell and eternal damnation. Righto.

Melanie says

3.5 stars

Parables is the first book I've read by John MacArthur and I really enjoyed it. The book was written very well and was easy to read/understand.

It wasn't that big of a book, but it did go through quite a bit of Jesus's parables and because there was so much in the book, I can see myself rereading it.

All in all, I liked Parables and look forward to reading more of John MacArthur's books.

I received a complimentary copy of this book for my honest review. All thoughts and opinions expressed are my own.

Becky says

I have looked forward to reading John MacArthur's newest book Parables since it first released in 2015. I wanted to read his book A Tale of Two Sons first though! (It was great. It was on Luke 15, essentially). This second book focuses on a wider selection of Jesus' parables.

MacArthur devotes the first chapter of this book to the subject of why; the chapter is titled, "One Ominous Day in Galilee." The introduction and the first chapter address two issues really: the dangers--then and now--of misinterpreting parables and WHY Jesus chose to speak in parables in the first place. What are some of the dangers according to MacArthur? Making sloppy conclusions that storytelling is "better" at reaching crowds than teaching straight-forward doctrine, for example, or even daring to believe that stories have no "fixed" or "objective" meaning and each reader can decide for himself or herself what any parable means. Why did Jesus speak in parables? Because to speak plain truth to those who were persistently, stubbornly holding onto their unbelief would have been unkind: they would be judged based on the knowledge that they had, that they had heard or seen. (That is also one reason the Scripture speaks of Jesus being "unable" to perform miracles in certain towns. He wasn't lacking power to perform miracles. He was limiting their future punishment.)

The remaining chapters in the book focus on the parables of Jesus grouped together by subject. Readers are getting: "A Lesson About Receiving the Word," "A Lesson About the Cost of Discipleship," "A Lesson about Justice and Grace," "A Lesson about Neighborly Love," "A Lesson About Justification by Faith," "A

Lesson About Faithfulness," "A Lesson About Serpentine Wisdom," "A Lesson About Heaven and Hell," and "A Lesson About Persistence in Prayer." The book, as you can see, covers just about every topic of importance to Christians seeking--striving--to live a life pleasing to God. Here is a book rich in lessons about what it means to follow Christ, to be a believer. And the book does keep it basic, mostly, almost every chapter offering a refresher course in the gospel.

Favorite quotes:

When we agree with God concerning our own guilt, the atoning blood of Christ cleanses us from every kind of sin or blasphemy--no matter how abominable (12).

The seed represents God's Word. Any attempt to improve the harvest by using different seed is a misguided dereliction of the sower's duty. The unadulterated Word of God is the only true and legitimate seed. (27)

Only God himself can plow and prepare a heart to receive the Word. He does it through the regenerating and sanctifying work of His Holy Spirit, who convicts the world of "sin and of righteousness and of judgment" (John 16:8). For those who believe, he awakens them spiritually (Romans 8:11). He enlightens their minds to the truth (1 Corinthians 2:10). He washes them clean (Ezekiel 36:25). He removes the stony heart and gives them a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26). He indwells His people and motivates them unto righteousness (Ezekiel 36:27). He engraves the truth of God on their hearts (Jeremiah 31:33; 2 Corinthians 3:3). He pours the love of God into their hearts (Romans 5:5). We who believe in Christ are totally dependent on the indwelling Spirit's work in our hearts to keep us tender, receptive, and ultimately fruitful. (37)

Genuine faith never fails to appreciate the true cost of salvation--what our deliverance from sin's curse and bondage cost Christ; what it means to be bought by Christ and bow to His lordship; and (above all) how valuable redemption is in terms of its eternal worth to the sinner. (43)

Forgiveness is not measured by weighing our good deeds against our sins, nor is it partially withheld if we have sinned for too long or too badly. Everyone who enters the kingdom receives the full abundance of God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness (68).

Christ is the living embodiment of divine love in all its perfection (93).

The gospel has nothing to say to people who are satisfied with their own righteousness. There is no truly good news for someone in that state of mind (107).

No one in the Bible had more to say about hell than the Savior of sinners, the Lord Jesus Christ. The most vivid and detailed biblical descriptions of hell appear in the four gospels, and they come from Jesus. (158)

Question whether God has a right to do what He says He will do, and you might as well deny the very existence of God. (164)

Johnny says

The best part about the book was his diligence to background historical and cultural work, the explanations could have been succinct and concise, and got convoluted even though the premise began with parables not being metaphors for every single point, felt like Macarthur was trying and drawing from too much. He has a passion for the Word, just not really as tight of a book as I was hoping.

Stacie says

My Blog: <https://pursuingstacie.wordpress.com>

As a total Bible Nerd, sometimes this girl craves some good, solid teaching. I am a huge fan of books on how to be a better woman of God, a better prayer warrior, and just about any other book that teaches me how to grow in my walk with God. However, there is something so fun about grabbing a cup of hot chocolate, notebooks and pens and spreading out all over my desk to study the Word of the Lord.

Therefore, when I saw that John MacArthur had released a book on the Parables of Christ, I was all in. And it did not disappoint.

Parables shows the reader how Jesus used parables to illustrate the mysteries of God's Kingdom. While MacArthur doesn't cover every parable, he chooses some of the more prominent ones. He gives us the context in which the parable was given, what the purpose of the parable was, and what it tells us about the Kingdom.

One of the beautiful things about Scripture is, there is so much more to it. You and I can read a set of verses, and think we understand what it means. But if we take the time to really study, dig in, pull the verse apart and really see what God is saying...Friends, the Bible is so very rich. This book will help you see beyond the familiar parable stories to the deep, beautiful doctrine that lies within each one.

Bottom Line: Grab your study notes, clear off your desk, read this book and enjoy the ride.

**I received a complimentary copy of this book from BookLook Bloggers in exchange for an honest review.

Lynda Newman says

I really enjoyed this book. Even read some things I haven't head before, it is exciting to learn something you have overlooked!

Amanda says

We read through this book in our couple's class at church and did the workbook that goes with it over the course of 10 weeks. John MacArthur is such a great Bible teacher, and I loved reading about the parables of Jesus. Some of them had always kind of confused me, and this helped clear that up! Each chapter takes one parable and explains it in depth.
