

Lenten E-Burst

Schoenstatt Scotland



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Jesus invitation to enter his kingdom comes by way of parables, (Jesus' parables were stories that were 'cast alongside' a truth in order to illustrate that truth). His parables were teaching aids and can be thought of as extended analogies or inspirational comparisons. A common portrayal of a parable is that it is an earthly story with heavenly meaning. Parables form a most characteristic feature of his teaching. It is through these, he invites us to the feast of the kingdom, but he also asks for a radical choice to gain the kingdom, you must give everything. Words are not enough; deeds are required of us. The parables are like mirrors for us: Will you be hard soil of good earth for the word? What use have you made of the talents you received? Jesus and the presence of the kingdom in this world are secretly at the heart of the parables. One must enter the kingdom, by becoming a disciple of Christ in order to 'know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven.' For those who remain 'outside' all remains unknowable.

For a time in his ministry, Jesus relied heavily on parables. He told many of them; in fact, according to Mark 4:34a, "He did not say anything to them without using a parable." There are about 35 of Jesus' parables recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. It had not always been that way. In the early part of His ministry, Jesus had not used parables. Suddenly, He begins telling parables exclusively, much to the surprise of His disciples, who asked Him, 'Why do you speak to the people in parables?' (Matthew 13:10). Jesus explained that His use of parables had a two-fold purpose: to reveal the truth to those who wanted to know it and to conceal the truth from those who were indifferent.