

The Crisis of Decision (3)

And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes. (Matt 7:28-29)

Let's conclude this series on **How (and What) the Parables of Jesus Help Us See** in [Matthew 25](#), and as we do, think about the amazing gospel ground we've covered:

- Parables about the **surprising arrival** of heaven's kingdom ([a season of announcement](#)) - a sower, seeds, wheat and weeds, leaven, hidden treasure, a pearl of great price, and a net that gathered fish of every kind.
- Parables about the **upside-down nature** of heaven's kingdom ([a season of teaching](#)) - debtors, a good Samaritan, a humble tax collector, an unforgiving servant, a foolish farmer, laborers in a vineyard, a dishonest manager, a persistent widow, a lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost son.
- Parables about the **crisis of decision** caused by heaven's kingdom ([a season of confrontation](#)) - a master returning from a wedding feast, a barren fig tree, and wicked tenants.

Now, how would Jesus draw this incredible body of teaching to a close?

One more time, it's especially important to look a little *before* these parables. They weren't told in a vacuum. Turn your Bible back to [Matthew 23:37-24:51](#). What's the setting? The context?

With this setting in mind...

- The parable of the ten virgins ([Matt 25:1-13](#)) -

- The parable of the talents ([Matt 25:14-30](#)) -

- The final judgment ([Matt 25:31-46](#)) -



Remember?

Think back to the conclusion of Jesus' most famous sermon.

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes. (Matt 7:24-29)

Isn't this the essential thread that weaves through each one of Jesus' parables?

"Everyone who **hears** and **does** will be like..."

"Everyone who **hears** and **does not do** will be like..."

A "parable" sets one thing "alongside of" something else. Parables prompt. How are these similar? How are they different? **And what should this help us see?**

Over and over again, we've heard Jesus say, "the kingdom of heaven is like..." He's authoritatively brought us face-to-face with the kingdom of God, its upside-down nature, and our need to humbly submit to the true and rightful King.

May we—unworthy, yet welcomed by grace—never cease to be "astonished at his teaching."

"Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it." (Matt 13:16-17)