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Mark 10:45 as a lens
for Mark's Gospel

What is real service about?

- Mark 10:35-45
- wide-angle lens: how this section fits into Mark's portrait of Jesus
- normal lens: getting a picture of this section
- zoom lens: focusing on v 45

Setting the scene

- 8:27–9:10 the centre of Mark
 - before that, the focus is on who Jesus is
 - after that, the focus is on what Jesus came to do
- 8:32 on final journey to Jerusalem
 - section is 8:22–10:52
 - ‘framed’ by healings of two blind men
8:22-26; 10:46-52

Setting the scene

- three predictions of Jesus' suffering and death
8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34
- each prediction followed by misunderstanding by disciples...
 - 8:32 Peter rebukes Jesus
- ...and teaching on discipleship by Jesus
 - 8:34-38 taking up the cross

Focusing on 10:35-45

- prediction of Jesus' suffering and death vv 33-34
- true greatness vv 35-45
 - misguided response v 37
 - discipleship vv 38-40
 - further misguided response! v 41
 - true discipleship vv 42-45
- a picture of discipleship: Bartimaeus 10:46-52
 - moves from sitting 'by the way' v 46 to following 'in the way' v 52

The climax is 10:45

For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many

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For even **the son of man** did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many

- 2:10 ‘...but so that you may know that **the son of man** has authority on earth to forgive sins...’
- Daniel 7:13-14 ‘As I watched in the night visions, I saw **one like a son of man** coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.’

The climax is 10:45

For even the son of man **did not come to be served**, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many

- James and John expect rule, power and authority—hence v 37
 - contrast vv 36 and 51
- ‘not so with you’ v 43

The climax is 10:45

For even the son of man did not come to be served, **but to serve**, and to give his life as a ransom for many

- Jesus is like a waiter: 'to serve'
- the greatest is the one who serves v 44
- Isaiah 52:13–53:12

Isaiah 53:10-12

10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain. When **you make his life an offering for sin**, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the LORD shall prosper. 11 Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

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- Jesus like a waiter: 'to serve'
- the greatest is the one who serves v 44
- Isaiah 52:13–53:12
- Jesus' question v 38; cf. 14:36

“

Disciples of Jesus do not decide to accept or reject hardships on the basis of the future rewards accruing from them. They accept suffering on the sole basis that it is the way of Jesus.

James Edwards

The climax is 10:45

For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, **and to give his life** as a ransom for many

- Jesus serves by giving his life v 32
- Jesus is **king** in his dying on the cross
 - and there James and John's question is answered
 - 15:27 And with him they crucified two bandits, **one on his right and one on his left**

The climax is 10:45

For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life **as a ransom for many**

- ransom
 - prisoners of war
 - slaves
 - redemption price
- for many
 - echo of Isaiah 53:12 'he bore the sin of many'

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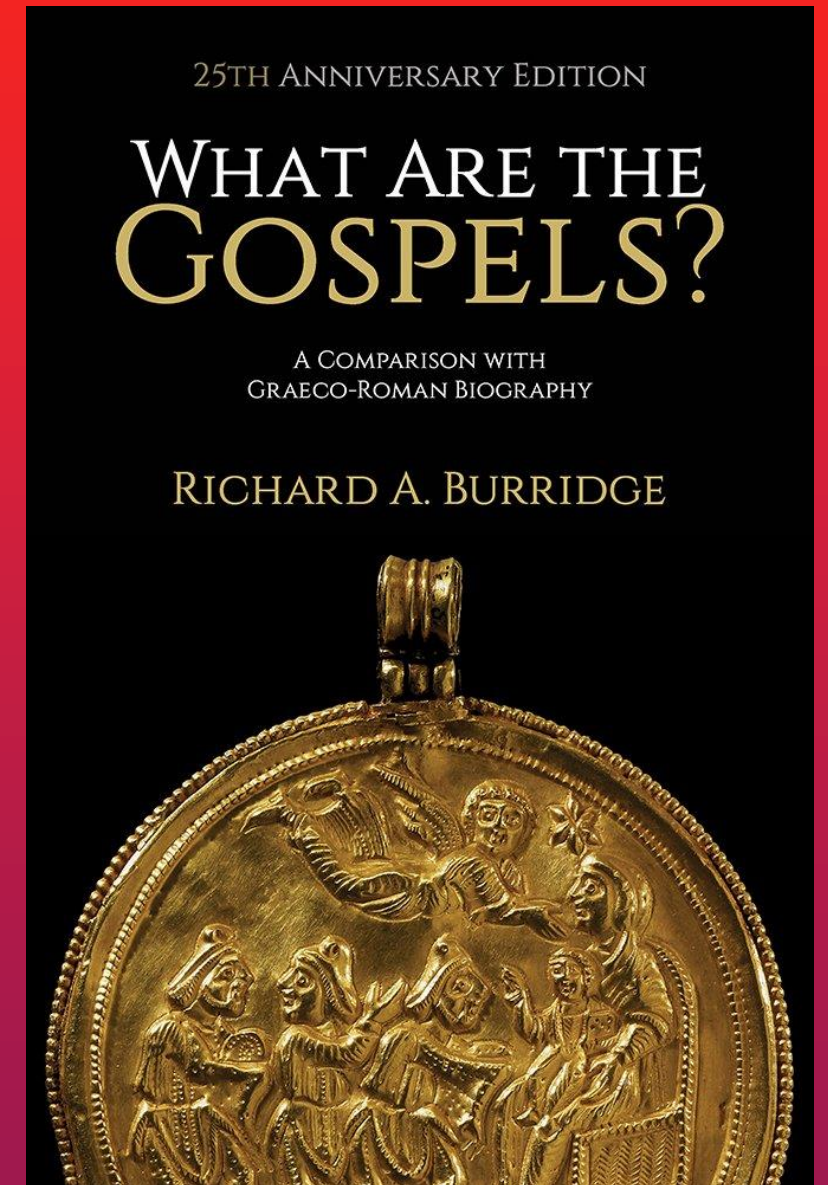
Overview of Matthew

Where we're going

- Review: Gospel genre and audience(s)
- Structure: How Matthew is organised
- The Old Testament in Matthew
- Matthew and the Jewish people

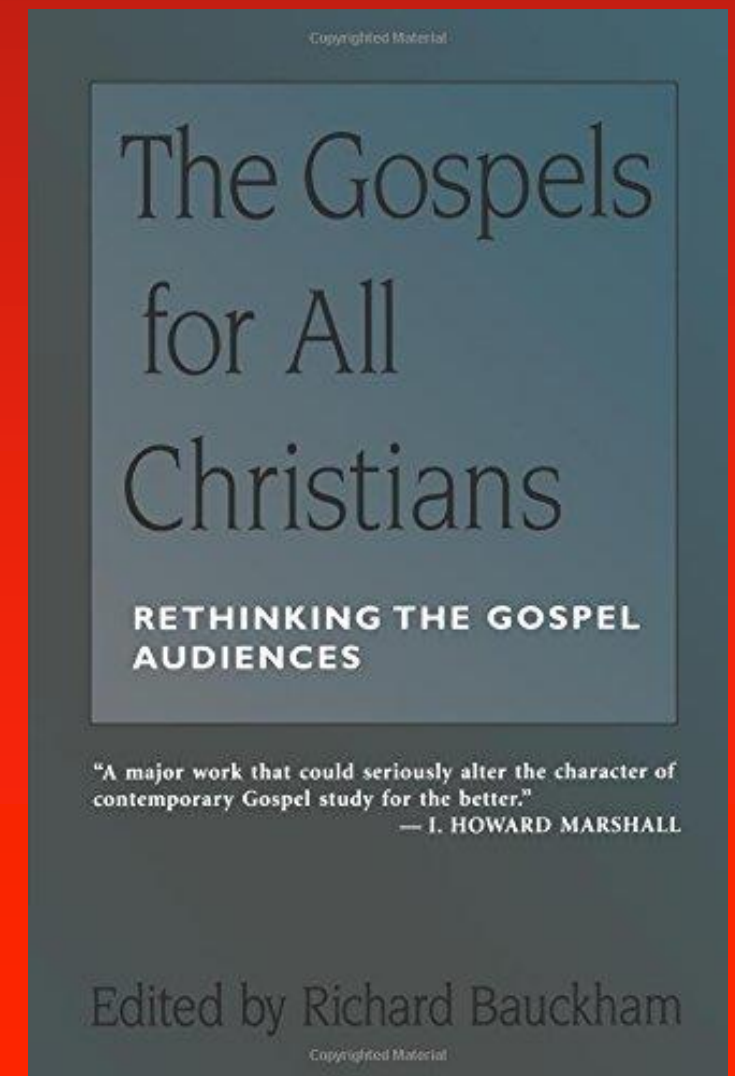
Gospel genre and audience(s)

- Gospel genre
 - Richard Burridge: the Gospels as ancient biographies
 - the Gospels are books about Jesus



Gospel genre and audience(s)

- Gospel audience(s)
 - reconstructing ‘Gospel communities’
 - Richard Bauckham: the Gospels written for a wide audience in the Mediterranean basin
 - literary dependence among the Gospels
 - early churches as part of a network with regular communication
 - conflict and some diversity among believers within a community and between communities



Structure: how Matthew is organised

- Beginning and end
 - 1:1 'The book of the **genesis** of Jesus the Messiah, son of David, son of Abraham'
 - genealogy 1:2-17
 - 3 x 14 generations = 6 x 7
 - Emmanuel = God is with us 1:23
 - 28:20 'I am with you always, until the end of the age'

Structure: how Matthew is organised

- Key transitions marked by ‘from that time on’ apo tote 4:17; 16:21
 - Preparation 1:1–4:16
 - Jesus’ life and ministry in Galilee 4:17–16:20
 - Peter’s recognition of Jesus’ messianic identity 16:16 (cf. Mark)
 - from Galilee to the cross and resurrection and the end of the age 16:21–28:20
 - note also 26:16 ‘From that time on (apo tote) [Judas] began seeking an opportunity to betray [Jesus].’

Structure: how Matthew is organised

- five blocks of teaching
 - ‘when Jesus had finished...’
7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1
 - 5–7 the ‘sermon on the mount’
— the ‘manifesto’ of the kingdom of heaven
 - 10 mission discourse
 - 13 parables
 - 18 life in the community of Jesus-followers
 - 24–25 the fall of Jerusalem and future judgement
- B. W. Bacon (1918): Jesus as the new Moses
— five blocks of teaching like the Pentateuch

The Old Testament in Matthew

- Richard Hays 'reading backwards'
 - figural interpretation

“

‘...a connection between two events or persons in such a way that the first signifies not only itself but also the second, while the second involves or fulfils the first.’

Erich Auerbach

The Old Testament in Matthew

- Richard Hays ‘reading backwards’
 - figural interpretation
 - learn how to read the OT by reading backwards from the Gospels
 - learn how to read the Gospels by reading forwards from the OT
 - metalepsis: seeing brief citations of Scripture as invitations to read the whole passage in the OT or a whole pattern in the OT
 - C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*

Matthew as 'annotated Study Bible'

- Mark 2:17//Matt 9:12-13

But when [Jesus] heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’

For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

Matthew 9:12-13

When Jesus heard this, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick;

I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

Mark 2:17

Matthew as 'annotated Study Bible'

- Mark 2:17//Matthew 9:12-13—Hosea 6:6
- Mark 2:25-28//Matthew 12:4-8

[David] entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests. Or have you not read in the law that on the sabbath the priests in the temple break the sabbath and yet are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. **But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.** For the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath.”

Matthew 12:4-8

[David] entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions.”

Then he said to them, “The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.”

Mark 2:25-28

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- Mark 2:25-28//Matthew 12:4-8—Hosea 6:6
- Matt 21:3-6//Mark 11:3-6 — Zechariah 9:9

“If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, “Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them;

Matthew 21:3-6

If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’”

They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Mark 11:3-6

Matthew as 'annotated Study Bible'

- Mark 2:17//Matthew 9:12-13—Hosea 6:6
- Mark 2:25-28//Matthew 12:4-8—Hosea 6:6
- Matthew 21:3-6//Mark 11:3-6 — Zechariah 9:9
- Matthew 24:15//Mark 13:14a — 'holy place', Daniel

“So when you see the desolating sacrilege standing **in the holy place**, as was spoken of by the prophet Daniel (let the reader understand),
Matt 24:15

“But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up **where it ought not to be** (let the reader understand),
Mark 13:14a

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Matthew 24:15

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Mark 13:14a

Jesus as 'Emmanuel' = 'God with us'

- 'All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."
1:23 = Isaiah 7:14
- 'And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'" 28:20
- 'For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.' 18:20

Authorial voiceovers: the 'formula quotations'

- 'This took place to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet...'
- 'Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."'
2:13-16, quoting Hosea 11:1
- Israel's story recapitulated in the story of Jesus



“I will not execute my fierce anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim;
for I am God and no mortal,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath.

They shall go after the LORD,
who roars like a lion;
when he roars,
his children shall come trembling from the west.
They shall come trembling like birds from Egypt,
and like doves from the land of Assyria;
and I will return them to their homes, says the
LORD.”

Hosea 11:9-11



“I will not execute my fierce anger;
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Hosea 11:9-11

Matthew and the Jewish people

- Matthew is steeped in Judaism
- Jewish categories to interpret Jesus
 - ‘the kingdom of **the heavens**’
 - ‘let him be to you as a gentile’ 18:17
 - ‘only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel’
10:5-6 (also 15:24)

Matthew and the Jewish people

- Matthew is steeped in Judaism
 - Jewish categories to interpret Jesus
 - use of Old Testament Scripture
 - validity of the law 5:17-19

“

17 Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

Matthew 5:17-19

Matthew and the Jewish people

- Matthew is steeped in Judaism
 - Jewish categories to interpret Jesus
 - use of Scripture
 - validity of the law 5:17-19
 - the ‘formula quotations’
 - Jesus’ own obedience to the law
 - Jesus fasts 4:2
 - Jesus wears ‘fringes’ on his outer garment 14:36
 - Jesus pays the temple tax 17:24-27

Matthew and the Jewish people

- Matthew is steeped in Judaism
 - Jewish categories to interpret Jesus
 - use of Scripture
 - Jesus as the climax of Israel's history: genealogy 1:2-17
 - 'righteousness' as ethical rather than judicial/forensic
 - 'fulfilling all righteousness' 3:15
 - 'your righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees' 5:20
 - 'practising your righteousness' 6:1
 - also 21:32; 23:29, 35

Matthew and the Jewish people

- Matthew is steeped in Judaism
- Yet Matthew has strong anti-Jewish language
 - criticism of the scribes and Pharisees ch. 23
 - ‘his blood be upon us and our children’ 27:25
 - ‘**their** synagogues’ 4:23; 9:35; 10:17
 - ‘the Jews’ believe the body of Jesus was stolen 28:15
 - the vineyard to go to ‘a nation which will produce the fruits of the kingdom’ 21:43

Matthew and the Jewish people

- Matthew is steeped in Judaism
- Yet Matthew has strong anti-Jewish language
- Tension of being within vs. being outside Judaism
 - critique of Jewish leaders and temple like prophets,
e.g. Ezekiel 34; Jeremiah 7
 - perhaps fits a Syrian context — first mixed church in Antioch Acts 11:20-26
 - tensions identified would be as true pre-AD 70 as after

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The parables in Matthew

What is a parable?

- *parabolē (Greek) = to set two things side by side, a comparison*
- *mašal (Hebrew) covers a wide range of sayings*
 - *proverbial sayings*
 - *bywords*
 - *pictorial prophetic speech*
 - *allegory*
 - *similitude, parable*
 - *poem*
 - *sentences of ethical wisdom*
 - *riddles*

“

‘At its simplest a parable is a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to tease it into active thought.’

C. H. Dodd

Parables in the Gospels and Matthew

- Parables are a key feature of our Gospel sources
 - 16% of Mark
 - 20% of 'Q' (source shared by Matthew and Luke)
 - 43% of Matthew's special material
 - 52% of Luke's special material
- Matthew's parables
 - Matthew 13 the largest group in a chapter
 - comes at a key turning point

“

This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: “I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden since the foundation.”

Matthew 13:35, quoting Psalm 78:2

History of interpretation

- allegorical: every point means something—Augustine
- 16th century Reformation reject allegorical interpretation (Martin Luther, John Calvin)
- Adolf Jülicher (1899): parables have only **one** point
- C. H. Dodd (1935): realised eschatology—the kingdom of God is full present in Jesus' ministry
- Joachim Jeremias (1947): inaugurated eschatology—the kingdom is partly present in Jesus' ministry, and partly yet to come
- Craig Blomberg (1990s): structure as key to interpretation

Form and transmission

- Form
 - beginnings of parables
 - ‘the kingdom of God/heaven is like...’
 - 11x in Matthew
 - ‘he told them a parable’, ‘he spoke to them in parables’
 - common in Mark and Luke

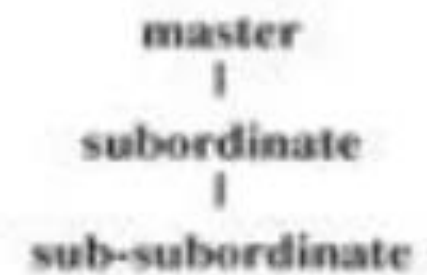
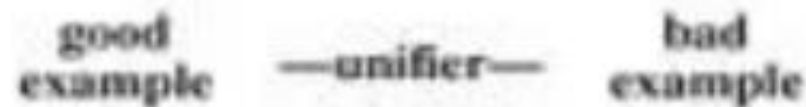
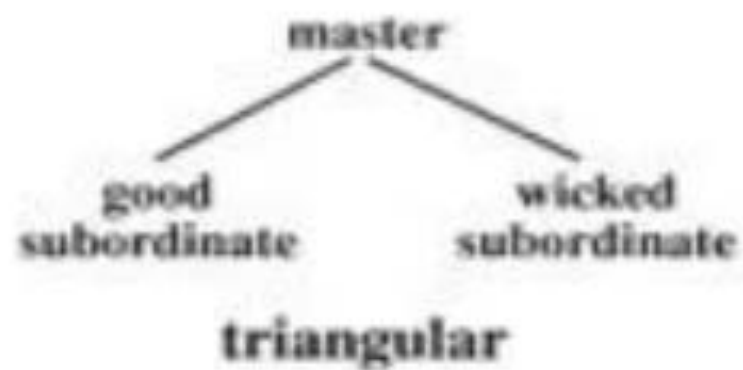
Form and transmission

- Transmission
 - trustworthy passing on from Jesus to the Gospels
 - Aramaic language background (Jeremias)
 - Palestinian features, e.g. sowing
 - little evidence of stories like this before Jesus
 - not found in NT outside the Gospels — so the church did not invent them

Interpreting the parables

- look carefully at the sequence, structure and wording

Some Common Parable Structures



non-triangular

triadic parables

master
|
servant

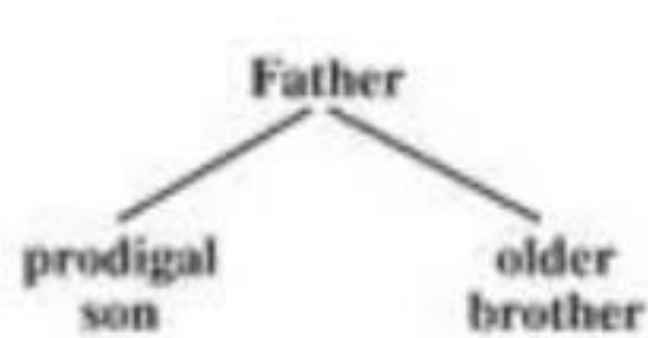
dyadic parables



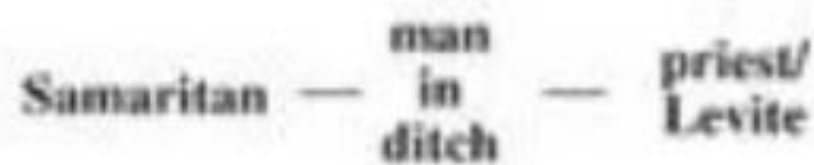
one
main
character

monadic parables

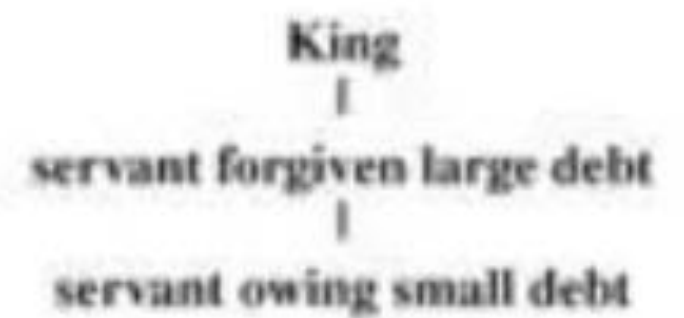
Examples of Jesus' Parable Structures



triangular



non-triangular



triadic parables



dyadic parables



treasure hunter

monadic parables

Interpreting the parables

- look carefully at the sequence, structure and wording
- usually one key point associated with each key character (Blomberg)
- note how the author has placed and shaped the parable in his Gospel
 - Matthew 25 has a series of parables on being ready
 - Matthew 24:3 ‘When will this be and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?’

Interpreting the parables

- look carefully at the sequence, structure and wording
- usually one key point associated with each key character (Blomberg)
- note how the author has placed and shaped the parable in his Gospel
- look for stress at the **end** of the parable
 - ‘Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.’ Matthew 13:9
 - ‘But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.’ Matthew 13:23

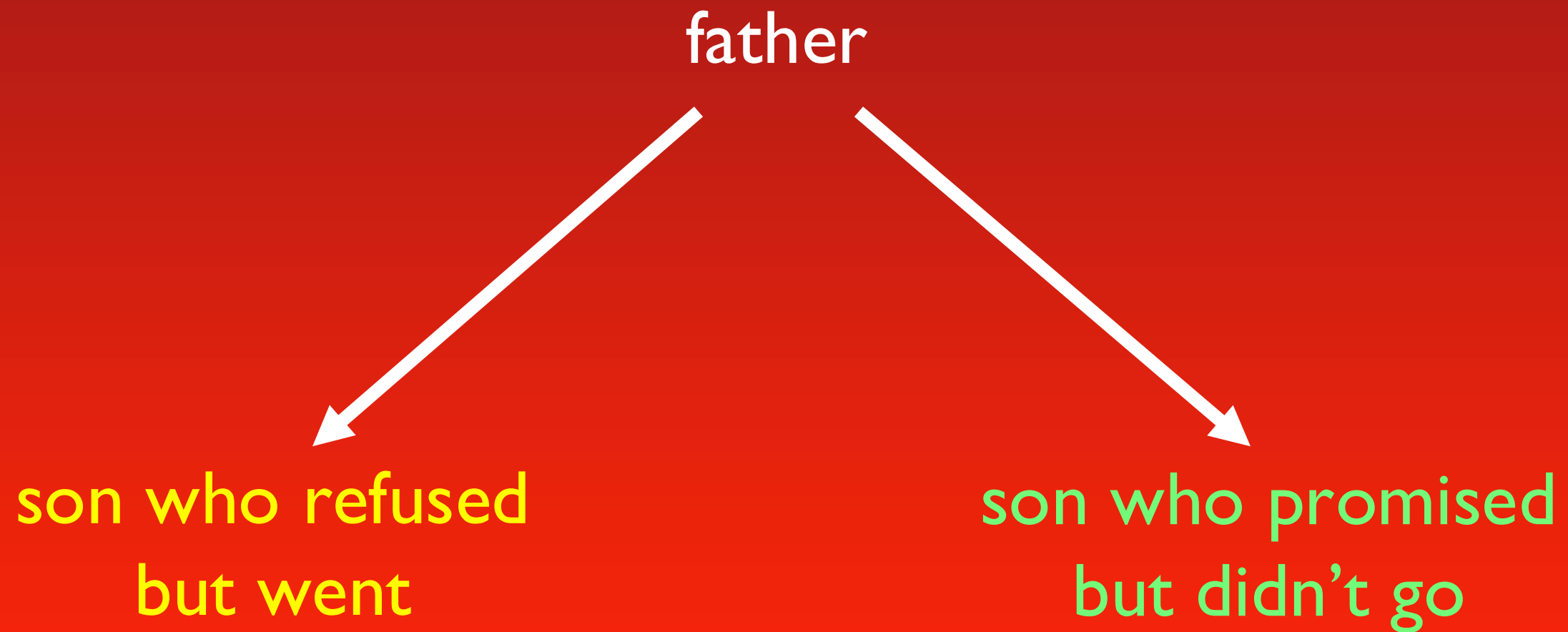
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- note how the author has placed and shaped the parable in his Gospel
- look for stress at the **end** of the parable
- look for the key point(s)
 - in the ministry of Jesus
 - for the churches later

Interpreting the parables

- look carefully at the sequence, structure and wording
- usually one key point associated with each key character (Blomberg)
- note how the author has placed and shaped the parable in his Gospel
- look for stress at the end of the parable
- look for the key point(s)
- are there links with other themes in Jesus' ministry and teaching?

The two sons 21:28-32



The two sons 21:28-32

- Like the father sending his sons to work, God commands all people to carry out his will
- Like the son who ultimately disobeyed, some people promise to obey but go back on their promise and exclude themselves from God's kingdom
- Like the son who ultimately obeyed, some rebel, but later return and obey, so that they are accepted in God's kingdom

The ten virgins/bridesmaids 25:1-13

bridegroom



five wise
bridesmaids who
had enough oil

five foolish bridesmaids
who did not have
enough oil

The ten virgins/bridesmaids 25:1-13

- Like the bridegroom, God/Jesus may delay his coming longer than people expect
- Like the wise bridesmaids, Jesus' followers must be prepared for such a delay—discipleship may be harder than a beginner expects
- Like the foolish bridesmaids, those who do not prepare well may come to a point of no return—when the End comes, it will be too late to undo the damage of their neglect

Three point parables

- God/Jesus is the authority figure
- The good/wise person turns to God sincerely with faith and a godly lifestyle, and will receive the joy of God's presence at the End
- The bad/foolish person is a warning against turning away from God or complacency—they face judgement if they will not repent
 - the purpose of the parables is to invite people to respond: they are not fixing people in categories that cannot change

The two house-builders 7:24-27



The two house-builders 7:24-27

24 Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a **wise** man who built his house on **rock**.

26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and **does not** act on them will be like a **foolish** man who built his house on **sand**.

25 The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and **beat on [prosepesan]** that house, but it **did not** fall, **because** it had been founded on rock.

27 The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and **beat against [prosekopsan]** that house, and it fell—and **great** was its fall!

The two house-builders 7:24-27

- Hear and act on Jesus' call, and you will safe eternally
 - notice 7:21-23
 - doing godly works which show true faith
- If you do not hear and act on Jesus' call, you face disaster
 - if you refuse to follow the way of discipleship, you face eternal loss

The hidden treasure 13:44

- the man who finds and hides the treasure, and the buys the field so that he can have the treasure
- the kingdom of heaven is so valuable that it is worth sacrificing anything to get it
 - examples
 - leaving home to follow Jesus—the disciples 4:18-22
 - selling everything you have—the rich young man 19:21

Preparation for Wednesday

- Study one of these parables with a group
 - (1) Matthew 18:23-35 The unmerciful servant
 - (2) Matthew 20:1-16 The workers in the vineyard

What kind of parable is it (one, two or three points)?
- how is it organised? what are the relationships between the characters?
- does the context (before the parable) help you understand it?
- is there exaggeration or something weird going on?
- what point(s) are being made?
 - how would you preach on these points (in outline, not in detail)?