

Sunday January 17th 2010
Matthew 13 Parables – Part Six
The Parable of the Leaven

1). Mt 13:33 *Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like [the proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the heavens continues like] leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."*

a). In the parable of the mustard seed we saw the unnatural growth of the church as a result of the work of the tares – how does the parable of leaven help explain how this unnatural growth took place?

b). Who would the woman be who is identified in our parable?

c). What is significant about the number 3?

d). What is meal used for? And what does it symbolize in our parable?

e). What is leaven and what does it symbolize?

f). How is leaven used elsewhere in scripture?

g). Why is the leaven placed in the 3 measures of meal?

2). Re 2:4 *"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."*

a). Jesus says these words to the church of Ephesus as the complete church stands before Him in judgment – how would leaving their first love fit into what is described in the parable of the leaven?

- b). What do we know from scripture about the church of Ephesus?
- c). What might we learn from this for ourselves?
- d). How do you think we would guard against leaving our first love?

3). Re 3:17 *"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—*

a). These are the words spoken by the Lord to the Laodicean church at the same judgment in the Book of Revelation – how do these words connect to what is described in the parable of the leaven?

b). What do you think this means for us?

4). Re 3:19 *"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.""*

a). How does Christ deal with His Church throughout the dispensation?

b). Where do we see the Lord here and what is He doing?

- c). What must be done by each individual Christian before they open the door?
- d). Can you think of any scripture that would help us with this?
- e). What does each individual Christian need to hear Christ say?
- f). What do you think it means when it says - *I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me?*
- g). What will the Christian in the Laodicean church have to overcome?
- h). What does this look like for you personally?
- i). What is the promise for those who do?

5). Can you describe how the parables of the Sower, the wheat and tares, the mustard seed, the leaven and what Christ says to the complete church in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3 provide for us a complete dispensational history of the church?

- a). What is the difference between an age and a dispensation?

6). 2Pe 3:3 ¶ *knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."*

- a). Who would the scoffers be?

- b). When are the last days?
- c). What according to our scripture is their motivation for what they do?
- d). What is the content of their message?
- e). What does this message do to the proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the heavens?
- f). Can you give any examples of what this false message would sound like within the church today?
- g). Is there anything we would want to add to this list that might be far less obvious?
- h). What would be the implications here for our own engagement with the word?

7). Jude 1:11 *Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.*

a). We saw in our scripture from 2 Peter that those placing the leaven were motivated to do so by ‘their own lusts’ – What additional information is given here in Jude about them?

b). Can you explain – ‘the way of Cain’ – ‘the error of Balaam’ – ‘the rebellion of Korah’?

8). Once the false message, the leaven, was placed within the proclamation and offer of the Kingdom of the heavens – the word of the Kingdom – at the beginning of the dispensation, can you explain how it has spread and reproduced since that time?

9). 2Pe 2:1 ¶ *But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.*

a). How does this scripture also describe for us the events of the parable of the leaven?

b). How does the word ‘secretly’ connect directly with our parable?

c). What are ‘destructive heresies’?

d). What would it mean to deny the Lord?

e). What does v2 say will happen?

f). What is ‘the way of truth’?

g). What will happen to the way of truth because of the false teachers?

h). What does this mean?

i). How does our scripture from 2 Peter Chapter 2 connect with what Paul told the elders of Ephesus? And how does this connect with the judgment of the Ephesians in the Book of Revelation?