

## Jesus illustrations

To explain important aspects of the kingdom of God, the Lord Jesus used illustrations that were very graphic for his contemporaries. They were intimately familiar with them. When Jesus spoke of sowing of the grain and of different qualities of the soil, his listeners had a living idea, (Matthew 13:24 = Mark 4: 4 = Luke 8: 5 - four kinds of soil; Mark 4:26 - he does not know how it grows; John 12:24 - the grain must die; Matthew 13:24 the enemy has spread the weeds...)

Have you noticed that His practical illustrations from the lives of contemporaries were His elaborate methodology? The Lord Jesus briefly mentioned the images that were common in their lives, and the result was that **they remembered** them very well; even later they thought about them and also **talked about them among themselves!** Of course, sometimes they needed help to project the individual parts into their own lives or into God's spiritual realm. The disciples thought and talked about some parables, even though the Master had long been on another subject. And that is exactly what Jesus wanted! His images remained in them and **worked, even as He was no longer with them**, and built their graphic image of the Kingdom of God, of which they had not any idea, yet...

## The power of images

When we want to describe to others something they do not know, which they have not yet experienced (especially when we want to correct something they have a distorted idea of or have bad experience with), we need to think diligently what **mental image or visualized scene** will probably help. How - with what is familiar to them - can we **portray real form of a new reality** of which they have no idea, yet? Ideally, we start their creativity in that direction. Reviving their own imagination is the key to the effectiveness of our message. Starting their imagination gives hope they will work creatively with my thoughts, **even when I will not be there** for a long time. The Holy Spirit can revive and further develop my image or story in their hearts. So I say: think hard, pray, and make your talk „visual“ for them. **Create a vivid image in their minds.** Let an image appear in your friends' thinking, or even better, let a story unfold in their thoughts based on your narration.

In communicating with people today who do not yet know the Lord Jesus, we can certainly use many of Jesus' parables from the Bible, or real stories that have happened around Him.



But some things may appear more clearly in front of Your George's eyes when you show him a current picture. The best thought-out and well-prayed-through story from his own life or from your life. **The strength of really good parable** lies in the fact that given image or story **lives and works in Your George, even as you are no longer there.**

I highly recommend you to start thinking this way. First of all, try to find your own comparisons of certain facts that you talked to George about. Develop your simile for a while and consider whether it captures exactly what you need to capture. After a time of „refining“ (ie purification and simplification), be sure to try it with people „out there“, to see what it does in them. It is not enough that it is eloquent for you or that it seems interesting to your believing buddy. In the following lessons, you will find my examples of modern parables. If they inspire you, feel free to use them.

*Lord Jesus, you have watched the lives of your contemporaries so well that you were able to use images and stories from their lives to reveal the profound mysteries of the Kingdom of God to them. Thank you for that!*