



## Dig Deeper Study Guide

Stroudsburg United Methodist Church - July 24, 2011

### Sermon

*"God's Realm"*

by Ted Good

Things I want to remember  
about this sermon...

Monday 7/25/11

Matthew 13:31-32

Seeds come in various shapes and sizes. A watermelon seed is not the same as a poppy seed. Knowing seeds is a complete study in itself. Jesus knew seeds, and he knew that there was a great lesson to be learned from the tiniest of all seeds--the mustard seed. Even though it is the smallest seed, it produces a complete kingdom of its very own--big enough to hold even birds of the air! We've been taught not to judge a book by its cover. The same can be said of seeds!

Tuesday 7/26/11

Matthew 13:44-50

What is a parable? Some of us were taught that a parable is "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." Parables are usually short, to the point, and contain one main meaning. Jesus taught about the kingdom of heaven by telling parables. The content of these parables contained common elements that people of his day could readily relate to and understand. Jesus took the common to explain the uncommon and extraordinary. Pay attention to the parables because they teach us about heaven!

Wednesday 7/27/11

Matthew 13:51

Jesus told a number of parables in this chapter of Matthew's gospel. He goes from one parable right into the next. Then, in this particular verse, Jesus asks his disciples if they understood all these things. Their quick response is, "yes." I wonder. Did they really understand all these things? And then I reflect on times I nodded when someone asked if I followed a complex explanation. It is easy to just go along and avoid the embarrassment of asking a so called "stupid question." But the only bad question is the unasked question. Do you understand?



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Things to do this week in response to the sermon...

Thursday 7/28/11  
Matthew 13:44

Jesus is telling the parables in this part of Matthew to explain the kingdom of heaven to his followers. The kingdom of Heaven is an involved and complicated subject. This is not religion 101. The concept adhered to in Jesus' day was that the kingdom of heaven was going to come some day. But Jesus taught the disciples that the kingdom of Heaven already began! What does this mean? What is this realm of God called the kingdom of heaven?

Friday 7/29/11  
Matthew 13:53-57

Jesus went from telling parables about the kingdom of heaven to being essentially powerless in his home town. The scriptures are clear here: Jesus could do no mighty works there according to Matthew. "Familiarity breeds contempt." Those who were so close to Jesus did not believe because he was just the carpenter's son. They refused to accept him and his powerful actions because they thought they knew this common man. How many times do we miss something extraordinary because we think something is common and all too familiar?

Saturday 7/30/11  
Psalm 18:32

The way of God is perfect. There is no better, no higher way, than God's way. The way of God is different than the way of humans. Someday God will reveal a whole lot to us and then, in that moment, everything will make sense. In the meantime, we have to remember that we are not God and that God's way is perfect! Take some time today to reflect on God's way instead of your own way.