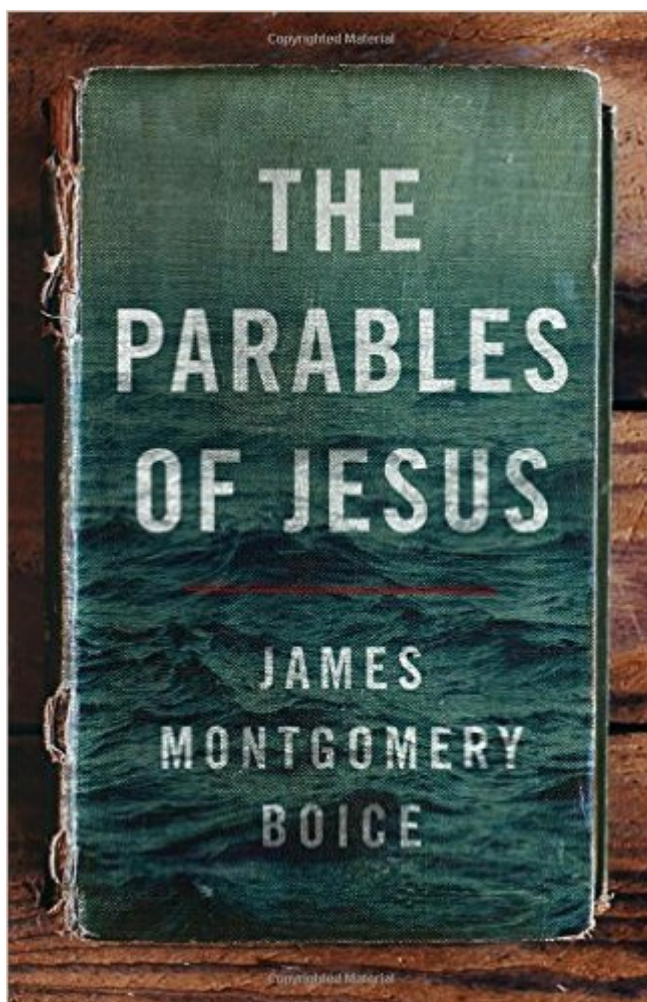


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# The Parables Of Jesus



## Synopsis

"Some sections of the Bible give us grand theology. Some move us to grateful responses to God. But the parables break through mere words and make us ask whether there has indeed been any real difference in our lives." In this beloved classic, James Boice takes us systematically through the parables of Jesus, grouping them into five categories: parables of the kingdom, salvation, wisdom and folly, the Christian life, and judgment. In each section Boice brings Jesus' words to bear on life today. Through his careful study and clear explanation of each parable—born from a sermon series he preached at the Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, where he pastored for 32 years—he helps us understand just what Jesus meant, and how our hearts and lives ought to respond. Jesus' parables are memorable for a reason. Discover their power for yourself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It is a joy to read the works of the late James Boice. He was one of those teachers who not only had a passion for God's word and a solid grasp of theological doctrine, he also had an amazing ability to gently explain even the most difficult concepts in ways that are easily digestible. The Foundations of the Christian Faith is just another great example of this. In the Parables of Jesus, James Boice takes a look at 22 parables spoken by our Lord, separating them into five different categories based on their main application. He groups them into parables of the Kingdom, parables of Salvation, parables of Wisdom and Folly, parables of the Christian Life, and parables of Judgment. He walks the reader through each parable, discussing the overall theme of the parable and then examining

the details and meanings of the imagery used by the Lord in these instructive stories. These parables were not new to me, and for most of them I had a pretty good idea what Jesus was teaching in His use of them. But even those parables I felt I already had a handle on, I gained additional insight into because of the sound exposition by Boice. There were a couple of parables he explained that I thought I understood before, but that completely surprised me as he worked through them. One example of this in the third chapter of the book where he discusses the man who found the treasure buried in the field and the merchant who found the pearl of great value. That single chapter alone was worth the price of the book many times over for me as it actually helped me better understand the process involved in my own conversion! And finally, of course, there were a few parables that had always been a little mysterious to me. This book helped shed some helpful light on those as well. The story of the persistent widow and the unjust judge is a good example here, and he tied this parable to a neat story about George Mueller and the persistence of prayer in a way that was very encouraging. All in all, I highly recommend this little gem of a book. I think there is a lot of value and worth tucked into this book, and the simplicity of the presentation in no way undermines the depth of the wisdom it elucidates. Without a doubt or a misgiving, I will be recommending it and sharing it with other believers in the faith.

This book had a very positive theological impact on my life. In each chapter, James Boice tackles a different parable, relying on the gospels of Matthew and Luke. Boice groups 22 of Christ's parables into those relating to kingdom, salvation, wisdom & folly, the Christian life, and judgment. He then summarizes and provides useful background information and commentary on each one. The actual teachings of Christ himself plus the helpfully illuminating commentary by Boice gave me an enhanced understanding of Christ's will and encouraged me to draw closer to Him in appreciation for the peace and salvation He offers. Highly recommend this book.

While Boice is a popular author and many will enjoy his writing style, he offers little new. But if what you are looking for is homiletic gems, Boice is an exceptional choice on the parables. Boice is fairly easy for people to understand and keeps a reformed perspective. I certainly understand the many 4 and 5 star reviews, but in the remainder of this review I will attempt to explain my lower ranking. All pastors and theologians will have their own theological persuasions and those always color their interpretations. How could they not? Still, as many within Boice's own camp are now letting Scriptures speak more in their context, it leaves Boice's work feeling dated and not very helpful. As an example, I will use one of the parables in the book. Please note that I am not trying to dismiss a

theology or an interpretation, but rather to give reason for my lower ranking. The reader can determine for himself/herself. The parable of the Sower is the first parable Boice explains. He does well seeing out the basic issues. I like that he brings out that the "kingdom of God" is about God's rule. He then presupposes that the parable is about getting into heaven. He focuses on the 4 soils as 4 would-be believers and says the first 3 soils are not believers and the fourth is a believer. But nowhere in the parable is this mentioned. .. Not in the original parable, nor in Jesus' own interp. And with that homiletic maneuver, he has relegated the parable as not very applicable to believers. Obviously, the point of the parable is number four response, that much everybody gets. That is the only soil with fruit. Boice sees this too. But it is important that the sower and his actions are brought out. The point isn't who is and isn't saved, the point is who responds to God's rule and what God does and the specific results to the kingdom. Boice steals the impact of this powerful parable, imo. Granted, Boice does come back and summarize what God does (he is not missing the whole picture, he is quite capable), but he doesn't connect it to this parable. Dissappointing, if your goal is to better understand the parables. Do the last four sentences of Chapter 1 seem a bit contradictory to anyone else? He rightly points to God's ability... He even says we can't come to God. Then, at the end he says we can. Oh well, perhaps I just need to give him homiletic license. .. His preface does admit he didn't have much time to write the book. If you are new to the parables, you may like his approach. Boice will give you answers. Are they correct, though? If you want to go a little deeper, then you need to get something else. David Wenham's Parables of Jesus certainly has some strong points and is easy to follow. Still, he barely supports some of his fanciful interpretations. Hard to get excited. Pentecost does another nice introduction. More academic and hard to follow is the recent: *Stories With Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* has come out... still has a Calvinistic flavor, though well researched, well presented, and complete. But this will not serve the same purpose as Boice. Some other good academic titles... *Interpreting the Parables* and *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom*. All three of these (the last is not merely a book on the parables) are more academic and complete, so you might investigate them a bit before you buy. For non-academic titles: One wonderful book on the Parables is by Kenneth Bailey and he has several books to choose from. One on Luke's Parables is outstanding: *Poet and Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke (Combined edition)* and is very readable. His new one is even more easily read and full of wonderful insights: *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospels*. You will enjoy and be informed of some of the deep meanings behind the Parables.

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