

# WHO IS JESUS?

The Kingdom Storyteller (Mark 4:1-34)



## Key questions

- Why do we love the parables of Jesus?
- What is a parable?
- Why did Jesus tell parables?



## The dual purpose of parables



- Mark 4:10-12 (also Matthew 13:10-17)
  - To **reveal** and to **hide**
    - ***The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that 'they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!'*** (quoting Isaiah 6:9-10)
  - Some people get it, others don't. Why?
  - ***"The secret of the kingdom of God"***

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## The secret of the kingdom of God

- Secret = *musterion*, initiation rites
- "given" to some and not others
- An **open secret**:
  - Romans 16:25-27 "*now revealed & made known*"
  - Ephesians 3:8-10 "*make plain to everyone*"
  - Daniel 2:28 "*God in heaven reveals mysteries*"
  - 1 Corinthians 2:7 "*we declare it*"



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## The secret of the kingdom of God

- What is it?
  - Ephesians 3:4-6 *"the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel"*
  - Colossians 1:26-27 *"to make known among the Gentiles ... Christ in you, the hope of glory"*
  - Romans 11:25-26 *"until the full number of the Gentiles come in"*
  - Ephesians 1:9-10 *"to bring unity to all things ... in Christ"*
  - 1 Timothy 3:16 *"... Jesus ..."*
- Why is this important? Why is it good news?



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## Understanding parables

- Remember the secret
- Jesus' teaching method
  1. I'll show you how to do the first one
    - Parable of the **sower/soils** fully explained
  2. I'll give you a hint to get you started
    - Parable of **lamp** with **partial explanation**
  3. You have a go on your own
    - Parables of **growing seed** & **mustard seed**
  4. If you get stuck, **ask me**

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## And finally...

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- How should we approach parables (and the rest of the Bible)?

**1. Listen!** (verses 3, 9, 23)

- Revelation as we read



**2. Think!** (verse 13)

- Do we really get it?



**3. Pray!** (verses 10-11, 34)

- Ask the author

