

Jesus: Storyteller Or Complete Communicator

Fun Sheet for Homegroup

Welcome Who do you love and hate in 'stories' eg books/films/TV? Why?

Worship Steps to becoming a worship leader: 1) Practice wonder
2) Inspire your friends to wonder 3) Learn Guitar (optional). True or false?
(Pete Greig). Worship = gazing with delight, gratitude and love.

In a couple of quiet minutes suggest that people 'wonder' about something
'wonder'-ful, eg Jesus mini parable 'I am the light of the world'.

Word Read Matthew 13. 1-17 with the phrase 'all welcome' in mind.

1. 'Why do you use nothing but stories when you speak to the people?' asked the disciples (v.10 CEV. Compare Mth. 13.34-35). Do you think Jesus' stories were inviting all people, even opponents to listen, think and learn?
2. Do you have the 'gift of knowing the secrets of the kingdom of heaven' (v.11 Wright)?
3. Do you know people who don't have the 'gift'?
4. Why can't some people 'see', 'hear' or 'understand'? (v.13. cp. Mk.4.10-12; Lk 8. 9-10)
 - What does 'calloused' (v.15) mean? ('stubborn minds' CEV; 'this people's heart has grown flabby and fat, their ears are muffled and dull...' Wright; 'The people are blockheads! They stick their fingers in their ears...' Message)
 - Does everyone have this problem to some degree?
(re vs. 11-12; Mk. 4.10-12 '...difficult... could look as though Jesus is saying that his parables are meant to stop people understanding about the kingdom of God ..Jesus is commenting on the way some people got very little out of the parable .. those who wanted to, asked about its meaning and got lots' Wenham).
5. Even as 'good soil' (v.8), do we still need a bird scarer, some manure, and more weeding and watering (v.4-7)? Why?
6. All the parables Jesus told seem to be about: himself; some aspect of the 'Kingdom'; a need to personally respond. Does knowing this help us to understand them?
7. When you spend time with the stories Jesus told, do they help you to think, learn and pray? Are such stories still a good way to communicate? Accepting that Jesus was a literary genius do we now need some updated stories or new ones?
8. We are all different. Parables may not be the best way for you to learn. Of course Jesus didn't only tell stories. To put his stories in context, list other ways he communicated with people about the Kingdom, eg
 - healed people (but see Mth. 8.10; 9.34; 11.18-24; 12.39; 16.1-4)
 - etc.

Witness

'We have to love our neighbour because she/he is there. She/he is the sample of humanity which is actually given us. Precisely because she/he may be anybody, she/he is everybody (GK Chesterton)'.

In the Jerusalem Temple only clergy were allowed in the most holy part; then further away were areas for men; then women; then foreigners. How do you/we pick and choose whom we will welcome? How will we become more welcoming?