

Lesson 1. The Parables of Matthew 13: Introduction: Didactics: Systematic Instruction; the Enlightenment & the Cosmic System; Overview of the Battle between Cosmic & Grace Didactics; Parable of Sowing Soil, Matt 13:1–3

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Joe Griffin, Pastor

Grace Doctrine Church

1821 South River Road

St. Charles, Missouri 63303

The Parables of Matthew 13: The Battle between Cosmic & Grace Didactics

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A. Introduction.

1. There is an English word that is taken from a Greek word group that best defines the transfer of information from an outside source to the **καρδία / *kardía*** / of the human soul. That word is:

Didactics: Systematic instruction. The art or science of teaching. To instruct through expository teachings.

2. Therefore, didactics involve a process whereby one teaches and another learns. The definition that will define didactics for our study is: A system by which the knowledge and thinking of one who is informed is transferred to the soul of one who was previously uninformed.
3. The classic passage in which the use of the Greek word from which this English word “didactics” is derived is:

John 14:26 - But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you [**διδάσκω (*didáskō*)**] all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

4. This conveyance of thought would contain as its subject the thinking of God. But there is another system of didactics that is administered by satanically inspired communicators who are referenced in:

2 Peter 2:1 - False prophets also arose among the people [**the Jews**] just as there will be false teachers [**ψευδοδιδάσκαλος (*pseudodidáskalos*)**] among you who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master Who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

5. The word Group in the Greek language originated in the time of Homer and emphasized three concepts: **(1)** sharing information, **(2)** passing on knowledge, and **(3)** acquisition of skills.
6. The first use of the word is found in Homer’s *The Iliad*, Book IX, where Phoenix says to Achilles:



Your father Peleus / PEEL-yuse / bade me go with you when he sent you as a mere lad from Phthia / THĪ-ah / to Agamemnon. You knew nothing neither of war nor of the arts whereby men make their mark in council, and he sent me with you to train [διδάσκω (*didáskō*)] you in all excellence of speech and action.¹ [439–44]

7. Students must be trained in order for them to maximize their assets so that when it comes time for application they can execute under pressure.
8. Right thinking comes in three categories:
 - 1) The laws of divine establishment, which can be learned from the Scripture or from a classical education.
 - 2) The Gospel, which reveals how a person may be saved.
 - 3) Doctrine, which expands one's inventory of ideas elevating him to the level of Christian integrity.
9. One of Satan's conspiracies is to prohibit orthodox Protestant theology from ever becoming a part of children's decision-making processes or problem-solving devices.
10. We are familiar with the many assaults that the youth of our nation confront on a daily basis and their inability to confront them with divine thought.

Commentary:

I do not think this congregation is ignorant of the Invisible War that rages between the forces of God and the fallen angelic creation led by Satan and his demons. The Scripture is clear that the motivation behind Satan's rebellion was his desire to supersede God as the supreme authority of this universe. Satan's plan of attack has always included attempts to discredit truth, neutralize believers, and eliminate the Jew. His primary weapon has been the lie and his most favored methods of communicating it have been delusion, duplicity, and deceit. His development of the lie within the souls of men is accomplished through a system of cosmic didactics. Satan deceives the masses into rallying behind some cause through the development of a rhetorical veil that conceals while it advances his hidden agenda. Example: A rhetorical veil: "Salvation may be attained by inviting Jesus Christ into your heart."

¹ Homer, "The Iliad of Homer and The Odyssey," in *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 4, ed. Mortimer J. Adler (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1951), IX:439–44.

This conceals while it advances Satan's hidden agenda: to distort the Gospel so that faith is ignored and works are emphasized with the result that salvation is prevented. Jesus Christ will not respond to an invitation from a person who is spiritually dead. Offering Christ an invitation is human works.

Secondly, what exactly is meant by the invitation for Christ to come into a person's heart? The Scripture is clear in Ephesians 3:19 that Christ is not even at home in the believer's heart until that believer attains spiritual maturity. So why would He enter into the heart of an unbeliever? Answer: He won't!

Based on these biblically supported facts, I do not think it requires too great a leap of faith to make the claim that every time there has been a significant advance on the part of orthodox truth at any point in human history, Satan has consistently mounted a counter attack. I believe a prime example is the fact that once Christianity became firmly established in the West, Satan founded Islam in the East. I also believe that, since one of the major breakthroughs in the advancement of orthodox theology was the Protestant Reformation, it follows that Satan would not permit such an advance to go unchecked. It seems prudent therefore for us to peer into the thinking which emerged from that period and see if we can identify the development of a trend, the aim of which is to denounce, discredit, or undermine the Scripture and even the existence of God. If our assumption is accurate, then we will be able to discover philosophies, belief systems, religions, -isms, and even scientific proclamations that call into question the veracity of biblical truth. I believe that the Enlightenment Movement is the counterattack that Satan initiated to counter the Reformation. The Enlightenment is defined by:

The Enlightenment is a philosophical movement that developed in eighteenth-century Europe and is characterized by its belief that reason, and not superstition or the authority of unexamined tradition, can solve all of the problems of humanity. It is used interchangeably with the phrase *Age of Reason*.

Enlightenment thinkers rejected the idea that religion can be a source of truth, and believed instead that the application of reason to the evidence of the senses is the sole source of the truth. Nature can be discovered and understood rationally and when so understood will be seen to be good and beautiful.

God's will can be seen at work in nature without the need of supernatural intervention. The attitude toward God and religion, characteristic of much Enlightenment thought, is called deism.

In conjunction with their deist beliefs, Enlightenment thinkers replaced ideas of divine authority and the rights of kingship with ideas of universal human rights and the natural rights of all individuals.

Some thinkers usually associated with the Enlightenment are the philosophers John Locke, Immanuel Kant, and Jean Jacques Rousseau.²

Others who have distorted the orthodoxy of Western thought include Charles Darwin, Thomas Malthus, Georg Hegel (HA-gel), Ludwig Feuerbach (FOI-er-bock), Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, John Dewey, and B. F. Skinner.

Therefore, as members of a client nation founded by people whose motivation for coming here was Protestant theology, I think it imprudent for us to ignore the intrusion of satanic thought into our culture. No other client nation in history has enjoyed such leisure. Such is not consistent with the Angelic Conflict. Its long history assures us that our way of life and our freedom to pursue the plan of God will surely face the harassment of our unseen adversary. If this were not true then client nations would not be necessary. Thus to deny Satan's active assault on our culture is to ignore his insidious game plan. To insist that no danger exists is to be naïve, irresponsible, and disoriented to the doctrinal reality that our great country has been transformed by the subtle mind games of *cosmos diabolicus*. We have become a nation decorated with space-age furnishings but populated by third-world people. Satan's genius mentality preys on Christians who make the mistake of believing that academic understanding of technical subject matter somehow produces a person of honor, virtue, and integrity.

The accumulation of knowledge and intake of data does not imply that a person is educated. It means they are proficient in their particular area of expertise. But life is a long-running episode that requires us to face and resolve problems, adjust to variables, and to conquer adversities.

² Herbert Kohl, *From Archetype to Zeitgeist: Powerful Ideas for Powerful Thinking*. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1992), 65.

If the individual is equipped only with technological understanding in accomplishing these tasks, he will fail and so do miserably. Ancient Athens had great thinkers, yet its society fell because it could not sustain itself without the glue of theology. The same can be said of Jerusalem, Rome, and now London. Washington is not very far behind.

Our citizens have been indoctrinated into a system of beliefs, which ignores the wisdom of the ages. Great writers have sought to dramatize morality, virtue, and integrity in the form of poetry, short stories, drama, and discourse. They developed plots, which sought to demonstrate how these truths have eternal values and serve mankind in any generation of history. To study the great writers is to acquire their insight into the mysteries of the human condition. Through trial and error, civilizations have learned what works and what doesn't. The culture we inherited has collected this wisdom and by filtering it through the critical analysis of Bible doctrine it has given us a glorious heritage. It is my contention that evil men have sought to do it harm and have succeeded while good men slept.

It is now up to us in the present generation to brighten the colors of our nation's fading splendor and restore it to its former glory. We can only accomplish this by learning the details of God's grace system of didactics. But even a clear understanding of biblical problem-solving devices is rendered useless if we refuse to acknowledge there are problems.

The Scripture is filled with warnings about the false teachings of *cosmos diabolicus*. It clearly recognizes the fact that there is a false system of didactics communicated by a faculty of false teachers. The only defense the believer has against this indoctrination is a soul filled with the doctrines of the Word of God. Armed with this knowledge, the believer is equipped to defend his soul by discerning the lie and rejecting it. God is willing to defend, deliver, and bless the believer who places his faith in His Word and executes the divine mandates.

Once we learn to simply follow God's lead and allow Him to take care of the details, we are protected from the insidious devices of the satanic system.

We now turn our attention to a key passage of Scripture that warns us of cosmic didactics and the satanic faculty of false teachers in the Devil's world.



B. The Parables of Matthew 13: An Overview of the Battle between Cosmic & Grace Didactics.

1. In past studies I have coined titles for these two schools of higher learning: (1) The Satanic Academy of Cosmic Didactics and (2) the Divine Academy of Grace Didactics. Both will come into view in Matthew 13.
2. The key concept by which we may distinguish between the two is identified by Russell Kirk:

The Academy, if it is to enjoy rights, must acknowledge some principles of truth, and not constitute itself as a mere debating society, doubting everything, sneering at all old convictions. The Academy sins if the Academy places falsehood on the same platform with truth. And when (a school) offers instruction in a subject, this implies that some truth may be found in the discipline. If the rising generation already could perceive every difference between truth and falsehood, the rising generation would not need to enter the Academy at all.

The objects of a decent society have been known for a great while, within and without the Academy: they are order and justice and freedom. But the ... liberals have dropped these objects, and so are decadent, and involve the Academy in their decay of reason.³

3. The Lord presents eight parables in Matthew 13 that compare these two academies. We will observe as many as possible in the time we have. My notes address the first seven.
4. Before beginning we need to establish a definition and a description for “parable.” We consult the introductory comments by:

The parable is a short, fictitious narrative which illustrates a principle of doctrine. “Parable,” is derived from the compound Greek word παραβολή (*parabole*): παρά (*para*), meaning “beside,” and βολή (*bole*), meaning “throw.” Together they denote “setting alongside” or a “comparison.” In other words, in order to understand the spiritual aspect of a parable, one must match up the story with the principle of doctrine. For example, in the parable of the prodigal son, the father represents God the Father and the two sons are analogous to carnal and spiritual believers. The interpretation of the parable requires deduction compatible with known doctrine.

³ Russell Kirk, *Decadence and Renewal in the Higher Learning*. (South Bend: Gateway Editions, Limited, 1978), 18–19.

All parables are derived from the mode of life as it was at the time the parable was written. The characters and incidents are figurative or typical, and proper names or specific geographic locations are never used. In this way you can distinguish between an actual historic event and a parable.

The narrative of a parable has an outward literal meaning which both the unbeliever and believer can understand, but parables are directed primarily toward the believer who has Bible doctrine in his soul. Only the believer with the filling of the Holy Spirit and doctrine is able to understand the spiritual significance of the story.⁴

5. This gives us all we need to know in order to begin our study of the parables found in Matthew 13.

C. The Parable of Sowing Soil, vv. 1-23.

1. In order to teach the principles of cosmic and grace didactics, Christ uses the well-known activity of planting seed into soil.
2. Some soils are receptive to seed while others are not. Those that are receptive do not always produce fruit while others do.
3. The Lord's disciples asked Him why He taught in parables and His response to them was that He wished to reveal truth to some while concealing it from others.
4. In the Matthew 13 passage, Jesus is dealing with a mixed group of people. It consists of those who have responded to his message as well as those who have rejected it.
5. In order to keep from casting His pearls before swine, He utilizes a technique that enables the believer to understand the message but prevents the unbeliever from doing so.
6. In the dispensation of the Incarnation, believers were still under the spiritual life of the dispensation of Israel which was the faith-rest drill. By faith, the believer could respond to the spiritual significance of the story and learn the doctrine it was intended to communicate. But the unbeliever could only understand the parable's outward literal meaning.
7. In this first parable we will learn from the illustration of sowing seed on various kinds of soil how the results compare with the teaching of truth to various individuals.

⁴ R.B. Thieme, Jr., *The Prodigal Son*. 4th ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2001), 1-2.



8. In the parable the “Sower” is Christ. The “seed” is representative of the Word of God, both the Gospel and doctrine. The “soil” symbolizes the soul of the individual believer. The “birds” exemplify Satan’s demonic forces.
9. The principle that will emerge is that the same immutable truth can be taught to all men but their responses will vary.

Matthew 13:1 - On that day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea.

v. 2 - And great multitudes gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat down and the whole multitude was standing on the beach.

v. 3a - And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, ...

1. We probably won’t have time to move through the seven parables found in the first 50 verses of this chapter so let’s note a few important principles regarding the general message the Lord intends to communicate by them.
2. The parables describe the period of time between the two advents of the Messiah.
3. Between the first advent, i.e., the Virgin Birth, and the Second Advent, i.e., the return of Christ at the close of the Tribulation, the Gospel will be presented throughout the devil’s world with various results.
4. Between the two advents is a time of sewing the seed of the Gospel into the soul soil of whosoever will give it a hearing until the harvest at the Second Advent.
5. The parables give examples of the result of such seed sowing and the types of harvests that can be expected.
6. The Lord’s first parable deals with cosmic versus grace didactics and teaches the principle that many hear the message but not all buy it.
7. It is encouraging to the believer who attempts to evangelize relatives and friends that not even Jesus, Who is the greatest of all communicators, was unsuccessful in convincing everyone of His message.

8. Grace transfer of the Gospel is contingent upon human volition and even when transfer is made, cosmic didactics intervene to neutralize the power of truth in the life of the believer.

