

MODERN-DAY PARABLES

“Then He spoke many things to them in parables ... and without a parable He did not speak to them.”¹

From this we can conclude that parables were one of Jesus’ favorite teaching tools. He understood that a story sticks more than a sermon.

A parable is defined as a short allegorical tale that contains morals, illustrating abstract ideas by means of concrete images and vivid word pictures.

When we read the parables that Jesus related to the people of His age, it’s easy to imagine the master storyteller pointing to a farmer sowing seeds in the nearby hills, or to fishermen throwing out their nets into Lake Tiberias. It makes me wonder, if Jesus were walking among us today, what physical images would He use to help us understand spiritual concepts? Perhaps some of them would go like the following:

The parable of the mop

Imagine Jesus placing a mop in the middle of a crowd of people and saying, “When a mop is first made, it is clean and spotless. That is how I came into this world, as the Lamb of God, untouched by the sins of mankind.



“As a mop is plunked and swished in the bucket with disinfectant, so I immersed myself in prayer, in My heavenly Father’s purifying love. And as a mop has no will of its own, so I did let the Father guide Me where He would—to the dark and dirty corners of the world. I had to allow myself to be exposed to the dirt and filth, just like this mop, so that I might be the offering for mankind, so that you could be made right with God through Me.”²

The parable of the cross-country rally

The kingdom of heaven is like a car-racing team made up of many members. Some are the mechanics, some make up the support team, and some are the drivers, yet all work together to keep the car in peak performance for the race.

Even though the race car is custom built to endure the long journey through rugged terrain, it needs to stop to change its tires, transmission fluid, oil, and fill up on gas. Though its wheels strain to hug the road up and down steep hills, and though the driver may take a wrong turn and get lost, there is still a chance for him to find the right road again. If he follows the GPS that the Leader of the rally gave him, and “runs with perseverance the race marked out for him,”³ he will reach the finish line and win the great prize that awaits him and his team.

The Leader of the rally will say, “Well done! You have driven well over many kilometers of dusty and dangerous roads. Enter into the winner’s bay and have a blast!”

I’m not joking when I tell you that in that day there will be a victory celebration so glorious, it will never be forgotten.



The parable of the hard drive

Now learn the parable of the hard drive. As a hard drive stores information, so your heart and mind store many of the things that you see and hear and learn throughout your lives. When you store the data of My Word on your “hard drive” through study and memorization, you are creating a resource of godly information that you can access to help you in your life.⁴ My Words will come to mind and be there to guide you.

Fill your “hard drive” with My Word, and use it to help you live a life of love, goodness, and kindness.—A life you can be proud of and which will receive God’s praise and blessing.⁵

There are a number of things that can be used in a parable—even modern appliances and new technology can relate timeless truths. All we need to do is to take the time to be aware that Jesus still speaks, and then stop to listen to the stories that He would like to tell us.

Footnotes

¹ Matthew 13:3,34 NKJV

² 2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT

³ Hebrews 12:1 NIV

⁴ Psalm 119:11

⁵ Matthew 25:21

