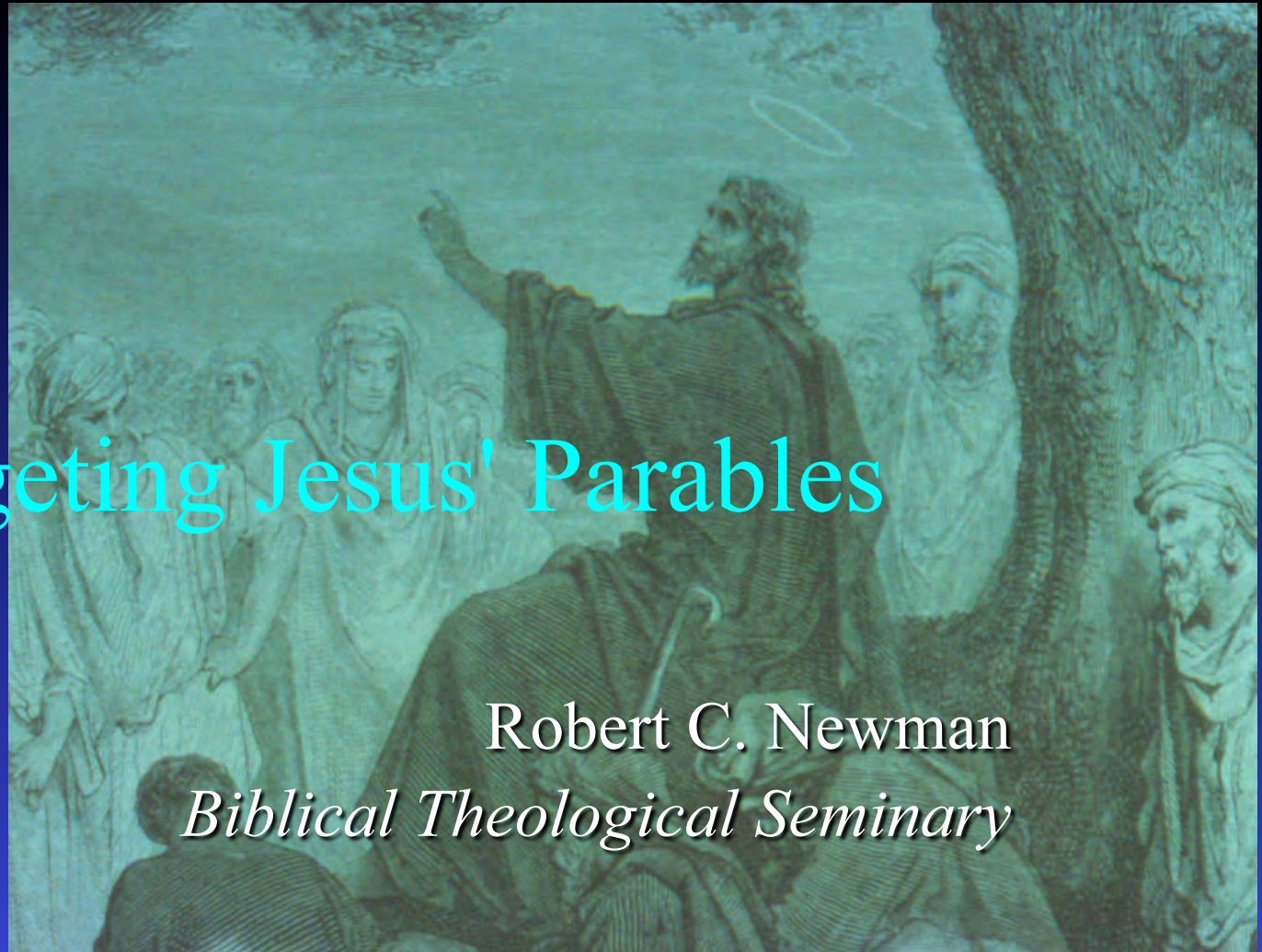


Exegeting Jesus' Parables

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What is a Parable?

■ Dictionary

- ◆ Short, fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or religious principle

■ Literary

- ◆ A simile expanded into a story

■ New Testament

- ◆ A rather broad genre of illustration, including parable (above), allegory, similitude, and sample parable, also proverb and paradox

How Parables Work

■ Parables are stories

- ◆ Brief
- ◆ Unified
- ◆ Few actors
- ◆ Direct discourse
- ◆ Serial development
- ◆ Rule of three
- ◆ Repetition
- ◆ Binary opposition
- ◆ End-stress
- ◆ (often) Resolution by reversal
- ◆ (usually) Two-level

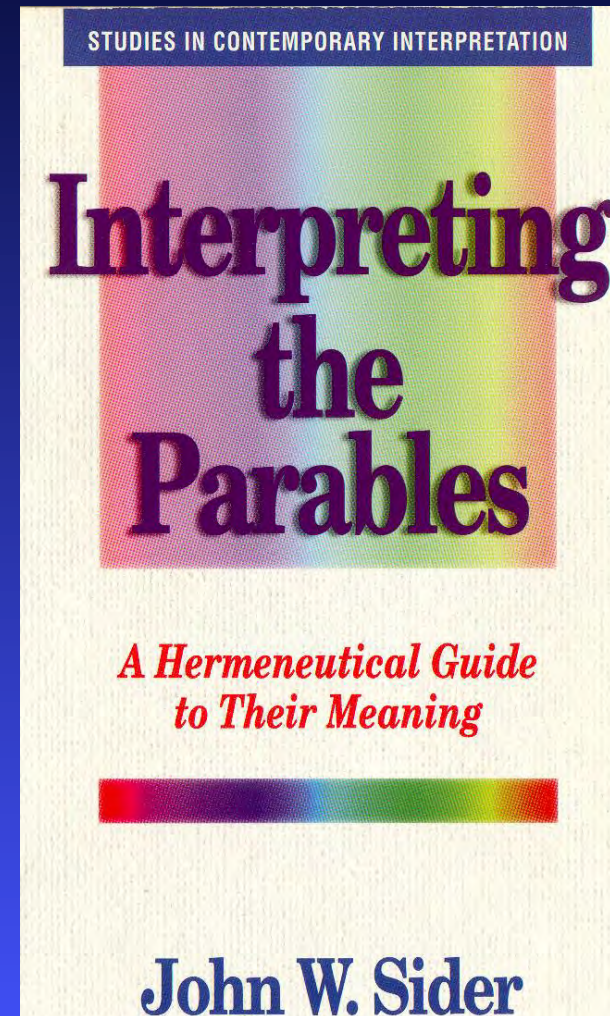


How Parables Work

See John W. Sider,
Interpreting the Parables

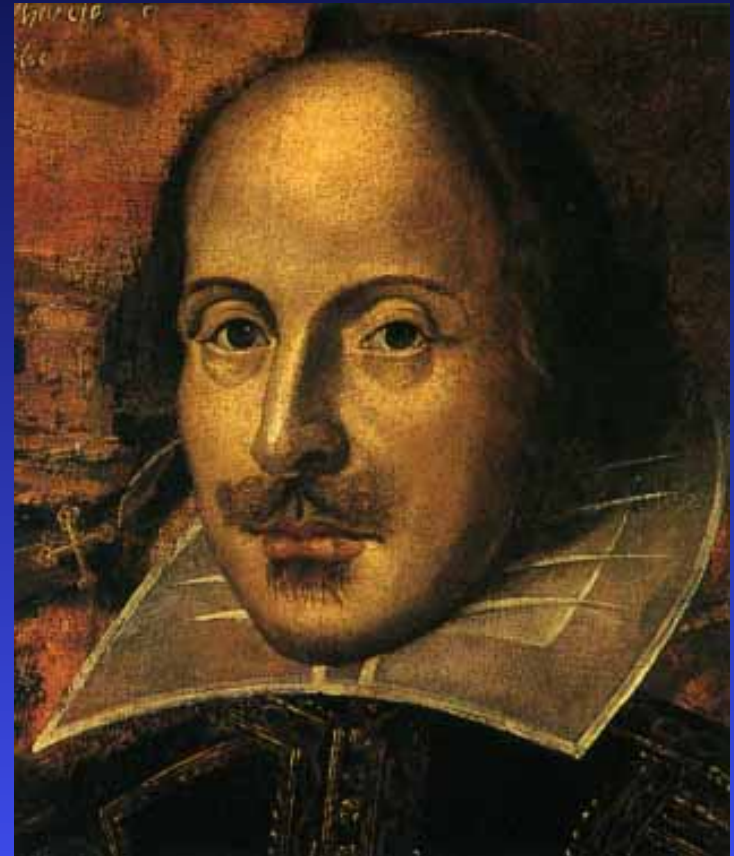
Parables are analogies:

- Verbal comparison
- Tenor – "heavenly meaning"
- Vehicle – "earthly story"
- Point(s) of resemblance



An Analogy from Shakespeare

- "As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods – they kill us for their sport."
- Tenor – relation of gods to humans
- Vehicle – relation of boys to flies
- Point of resemblance – re/ how mistreated



The Analogy Diagrammed

Tenor

Vehicle

We: gods = flies: (wanton) boys

With respect to how they mistreat us

Point of Resemblance

An Example from Jesus' Parables

- Wheat & Weeds – Matt 13:24-30, 36-43
- Story: Man sows good seed, his enemy weeds. When discovered, slaves want to remedy situation right away; owner has them wait till harvest.
- Tenor: kingdom of heaven
- Vehicle: story above
- Points of Resemblance: several



Parables in the Gospels

- Christological
- Lost & Found
- Forgiveness & Mercy
- Prayer
- Transformation
- Stewardship
- Invitation & Rejection

Parables in the Gospels

- Second Coming
- Warning & Judgment
- Kingdom
- Illustrative (example) Parables
- Acted Parables

The End

Let's begin to make the parables come
alive for our audience!