

Kids' Chronicle

Jesus describes heaven in parables

BY JOE SARNICOLA

Many times, when word spread that Jesus was coming, huge crowds of people would follow him, hoping he would preach to them or heal them. On one of those days, the crowd was so large that Jesus had to preach from a boat in the water while the people listened from the shore. Jesus looked with love at his people. Then he began preaching.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed. When everyone was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat. His laborers asked him if he wanted them to pull the weeds, but he said the wheat would be pulled out at the same time. He told them to wait until harvest time. Then the weeds would be separated and burned and the wheat would be stored in the barn."

Jesus could see that his story had caused some of the people to question each other about its possible meaning. Jesus raised his arms to get their attention again and he told them another story.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed. It is the smallest of seeds, yet when full-grown, it is the largest of plants. The kingdom of heaven is also like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened."

After he had told them a number of stories, Jesus sent the people home.

When they had all gone, and he was



Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

alone with his disciples, one of them asked Jesus a question. "What is the meaning of the parable of the weeds in the field?"

Jesus looked at each of his friends and said, "He who sows good seed is the Son of Man, the field is the world, the seed is the children of the world and the enemy is the devil. Just as weeds are collected

and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father."

And Jesus told his disciples another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea. When it is full, the fishermen haul it ashore and sit down and put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. Do you understand all these things?"

"Yes," the disciples answered.

READ MORE ABOUT IT:
Matthew 13

Q&A

1. Why did Jesus preach from a boat?
2. What were all of Jesus' parables about?

Bible Accent

The Gospel According to Matthew is the first of the four Gospels that opens the New Testament.

Before beginning his book, Matthew documents the genealogy of Jesus all the way back to Abraham. After describing how the Magi came to visit the baby Jesus, Matthew quickly makes the connection Jesus had with John the Baptist. John was not only the cousin of Jesus, but he was "a voice of one crying out in the desert," who prophesied that Jesus would soon come. John baptized Jesus, and immediately after that Jesus was tempted by the devil.

He resisted the devil's temptations by quoting Scripture and standing firm in his faith in God, his Father. Matthew recorded many of the beautiful sermons and parables Jesus told, including the Sermon on the Mount, which contained the beatitudes. The Lord's Prayer, also called the "Our Father," is found in Matthew, and so is the Great Commission, "Go, and make disciples of all nations."

St. Bonaventure

St. Bonaventure joined the order of Friars Minor and gained an education at the University of Paris. He enjoyed preaching, and his sermons were very inspiring to many of the people who heard them. While still at the university, he wrote one of his most well-known theological works, the "Commentary on the Sentences" of Peter Lombard. Bonaventure wrote another paper, "Concerning Perfection of Life," for Isabella, the sister of St. Louis IX and a leader of the Poor Clares. When he was appointed the minister general of the Friars Minor, Bonaventure wrote a paper to settle a dispute of theological extremes between two groups of friars. Pope Clement IV nominated Bonaventure to the position of Archbishop of York, but he refused the position. Less than 10 years later, Pope Gregory X named him to be the Cardinal-Bishop of Albano. We honor Bonaventure on July 15.

Puzzle

Circle the word that makes the sentence true. The questions are based on the Gospel of Matthew; chapter numbers are given as hints.

Answers on page 8.

1. (Emmanuel, Messiah) means "God is with us." (ch. 1)
2. Jesus was born in (Egypt, Bethlehem) (ch. 2)
3. Jesus was baptized in the (Nile, Jordan) River. (ch. 3)
4. (Twenty-one, Twelve) men were the first disciples of Jesus. (ch. 10)
5. Jesus walked on the (sea, quicksand) as if it were dry land. (ch. 14)
6. Jesus died on the (cross, gallows). (ch. 27)

Kids' Club

You can win a \$50 savings bond by writing an essay (100 or fewer words) answering this question: Why is the Bible so important to our faith?

Send your essay — including name, home address, telephone number, school and grade — to Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624. Deadline for entries is July 18, 2002. The winner will be notified by phone and receive the savings bond by mail. In addition, the winner's essay will be published in an upcoming issue of Kids' Chronicle.

Last month's winner was Alisha Cleggett, a fifth-grader at St. Monica School in Rochester. In response to Jesus told us not to be afraid. How can fear affect the way we act? she wrote "Fear can affect you in many ways. It can make you so scared that you stop believing in God. Fear can make you scared of the dark. Then you start to believe that there are people in your house or monsters. Just like Peter! Peter was scared and that's why he denied Jesus three times. That's what fear can do to you. Jesus and God can help you overcome fear. Jesus can be in another person who can help you out with your fears."

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