

# Readings

## Scripture

<sup>10</sup> Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" <sup>11</sup> And he answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. <sup>12</sup> For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. <sup>13</sup> This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. <sup>14</sup> Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: ""You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive." <sup>15</sup> For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.' <sup>16</sup> But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. <sup>17</sup> For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. ...

<sup>34</sup> All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable. <sup>35</sup> This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world."

Matthew 13:10-17, 34-35 (English Standard Version)

## Reflection

Haven't seen you in quite a while  
I was down the hold, just passing time.  
Last time we met it was a low-lit room  
We were as close together as a bride and groom.  
We ate the food, we drank the wine  
Everybody having a good time except you.  
You were talking about the end of the world.

I took the money, I spiked your drink  
You miss too much these days if you stop to think.  
You led me on with those innocent eyes  
And you know I love the element of surprise.  
In the garden I was playing the tart  
I kissed your lips and broke your heart.  
You, you were acting like it was the end of the world.

In my dream, I was drowning my sorrows  
But my sorrows they'd learned to swim  
Surrounding me, going down on me  
Spilling over the brim  
Waves of regret and waves of joy.  
I reached out for the one I tried to destroy.  
You, you said you'd wait till the end of the world.

U2, *Until the End of the World*

# Sermon Outline

**Revealing and Concealing**  
Matthew 13:10-17, 34-35

*Tell Me a Story About a Kingdom*  
Brad Anderson

**Why do you speak to them in parables?** (Matthew 13:10, 34-35)

**To reveal the secrets of the kingdom of heaven to some...** (Matthew 13:11-12a, 16-17)

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**To conceal the secrets of the kingdom of heaven to others...** (Matthew 13:12b-15)

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## Reflection Questions

*(taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)*

- What was your favorite story growing up as a child? Did you read it more than once? Why? What did you like about the story? As an adult, have you read that same story to other children?
- What is your favorite parable in the Bible? What do you remember about it that stands out? What made it memorable?
- Why would God lead Jesus to teach about the kingdom of heaven through stories that seem almost dismissible?
- In verses 16-17, Jesus gives a new beatitude. What have the disciples seen and heard that the prophets longed to see and hear? Are we included in this blessing, or was it only for the disciples?
- Jesus states that the dynamic of speaking in parables fulfills the prophesy of Isaiah. Read Isaiah 6. Describe how the hardening of some hearts and the responsiveness of other hearts reveal God's sovereignty? (Read Romans 8-9 for further insight.)
- Look back at Matthew 13:10, 15. Jesus is encountering a dynamic that has been true since the fall of the world into sin. What does revealing and concealing the secrets of the kingdom of heaven do in us regarding our worship, our hope, our trust in God and his purposes?
- Why does it seem like so few people are following Jesus in Matthew's gospel? Why so little glory, if he is the Messiah?