

2. Second visit: tracing the story line

- a. What has Jesus been doing so far? (in chapters 1-3)
(You will find lots of things, but don't miss 1:14, 21, 38, 2:2, 13, 3:13-15, 4:1)

- b. List the various groups of people Jesus has interacted with.

- c. How have these different groups responded to him?

- d. Compare chapter 1 and chapter 3. How have things changed?
(e.g. Look at 1:21-27 and 3:1-6)

If you were a disciple, would you be in any way worried by how Jesus's ministry seems to be going?

- e. Does this background shed any light on the parable and its explanation?

Observations:

3. Third visit: The OT quotation

It comes from Isaiah 6. Isaiah has a great vision of God in his temple. In this vision, God calls for a preacher to go (v8) and Isaiah asks to be sent.

Read Isaiah 6:8-12

- a. From this morning's session, where are we in Israel's history?

On a scale of 1-5, how much exposure has Israel had to God's word during her history?

How has she responded?

- b. Isaiah is given a difficult job, of being the preacher who won't be understood (v10) because God is going to send the people into exile (v11).

Why is this a fitting thing for God to do, given Israel's previous attitude to God's word?

- c. Let's assume that Jesus quotes from Isaiah 6 because this passage has something important to say to his own time.

How is Israel in Jesus's time similar to Israel in Isaiah's time?

How might this passage help the disciples to understand why Jesus is now preaching in parables?

Observations