

13:9 Not everyone has the capacity to hear and understand the Gospel; not all have faith (2 Thess. 3:2). But those of us who do should use the potential we've been given.

13:11 The parables weren't stories with an obvious, easy to understand meaning. Jesus used them in order to filter out those who didn't want to understand. For them the parables were confusing and obscured His message. There's an upward spiral and also a downward spiral in our relationship with God.

13:12 How can a person who has nothing have what he has taken away from him? Maybe Jesus meant us to read in an ellipsis: 'the person who [thought he] had nothing [even though he does], will have even that taken from him'. This would be like the one talent man of Mt. 25:24. People have more than they think; for God's generosity is greater than we imagine.

13:21 Trial comes into our lives soon after baptism, as Israel were 'baptized' in the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:1,2) and very soon encountered problems in the wilderness [no food or water].

13:28 Jesus foresaw that His followers would have a tendency towards trying to do God's judgment for Him; He explains (:29) that it's not possible for us to judge who is who. It's therefore a fact that there will be insincere people growing within the field of the church, next to those who are sincere. They have an appearance of growth. But we must leave them until harvest- the return of Jesus.

13:32 From tiny beginnings- reading a Bible, noticing an advertisement, meeting someone 'by chance'- we will come to eternity. We will be a refuge for others then. We will look back on this life and it will seem so disproportionate- that we got 'there' from 'here'.

13:39 *Angels*- First we will know that Jesus has returned is that our Angel will be standing next to us and inviting us to go meet Him.

13:46 Often Jesus intends us to think how the stories continue or end. So, what did the man do now? No wealth or possessions, just one stone. Surely he looked at it and loved it and treasured it more than anything else. This should be our attitude to the Kingdom of God.

13:50 Banging teeth is a symbol of anger with oneself.

13:55 Jesus never sinned, neither in commission nor omission, for all those 30 years He lived amongst them in Nazareth. But they never noticed He was anything special. This isn't only an essay in His utter humanity. It challenges us, for whenever we appear righteous in the eyes of the world, they perceive it and dislike it. But somehow the perfection of Jesus wasn't noticeable. Hence He was indeed perfect.