

QC0062 - The Parable of the 3 Farmers

Today's episode of Quick Counsel is going to be a little different. Today, I want to tell you The Parable of the 3 Farmers and what lessons we might be able to pull from it and apply to our lives...especially to our relationships.

So let's get started.

Anyone who knows me, know's I love stories. If you were to walk into my office, you would find children's book on my desk, children's book on my coffee table, and children's book on my bookshelves.

Whether they're Aesop's fables or Jesus' parables, I've found that stories have a way of by-passing our heads and powerfully conveying truth straight to our hearts.

When it comes to relationship issues, parables can be especially effective in getting around our pride and defensiveness. So, today I want to tell you a parable I came up with to help cut through the relationship noise that can exist between people. It's called The Parable of the 3 Farmers.

Once there were three farmers. They each had a field that was not doing well. The demands of growing crops had, over time, slowly drawn the life-giving nutrients from the soil, and so they no longer brought satisfying crops to the farmers. And each of the farmers was very frustrated with their field.

The first farmer said, "Farming shouldn't be this hard. I've been struggling with this field for some time, and I don't seem to be getting anywhere. I'm not sure what to do with it, and even if I did know what to do, I'm not sure I have the time, energy, or resources to invest in this field anymore." He eventually sold his field and took a loss, just to get out from underneath it.

The second farmer said, "This is frustrating. This field used to produce a great crop. What's wrong with it? I'm not doing anything different. I've not changed my way of doing things. I don't know why things are getting worse, but one thing I do know, I'm going to stick with doing what I've always done. If it was good enough to produce crops then, it should be good enough now." This farmer continued to do things the way he had always done them, seeing less and less return from his field, and becoming more and more convinced that there was a problem with the field.

The third farmer said, "This is not good. This is not how I want things to be, but I've got too much invested in this field to let it go just yet. It seems to me that what I'm doing should be working, but, maybe I'm missing something." The farmer sought out the original owner of the land, because he had heard of his track record for producing successful crops.

The original owner suggested that the farmer's field was not producing a satisfying crop because the farmer was not putting the necessary nutrients back into the field. He told the farmer, "Over time, the demands of growing, the heat of the sun, and the erosion from storms takes a lot out of a field. You must put back into the field the things it needs if you want to keep producing good crops." The farmer asked him just what he should be putting into his field, to which the original owner said, "That depends on the field. Each field is different, with different needs. You must get to know your field." And so, with much uncertainty and no guarantee of success, the farmer took the original owner's counsel and went back to "get to know his field" and to "put back into it the things it needed."

Now, having heard the parable, let it sink in deep by answering the following questions regarding relationship difficulties you might be having:

1. Does this parable apply to your situation? If so, how?
2. With which farmer do you most identify? Why?
3. What's one thing you can take from this story that would be beneficial to your current situation?

I encourage you to spend some time thinking about this parable and these questions this week. Maybe you'll want to replay this episode and listen to the parable again.

As you answer these questions, I would love it if you would leave some comments and tell me how you answered some of these questions.

I hope you enjoyed this parable approach to relationship issues. But more than that, I hope it prompted you to think differently and maybe approach your relationship situation differently.

As always, you can find more from me at bretlegg.com (that's 1 t and 2 g's) and I would encourage you to find me on Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and Twitter.

Now go out into the rest of your week, deciding which farmer you want to be... and I'll see you back here for the next Quick Counsel.