

A black and white, upside-down photograph of a city skyline with various skyscrapers and buildings. The image is inverted, with the top of the buildings at the bottom of the frame.

MATTHEW

The Upside umog Kingdom

Matthew 13

Jesus used parables to teach His disciples about the kingdom



Matthew 13:1-23

Not everyone will accept the Gospel

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The Upside down Kingdom



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- This chapter contains several parables about the kingdom of God, each of which tells us something different about the kingdom.
- Parables are unique kinds of stories.
- Parables, like jokes, work by surprise. They elicit a response from the hearer — laughter, surprise, tears, a punch of guilt. The hearers are suddenly surprised by a spiritual truth.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- Many of the parables are about the kingdom of God.
- The ministry of Jesus was to proclaim the kingdom.
- This chapter contains a special set of parables that literally open with “The kingdom of God is like . . .”
- These parables are intentional teaching metaphors to explain the kingdom of God to us.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- The parable of the sower is the key to the others.
- Jesus explained to His disciples that the four kinds of soil correlate to people's responses to the message of the kingdom.
- The point of the parable is the urgency of the message.
- Judgment is coming, so we really want to be that good soil.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- Most of Jesus' parables involve characters and situations that were familiar to His audience, in this case, a farmer and a field.
- The odd detail of this story, which His hearers would have noticed that the farmer didn't sow his seed only in the good soil.
- Farmers normally till and prepare a field, then only sow where the field is ready to receive the seed.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- A typical farmer wouldn't sow seed on the path or even in the weeds or rocky places.
- The audience would have been thinking, "What a dumb farmer."
- Jesus was making a strong point. He shared the Gospel with everyone, whether they were ready to hear it or not, whether people might have thought it would be a waste or not.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- The path – the footpaths around or through a field,
- Sowing seed here would be like throwing it on concrete.
- Jesus tells us that this soil is the one who hears the Gospel but doesn't understand it.
- This isn't about the evangelist not doing a good enough job making the message understandable or relevant.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- The rocky soil – much of the land in Israel is like this, it is shallow soil over rock.
- It was common for seed in these places to spring up quickly but then die because it cannot put down deep roots.
- If we don't take the time to dig deep roots through Scripture, prayer and other spiritual disciplines, our faith won't last.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- The thorns – Jesus explains that the thorns are the worries of life and the deceitfulness of wealth.
- Thorns grow up around all of us. We all live in the world.
- Jesus wasn't advocating removing ourselves from the world but not letting the world choke us.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- The implication is that the disciples are the good soil. They have heard the message and understood it (verses 11–16).
- The Pharisees are the path. They heard the message but didn't understand (verse 13). Their hearts were hardened like the "soil" of the path. Like the people of God in Isaiah's time, they would hear but never understand.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- Some in the large crowd who followed Jesus were more like the rocky or the weedy soil.
- But Jesus' disciples would prove themselves to be the good soil.
- Though they weren't perfect, when persecution would come, they would not fall away (verse 21), they would endure it all the way to death.



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- The measure of good soil is whether it produces a crop.
- This is consistent with other passages in which Jesus said we will know people by their fruit (Matthew 7), that those who abide in Christ will bear good fruit (John 15), and that those who walk in the Spirit will bear the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5).



Not everyone will accept the Gospel

- Fruit is something that grows in good soil or on a healthy branch.
- It is not something we manufacture ourselves.
- It grows in our lives because we are planted in the right soil, because we are connected to the right vine.
- Jesus ended this parable with "He who has ears, let him hear" (verse 9).



Matthew 13:24-52

The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

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The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

- This section contains six parables: the weeds, the mustard seed, the yeast, the hidden treasures, the pearl, and the net.
- The Weeds: This parable describes how and why the world is filled with both the good and the wicked.
- They are growing side-by-side until God separates them at the end.



The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

- The weeds here are darnel, a poisonous weed organically related to wheat, that looked so like wheat from the outside that it was next to impossible to tell the difference.
- Pulling up the weeds from the wheat might damage the crop in the process. So they waited until they were fully grown.
- In the world, there are both wheat and weeds, growing together.

darnel



wheat



The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

- Day of Judgment: God will separate them and burn up the weeds.
- But God's workers (the disciples and us) cannot tell the difference between the wheat and the weeds.
- It is not our place to judge, not our place to decide between the good and the wicked, believers and unbelievers.



The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

- The Mustard Seed and the Yeast: These parables describe the “already-not yet” of the kingdom of God.
- The kingdom has already arrived in Jesus, but it has not yet come in all its fullness.
- At the time, people wondered if Jesus’ ministry really was the kingdom of God. It seemed so small and insignificant.



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- Like a mustard seed, the kingdom starts out small, but will become extremely large.
- The mustard seed was the smallest seed known to the Jews of Jesus' day and was often used to talk about small things.
- The disciples will multiply themselves much, much more than a hundredfold.



The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

- Like yeast in a dough, the kingdom changes the whole world around it.
- The kingdom of God wasn't just about Israel. It would spread throughout the whole world. At the end of Matthew, Jesus tells His disciples that the Gospel of the kingdom would be preached to every nation on earth (Matthew 24:14).



The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

- The treasure and the pearl: Both parables teach that the kingdom of God is worth everything you have.
- The kingdom may be hidden to the world, like a treasure hidden in a field, but to the one who recognizes its value, it is worth everything he has.
- It is even worth it all to a wealthy pearl merchant.



The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

- The net: Like the parable of the weeds, this describes the Judgment at the end of the age.
- Jesus will usher in the final kingdom, the consummation.
- As God separates the wheat from the weeds, He will separate the good fish from the bad fish, the wicked from the righteous.



The kingdom is already here but not yet in its fullness

- Jesus closed these parables by saying that every scribe is like a wealthy man who displays both his new and old treasures, representing the old and new covenants.
- The new covenant brings us Jesus, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life in the kingdom, while the old covenant is valuable in the way it points ahead to the new.



Matthew 13:53-58

Jesus was not accepted in His hometown

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Jesus was not accepted in His hometown

- His lack of acceptance in Nazareth isn't really surprising.
- He even spoke the lesson of it like a proverb: a prophet is not accepted in his hometown.
- These people grew up with Him. They knew His parents.
- How could they believe He was the Messiah?



Jesus was not accepted in His hometown

- Jesus didn't fit any of the images they had of what the Messiah would be.
- He was just a carpenter's son (verse 55). He was born in humility (Philippians 2) and lived in humility while He was with them.
- He hadn't done any miracles until He started His ministry, and they were shocked at His wisdom and mighty works (verse 54).



Jesus was not accepted in His hometown

- Jesus was not surprised.
- He spoke a common proverb, one the Nazarenes themselves were familiar with — “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.”
- At first, even His own family didn't believe in Him (John 7:5).



Jesus was not accepted in His hometown

- Even His relative John had some doubts when he saw the kind of ministry Jesus was carrying out (Matthew 11:3).
- Jesus wasn't what any of them expected.
- But those who had ears to hear would recognize that He was a hidden treasure, a precious pearl, and would give all that they had to follow Him (Matthew 16:24–26).

Ask Kerby

A BIBLICAL VIEW ON
MEDIA BIAS

CENSORED

MarjorieDannenfelser
Abortion is profoundly anti-women. - Mother Teresa #daywithoutawoman @SBAList

"Abortion is profoundly anti-women. Three quarters of its victims are women. Half the babies and all the mothers."
Mother Teresa

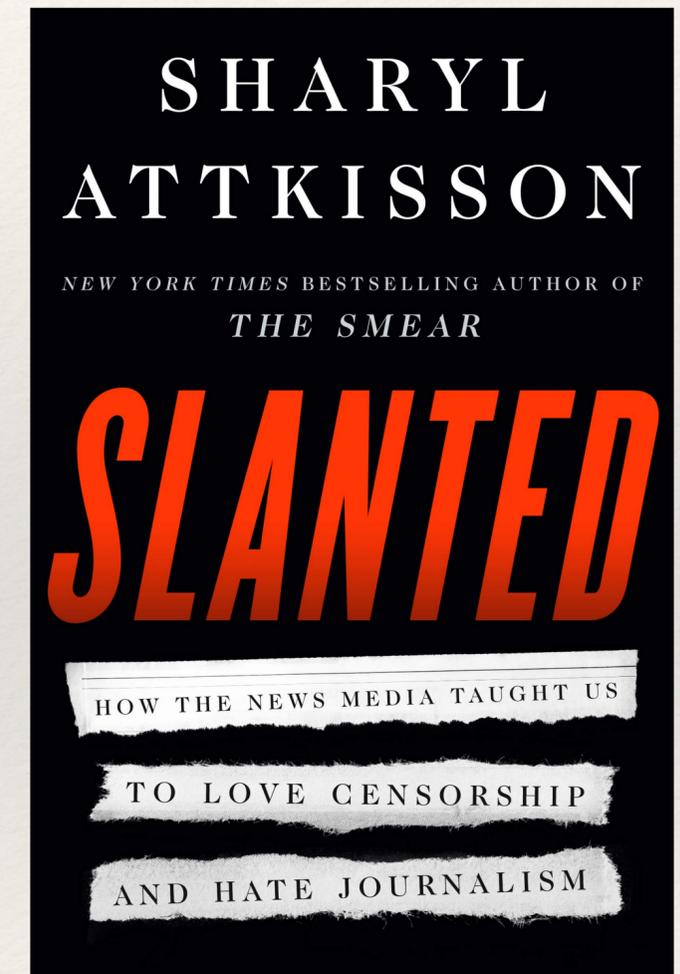
MR. ORLE

MR. HIRSH

KERBY ANDERSON

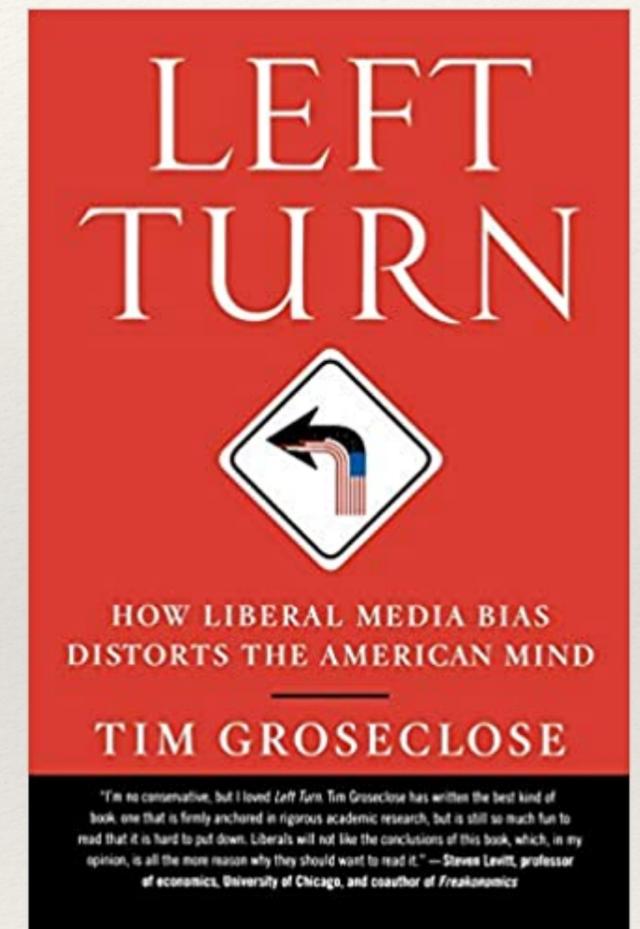
The Narrative

- First, truthful information can be deliberately presented in a biased fashion in order to confuse or overwhelm other facts.
- Second, truthful information can qualify as a narrative when it is amplified beyond its news value to fit a broader story line.
- Third, truth can be couched in term that present an issue as a closed case. Contrary facts and views are illegitimate. We hear environmental activists tell us that the science is settled.



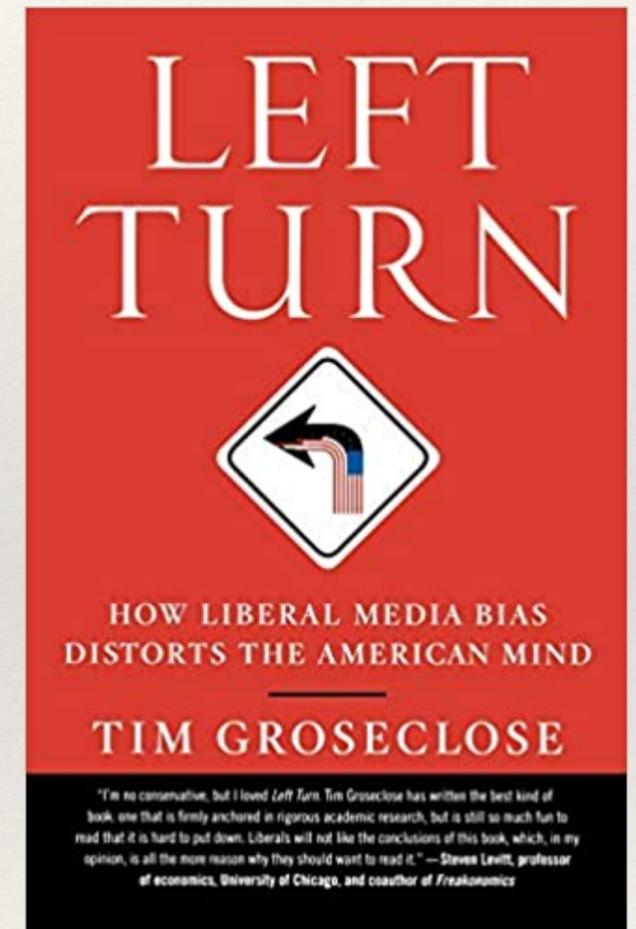
Measuring Media Bias

- UCLA professor Tim Groseclose published his groundbreaking study that used quantitative methods to study the issue.
- He constructed a measure of media bias known as the “Political Quotient” often called PQ for short.
- Using his research method, he found that eighteen of the twenty media outlets at that time were left of center.



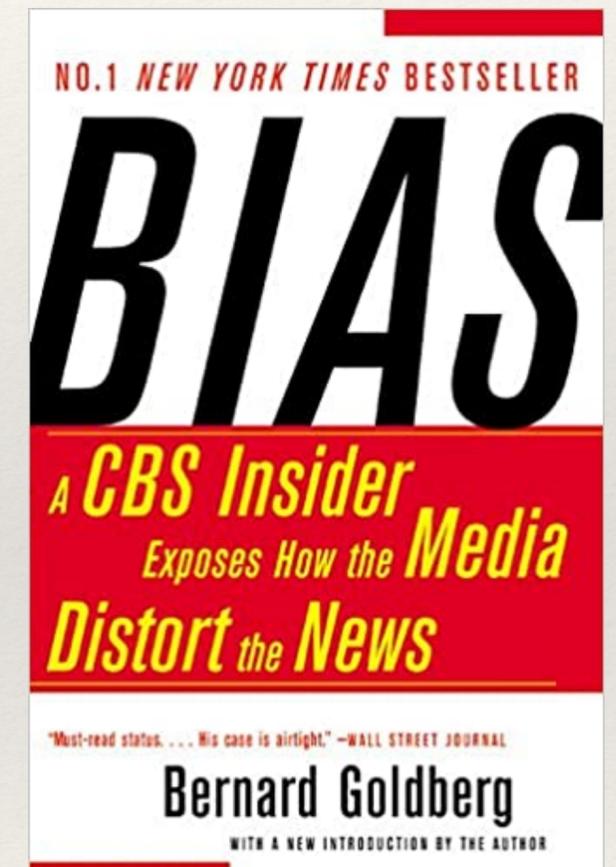
Measuring Media Bias

- He was also able to measure the impact the media in having on the perceptions of Americans. Absent the media's influence, the average American's views would reflect those of conservative areas like Orange County, California and the state of Kansas.
- He says the media uses distortion, not lies or incorrect facts, to report news with a liberal slant. In other words, the facts they use are usually correct. But the omission of other important facts is how bias manifests itself.



Worldview Bias

- Bernard Goldberg published his book, *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News*.
- It was significant because he was one of the first media insiders to reveal what many of us suspected about the background and attitudes of the people who determine what you read, see, and hear in the media.
- The “mainstream media” has a common worldview that is promoted in the newsrooms and also promoted in the way news stories are covered.



Bias Through Censorship: Example # 1

- Center for Medical Progress did a number of hidden-camera interviews of Planned Parenthood. They exposed many disturbing aspects of Planned Parenthood that were later revealed through other investigative reports.
- The only response from Planned Parenthood about the videos was that they were “heavily edited.” They were not. The media edited them.
- Media Research Center found that the three networks “completely censored the actual video of the Planned Parenthood officials incriminating themselves.” All you saw from the actual videos was 73 seconds.

Bias Through Censorship: Example #2

- Media Research Center asked The Polling Company to survey 1,750 Biden voters in seven swing states.
- They tested the voters' knowledge of eight news stories that liberal news media failed to report properly. Three stories reflected poorly on Joe Biden or Kamala Harris and five stories about Trump administration successes.
- A total of 17 percent said they would have changed their vote if they had been aware of these issues. This would have moved every one of the swing states into Trump's column and given him 311 electoral votes.

Biblical Principles

- As Christians we must guard against becoming conformed to this world (Romans 12:1) which can easily happen given the powerful influence of media in our 21st century world. We will need discernment to separate truth from error, reality from fantasy, true facts from fake news.
- The Apostle Paul warns us, “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8).
- It is easy to be taken captive by the culture through false views and media bias. We need to guard against being deceived.

Biblical Principles

- Paul also calls for us to grow in knowledge, wisdom, and discernment: “And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ” (Philippians 1:9-11).
- We should guard against believing everything we see, read, or hear. Media bias will give us a false view of the world.
- We should use a biblical worldview to evaluate what we see in the world. “Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth” (Colossians 3:2).