

# ***Parables of Jesus***

**Fall of 2016  
Side Study  
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# Parables of Jesus

## Introduction

### Lesson 1

#### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom

#### **Introduction**

Parables were used as a method of teaching in the Old Testament, but the number of parables to be found there depends upon one's definition of a parable. The most obvious Old Testament parables would include Nathan's story of the poor man's lamb in II Samuel 12:1-4, the two eagles and the vine of Ezekiel 17:1-10, and the prophet Joab's story (through a woman of Tekoa) in II Samuel 14:1-13. But the master teacher of parables was clearly Jesus our Lord. It's difficult to say how many of his parables are recorded in the four Gospel accounts, as individuals have used different definitions for what constitutes a parable. We have included a chart at the end of this lesson that lists 46 parables of Jesus. Others would claim a much higher number as they count many short illustrations (such as new wineskins – Matthew 9:17) and metaphors of Jesus (I am the bread of life, the light of the world, etc) as parables. R.C. Trench in his Notes on the Parables of Jesus lists 30 parables. In this class we will examine 29 stories/illustrations that we consider to be parables, but we do not regard this as an exhaustive list. See the Schedule of Lessons attached.

#### **Background to the Parables of Jesus**

One way to consider these parables is to ask the following questions:

1. **Who** taught the parables of our study? We have answered this in the title of our study – we will examine the parables of Jesus.
2. **What** is a parable? There seems to be general consensus on the definition of the word *parable* (though not necessarily on what is or is not a parable). Most definitions are similar to this: "parable from the Greek, *parabole*, which is from a verb signifying *to put forth one thing before or beside another*" (from Notes on the Parables of Our Lord – R.C. Trench). The idea being that a spiritual meaning is cast alongside an easy to understand story. A familiar and helpful expression is that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. We are looking for teaching that uses familiar illustrations to convey a much deeper and complex spiritual lesson.
3. **Where** will we find the parables of Jesus? Almost exclusively in the Gospel accounts of Matthew and Luke. Look again at the chart of 46 parables. Only one is exclusively found in Mark (Mark 4:26-29) and only one is listed at all from John (John 10:1-5, 7-18).
4. **When** did Jesus teach his parables? This is an interesting point – almost all of Jesus' parables were taught during the last year of his three year ministry. Even these are mostly in the latter half of that year, and many are from the last week of his life. They seem to have increased in

frequency as the opposition to Christ became more intense. We believe there is a connection between the timing of the parables and the answer to our next question.

5. **Why** did Jesus teach in parables? Here we are on somewhat firmer ground for he gives an answer to this question in Matthew 13:10-13:

<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.

But this answer may raise even more questions. Why would Jesus, the great teacher, purposefully use a method that would be difficult for many to understand? Based on the timing of the parables, it appears that Jesus was intentionally challenging his listeners through parables, winnowing out those who were not determined to follow him at any cost. Paul Earnhart in his book on the parables, Glimpses of Eternity, explains this process:

*"Jesus' parables never appealed much to people who knew it already. They simply served to put out the little light that such folk had, but that was alright because the Lord was not calling them anyway, and the time had come by the third year of His public ministry to drive off the eternal critics, the curiosity seekers, the unthinking hangers-on who had no real interest in the kingdom of God."*

### **Guidelines for Our Study**

During the course of our study we will pay close attention to the following guidelines as we study each individual parable:

1. We will examine the context of the parable. Why did Jesus teach this particular parable at this specific moment? Often, the account gives us an explanation. For example, the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) is given in response to a lawyer's question. That question and the further exchange of Jesus and the lawyer are essential in grasping the full meaning of the parable. Similarly, the three parables on things lost in Luke 15 were triggered by criticism of Jesus receiving and eating with sinners (Luke 15:1-2).
2. We will look for the main point of the parable. Though there may be many side lessons learned from a parable, generally speaking Jesus had one main idea that the parable was intended to convey. It is important to focus on that main idea.
3. We will avoid getting caught up in the details of the parable. Related to the guideline above, it is easy to miss the real point that Jesus is teaching when we try to assign a meaning to every aspect of the parable. Such an approach runs counter to the way that Jesus used parables.
4. We will attempt to make a personal application from the parable. Rather than seeing the parable as solely related to the original listeners, we will look for personal lessons that can be learned and applied. Read our Overall Goals for the class again. Goals 2-4 are stated in recognition of the fact that we should make personal applications of the parables we will study.

# Parables of Jesus

## Kingdom Parables – Parable of the Sower Lesson 2

### Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

### Introduction

We begin with the Parable of the Sower. The parable is found in three accounts (Matthew 13:3-9, Mark 4:3-8, and Luke 8:5-8). While not the longest of Jesus' parables, it is the one for which he gave the most detailed explanation. It was also this parable that prompted the apostles to ask, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" Jesus answered their question, and then proceeded to explain the meaning of the parable; an explanation that will aid us in understanding many of his other parables.

### 1. Context

- a. Note that Jesus teaches this parable around the end of the second year of his ministry.
- b. Describe the scene of Jesus teaching this parable:
  - i. How is the size of the crowd described?
  - ii. From where did Jesus teach?
- c. What events happened in the preceding chapter (use either Matthew 12 or Mark 3) that illustrate the opposition that existed against Jesus?

### 2. Content of the Parable

- a. This is Matthew's account (English Standard Version):

<sup>3</sup>And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. <sup>4</sup>And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. <sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, <sup>6</sup>but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. <sup>7</sup>Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. <sup>8</sup>Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. <sup>9</sup>He who has ears, let him hear."

- b. List the types of soil. What happens to the seed in each soil?

**3. Main Point(s)**

- a. Does Jesus give the parable a title? If so, what does he call it?
- b. In your words, what is the main lesson to be learned from this parable?

**4. Explanation of Jesus (if any)**

- a. Jesus explanation of the parable's meaning according to Matthew 13:18-23 was:  
*<sup>18</sup> "Hear then the parable of the sower: <sup>19</sup> When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. <sup>20</sup> As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, <sup>21</sup> yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. <sup>22</sup> As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. <sup>23</sup> As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."*
- b. What was the seed?
- c. What did the soils represent?
- d. What happened to the seed in each of the four cases? For each, state a reason why it happened?

**5. Application to Us**

- a. Do you believe a person can be represented by one type of soil at a certain point in life and later be more like a different kind of soil?
- b. What lessons do you see from this parable as you consider teaching others (i.e. taking on the role of a sower)?
- c. What two kinds of soil are probably most often found among active Christians?
- d. What is the lesson to you personally?

# Parables of Jesus

## Kingdom Parables – Parables of Lesson 3

### Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

### Introduction

In this lesson, we will study a series of parables that were grouped with the Parable of the Sower. All of these parables, with the exception of one, are found in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew. The parables we will examine and where they are recorded are as follows:

- Parables of the Weeds Matthew 13:24-30
- Mustard Seed Matthew 13:31-33 Mark 4:30-32 Luke 13:18-19
- Leaven Matthew 13:33 Luke 13:20-21
- Hidden Treasure Matthew 13:44
- Great Pearl, Matthew 13:45-46
- Net Matthew 47-50
- Growing Seed Mark 4:26-29

### 1. Context of the Set of Parables

- a. The context of these parables is the same as that of the parable of the sower – they occur around the end of the second year of Jesus' public ministry.
- b. Describe the scene of Jesus teaching this parable:
  - i. How is the size of the crowd described?
  - ii. From where did Jesus teach?

### 2. Content of the Parables

- a. This is Matthew's account of six of the parables of this lesson (Matthew 13:24-33, 44-50):

#### **The Parable of the Weeds**

<sup>24</sup> He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, <sup>25</sup> but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. <sup>26</sup> So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. <sup>27</sup> And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your

field? How then does it have weeds?’<sup>28</sup> He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’<sup>29</sup> But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them.’<sup>30</sup> Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

#### **The Mustard Seed and the Leaven**

<sup>31</sup> He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. <sup>32</sup> It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

<sup>33</sup> He told them another parable. “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened.”

#### **The Parable of the Hidden Treasure**

<sup>44</sup> “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

#### **The Parable of the Pearl of Great Value**

<sup>45</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, <sup>46</sup> who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

#### **The Parable of the Net**

<sup>47</sup> “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. <sup>48</sup> When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. <sup>49</sup> So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous <sup>50</sup> and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- b. What is a common statement at the beginning of each of these parables?
- c. What does a mustard seed and leaven have in common?
- d. What was the common reaction of the finders of the treasure and of the pearl?
- e. This is the one unique parable in Mark, the parable of the growing seed in Mark 4:26-29:

#### **The Parable of the Seed Growing**

<sup>26</sup> And he said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground.

<sup>27</sup> He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how.

<sup>28</sup> The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

<sup>29</sup> But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

### **3. Main Points**

- a. Pair the above parables as follows and suggest a main lesson to be learned from the pairs:
  - i. Parable of the weeds and the parable of the net:
  - ii. Parable of the mustard seed and the parable of the leaven:

iii. Parable of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price:

b. In your words, what is the main lesson of the parable of the seed growing?

#### **4. Explanation of Jesus**

a. Jesus explains the meaning of one the parables above – the parable of the weeds (Matthew 13:37-43):

*<sup>37</sup> He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, <sup>39</sup> and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup> Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, <sup>42</sup> and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear."*

b. Identify the sower, the good seed, and the weeds:

c. Who is the enemy?

d. What event is represented by the harvest? What will be the fate of the "weeds"? of the good seed?

e. Note also the explanation of Jesus in vs. 34-35 regarding why he taught in parables.

#### **5. Application to Us**

a. Based on the parable of the weeds, what should we expect the world around us to be like? What effect should this expectation have on the way that we live?

b. What are you holding on to rather than selling in order to obtain the "hidden treasure" or the "pearl of great price"?

c. Should we be frightened by the prospect of a judgment day?

d. What should we be prompted to do, given the lesson of the mustard seed and leaven?



# Parables of Jesus

## Prayer and Persistence

### Parables of the Midnight Friend and the Persistent Widow

#### Lesson 4

#### Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study

By the end of the study each one of us will:

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5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

#### Introduction

Here we have two parables with a similar message regarding our prayers.

#### Midnight Friend – Luke 11:5-13

##### 1. Context

- a. This parable appears to have been taught during the last year of Jesus ministry.
- b. What request prompted Jesus to teach this parable (Luke 11:1)?
- c. How did Jesus initially respond to the request?

##### 2. Content of the Parable

- a. The parable is in vs. 5-8 (English Standard Version):  
*<sup>5</sup>And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, <sup>6</sup>for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; <sup>7</sup>and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'?" <sup>8</sup>I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs.*
- b. Is there an expectation that the friend who arrives at midnight will receive what he needs? What two potential reasons are given for believing that the friend will receive an answer?

##### 3. Explanation of Jesus (if any)

- a. Jesus gives a deeper meaning to the parable in his comments that follow in Luke 11:9-13:  
*<sup>9</sup>And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup>For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup>What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; <sup>12</sup>or if he asks for an egg, will give him a*

*scorpion?*<sup>13</sup> *If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!*”

- b. Who is doing the asking at the end of this explanation? Who is hearing the request? To whom is he compared?

#### **4. Main Point(s)**

- a. We are told to ask, seek and knock. Given the model prayer of Luke 11:2-4, what should we be asking for?
- b. In your words, what is the main lesson to be learned from this parable?

#### **5. Application to Us**

- a. What should be our view of God as we pray?
- b. What should be our attitude and action if we do not receive what we have prayed for?

### **Persistent Widow – Luke 18:1-8**

#### **1. Context**

- a. This parable is part of a sequence of parables taught by Jesus in the last few months of his public ministry.
- b. What reason is given for Jesus give for telling this parable (vs. 1)?

#### **2. Content of the Parable**

- a. This is Luke’s account (English Standard Version):  
*“In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man.<sup>3</sup> And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’<sup>4</sup> For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man,<sup>5</sup> yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’”*
- b. What was the request of the widow? Why would she have turned to the judge?
- c. What was the character of the judge (look at vs. 6 also)?
- d. Why was the woman successful in her plea?

#### **3. Explanation of Jesus**

- a. As with the previous parable, Jesus gives a deeper meaning in his comments that follow in Luke 18:6-8:

*<sup>6</sup> And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. <sup>7</sup> And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? <sup>8</sup> I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"*

- b. What will God give to his elect? What will the elect do?
- c. What question does Jesus have (vs. 8)?

**4. Main Point(s)**

- a. Use the context of vs. 1 and the explanation of vs. 6-8 to answer the next question.
- b. In your words, what is the main lesson to be learned from this parable?

**5. Application to Us**

- a. Why do we become discouraged in our prayers?
- b. Why is it difficult to "always pray"?
- c. How can you use this parable to learn to pray without losing heart?

# Parables of Jesus

## Parables on Responsibility (Part 1)

### Lesson 5

#### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
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4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

#### **Responsibility of Discipleship**

Each of us has been entrusted with weighty and important responsibilities by God. In the two parables we will discuss in this lesson Jesus is trying to impress upon us just how significant our service is in his Kingdom. We cannot take our service lightly or else we will face judgment for our failure to live up to the high calling of our Master and King. Both of these parables were delivered by Jesus very near the end of his earthly ministry. I suppose as his time drew near to be responsible to bear the burden of sins he felt it appropriate to remind us of the responsibilities we must bear as we take up the cross and follow him.

#### **Parable of the Talents – Matthew 25:14-30**

##### **1. Context**

- a. This was taught near the end of Jesus' earthly ministry while he was in Jerusalem during his last week before the Crucifixion.
- b. Just before this, Matthew records a string of interviews between Jesus & the religious leaders of Jerusalem (21-22), followed by Jesus' scathing rebuke of those hypocritical religious leaders (23) and finally Jesus' prediction of judgment on Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple (24).
- c. This parable is sandwiched in chapter 25 between the Parable of the Ten Virgins and a depiction of Judgment Day. All three of these relate to the concept of each of us being personally responsible for our actions before God.
- d. RESEARCH QUESTION: How much approximate value did a "Talent" represent?

##### **2. Content of the Parable**

- a. Read Matthew 25:14-30
- b. What was the determining factor for how much the Master entrusted to each servant?
- c. How did the Master respond to the efforts of the Five & Two Talent servants? What difference is there in his responses to them?
- d. Why did the Master condemn the One Talent servant?

- e. Did difference in level of ability reduce the level of responsibility among the servants?

**3. Main Point(s)**

- a. What do you think is the main point(s) of this parable?
- b. Explain the following quote as it relates to this parable: *“For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away”* (Matthew 25:29).

**4. Application to Us**

- a. What things has the Master entrusted to you? How can you improve in using these things in serving him?
- b. How does cowardice impair your service?
- c. What should be the hope that we strive for in our service to the Master?

**Parable of the Minas – Luke 19:11-27**

**1. Context**

- a. While very similar to the Parable of the Talents, this was delivered with different details and at a different time—just before Jesus enters Jerusalem for the final week before his Crucifixion (Luke 19:28). Luke spends a lengthy portion of his gospel recording Jesus on his way to Jerusalem, placing great emphasis on the journey there and the judgment that Jesus would bring on the current hypocritical religious system.
- b. Previously Jesus had encountered Zaccheus and reminded us that His mission was to seek and save the lost even though most people despised sinners (Luke 19:1-10).
- c. Why did Jesus tell this parable according to the brief introduction in the text? (19:11)
- d. RESEARCH QUESTION: Approximately how much value did a “Mina” represent?

**2. Content of the Parable**

- a. Read Luke 19:11-27.
- b. Who do you think the “Nobleman” represents? Explain your answer.
- c. How much did the Nobleman entrust to each servant?
- d. Did the King (formerly called the Nobleman) have a significantly different reaction to the first and second servants who brought back what they had gained?
- e. Why did the third servant hide his mina? What do you think about the King’s response?
- f. Why do you think Jesus mentioned the citizens who rejected the King in the beginning (v. 14) and the King’s order to execute them at the end (v. 27)?

**3. Main Point(s)**

- a. What do you think is the main point(s) of this parable?
- b. What did the servant who made 10 minas have that the servant who hid his mina not have?
- c. How does the condemnation on the fearful servant (v. 22-26) relate to the order to execute the King's enemies (v. 27)?

**4. Application to Us**

- a. What are some things that all servants of the King have been given?
- b. What differentiates good servants & bad servants in the kingdom?
- c. Does the context of this parable (19:10-11) relate to the lessons in this parable and have any impact on our service for the King today?

# Parables of Jesus

## Parables on Responsibility (Part 2)

### Lesson 6

#### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
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3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

#### **People and Possessions**

Perhaps some of the greatest challenges we face in our responsibilities to the Lord are how we treat the many **People** He puts in our lives and how we deal with the temporal **Possessions** He blesses us with. Part of the difficulty is that these are the things we most frequently interact with and too often that familiarity causes us to not take our responsibilities in these things seriously. The parables of **The Good Samaritan** and **The Rich Fool** are sobering stories that force us to pause and consider our responsibilities to the King with regard to the people and possessions He has put into our lives.

#### **Parable of the Good Samaritan – Luke 10:25-37**

##### **1. Context**

- a. Jesus has sent out the 72 out to preach (Luke 10:1-16), they have returned with joy because of their success but Jesus focuses their joy on their relationship with God and He praises God for allowing child-like disciples to see the kingdom (10:17-24).
- b. In contrast to the child-like disciples of the kingdom, a Lawyer comes to test Jesus (10:25). What question does the Lawyer initially ask? How does Jesus respond?
- c. After Jesus points the Lawyer to the answer to life (love) what does the Lawyer desire? What question does he ask that stems from that desire?

##### **2. Content of the Parable**

- a. Read Luke 10:25-37
- b. What happened to the man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho? Do we know anything about this man's nationality, character, purpose in travel, etc?
- c. How did the Priest and Levite react when they saw the man in need?
- d. "But a Samaritan..."
  - i. How did Jews (Jesus' main audience) view Samaritans?

ii. What was the Samaritan doing when he came upon the man?

iii. How did the Samaritan react when he saw this man in need?

iv. What did the Samaritan do for the man?

**3. Main Point(s)**

a. What question does Jesus pose at the end of the parable? How is this question a reversal of the Lawyer's question: "And who is my neighbor?"?

b. What is the answer that the Lawyer gives? What point does Jesus make in response?

**4. Application to Us**

a. Love is the heart of Christian living (Lk. 10:27-28; Jn. 13:34-35; Eph. 5:1-2; Col. 3:14; 1 Jn. 4:7-8). Why do you think we struggle with it so much?

b. List some specific ways that you can show Neighbor (i.e. Christ-like) Love to...

i. Family at Home

ii. Fellow Christians

iii. Lost in the World

**Parable of the Rich Fool – Luke 12:13-21**

**5. Context**

a. At this time in His ministry Jesus was dealing with both the intensifying hatred of the Jewish religious establishment (Luke 11:53-54) and soaring popularity among the people who at this time are thronging to Him literally by the thousands (12:1).

b. In the midst of this opposition and popularity Jesus has been speaking on various topics that relate to what it means to be a true disciple of His.



- c. What was Jesus discussing just before the man interrupts him with this inheritance dispute? What does that show you about the man's heart and mind? (12:13)
- d. What does Jesus say in response to the man that serves as an introduction to this parable? (12:14-15)

**6. Content of the Parable**

- a. Read Luke 12:13-21
- b. How did the Rich Man become rich?
- c. What solution does he devise to deal with the surplus he had accumulated?
- d. What is the attitude/mindset that the Rich Man had toward life and possessions?
- e. How does God view this man? What does God say will happen to him?

**7. Main Point(s)**

- a. What does Jesus warn us about in his introduction? What conclusion does He draw?
- b. How does the warning relate to the conclusion of the parable?
- c. What does it mean to be "rich toward God"?

**8. Application to Us**

- a. Use elements of this story to define the term "covetousness."
- b. According to Colossians 3:5, how serious is covetousness?
- c. Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. How does this text relate to the parable of the Rich Fool?

# Parables of Jesus

## Forgiveness

### Parables of the Two Debtors, Unworthy Servants, and the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

#### Lesson 7

#### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

#### **Introduction**

In this lesson and in lesson 8, we will focus on a total of five parables that teach us about forgiveness. We will study three parables from Luke's account in this lesson, and two more from Matthew's account in the lesson that follows.

#### **Two Debtors – Luke 7:41-42**

##### **1. Context**

- a. This parable appears is taught specifically because of what happens to Jesus in the home of a Pharisee. Read Luke 7:36-40.
- b. How is the woman described in this incident (7:37)?
- c. What did she do for Jesus? What demonstrated her emotions?
- d. What was Simon's (the Pharisee) conclusion regarding this scene?

##### **2. Content of the Parable**

- a. The parable is in vs. 41-42 (English Standard Version):  
*<sup>41</sup> "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?"*
- b. What was the relative value of the first man's debt to the second man?
- c. What was Jesus' question at the end?

##### **3. Explanation of Jesus**

- a. Jesus taught the parable to make a point that Simon might not otherwise have understood. He then explains the real life meaning behind this parable in Luke 7:43-50.

- b. Compare the behavior of the woman to that of Simon while Jesus was in the house?
- c. What blessing did the woman receive?
- d. What point is made by Jesus in vs. 47?

**4. Main Point(s)**

- a. Use Luke 7:47 and the question and answer of vs. 42-43 to describe what you believe is the main point of the parable.
- b. What other reaction was made by those who saw this incident (Luke 7:49)?

**5. Application to Us**

- a. Is it important for us to have a sense of how much we have been forgiven by God? Why?
- b. What should be our emotion regarding our forgiveness?

**Pharisee and Tax Collector – Luke 18:9-13**

**1. Context**

- a. This parable is part of a sequence of parables taught by Jesus in the last few months of his public ministry.
- b. To whom are we told specifically Jesus taught this parable? <sup>9</sup>*He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt.*

**2. Content of the Parable**

- a. This is Luke's account (English Standard Version):  
<sup>10</sup>*“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ <sup>13</sup>But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’*
- b. For what was the Pharisee thankful? What did he claim to have done?
- c. What was the tax collector's physical demeanor?
- d. How did the tax collector describe himself? What was his request?

**3. Explanation of Jesus**

- a. Jesus explains further in Luke 18:14:

*<sup>14</sup>I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.*"

- b. What is necessary for justification?

#### **4. Main Point(s)**

- a. Use the statements of vs. 9 and 14 to answer the next question.
- b. In your words, what is the main lesson to be learned from this parable?

#### **5. Application to Us**

- a. Think of a prayer where you have prayed like the Pharisee.
- b. How can you increase humility before a prayer?
- c. What is the meaning of mercy?

### **Unworthy Servants – Luke 17:7-10**

#### **1. Context**

- a. This parable is part of a sequence of parables taught by Jesus in the last few months of his public ministry.
- b. If there is a specific reason for this parable it may relate to the question of the apostles in Luke 7:5.

#### **2. Content of the Parable**

- a. This is Luke's account (English Standard Version):  
*<sup>7</sup>"Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and recline at table'? <sup>8</sup>Will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink'? <sup>9</sup>Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded?"*
- b. What would a master not say to a servant? What does he not do for the servant?

#### **3. Explanation of Jesus**

- a. Jesus explains in Luke 17:10:  
*<sup>10</sup>So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'*
- b. What will kind of spirit would such a statement reflect?

**4. Main Point(s)**

- a. The main point is clearly stated in 17:10.
- b. What conclusions should not be drawn about God from this parable?

**5. Application to Us**

- a. Do we sometimes feel entitled, that God owes us something more than we have received?
- b. What is our responsibility?
- c. How does this parable relate to teaching on forgiveness and mercy?

# Parables of Jesus

## Forgiveness

### Parables of the Unmerciful Servant and the Two Sons

#### Lesson 8

#### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

#### **Introduction**

In this lesson, we will complete our study of five parables that teach us about forgiveness. We looked at three parables from Luke's account in the previous lesson, and here examine two more from Matthew's gospel.

#### **Unmerciful Servant – Matthew 18:23-34**

##### **1. Context**

- a. Peter asks a question that leads to Jesus teaching this parable:

*<sup>21</sup> Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times."*

- b. But the question of Peter follows teaching of Jesus that touches on a number of topics related to the sin of others. What subject matter is covered in:
- i. Matthew 18:7-9
  - ii. Matthew 18:10-14 (cf. Luke 15:4-7)
  - iii. Matthew 18:15-20

- c. What do you think prompted Peter's question? What answer did Jesus give before the parable?

##### **2. Content of the Parable**

- a. The parable is in vs. 23-34 (English Standard Version):

*<sup>23</sup> "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. <sup>24</sup> When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. <sup>25</sup> And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup> So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' <sup>27</sup> And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup> But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him,*

saying, 'Pay what you owe.'<sup>29</sup> So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'<sup>30</sup> He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt.<sup>31</sup> When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place.<sup>32</sup> Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.<sup>33</sup> And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?'<sup>34</sup> And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt.

- b. Try to determine the value of 10,000 talents. Was it an amount this servant would ever be able to repay?
- c. What were the planned consequences for this man and his family? Why did the master change his mind and forgive him?
- d. What action did the forgiven servant take against a man who owed him money? What was the reaction of the fellow servants who witnessed this?
- e. What ultimately happen to the forgiven servant because of his lack of mercy?

### **3. Explanation of Jesus**

- a. Jesus explains the application of this parable to each of us in the verse that follows (vs. 35):  
*<sup>35</sup> So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."*
- b. Why is it so important for us to forgive others? Besides the consequences, what else should motivate us?

### **4. Main Point(s)**

- a. Jesus gives us the main point of this parable in his answer of Matthew 18:22 and the statement of vs. 35.
- b. How might you apply Jesus' teaching to situations such as those described in Matthew 18:15-20)?

### **5. Application to Us**

- a. Why is it so difficult to forgive others?
- b. Does God intend us to be concerned about the sins of others? Besides the parable, what else in this chapter teaches this principle?

## **The Two Sons – Matthew 21:28-30**

### **1. Context**

- a. This parable is taught during the last week of Jesus' life and is part of a series of responses to the challenges of the opposition of the Jewish leadership.

- b. What happened immediately prior to this parable in Matthew 21:23-27?

## **2. Content of the Parable**

- a. This is Matthew's account (English Standard Version):

*<sup>28</sup>“What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ <sup>29</sup>And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup>And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go.*

- b. How many of the sons said they would go? How many actually went?
- c. Which son was actually faithful?

## **3. Explanation of Jesus**

- a. After the leaders acknowledged which son was faithful, Jesus made a devastating application:

*“Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.*

- b. Based on this statement, which of the two sons in the parable represent the Jewish leaders?

## **4. Main Point(s)**

- a. What matters the most – what we say or what we do?
- b. Why do you think Jesus was so plain in this parable?

## **5. Application to Us**

- a. This parable could be included in the group of rejection parables we will study in lesson 12. What lesson do you think the parable can teach on forgiveness?
- b. Are there righteous steps you have intended to take but have failed to follow through with? Is it too late?



# Parables of Jesus

## Parables on the Lost Lesson 9

### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

### **Jesus' Dinner Party**

We all like to eat with our friends and the people we care about. Usually these are the people most like us, the ones that make us feel and/or look good, they are a blessing to us. When we see Jesus at dinner we see him surrounded by the lowest, dirtiest sinners. He received people most dissimilar to him, that brought burden and reproach to him, but the people that he could be a blessing to. Do we have the heart of Jesus toward the Lost?

### **Context of Lost Parables**

- Starting in Luke 14:1, we see Jesus having dinner at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees and is under close scrutiny. Jesus used this dinner as an opportunity to teach various lessons to the many different types of people present.
- It is apparently in this setting that the Pharisees and Scribes complained about Jesus saying, "*This man receives sinners and eats with them*" (15:1).
- How does this statement help set the stage for the parables that Jesus told here? What do you think was his purpose in telling these parables?

### **Parable of the Lost Sheep – Luke 15:1-7**

1. **Content of the Parable**
  - a. Read Luke 15:1-7
  - b. Who does the Shepherd represent? The lost sheep?
    - a. What things does Jesus say that the Shepherd will do for one lost sheep?
  - d. How does the Shepherd react to finding his Sheep?
2. **Explanation**
  - a. What heavenly truth does Jesus say this story points to?
    - b. Our repentance makes God rejoice! What an amazing thought!
3. **Main Point(s)**
  - a. What does this story show you about God's love for the Lost?
    - b. How does this story illustrate the personal investment God makes in saving the Lost?

- c. How much do we impact God's emotions?

4. **Application to Us**

- a. Do you ever wonder how God feels about you after you have sinned? Do you wonder if he can still receive you back to himself? How does this parable help give answers to those questions?
  
- b. What brings you the most joy? How do you think that impacts your evangelistic efforts?

**Parable of the Lost Coin – Luke 15:8-10**

1. **Content of the Parable**

- a. Read Luke 15:8-10
- b. Who does the Woman represent in this story? The lost coin?
  
- c. What all does Jesus say the Woman does who loses her one coin?
  
- d. How does the Woman react to finding her Coin?

2. **Explanation**

- a. What heavenly truth does Jesus say this story points to?
  
- b. Who does Jesus specifically say rejoices over lost sinners?

3. **Main Point(s)**

- a. How much value does God place on every person?
  
- b. How intent is God on saving the Lost?

4. **Application to Us**

- a. Do you ever wonder whether you are valuable to God (especially when you aren't living right)? How does this story help answer that question?
  
- b. How can this story help us to have more concern for the Lost?

**Parable of the Lost Son – Luke 15:11-32**

1. **Content of the Parable**

- a. Read Luke 15:11-32
- b. Who does the Father represent? The Younger Son? The Older Son?

- c. What things does the Younger Son do/say/think wrong?
- d. Where does the Younger Son end up because of his “reckless living”?
- e. What does the text say happens in the Younger Son while he is with the pigs?
- f. What attitude do you see in the Younger Son’s return?
- g. How does the Father react to the Younger Son’s return?
- h. How does the Older Son react to his brother’s return? What does he call his brother?
- i. What does the Father say about his feelings about the Younger Son’s return?

2. **Main Point(s)**

- a. Do you think this parable is told primarily to illustrate God’s love for the Lost or to point out the wrong attitudes that the “Righteous” often have toward the Lost? Explain.
- b. What is the significance (if there is any) of the Father not pursuing, seeking for his son like we saw in the previous two parables?
- c. How does the Father view all of His children?

3. **Application to Us**

- a. Will God force us to come back home to Him? What does this story show is necessary for us to come home?
- b. What wrong attitudes does the Older Son display? How can we exhibit the same spirit?

# Parables of Jesus

## Parables on Judgment

### Lesson 10

#### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart by better understanding our own forgiveness.
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

#### **Judgment Will Come**

We may at times feel like we can escape God's notice in judgment but the parables we will study in this lesson help us to realize that God will judge us by our deeds. Jesus teaches us in these parables that we must be people that bear fruits of repentance and live with the realization that all we have and do in this life is only preparing us for the judgment that will lead to the next life.

#### **Parable of the Barren Fig Tree – Luke 13:1-9**

##### **5. Context of the Parable**

- a. Read Luke 13:1-5
- b. What news story were people discussing with Jesus at this point?
- c. What idea does Jesus present in light of this and another similar event?
- d. What does the word "repent" mean?

##### **6. Content of the Parable**

- a. Read Luke 13:6-9
- b. What would you expect to find on a fig tree? What did the man in this story find on his? How long had the tree been in this condition?
- c. What did he tell the Vinedresser to do to the tree?
- d. What request did the Vinedresser make?

##### **7. Main Point(s)**

- a. Consider how this parable connects to the introductory discussion in 13:1-5.
- b. What is the main point?

8. **Application to Us**

- a. What does this parable teach us about God's expectations and judgment of us?
  
- b. How does this parable illustrate God's patience in judgment?

**Parable of the Dishonest Manager – Luke 16:1-13**

5. **Context of the Parable**

- a. This parable is told in the midst of a flurry of parables that Luke records (14:1-17:10).
- b. What group did Jesus address this parable to? Who else was also listening (16:14)?

6. **Content of the Parable**

- a. Read Luke 16:1-9.
- b. What was the Rich Man's Manager doing wrong?
  
- c. What judgment did the Rich Man pronounce on the Manager?
  
- d. What did the Manager think about his predicament? What did he do?
  
- e. How did the Master respond to his Dishonest Manager?

7. **Explanation**

- a. What does Jesus say the "sons of this world" do better than "sons of light"?
  
- b. Do you think Jesus is commending dishonest behavior? Explain.

8. **Main Point(s)**

- a. How do you think the Dishonest Manager is a positive example for us?
  
- b. What lesson does Jesus "tell" us at the conclusion of this parable as the main point?

- c. After the main summary point of the parable (16:9), what lesson does Jesus teach about how “unrighteous wealth” will impact our receiving “true riches”?
  
- d. “No servant can serve two masters” (16:13). Between God and Money, which Master will judge our eternal destiny? Which Master-Judge should we pay more attention to?

9. ***Application to Us***

- a. What “unrighteous wealth” (16:9, 11) has God entrusted to you personally?
  
- b. How can you be more “faithful” in your management of what God has entrusted to you?
  
- c. Based on your lifestyle, who are you living to be judged by—God or Money?

# Parables of Jesus

## Parables on Judgment Lesson 11

### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

### **Opportunity Ends**

We will not have an opportunity to repent forever. There will come a day when we will be called to account for our worldly living. God wants us to be right with Him when we stand in judgment, but his patience does not last forever. The parables we will study this lesson were told by Jesus in his last week and are meant to awaken our sense of urgency to serve the King of Heaven so that when judgment comes we will be accepted by Him as faithful citizens instead of being cast out of His Kingdom.

### **Parable of the Wedding Feast – Matthew 22:1-14**

1. **Context of the Parable**
  - a. Jesus had entered Jerusalem and was met with adoration by the crowds (21:1-11).
  - b. He then had various interactions and discussions with and about the corrupted Jewish religious leaders (21:12-46).
  - c. This is part of a set of parables that Jesus is telling to illustrate the judgment God is bringing on Jerusalem and those that reject the Messiah.
2. **Content of the Parable**
  - a. Read Matthew 22:1-14
  - b. Who do you think the King and Son probably are intended to represent?
  - c. What did the King do for his Son? How did those invited to the Feast respond?
  - d. How did the King appeal to the invitees the second time? What all did they do this time?
  - e. Upon this second rejection, how did the King respond? What did he say about the character about those he had invited?
  - f. Who did he invite next? Describe the scene at the Feast.

- g. What was wrong with one of the guests? What did the King do to him?
- 3. **Main Point(s)**
  - a. In your own words, what is the main point of this parable according to 22:14?
  
  - b. What happens to those who do not properly come to the King's Feast?
  
- 4. **Application to Us**
  - a. What does this parable teach us about God's expectations for us and how we will be judged?
  
  - b. Are the "called" that only respond partially to the King any better than those who completely reject Him? How should that impact your attitude and behavior?

### **Parable of the Ten Virgins – Matthew 25:1-13**

- 10. **Context of the Parable**
  - a. This is told immediately after Jesus predicts the Jerusalem's destruction (Matt. 24).
  - b. This is the first of three stories focusing on God's coming judgment. These parables conclude Matthew's account of Jesus' teaching ministry before the Last Supper.
- 11. **Content of the Parable**
  - a. Read Matthew 25:1-13
  - b. Who are the main characters of this story? What event were they attending?
  
  - c. How are these 2 groups of Virgins described? What preparation (or lack of) demonstrated their character?
  
  - d. What did all the Virgins do while waiting? What was the cry at midnight?
  
  - e. What did the Foolish Virgins ask for? How did the Wise respond?
  
  - f. When the Bridegroom came, why did the Foolish Virgins end up outside the feast?
  
  - g. How did the Foolish Virgins feel about being left outside? What did the Bridegroom say?



12. **Main Point(s)**

- a. What lesson does Jesus give at the end of this story?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. RESEARCH QUESTION: Can you think of another time when Jesus used the same or similar phrases to “*Lord, lord*” and “*I do not know you*” when speaking about judgment? (HINT: Look in Matthew).

13. **Application to Us**

- a. How do the Wise & Foolish Virgins serve as a helpful lesson for us in our daily lives?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. Read Matthew 7:21-23. How does the teaching Jesus gives in this passage pair with the parable we have studied in this lesson?

# Parables of Jesus

## Parables on Rejection Lesson 12

### **Overall Goals of the 13 Lesson Study**

By the end of the study each one of us will:

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher.
2. Have a more loving and forgiving heart by understanding our own forgiveness.
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers.
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom.
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others.

### ***"He was Despised and Rejected by People"***

Even though Jesus did many mighty works of love by the power of God, most people rejected him. His authoritative Kingship was something they refused to accept and the result was that they murdered him on the Cross. The parables we will study in this lesson will show how and why people reject Jesus. As we come to the end of our study we must ask ourselves the question: Do I accept Jesus or do I still have a heart that is full of rebellion that rejects his Kingship in my life?

### **Parable of the Great Supper – Luke 14:12-24**

1. **Context of the Parable**
  - a. Jesus told a parable to teach that we should show kindness to those who cannot repay.
  - b. After hearing this, a man exclaimed, "*Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!*" (14:15).
2. **Content of the Parable**
  - a. What was the specific invitation that the Servant gave to those invited?
  - b. What reasons did people give to not attend the Man's banquet?
  - c. How did the Master respond to being rejected?
  - d. What type of people did he invite after being rejected?
3. **Main Point(s)**
  - a. What was the end goal of the Man in having this banquet (14:23)? So what were people really rejecting?
  - b. What do we learn from this parable about rejecting an invitation to Jesus' house?

4. **Application to Us**

- a. Read Luke 14:25-33
- b. What things does Jesus say must be given up in order to accept/follow Him? (Note these are the things that people would not give up to come to the Feast in the parable.)

**Parable of the Laborers – Matthew 20:1-16**

1. **Context of the Parable**

- a. Very near Jerusalem and just after the discussion with the Rich Young Ruler.
- b. What are the last words of Jesus immediately before this parable is told (19:30)? Consider how this connects to the parable.

2. **Content of the Parable**

- a. What are the specific times given when the Laborers were hired?
- b. What specific payment promises does the Master make to the Laborers?
- c. How is the Master's conversation with the fourth group unique?
- d. Who was paid first? THOUGHT QUESTION: Why do you think Jesus includes this detail?
- e. Why were workers of the first group upset?
- f. How does the Master respond to their complaint?

3. **Main Point(s)**

- a. What is the point that Jesus makes at the end of this parable?
- b. What does this statement mean? How does this parable teach that lesson?

- c. Why is this concept a difficult one to accept?

4. **Application to Us**

- a. Read Matthew 19:23-30. What is Peter's mindset as revealed by his statement in 19:27?
  
- b. Why do you think Jesus follows up his promises to the disciples (19:28-29) with the statement in 19:30, then this parable, and then that statement repeated in 20:16?
  
- c. In terms of rank in the Kingdom, what should be the mindset of disciples toward each other? Why is this mindset challenging to have?

**Parable of the Wicked Tenants – Matthew 21:33-41**

5. **Context of the Parable**

- a. Jesus had just come in to Jerusalem, cleansed the temple, cursed the fig tree (emblematic of his judgment on Jerusalem/Jewish "fruitlessness"), was dealing with the Jewish religious leaders rejecting his authority and had just previously told the parable of the Two Sons (21:1-32).

6. **Content of the Parable**

- a. How much work did the Master put into this vineyard?
  
- b. What did the Master expect from the Vineyard that he had leased to Tenants? What did the Tenants give him instead?
  
- c. Who do you think might be represented by: the Tenants? Servants? Son?
  
- d. What did the religious leaders say should be done to the Tenants?

7. **Explanation**

- a. Read Psalm 118. How does Jesus' quotation of this Psalm help explain the meaning of the parable?

**b.** What does Jesus say this parable teaches about the Kingdom?

**c.** How will it go with people who reject Jesus?

**8. *Main Point(s)***

**a.** What is the main point of Jesus telling this parable?

**b.** How did the Jewish religious leaders prove the truth of this parable?

**9. *Application to Us***

**a.** What did the people of Jesus' day reject about Him? Look especially in Matthew 21.

**b.** In what ways might we act similarly to the people of Jesus' day?

**c.** If we do not produce fruit, what does this parable teach that we are essentially doing?

# Parables of Jesus

## Review Lesson 13

### Introduction

These are the parables we studied over the last twelve lessons:

Title	Parables
Kingdom Parables	Parable of the Sower (Matt. 13, Mark 4, Luke 8) Parables of the Weeds, Mustard Seed, Leaven, Hidden Treasure, Great Pearl, Net (Matt. 13), Seed (Mark 4)
Prayer and Persistence	Midnight Friend (Luke 11) Persistent Widow (Luke 18)
Parables on Responsibility	Talents (Matt 25) Pounds (Luke 19) Good Samaritan (Luke 10) Rich Fool (Luke 12)
Parables on Forgiveness	Two Debtors (Luke 7), Unworthy Servant (Luke 17), Pharisee and Tax Collector (Luke 18) Unmerciful Servant (Matt. 18) Two Sons (Matt. 21)
Parables on the Lost	Lost Sheep Lost Coin Lost Boy (Luke 15)
Parables on Judgment	Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13) Unjust Steward (Luke 16) Wedding Feast (Matt. 22) Ten Virgins (Matt. 25)
Parables on Rejection	Wicked Husbandmen (Matt. 21, Luke 20) Great Supper (Luke 14) Laborers (Matt 20)

### Overall Goals of Our 13 Lesson Study

We made it our aim that by the end of the study each one of us would have accomplished the goals listed below. You should review each one and consider the progress that you have made. For each of the goals, look back over the list of parables we have studied and list several that should have helped us with that specific goal. For example, the parable of the persistent widow would certainly aid us with goal #3, to be more persistent and humble in prayer.

1. Have an increased appreciation for Jesus as a teacher

2. Gain a deeper understanding of our forgiveness and have a more loving and forgiving heart
3. Be more persistent and humble in our prayers
4. Have a clearer understanding of our responsibilities in God's kingdom
5. Be more skilled in using parables to teach others

### **Questions**

Answer the following questions. All but one of them have been included in our pre-class exercises.

1. What is the only parable found exclusively in Mark?
2. In what book and chapter will you find the kingdom parables?
3. In what book and chapter will you find the three parables on lost things?
4. In what books are most of the parables found?
5. In the parable of the sower what did the soils represent?
6. What was the main lesson of the parables of the treasure and of the pearl of great price?
7. What two reasons were given for the parable of the persistent widow being taught?
8. How many talents were given to the three men and how many did they make?
9. What was the main lesson of the parable of the talents?
10. What prompted the parable of the Good Samaritan?
11. To whom was the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector addressed?
12. What criticism of Jesus led to his teaching the three parables on lost things?
13. What two reasons did Jesus give the disciples for teaching in parables?
14. During what period of Jesus' ministry did he teach most of the parables?
15. What parable do we match with the parable of the mustard seed?

16. What real life issues are represented by the weeds of the third soil?
17. Who was the enemy in the parable of the wheat?
18. When were the weeds removed?
19. Why did Jesus teach the parable of the Unforgiving Servant?
20. Which Lost Son ended up outside the house?
21. Why was the Dishonest Manager commended?

***Where would you find?***

The answers are in the table above, but try to name the book and chapter where the following parables are found:

1. The parable of the Sower (name two).
2. The parable of the Good Samaritan
3. The parable of the Persistent Widow
4. The parable of the Prodigal Son
5. The parable of the Unforgiving Servant
6. The parable of the Unjust Steward
7. The parable of the Talents
8. The parable of the Two Debtors