



What is a Parable?

Parables are stories or illustrations that use situations that commonly understood by most people in order to reveal important principles.



Parables are found throughout the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Jesus frequently used them to reveal spiritual truths through simple, earthly stories. These parables resonated well with His listeners because they connected with things that occurred in their everyday lives. Parables are familiar to many people but not always correctly understood. Jesus used parables to convey His message to all; however, the truth of these parables was only revealed to those able to understand. The crowds who gathered to listen to Christ teach would have been a mix of believers and non-believers. Christ employed the use of parables to reveal mysteries to His followers and to conceal truth to those who would not hear.

DAY 1

“A Lamp on a Stand”

Verses to Read: Luke 4:21-22; Luke 8:16; Luke 11:33

Big Idea: In this parable, Jesus instructed the disciples about their responsibilities regarding His message. They were not supposed to keep this wonderful news to themselves but were to produce fruit by spreading His message. Like the disciples, when we hear about Christ’s redeeming love, we are commanded to share His truth with others. The message of the Kingdom of God must not be hidden or even whispered in secret. Rather, it must be proclaimed openly and clearly so that it will provide illumination and power to all who hear it. When we tell others about Jesus, we are like a lamp placed on a stand, showing the whole world the light of God. We may only be one person, but we are each like a much-needed flashlight in a powerless house. Shine brightly, friends!

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine...

Hide it under a bushel no! I’m gonna let it shine.”

Memory Verse: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” (1 Peter 1:3, CSB)

Next Steps:

1. Why would the disciples have been tempted to hide or stifle the message of Christ? Are there times when you do not proclaim the truth as boldly as you should? What can you do to counter these feelings of fear, apprehension, or uncertainty?

2. The purpose of a lamp is to illuminate the space around it. If we hide a lamp, we are defeating the purpose for which it was created. In that same way, if we do not shine brightly, we are limiting our own potential to shine brightly for Christ. In shining for Jesus, would you say you are a 20, 60, or 100-watt bulb? Or are you burned out? What are some ways you can increase your wattage and help your light shine more brightly?

3. When we shine the light of Jesus, the fruits of the Spirit will be displayed. Our lives should be characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Which of these fruits do you struggle to exhibit? Pray that the Lord will help you in those areas.

DAY 2

“Foundation for Life”

Verses to Read: Matthew 7:24-27 and Luke 6:47-49

Big Idea: In this parable, Jesus likens our lives to a building or a house. When storms come, a building that is built on a terrible or weak foundation is destined to fall. Just like a building, our lives, too, must have a foundation, because storms will come throughout our lives, and a life that is founded on anything other than Jesus’ truth will be crippled and destroyed by the pains of life’s storms.

Next Steps:

- 1. Jesus calls each of us to build our lives upon His truth. Why do you think this is necessary?**
- 2. Knowing that it is too late to build a foundation in the middle of a storm, how can we regularly grow in our knowledge and truth of who Jesus is?**
- 3. So, what now? Talk about a plan for how each family member can grow in their knowledge of Jesus. Intentionality is key to strengthening our relationship with Jesus.**

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DAY 3

“Unequal Debts and Infinite Grace”

Verses to Read: Luke 7:36-50

Big Idea: God shows the same mercy, regardless of the size of the debt, to all people. Every person without Christ is condemned to death, but thankfully Jesus paid the price for all and made a way for each of us to be reconciled to God. It is our response to God’s mercy that reveals our faith. Those that recognize the death from which they were saved demonstrate their faith through their actions and words.

Next Steps:

- 1. The woman in this story humbled herself completely before the Lord, recognizing who he was and trusting that he could save her. What are some ways that you can daily humble yourself before the Lord, recognizing him for who he is and allowing him to be the leader of your life?**
- 2. The moneylender shows great mercy to those that owed him money, canceling the debts in full. Jesus has done the same for us, and while our debt may not have been as big as someone else’s, the full payment is the same. How do we keep the right perspective of what God did for us and not become like the one who forgave little?**
- 3. So, what now? God’s love for us leads us to action. Since we have been forgiven much, we should desire to see others forgiven much, as well. What are some ways that your family can show others the great love that Christ has for us all?**

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DAY 4

“Unfruitful Fig Tree”

Verses to Read: Luke 13:1-9

Big Idea: As followers of Christ, we need to see other people as He sees them. Those that do not know Him as Savior do not have unlimited time to surrender their lives to him. This is what is being illustrated when Jesus talks about the fig tree. As people who know the love, hope, and security found in Christ, we should be burdened to see that others do not perish without Him.

Next Steps:

- 1. When watching games that utilize a clock, as the time nears expiration, those participating typically increase their effort in hopes of doing more before the time runs out. What are some ways that we can live our lives with more urgency towards telling others about Christ?**
- 2. This parable was not only directed toward personal repentance and acceptance of Christ, but it was also directed at the nation of Israel. God wanted his people, His nation, to repent and return to him. In looking at our own nation, how can we influence a return to God?**
- 3. So, what now? There are many around us that do not know Christ, and they do not have unlimited time to turn to him. What are some ways that your family can impact your neighborhood with the Gospel?**

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DAY 5

“The Soil of the Heart”

Verses to Read: Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23; Mark 4:3-8, 14-20; and Luke 8:5-8, 11-15

Big Idea: Jesus teaches using the image of a farmer and soil within this parable. Beautifully, Jesus gives us an understanding of this parable by explaining it. Through Jesus' explanation, we understand that the condition of our hearts matters in the reception of God's Word. Will we love God's Word more than the world? This is the important question we must ask of ourselves.

Next Steps:

- 1. Knowing that we cannot control the hearts of people, what can we learn from this parable regarding the sharing of the Gospel of Jesus?**
- 2. What can we do to be sure that Gospel is not removed from our own hearts? How can we keep the soil of hearts healthy?**
- 3. So, what now? Talk about the ways in which we can spread the seed of the Gospel throughout our community.**

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