



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

“The Gatekeeper”

Verses to Read: John 10:1-5

Big Idea: Jesus is the only way a person can become a part of the family of God. In the time that Jesus spoke these words, sheep belonged to many families and individuals. Each of these animals knew their owners voice when called. In the same way, the people of God only come to God through the Gatekeeper, who is Jesus, and we know His voice when He calls. Will we listen?

Next Steps:

- 1. If Jesus is the “Gatekeeper” to God the Father in salvation, can anyone come?**
- 2. If someone tries to gain salvation apart from Jesus, what will be the result?**
- 3. So, what now? If Jesus is the only way for someone to be saved, then how often should we be telling others about Him? How are ways that you can tell others about Jesus consistently?**

Memory Verse: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and “your neighbor as yourself.”(Luke 10:27, CSB)

DAY 2

“The Good Samaritan”

Verses to Read: Luke 10:30-37

Big Idea: In this parable, we see the Samaritan showing compassion and taking care of the injured Jewish man after a priest and a Levite passed by offering no assistance. Samaritans and Jews did were not kind toward each other, and it would have been quite unusual for a Samaritan to provide aid to a Jewish person. Jesus is instructing us to love everyone we meet and is challenging our understanding of neighbor.

Biblical love transcends the boundaries of race, religion, geography, socio-economic level, and even convenience. Neighbors are not defined by the confines of our community or limited to people with common bonds. Instead, Jesus encourages us to view anyone we meet as our neighbor and to extend kindness, even to strangers. By loving others, we exhibit our love and obedience to God.

Next Steps:

- 1. A priest and a Levite passed by the injured Jewish man offering no help. According to this Scripture, what is more important to Jesus: what a person knows intellectually, what a person does professionally, or how a person treats others relationally?**

- 2. Historically, there was deep-rooted and long-standing animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans. Why do you think Jesus used the Samaritan to exemplify brotherly love, and what does this teach us about who our neighbor is?**

- 3. So, what now? Pray for opportunities to display kindness and love as the Samaritan did in the parable. Are there specific people that you could help, even if those individuals are different from you?**

Memory Verse: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and “your neighbor as yourself.”(Luke 10:27, CSB)

DAY 3

“The Cost of Discipleship”

Verses to Read: Luke 14:25-33

Big Idea: There is a cost for everything. When making purchases, we must consider if it fits within our budget. Often, what we desire most takes priority over other items. This is Jesus' point in this parable: what we desire most will take priority. God desires our all. He wants our best, not what is left over. To follow Jesus, we are to love him more than anything else. Jesus makes this point clear in saying that to follow him, we must love Him more than our family, more than ourselves, and more than stuff. This parable calls us to continually consider the cost and sacrifice to follow Jesus.

Next Steps:

- 1. The word “hate” that is used in this passage was used to convey preference. So, Jesus is calling us to prefer him more than our family. How can you intentionally prefer Jesus more than your family?**
- 2. To follow Christ means to put ourselves and our things second. What things in your life do you need to reprioritize to align with Christ?**
- 3. So, what now? What steps will you take this week to prioritize your relationship with Christ?**

Memory Verse: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and “your neighbor as yourself.”(Luke 10:27, CSB)

DAY 4

“Lost and Found”

Verses to Read: Luke 15

Big Idea: If you have something you love and lose it, would you look for it? Our sin has separated us from God. We are lost in our sin. God values each of us so much that He has made a way for us to be saved. Not only has He made a way for us to be saved, but He also pursues us in salvation. Never has something I lost found me. I always find it. In the same way, God has found us and saved us.

Next Steps:

- 1. When you think about the fact that God has chosen to love you, despite your sin, what does this cause you to feel?**
- 2. What are ways that we can pursue God as He pursues us?**
- 3. So, what now? God uses His people to pursue those who are lost in this world. Pray for specific people who do not know Jesus, asking God to work in their hearts to bring salvation.**

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DAY 5

“The Rich Man and Lazarus”

Verses to Read: Luke 16:19-31

Big Idea: The decisions we make in this life have consequences. There is no decision greater than the decision to surrender our lives to Christ. The rich man in this story enjoyed the riches of this world on earth, but he never surrendered to Christ. Because of this, he was eternally separated from God. Lazarus was humble before the Lord and trusted Him, and because of this, he was with the Lord in eternity. Through Christ, we all have the opportunity to spend eternity with Christ. Have you surrendered yourself to him?

Next Steps:

- 1. The rich man had all the comforts of this world yet missed the mark on eternity. It is pride in our hearts that blinds us to what God desires. How do we combat our pride and humble ourselves before Christ?**
- 2. The rich man realized the error of his way, and while nothing could be done for him, he longed that everyone else in his family would follow Christ. Who is someone in your life that you need to share the gospel with?**
- 3. So, what now? Are you burdened for the lost? How can you reach out to your neighborhood with the gospel?**

Memory Verse: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and “your neighbor as yourself.”(Luke 10:27, CSB)