



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

“Workers in the Vineyard”

Verses to Read: Matthew 20:1-16

Big Idea: It is shocking how God gives His grace equally to all. Often, we think of life in the manner of the early workers, who thought they should be paid more than the others because they had worked longer. God is sovereign and gives freely of His grace to each of us, and because of this, He can show His grace and mercy in any way that He pleases. This parable shows us that not only do we not deserve this grace, but salvation is also not dependent on what we have done. We are saved by a merciful God who extends perfect grace.

Next Steps:

- 1. We learn much about God’s sovereignty and grace in this parable. What stands out most to you about how God shows his grace and mercy?**
- 2. Knowing that we do not deserve the grace that is given to us is humbling. How does this lead us to share of God’s love with others?**
- 3. So, what now? How will you share God’s love and mercy with someone else this week?**

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

“Persistent Widow”

Verses to Read: Luke 18:1-8

Big Idea: Prayer is such an important aspect of our faith. Our prayers reflect our faith, showing how much we truly depend on God and believe His promises. The widow in this parable persistently asks the unrighteous judge for justice, and he finally relents and helps her. Jesus says if this unrighteous judge would be willing to intercede on her behalf, what more can God do for his people? Our faith is strengthened through persistent prayer, and our faith is what fuels our prayer.

Next Steps:

1. Much like a child wears down a parent by persistently asking for something, the widow persistently seeks justice from the judge. While God does not “wear down,” He is blessed by our faith-filled persistence of our dependence on him. How does praying persistently strengthen our faith?

2. Our faith also leads us to pray. Specifically, as our faith grows, we desire what God desires. Ultimately, God desires for people to turn to Him. For whom, in your life, are you praying to surrender their life to Christ?

3. So, what now? What things are you praying for faithfully that only God can do?

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

“A Faith Made for Walking”

Verses to Read: Matthew 21:28-32

Big Idea: What we say matters; however, how we live also matters. In this parable, Jesus is teaching us that our actions absolutely matter. If we are going to walk with Jesus, we must live in a manner that is holy. This does not mean that we will always get everything right, but our changed hearts should be prone to wanting to be obedient to God. The religious people of Jesus’ day had missed the truth of John the Baptist’s message. They were not interested in the truth. They were interested in being right, and they wanted to be applauded for their perceived rightness. Christ-followers seek not man’s applause; instead, we seek the joy of honoring our Father in Heaven. As the old saying goes, “If you’re going to talk the talk, you’ve got to walk the walk.” Christ-followers must talk and walk.

Next Steps:

- 1. Just like the religious people of Jesus’ day, we have the same tendency to be interested in what we want, instead of what God wants. How can we guard against this tendency?**
- 2. What are different ways we can walk in the truth of God daily?**
- 3. So, what now, pray to God, and ask Him to lead you as a family to be people who are not only “hearers” of the Word but also “doers” of the Word.**

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

“Parable of the Talents”

Verses to Read: Matthew 25:14-30

Big Idea: God is generous and gives us gifts.

These may be material gifts He has blessed us with or talents he has given us. Most of all, He gives us the precious gift of salvation. He trusts us to be good stewards and look after the gifts He has given us, whether that means giving our material possessions to others, using our abilities to build His kingdom, or sharing the Good News with unbelievers. We choose how we use God’s gifts. In this parable, we see the value of being responsible with these gifts. We are to strive to honor God with the gifts He has given. When we make good use of our gifts, God will trust us with even more. Like the master in this parable replied to the first two servants, our ultimate desire at the end of our lives is to hear God say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

Next Steps:

- 1. We are all given different abilities, talents, and gifts. We should not compare our gifts to those of others. How could jealously keep us from using the talents God has given us?**
- 2. The master in the parable receives the same amount of money back from the third servant. Why is he still upset with the servant? What should the servant have done instead?**
- 3. So, now what? What specific abilities do you have that you could invest into the Kingdom of God to share with others to help further His kingdom?**

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 5

“The Right Side”

Verses to Read: Matthew 25:31-46

Big Idea: The images that Jesus provides in this parable are alarming, and they should cause us to pause and to focus upon our lives. True followers of Christ are the sheep within the parable, and the goats are those who claimed to follow Christ. Jesus is teaching, again, that how we live our life is just as important as to what we say we believe. To claim to be a follower of Jesus and never act like Jesus toward those who are suffering shows the true belief of a person's heart. Jesus was compassionate toward all people, especially those who were suffering. Loving others like Jesus is not negotiable if we are going to be followers of Him. Judgment will come. Let us trust Jesus and allow Him to change our lives to be more like Him daily.

Next Steps:

- 1. We are holy, and we are being made holy by God. What are ways that we seek to grow in holiness within our lives?**
- 2. What are obstacles we face when seeking to help those who are suffering?**
- 3. How can we overcome these obstacles and our fears?**
- 4. So, what now? This week, look for ways that you can show the love of Jesus to those around you, especially the suffering. When you see those opportunities, take advantage of them, and do something to show Jesus' love. Ask Jesus for the strength!**

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)