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# Wednesday in the Word

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## The Parables of Jesus

### Table of Contents

#### Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
How to Study the Bible.....	3
Suggested Reading.....	4
List of the Parables & Metaphors of Jesus.....	5
Understanding Parables .....	6
Parable of the Soils, Matthew 13:1-23.....	7
The Wheat & Weeds, Matthew 13:24-43 .....	12
The Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37.....	15
Widow/Judge & Pharisee/Tax Collector, Luke 18 .....	28
The Vineyard Workers, Matthew 19:16-20:16.....	31
The Wise/Foolish Virgins, Matthew 25:1-13 .....	35
Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25:14-30.....	38
The Friend at Midnight Luke 11:5-13 .....	41
Parables Summary .....	45

*"For all their charm and simplicity, the parables have suffered a fate of misinterpretation in the church second only to the Revelation."*

- Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart, [How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth](#)

# How to Study the Bible

## Step 1 Make with an outline

- Start new sentences at the left margin.
- Put modifying phrases or clauses under the words they modify.
- Make the parallel phrases obvious.
- Place lists of qualities, actions, etc. in vertical columns.
- Highlight and/or color code repeated words or phrases or ideas.
- Underline main statements to distinguish them from explanations, modifying clauses, and rabbit-trails.
- Circle key connecting words.
- Study and define crucial words.

## Step 2 Observe the details

- admonitions and reasons, use of questions, contrasts, comparisons and illustrations
- repetition of ideas, emphatic statements, commands

## Step 3 Ask & Answer Questions

- Who is speaking to whom regarding what?
- Why is this included? Why is it important?
- How does one verse/thought lead to the next?
- What do the metaphors, images, comparisons and key words mean?
- What is the main theme? Minor themes?

## Step 4 Put it all together

- Consider the context: How does this passage relate to what precedes and what follows it?
- Write a summary of the passage in your own words.
- Finish these sentences:  
"The main thought in this section is..."  
"If I took this passage seriously, it would make the following difference in my life ...."
- Answer the specific study questions for each Week.

For more bible study resources and to listen to podcasts on the Parables, visit:  
[www.wednesdayintheword.com](http://www.wednesdayintheword.com)

# Suggested Reading

## How to Study the Bible

- [Basics of Bible Interpretation, by Bob Smith](http://www.raystedman.org/leadership/smith/) – a classic! great for the beginner. Now available FREE online, though I believe you can still buy a paper copy.  
<http://www.raystedman.org/leadership/smith/>
- [Adventuring Through the Bible: A Comprehensive Guide to the Entire Bible, by Ray C Stedman](http://www.raystedman.org/bible-overview/adventuring) – this is my favorite one-volume commentary; It is often my starting point when beginning a new study. You can buy a paper copy or access it FREE online.  
<http://www.raystedman.org/bible-overview/adventuring>
- [Precepts Austin – How to do an Inductive Study](http://www.preceptaustin.org/inductive_bible_study.htm) — Complete at least the first 3 lessons in how to do an inductive bible study. Then explore the rest of the resources on this helpful site. [http://www.preceptaustin.org/inductive\\_bible\\_study.htm](http://www.preceptaustin.org/inductive_bible_study.htm)
- [Living by the Book](#), (Book and Workbook) by Howard G Hendricks & William Hendricks – also available as an ebook and a video series. Don't be intimidated by the size of the book. The writing is clear and engaging and you will learn a lot.
- [How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth](#), by Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart – this is a must have resource; no Bible student should be without and it now comes as an e-book. Re-read the chapter for your particular type of passage when you start a new study.

## Acknowledgements & References

All Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Version.

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## List of the Parables & Metaphors of Jesus

Title	Mark	Matthew	Luke
The Sower & the Seed	4:3-8	13:3-8	8:5-8
The Growing Seed	4:46-29		
The Mustard Seed	4:30-32	13:31f	13:8f
The Vineyard & the Tenants	12:1-11	21:33-44	20:9-18
The Budding Fig Tree	13:28f	24:32f	21:29-31
The Doorkeeper	13:33-37		12:35-38
Going before the Judge		5:25f	12:58f
The Two Houses		7:24-27	6:47-49
The Children in the Marketplace		11:16-19	7:31-35
The Return of the Unclean Spirit		12:43-45	11:24-26
The Weeds and the Wheat		13:24-30	
The Yeast		13:33	13:20
The Buried Treasure		13:44	
The Pearl		13:45f	
The Net		13:47f	
The Lost Sheep		18:12-14	15:4-7
The Unmerciful Servant		18:23-35	
The Good Employer		20:1-16	
The Two Sons		21:28-32	
The Great Supper		22:1-10	14:16-24
The Wedding Banquet		22:11-14	
The Burglar		24:43f	12:39f
The Faithful/Unfaithful Servant		24:45-51	12:42-26
The Ten Virgins		25:1-13	
The Talents		25:14-30	19:12-27
The Last Judgment		25:31-46	
The Two Debtors			7:41-43
The Good Samaritan			10:25-37
The Friend at Midnight			11:5-8
The Rich Fool			12:16-21
The Barren Fig Tree			13:6-9
The Closed Door			13:24-30
The Places at the Table			14:7-11
The Cost of Discipleship			14:28-32
The Lost Coin			15:8-10
The Prodigal Sons			15:11-32
The Shrewd Manager			16:1-8
The Rich Man & Lazarus			16:19-31
The Servant's Reward			17:7-10
The Widow & the Unjust Judge			18:1-8
The Pharisee & the Tax gatherer			18:9-14

(from The Parables of Jesus by Joachim Jeremias)

## Understanding Parables

**Analogy**  
 a story which describes a situation which is LIKE reality in some way specified by the author and is told to illustrate reality

**Allegory**  
 a story which describes a reality through the SYMBOLIC meaning of the elements in the story and is told to clarify reality

Parable	Analogy	Allegory
Story: Why did the author choose the elements in the story?	They make sense as a story	They have predetermined symbolic value in the culture
Story: Must the elements of the story make sense?	Yes, any symbolic value is not necessarily relevant	No, their symbolic value is critical to the meaning
Story: What question should I answer to interpret the parable?	What is the dynamic of the story?	What do the elements in the story symbolize?
Reality: Why did the author use this story to explain reality?	The dynamic in the story is LIKE reality	The story is a SYMBOLIC way of saying the reality
Reality: How do I expect the story to teach me?	Something about the situation in the story is similar to reality	When I replace the symbols in the story with what they represent, I have a statement that corresponds to reality
Reality: What question should I answer to understand reality?	What about the story is like reality? "Just as [A] in the story, so [B] in reality"	What do I get when I replace the symbols in the story with the realities they represent?

### Determining which is which

- Is the story itself meaningful or not? Do the elements contribute to the sense of the story? Or are they "nonsensical"?
- Do elements which don't contribute to the sense of the story have symbolic meaning in that culture apart from the story? Does the story make sense without the symbolic value of the elements?
- Is the author expecting his audience to make a judgment based on the story itself?
- Is it difficult, impossible or easy to substitute reality for elements in the story and have a meaning that corresponds to reality?

## Parable of the Soils, Matthew 13:1-23

Mat 13:1 That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea.

Mat 13:2 And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach.

Mat 13:3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow;

Mat 13:4 and as he sowed, some *seeds* fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.

Mat 13:5 "Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil.

Mat 13:6 "But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

Mat 13:7 "Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out.

Mat 13:8 "And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.

Mat 13:9 "He who has ears, let him hear."

Mat 13:10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

Mat 13:11 Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

Mat 13:12 "For whoever has, to him *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.

Mat 13:13 "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

Mat 13:14 "In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;

Mat 13:15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'

Mat 13:16 "But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

Mat 13:17 "For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see *it*, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear *it*.

Mat 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the sower.

Mat 13:19 "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 the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.

Mat 13:20 "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

Mat 13:21 yet he has no *firm* root in himself, but is *only* temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.

Mat 13:22 "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

Mat 13:23 "And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

## **Notes Parable of the Soils, Matthew 13:1-23**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words.

## **Discussion Parable of the Soils, Matthew 13:1-23**

1. Why do you think some people are more open to spiritual things than others?
2. In verse 10, the disciples ask Jesus why He speaks in parables. If Jesus came today, do you think He would teach in parables? Why?
3. What can we do to help people of our day understand the gospel?
4. Which of the four "soil types" do you identify with the most? Why?
5. If you're a believer, what made you respond to the gospel?

## Summary Parable of the Soils, Matthew 13:1-23

Parable	Jesus' Explanation	"Just as.... so ...."
<p>Matt. 13:3 "Behold, the sower went out to sow; 4 and as he sowed, some [seeds] fell beside the road, and the birds came and devoured them.</p>	<p>Matt. 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the sower, 19 When any one 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 the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.</p>	<p>Just as seed which fell by the road produced no fruit and the birds devoured it, so some people hear the truth, do not understand it and they lose what little understanding they had.</p>
<p>5 And others fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. 6 But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.</p>	<p>20 And the one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word, and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no [firm] root in himself, but is [only] temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.</p>	<p>Just as the seed which fell on the rocky places sprang up but had no root to grow, so some people seem to respond to the truth with faith, but when that faith is tested, they abandon the truth because their faith is not genuine.</p>
<p>7 And others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out.</p>	<p>22 And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.</p>	<p>Just as the seed which fell among the thorns was choked, so some people hear the truth and seem to respond with faith, but they abandon their faith in favor of the cares and values of this world.</p>
<p>8 And others fell on the good soil, and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty and some thirty. 9 He who has ears, let him hear."</p>	<p>23 And the one on whom seed was sown on the good ground, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."</p>	<p>Just as the seed which fell on the good soil grew and produced fruit, so some people hear the truth and respond with faith that matures, grows strong and endures.</p>

## The Wheat & Weeds, Matthew 13:24-43

Mat 13:24 Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

Mat 13:25 "But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.

Mat 13:26 "But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also.

Mat 13:27 "The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

Mat 13:28 "And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?'

Mat 13:29 "But he said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them.

Mat 13:30 'Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn."' ....

Mat 13:36 Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

Mat 13:37 And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man,

Mat 13:38 and the field is the world; and *as for* the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil *one*;

Mat 13:39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels.

Mat 13:40 "So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age.

Mat 13:41 "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,

Mat 13:42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Mat 13:43 "Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

## **Notes - The Wheat & Weeds, Matthew 13:24-43**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words.

## **Discussion - The Wheat & Weeds, Matthew 13:24-43**

1. If someone said, "You're so judgmental," would you consider it a compliment or an insult?
2. Have you ever been frustrated by the fact that God has not removed evil from the world? Explain.
3. If an angel appeared to you today and told you the world would end by Friday, what would do between now and then?
4. How do you think we should live today in light of the coming judgment of God?
5. How do you think we should live today in light of God's patience and plan for dealing with evil?

## The Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37

Luk 10:25 And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

Luk 10:26 And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?"

Luk 10:27 And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Luk 10:28 And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."

Luk 10:29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Luk 10:30 Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead.

Luk 10:31 "And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

Luk 10:32 "Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

Luk 10:33 "But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,

Luk 10:34 and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on *them*; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

Luk 10:35 "On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.'

Luk 10:36 "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' *hands*?"

Luk 10:37 And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

## **Notes - The Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

Round 1: A lawyer stood up to put him to the test and said,

Lawyer: Question 1 - "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (vs 25)

Jesus: Question 2 - "What about the law?" (vs 26)

Lawyer: Answer to 2 - "Love God and your neighbor." (vs 27)

Jesus: Answer to 1 "Do this and you will live." (vs 28)

Round 2: The lawyer desiring to justify himself said,

Lawyer: Question 3 - "Who is my neighbor?" (vs 29)

Jesus: Question 4 - "A certain man went down from Jerusalem ....." (vs 30-35)  
Which of these three became a neighbor?" (vs 36)

Lawyer: Answer 4 - "The one who showed mercy on him." (vs 37)

Jesus: Answer 3 - "Go and continue doing likewise" (vs 37)

## **Discussion - The Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37**

1. In your opinion, what defines a "neighbor"? Geographical proximity? Community of race or religion? Sharing the same social or economic level?
2. Share your "just as/so" statements and compare/contrast them. What did you learn from each other?
3. Legalists are sometimes defined as those who scale down God's law to justify their own behavior. Do you think we are consciously or subconsciously guilty of this today? How?
4. What discourages your "neighborly actions"? Cost? Risk? Inconvenience? What encourages your "neighborly actions"?
5. In our culture and our day today, how would we "go and continue doing likewise"? What do you think Jesus expects us to take away from this parable?

## **The Lost Sheep, Coin & Sons, Luke 15:1-32**

Luk 15:1 Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him.

Luk 15:2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes *began* to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

Luk 15:3 So He told them this parable, saying,

Luk 15:4 "What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?

Luk 15:5 "When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

Luk 15:6 "And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'

Luk 15:7 "I tell you that in the same way, there will be *more* joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Luk 15:8 "Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?

Luk 15:9 "When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!'

Luk 15:10 "In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Luk 15:11 And He said, "A man had two sons.

Luk 15:12 "The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them.

Luk 15:13 "And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living.

Luk 15:14 "Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished.

Luk 15:15 "So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

Luk 15:16 "And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving *anything* to him.

Luk 15:17 "But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!

Luk 15:18 'I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight;

Luk 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'"

Luk 15:20 "So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion *for him*, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

Luk 15:21 "And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

Luk 15:22 "But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet;

Luk 15:23 and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate;

Luk 15:24 for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate.

Luk 15:25 "Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.

Luk 15:26 "And he summoned one of the servants and *began* inquiring what these things could be.

Luk 15:27 "And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.'

Luk 15:28 "But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and *began* pleading with him.

Luk 15:29 "But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and *yet* you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends;

Luk 15:30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.'

Luk 15:31 "And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours.

Luk 15:32 'But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and *has begun* to live, and *was* lost and has been found.'"

## **Notes - The Lost Sheep, Coin & Sons, Luke 15:1-32**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

## **Discussion - The Lost Sheep, Coin & Sons, Luke 15:1-32**

1. Given each of the following pairs, which one best describes your view of God's character: somber or joyful? Loving father or harsh judge? Searching or waiting?
2. What is your attitude toward unrepentant sinners? Toward repentant sinners?
3. Describe an incident when you lost or misplaced something valuable to you. How does that help you understand the parable?
4. What does this parable teach you about God's character that surprised you or that you didn't already know or didn't fully understand?
5. Which character in the story of the prodigal sons do you identify with most? Which character do you find hardest to understand? Why?

## **The Unjust Steward, Luke 16:1-8**

Luk 16:1 He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions.

Luk 16:2 And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.'

Luk 16:3 And the manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg.

Luk 16:4 I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.'

Luk 16:5 So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

Luk 16:6 He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.'

Luk 16:7 Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'

Luk 16:8 The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.

## **Notes - The Unjust Steward, Luke 16:1-8**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

## **Discussion - The Unjust Steward, Luke 16:1-8**

1. Have you ever been caught red-handed doing something wrong? How did you respond you?
2. Do you think sin is ever excusable or justified?
3. What gives you courage to act on what you know to be true about God? What holds you back?
4. What does God's mercy mean to you? God's justice?
5. This is one of the more difficult parables. Share your "just as/so" statements and compare/contrast them. What did you learn from each other?

## The Unforgiving Servant, Matthew 18:21-35

Mat 18:21 Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

Mat 18:22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

Mat 18:23 "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.

Mat 18:24 "When he had begun to settle *them*, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him.

Mat 18:25 "But since he did not have *the means* to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made.

Mat 18:26 "So the slave fell *to the ground* and prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.'

Mat 18:27 "And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.

Mat 18:28 "But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and *began to choke him*, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.'

Mat 18:29 "So his fellow slave fell *to the ground* and *began to plead with him*, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.'

Mat 18:30 "But he was unwilling and went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed.

Mat 18:31 "So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened.

Mat 18:32 "Then summoning him, his lord said to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.

Mat 18:33 'Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?'

Mat 18:34 "And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.

Mat 18:35 "My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."

## **Notes - The Unforgiving Servant, Matthew 18:21-35**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

## **Discussion - The Unforgiving Servant, Matthew 18:21-35**

1. Do you think there is a relationship between being guilty and being unforgiving? Explain.
2. Share your "just as/so" statements and compare/contrast them. What did you learn from each other?
3. What should our ultimate goal be when we approach someone who has sinned against us? Or we have sinned against?
4. When you have difficulty forgiving someone, what helps you? What makes it harder?
5. Do you have more difficulty forgiving other believers or other non-believers? Why?

## Widow/Judge & Pharisee/Tax Collector, Luke 18

Luk 18:1 Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart,

Luk 18:2 saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man.

Luk 18:3 "There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Give me legal protection from my opponent.'

Luk 18:4 "For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, 'Even though I do not fear God nor respect man,

Luk 18:5 yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.'"

Luk 18:6 And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said;

Luk 18:7 now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

Luk 18:8 "I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"

Luk 18:9 And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt:

Luk 18:10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

Luk 18:11 "The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

Luk 18:12 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'

Luk 18:13 "But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'

Luk 18:14 "I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

## **Notes - Widow/Judge & Pharisee/Tax Collector, Luke 18**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

## **Discussion - Widow/Judge & Pharisee/Tax Collector**

1. When are you most tempted to give up praying about something or for someone?
2. How helpful or unhelpful is it to compare yourself with others? Explain.
3. Share your "just as/so" statements and compare/contrast them. What did you learn from each other?
4. What we know to be true about God and what we feel about Him as we pray may conflict. How do you handle prayer when your feelings and beliefs collide?
5. How have delayed answers to prayers impacted your faith in God? In the short run and in the long run?
6. What tempts you to trust in yourself? What cures you of it? What tempts you to exalt yourself? What humbles you?
7. Do you think this parable has anything to say to our culture's emphasis on self-esteem? Why?

## The Vineyard Workers, Matthew 19:16-20:16

Mat 19:16 And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"

Mat 19:17 And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is *only* One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."

Mat 19:18 *Then* he said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS;

Mat 19:19 HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Mat 19:20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?"

Mat 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go *and* sell your possessions and give to *the* poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Mat 19:22 But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.

Mat 19:23 And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 19:24 "Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Mat 19:25 When the disciples heard *this*, they were very astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?"

Mat 19:26 And looking at *them* Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Mat 19:27 Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?"

Mat 19:28 And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Mat 19:29 "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

Mat 19:30 "But many *who are* first will be last; and *the* last, first.

Mat 20:1 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard.

Mat 20:2 "When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.

Mat 20:3 "And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place;

Mat 20:4 and to those he said, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.'  
And *so* they went.

Mat 20:5 "Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing.

Mat 20:6 "And about the eleventh *hour* he went out and found others standing *around*; and he said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day long?'

Mat 20:7 "They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.'

Mat 20:8 "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last *group* to the first.'

Mat 20:9 "When those *hired* about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius.

Mat 20:10 "When those *hired* first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius.

Mat 20:11 "When they received it, they grumbled at the landowner,

Mat 20:12 saying, 'These last men have worked *only* one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.'

Mat 20:13 "But he answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius?'

Mat 20:14 'Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.

Mat 20:15 'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?'

Mat 20:16 "So the last shall be first, and the first last."

## **Notes - The Vineyard Workers, Matthew 19:16-20:16**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

## **Discussion - The Vineyard Workers, Matthew 19:16-20:16**

1. When God answers your prayers differently than He answers someone else's, is He being fair? Why?
2. In what ways do you think we treat God as a "divine employer" and ask for our fair wages?
3. Share your "just as/so" statements and compare/contrast them. What did you learn from each other?
4. If God asked you to sell all your possessions and follow him, could you do it? What would be the hardest to give up?
5. What does this parable teach you about "fairness" and "generosity"?

## **The Wise/Foolish Virgins, Matthew 25:1-13**

Mat 25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

Mat 25:2 "Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent.

Mat 25:3 "For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them,

Mat 25:4 but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps.

Mat 25:5 "Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and *began* to sleep.

Mat 25:6 "But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet *him*.'

Mat 25:7 "Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

Mat 25:8 "The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

Mat 25:9 "But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you *too*; go instead to the dealers and buy *some* for yourselves.'

Mat 25:10 "And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut.

Mat 25:11 "Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.'

Mat 25:12 "But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'

Mat 25:13 "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

## **Notes - The Wise/Foolish Virgins, Matthew 25:1-13**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

## **Discussion - The Wise/Foolish Virgins, Matthew 25:1-13**

1. Did you ever ignore a warning? Did it get easier or harder to ignore as you continued to ignore it?
2. How do you handle it when God's answers to your prayers seem to be long in coming?
3. If you knew Jesus would return next week, what would you do between now and then?
4. If you knew Jesus would return next week, are you ready? Explain.
5. How could you live more "wisely" in light of this parable?

## Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25:14-30

Mat 25:14 "For *it is* just like a man *about* to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.

Mat 25:15 "To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.

Mat 25:16 "Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents.

Mat 25:17 "In the same manner the one who *had received* the two *talents* gained two more.

Mat 25:18 "But he who received the one *talent* went away, and dug *a hole* in the ground and hid his master's money.

Mat 25:19 "Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.

Mat 25:20 "The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.'

Mat 25:21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Mat 25:22 "Also the one who *had received* the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.'

Mat 25:23 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Mat 25:24 "And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no *seed*.

Mat 25:25 'And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.'

Mat 25:26 "But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no *seed*.

Mat 25:27 'Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my *money* back with interest.

Mat 25:28 'Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.'

Mat 25:29 "For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.

Mat 25:30 "Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

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

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

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

1. Some translations end the master's speech at verse 30. Other translations end the master's speech with verse 28 and attribute verses 29-30 as commentary by Jesus. Which do you think is correct and why?
2. Compare & contrast the majority and minority views of understanding this parable. Which persuades you and why?
3. How does your relationship with God affect your attitudes toward what you do?
4. How do you think the master is like or unlike God?
5. Do you consider yourself a "5-talent person", a "2-talent person" or a "1-talent person"? Explain.

## The Friend at Midnight Luke 11:5-13

Luk 11:1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples."

Luk 11:2 And He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come.

Luk 11:3 'Give us each day our daily bread.

Luk 11:4 'And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.'"

Luk 11:5 Then He said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves;

Luk 11:6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him';

Luk 11:7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you *anything*.'

Luk 11:8 "I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him *anything* because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

Luk 11:9 "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Luk 11:10 "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.

Luk 11:11 "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he?

Luk 11:12 "Or *if* he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?

Luk 11:13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

## **Notes - The Friend at Midnight Luke 11:5-13**

Outline & summarize this section in your own words. Write a "Just as [in the parable], so [in reality]" summary statement.

## **Discussion - The Friend at Midnight Luke 11:5-13**

1. What's the best gift you ever received?
2. How does honor or fear of being shamed change your behavior?
3. Share your "just as/so" statements and compare/contrast them. What did you learn from each other?
4. Do you think Jesus is promising too much in Luke 11:9-13? Explain.
5. What inspires your confidence that God will answer your prayers? What shakes your confidence?

## Notes Week 12 - The Friend at Midnight Luke 11:5-13

### The Parable

Jesus expects a negative response to his opening question.

#### What will not happen (vs. 5-7)

And he said to them, "Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and from inside he shall answer and say, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you [anything].' ?

#### What will happen (vs. 8)

I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his *anaideia* {persistence/shamelessness}, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

### The Problem (vs. 8)

Does *anaideia* mean shamelessness or persistence?

Luke 11:8 is the only biblical use of this word.

The word originally meant "shamelessness" in classical Greek.

At some point the meaning of the word shifted to "persistence. "

Does *anaideia* refer to the borrower or the sleeper?

I tell you though **he** will not give him anything  
because **he** is his friend  
yet because of *his anaideia*  
**he** will get up  
and give him whatever he wants

sleeper gives to borrower  
sleeper is borrower's friend  
?  
sleeper gets up  
sleeper gives to borrower

## Parables Summary

Parable	"Just as ... so ..."
Parable of the Soils Matthew 13:1-23	
Wheat & Weeds Matthew 13:24-43	
Good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37	
Lost Sheep, Coin & Sons Luke 15:1-32	
Unjust Steward Luke 16:1-8	
Unforgiving Servant Matthew 18:21-35	
Widow & Judge Luke 18:1-8	
Pharisee & Tax Collector Luke 18:9-14	
Vineyard Workers Matthew 19:16-20:16	
Wise/Foolish Virgins Matthew 25:1-13	
Parable of the Talents Matthew 25:14-30	
Friend at Midnight Luke 11:5-8	

Conclusions: \_\_\_\_\_

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