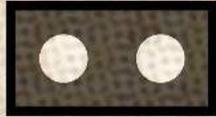


**THE**



**PARABLES**



**OF**



**JESUS**

# THE PARABLES OF JESUS

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written by Cheryl Mullis, with editing support from Laura Dingess and Nancy Sherwood, and graphic design by David Harris

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The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 8:4-15

Lesson 1: The Sower and the Purpose of the Parables

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living with One Another

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the setting in which Jesus tells this parable? (Where is he? Who is with him? What time of day is it?)
2. In what way does the historical, geographical, and social context of first century Palestine inform your understanding of this parable?
3. What do you learn about God in this parable?
4. Identify the following:
  - A specific need or issue that Jesus is addressing
  - One truth the parable reveals to a believer
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5. What is the mission of Jesus?
6. How does understanding this mission shape the priorities of your daily life and the life of our church?

## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

*God, we pray for the softness of heart, for openness to your Word. God, we pray for an awakening in our country. God, we pray for spiritual awakening. Please, oh God, soften hearts. God, we pray for fruit that is yielding a hundred-fold for your glory. God, we pray only you can do these things. We pray that the power of your word would fall on soft hearts by the power of your spirit. And that fruit would be born, God, and all these unreached people we pray for every day. God, we pray for soft hearts among unreached people. They might hear your word, believe it and respond to it and obey it and hold fast to it and not be choked out by every attempt of the adversary to do so. God, we pray for your word to bear fruit in our lives and our families and our churches and our communities, our cities, and among the nations. We pray this according to this parable. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Radical

Podcast #1,085 - The Parable of the Sower

David Platt

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 7:36-50

Lesson 2: The Debtors and the Sower

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

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6. How does understanding this mission shape the priorities of your daily life and the life of our church?

## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

The gospel shows that the cross of Christ bridges the infinite gap between holy God and sinful man. If you have a small view of God's majesty and a small view of your wickedness, you will have a small Savior who bridges that small gap. But if you are stunned into silence at the glory of God and also humbled beyond belief at the ongoing sin in your heart, you will live in awe of Christ your Savior.

This does not mean we need to commit big sins in order to really worship God. It means that we must learn to see even our seemingly "small" sins as they really are. As Matthew Henry says, there's no such thing as a small sin because there's no such thing as a small God to sin against.

To remember my sin, I spend time every day confessing my own sins from the previous day. Of course, this practice puts us in danger of drowning in morbid introspection. So I think it is wise to spend enough time confessing your sins until you feel some sense of lament over the way you have grieved Christ. Then quickly rush to the cross and remind yourself of the gospel in fresh ways.

### *Pray*

- As you confess your pride, take time to celebrate that Jesus always glorified his Father ([John 12:27-28](#)), and that his humility is yours.
- As you confess your lust, celebrate that Jesus never used people for his own pleasure ([Mark 10:45](#)), and that his purity is yours.
- As you confess your anger, celebrate that Jesus refused to retaliate when others reviled him ([1 Peter 2:23](#)), and that his patience is yours.

Applying Jesus's specific perfections to our specific sins will not seem boring. You will want to sing, to shout, to obey!

*Kindle Worship with Confession, Desiring God November 11, 2017*

Olan Stubbs; Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Alabama

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 15:1-10

Lesson 3: The Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the setting in which Jesus tells this parable? (Where is he? Who is with him? What time of day is it?)
2. In what way does the historical, geographical, and social context of first century Palestine inform your understanding of this parable?
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4. Identify the following:
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5. What is the mission of Jesus?
6. How does understanding this mission shape the priorities of your daily life and the life of our church?

# Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

## LOST IS FOUND

There were a hundred sheep in fields of green  
And their shepherd loved them so  
But one got lost inside a deep ravine  
And didn't know how to get home  
The shepherd sought the one who strayed  
And wouldn't rest 'til he could say:

## CHORUS

"What once was lost is found  
Raise up a joyful sound  
Come now and celebrate  
This one is home and safe!  
What once was lost is found  
It's time to jump around  
Let happiness abound  
For the lost is found!"

There were ten precious coins a lady kept  
Until one day there were nine  
She ran around the house and carefully swept  
To seek the one she couldn't find  
And when at last her coin appeared  
She wanted everyone to hear:

There was a boy who left his father's home  
But found himself with pigs and mud  
He came back sure that he had been disowned  
Though he was sad for what he'd done  
But as in shame he hung his head  
His father ran to him and said:

## BRIDGE

Everyday it's happening—  
The lost are found  
By their loving King and  
As they turn from all their sin  
Listen, you can hear the angels sing:

Music and Words by Doug Plank, Dave Fournier, and Bob Kauflin  
© 2017 Sovereign Grace Praise (BMI)/Sovereign Grace Worship (ASCAP)

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 15:11-32

Lesson 4: The Lost Sons

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the setting in which Jesus tells this parable? (Where is he? Who is with him? What time of day is it?)
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6. How does understanding this mission shape the priorities of your daily life and the life of our church?

## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

1. Pray for a heart of brokenness. Father, save those we love from an eternity apart from you—no matter the cost.
2. Pray for protection from the enemy, Satan, who is battling for our hearts. Pray that God will rescue us from the power of the evil one and give us faith in Christ.
3. Pray scripture over our lives:

Psalm 18:16-19

He sent from on high, he took me;  
he drew me out of many waters.

<sup>17</sup> He rescued me from my strong enemy  
and from those who hated me,  
for they were too mighty for me.

<sup>18</sup> They confronted me in the day of my calamity,  
but the Lord was my support.

<sup>19</sup> He brought me out into a broad place;  
he rescued me, because he delighted in me.

Psalm 71:20-21

<sup>20</sup> Though you have made me see troubles,  
many and bitter,  
you will restore my life again;

from the depths of the earth  
you will again bring me up.

<sup>21</sup> You will increase my honor  
and comfort me once more.

Create in \_\_\_\_\_ a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within him/her ([Psalm 51:10](#)). Though you have made \_\_\_\_\_ see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore \_\_\_\_\_'s life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring \_\_\_\_\_ up. You will increase \_\_\_\_\_'s honor and comfort \_\_\_\_\_ once again ([Psalm 71:20-21](#)). Thank You that Your word says I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate \_\_\_\_\_ from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 6:46-49

Lesson 5: The Two Builders

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the setting in which Jesus tells this parable? (Where is he? Who is with him? What time of day is it?)
  
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6. What is the mission of Jesus?
  
7. How does understanding this mission shape the priorities of your daily life and the life of our church?

## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

### **My Hope is Built on Nothing Less**

1 My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus Christ, my righteousness;  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;  
All other ground is sinking sand,  
All other ground is sinking sand.

2 When darkness veils His lovely face,  
I rest on His unchanging grace;  
In every high and stormy gale,  
My anchor holds within the veil.

3 His oath, His covenant, His blood,  
Support me in the whelming flood;  
When all around my soul gives way,  
He then is all my hope and stay.

4 When He shall come with trumpet  
sound,  
Oh, may I then in Him be found;  
In Him, my righteousness, alone,  
Faultless to stand before the throne.

Edward Mote

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 13:18-21

Lesson 6: The Mustard Seed and the Leaven

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the setting in which Jesus tells this parable? (Where is he? Who is with him? What time of day is it?)
  
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6. How does understanding this mission shape the priorities of your daily life and the life of our church?

## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

The kingdom of God, says our Savior, is like the mustard seed, which “is the smallest of all the seeds on earth” (Matthew 13:31-32). Now, of course, we know that there are some seeds smaller than the mustard seed. In fact, in first-century Palestine, smaller seeds than mustard seeds were planted, and Christ certainly knew that. But our Lord’s point in this parable is not to give us a lesson in botany. In the culture of the day, the mustard seed was often used proverbially for the smallest thing one could think of. Jesus adapts that use in this parable. His point is that the beginning of the kingdom is tiny to the point that it seems insignificant. Hardly anyone notices its start, just as almost no one pays any attention to a mustard seed.

Yet the kingdom is not to be evaluated by its humble, nearly invisible origins. For just as a mustard seed grows into the largest of garden plants, the kingdom of God finally grows to such an extent that no one can miss it (Matthew 13:32). History bears out the truth of our Savior’s teaching. He started out with twelve ordinary men whom He appointed as Apostles and a handful of other followers. He lived and died in what was considered a backwater province of the Roman Empire, and He is mentioned only in passing in the secular historical sources of that time. But since the time of Christ’s ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension, the kingdom of God has been steadily growing. His church is found around the globe, and it grows even in the most hostile lands. The mustard seed is well on its way to becoming the mustard plant.

### *The Parable of the Mustard Seed*

*Tabletalk Magazine*, an outreach of Ligonier.

Thank God for the visible signs of the growth of His Kingdom. Where do you see evidence of growth?

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 11:5-8

Lesson 7: The Friend at Midnight

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

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6. How does understanding this mission shape the priorities of your daily life and the life of our church?

## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

*This odd parable about prayer is a wonderful gift. Jesus is reassuring us that unexpected needs, arising at the most inconvenient times, which are beyond our ability to meet, and so press us to plead with God for provision, are part of the normal Christian life.*

*They are, in fact, God's design. Few things have the power to make people feel more loved than our willingness to joyfully sacrifice to make them a priority. And few things honor God more than our willingness to really trust him to provide for our needs. The two forces combine when we face unexpected, inconvenient, overwhelming needs. They are opportunities to sacrificially love like Jesus and radically trust in Jesus at the same time.*

*Jon Bloom, co-founder of Desiring God Ministries*

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 14:15-24

Lesson 8: The Great Banquet

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the setting in which Jesus tells this parable? (Where is he? Who is with him? What time of day is it?)
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## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

Are you surprised by those who have refused the invitation to “come to the banquet”? Perhaps the invited guests have refused to come and have been replaced by others who were unexpected?

Ask God to give you eyes to see those who are ready to come. Pray for opportunities to go and bring them in. Welcome them in with open arms.

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 10:29-37

Lesson 9: The Good Samaritan

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the setting in which Jesus tells this parable? (Where is he? Who is with him? What time of day is it?)
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## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

Dear Lord Jesus, the call to shoulder up under the burdens of friends and family drives me to you today. Otherwise I'd follow the example of the priest and the Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), and avoid getting involved. Only you know why there's such an avalanche of broken stories converging on my doorstep at this time. Where else can I go but to you?

Jesus, it's only because you bore the burden of the law's demands and judgment for us; only because you steadfastly say to us, "Cast all your care upon me, for I care for you" (1 Pet. 5:7); only because you constantly call to us, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28) that we can take on the heavy burdens of others.

Jesus, here's what I ask and need from you today: Help me not to be afraid of the emotional messiness that certain burdens bring. Help me know how to rely on your presence more than I rely on my words. I want to be aware of my limits, for sure, but even *more* aware of your limitless mercy, grace, power, and peace.

For my friend who just discovered she has another skin cancer that's developed into melanoma; for the couple whose two-year wait to welcome their adoptive child just ended childlessly; for friends who've spent tons of money, and who are now emotionally spent, from trying to rescue their daughter from the ravages of an eating disorder.

For friends who are having to pay a great price for a misdiagnosed medical condition; for the couples who are sleeping all alone in the same bed; for the family whose life-weary dad took his life; and for pastor friends who tell me, "This is too much, I cannot sustain the crazy-making of ministry" . . .

Jesus, I bring all of these friends to your throne of grace. How long, Oh Lord, before you return to put all things right? Until then, grant us grace, *big* grace. So very Amen I pray, in your persistent and sufficient name.

Pastor Scotty Smith, TGC January 27, 2014

*A Prayer for Engaging in Burden - Bearing Love*

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 12:16-21

Lesson 10: The Rich Fool

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## Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

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## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

*Instead of saying, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years. Relax, eat, drink, be merry," I think he would've said something like this: "God, this is all yours. You made my fields prosper, and you made me. Show me how I can express with my riches that you are my treasure. How can I make that plain in the world, God? I'm a rich man. My fields just blew me away. And there it is, available at my disposal."*

*And you pray, "O God, I don't need a bigger and bigger safety net. I don't need a bigger pad. I don't need a bigger and better anything. I don't need better food. I don't need better drink. I don't need better parties. I do want to make merry because you said it is more blessed to give than to receive. I want to maximize that, so would you just help me know how to invest and how to give this prosperity so that I can make merry in how much good it does others in pointing them to you? Help me discern that."*

*John Piper, Get Rich or Die Trying?, Desiring God, July 30, 2018*

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 11:5-8, 18:1-8

Lesson 11: The Persistent Widow, Friend at Midnight, Unjust Judge

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## Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

1. Describe the setting in which Jesus tells this parable? (Where is he? Who is with him? What time of day is it?)
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## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

The criteria for coming to Jesus is weariness. Come overwhelmed with life. Come with your wandering mind. Come messy.

What does it feel like to be weary? You have trouble concentrating. The problems of the day are like claws in your brain. You feel pummeled by life.

What does heavy-laden feel like? Same thing. You have so many problems you don't even know where to start. You can't do life on your own anymore. Jesus wants you to come to him that way! Your weariness drives you to him.

Don't try to get the prayer right; just tell God where you are and what's on your mind. That's what little children do. They come as they are, runny noses and all. Like the disciples, they just say what is on their minds.

...In order to pray like a child, you might need to unlearn the nonpersonal, nonreal praying that you've been taught.

Paul Miller, *A Praying Life*

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 19:11-27

Lesson 12: The Talents

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

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6. How does understanding this mission shape the priorities of your daily life and the life of our church?

## Living Out Our Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

*Today, Jesus has reminded us that there are only three categories of people. For anyone who recognizes themselves as a rebel today, who hasn't bowed the knee before Jesus and acknowledged him as king, may they do that today. Jesus is the only king who died for his rebels, who joyfully gave his life so that rebels could be forgiven, not judged. The essence of sin is rebellion. Thank you for sending your Son for rebels like us so that we could be forgiven, and become his servants.*

*Father, help us to realize we have one job until Jesus returns: to faithfully invest everything he's entrusted to us. The greatest danger is that we look like servants, but live like rebels; that we don't engage in business until he comes. So help us. Right now, reveal areas of our lives in which we are not engaging in Jesus' business until he comes back. Thank you that you haven't given us detailed instructions. You have given us a lot of freedom to figure out how to invest what we have. There's no cookie-cutter approach, but there's a clear mandate. Help us as we think about how to do this in our lives.*

*Help us to use everything we have in your service, to live for you, not us; for then, not now. I pray for the Spirit's help as we do this. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Darryl Dash, *You Had One Job*, Dashhouse, September 6, 2015

The Parables of Jesus

# Luke 18:9-14

Lesson 13: The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

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Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

# Living With One Another

## Discussion Questions

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## Living Our Out Faith: *Reflect and Pray*

This parable is one of the most important teachings in Luke, showing both what God values and the call of the gospel. Jesus presents a vivid contrast to the gospel between self-righteous religion and the opposite, proper response to the gospel. The two men of the parable represent these two contrary responses to God. On the one hand, we have a self-confident person whose outward life is apparently without fault. On the other we have a man who would be considered a sinner, even a traitor to his own people because of his being a tax collector for Rome. But Jesus clearly shows the difference between these two men; God loves and accepts the person who humbly looks for mercy, while he rejects those who exalt themselves.

This is good news indeed. Jesus is not calling us to a plan of moral improvement or a list of wrong behaviors to avoid, but rather to the one thing that we can all pursue, no matter our brokenness or failures; to humble ourselves before God and call upon his mercy. This alone will result in "justification" - which is another way to describe the gospel of freely entering the kingdom and inheriting eternal life.

Commentary on Luke 18 from *Gospel Transformation Bible*; Crossway



📍 renew



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