

## **Jesus' Parables** **Dr. Greg Smith**

### **Course Description** (excerpted from the COW Winter 2009 Brochure)

Jesus' parables are among the most memorable elements in the Gospels. . . Join a group of modern day disciples who look for answers through study, prayer, and discussion.

### **Class Format**

Each week, we will explore one (or more) of Jesus' parables. After reading the parable in Scripture, we will consider it further via directed discussion about its background and meaning, viewing images (still and/or motion), and prayer. Note: Parables marked with \* are those most likely to be discussed at the listed session.

### **Session 1: January 14**

Course Overview & Exploration of Participants' Expectations

Introduction to Parables & Introduction to Jesus' Parables

Introduction to Matthew's Parables

DVD Presentation by Dr. Charles McCollough – Art with Music & Text

Matthew's Parables, part 1

\*The Two Builders / 7:21-27 (Lk. 6:47-49)

The Wheat and the Tares / 13:24-30

The Leaven / 13:33

### **Session 2: January 21**

Jesus' Parables in Matthew, part 2

\*The Treasure and the Pearl Merchant / 13:44-46

DVD – Deeper Connections: Dr. David Garland

The Fishnet / 13:47-50

\*The Unforgiving Slave / 18:21-35

The Vineyard Workers / 20:1-16

The Two Children / 21:22-32

The Young Women / 25:1-13

The Talents / 25:14-30

The Last Judgment / 25:31-46

### **Session 3: January 28**

Introduction to Mark's Parables

DVD Presentation by Dr. Charles McCollough – Art with Music & Text

Jesus' Parables in Mark

\*The Sower/4:1-23 (Mt. 13:3-8 and Luke 8:5-8)

\*The Seed and the Harvest/4:26-29

The Mustard Seed/4:30-32 (Mt. 13:31-32 and Luke 13:19)

The Absentee Landlord/12:1-8

#### **Session 4: February 4**

Introduction to Luke's Parables

DVD Presentation by Dr. Charles McCollough – Art with Music & Text

Jesus' Parables in Luke, part 1

The Children in the Marketplace/7:18-35 (Mt. 11:16-19)

The Two Debtors/7:36-50

\*The Samaritan/10:25-37

DVD – Modern Parables: *Samaritan*

The Friend at Midnight/11:5-10

The Rich Farmer/ 12:13-21

The Doorkeeper and the Overseer/12:35-46

#### **Session 5: February 11**

Jesus' Parables in Luke, part 2

The Great Supper/14:15-24 (Mt. 22:2-10)

\*The Tower and the Warring King/14:25-33

The Lost Coin and the Lost Sheep/15:1-10

\*The Prodigal and Elder Sons / 15:11-32

DVD – Modern Parables: *Prodigal Sons*

#### **Session 6: February 18**

Jesus' Parables in Luke, part 3

The Dishonest Manager/ 16:1-13

The Rich Man and Lazarus/16:19-31

\*The Corrupt Judge/18:1-8

DVD – Modern Parables: *The Widow and The Judge*

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector/18:9-14

Living the Jesus' Parables

Course Evaluation

#### **Recommended Books:**

Buttrick, David. *Speaking Parables*, 2000. 0-664-22191-2.

Dunnam, Maxi. *Twelve Parables of Jesus*, 1988. 978-0-687-49000-4.

Hultgren, Arland J. *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*, 2000. 978-0-8028-6077-4.

Kistemaker, Simon J. *The Parables: Understanding Stories Jesus Told*, 1980. 978-0-0810-6391-6.

McCullough, Charles. *The Art of Parables*, 2008. 978-1-55145-563-1.

#### **Recommended DVDs:**

Modern Parables: Living in the Kingdom of God, 2008. Compass Cinema.

Deeper Connections: The Parables of Jesus, 2007. Zondervan. 978-0-310-27190-1.

#### **Contact Information:**

# Jesus' Parables – Session 1

## Dr. Greg Smith

### Course Overview & Exploration of Participants' Expectations

#### Introduction to Parables & Introduction to Jesus' Parables

“Everyone who hangs around churches has heard of the parables of Jesus. They are familiar. Have they not contributed to our language? We speak of helpful neighbors as “Good Samaritans” or label wayward youngsters as “Prodigal.” We use the word “talent” because of Matthew’s famous parable. They have been allegorized, psychologized, and sometimes reduced to pointed “lessons” on moral behavior. But, mysteriously, after twenty centuries they still generate retelling and still are puzzling.”

- David Buttrick, *Speaking Parables*, p.3

Why parables?

Parables before Jesus?

How are Jesus' parables unique?

How many parables?

What are Jesus' parables really all about?

How do we define the word parable?

How should we interpret parables?

#### Purifoy and Rogers' 4 Interpretive Questions

1. What do the original words mean?
2. What would the original culture have known that isn't explained?
3. What does the structure of the story tell us?
4. What does Jesus or the gospel writer say about the parable; what other events or parables are around it; and to whom is Jesus talking? (context)

#### Kistemaker's Principles

1. Study the historical setting of the parable, including a detailed analysis of the religious, social, political, and geographical circumstances.
2. Pay close attention to the literary and grammatical structure of the parable.
3. The main point of a given parable should be checked theologically against the teachings of Jesus and the rest of Scripture.
4. The interpreter of the parable must translate meaning in terms relevant to the needs of today.

#### **Introduction to Matthew's Parables**

DVD Presentation by Dr. Charles McCollough – Art with Music & Text

### **Matthew's Parables, part 1**

**\*The Two Builders / 7:21-27 (Lk. 6:47-49)**

**The Wheat and the Tares / 13:24-30**

**The Leaven / 13:33**

The Two Builders (Matthew 7:21-27, NIV)

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

## Parable Names and Parallels

Charles McCullough

	Luke	Mark	Matthew	Thomas	Other Names
1. Barren Fig Tree	13:1-9				Barren Tree
2. Children in the Market	7:18-35				Children in the Marketplace
3. Two Debtors	7:36-50				
4. Samaritan	10:25-37				Good Samaritan
5. Friend at Midnight	11:1-13				Importuned Friend
6. Rich Farmer	12:14-21			63	Rich Fool
7. Doorkeepers and Overseer	12:35-48	13:33-37	24:45-51		Returning Master
8. Great Supper	14:16-24		22:1-13	64	Great Feast, Feast
9. Tower and Warring King	14:25-33				
10. Lost Coin (and Sheep)	15:1-10		18:12-14	107	Lost Drachma
11. Prodigal and Elder Sons	15:11-32				Prodigal Son
12. Dishonest Manager	16:1-13				Unjust Steward
13. Rich Man and Lazarus	16:19-31				Lazarus and Dives
14. Corrupt Judge	18:1-8				Persistent Widow
15. Pharisee/Tax Collector	18:9-14				Pharisee and Publican
16. Sower	8:4-8	4:3-20	13:3-23	9	Types of Soil
17. Seed and Harvest		4:26-29		21	Seed Growing Secretly
18. Mustard Seed	13:18-19	4:31-32	13:31-32	20	
19. Absentee Landlord	20:9-18	12:1-12	21:33-34	65	Wicked Tenants
20. Two Builders	6:47-49		7:21-27		House Builders
21. Wheat and Tares			13:24-30	57	Planted Weeds
22. Leaven	13:20-21		13:33	96	Leaven in the Loaf
23. Treasure/Pearl Merchant			13:44-46	109, 76	Hidden Treasure/ Pearl of Great Price
24. Fishnet			13:47-50		Dragnet
25. Unforgiving Servant			18:21-35		Unmerciful Servant
26. Vineyard Workers	20:9-18	12:1-12	20:1-16		Labourers in the Vineyard
37. Two Children			21:28-32		Two Sons
28. Young Women	13:25		25:1-13		Ten Virgins, Closed Door
29. Talents	19:11-21		25:14-30		Entrusted Money
30. Last Judgement			25:31-46		

**Jesus' Parables**  
**Session 2: Jesus' Parables in Matthew, part 2 of 2**  
**Dr. Greg Smith**

**\*The Treasure and the Pearl Merchant /13:44-46**

**DVD – Deeper Connections: *The Demand of the Kingdom – Treasure and Pearls***

Dr. David Garland

Professor of Christian Scriptures at Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor University

The Treasure and the Pearl Merchant (Matthew 13:44-46, NIV – Parable occurs only in Mt.)  
"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

Introduction – Jarrett Stevens

Video, Part 1 – David Garland

Twin Parables:

- #1 Treasure in a Field
- #2 Pearl of Great Price

Video, Part 2 – David Garland

The rabbis had rules for ownerless property

The kingdom of heaven is like an unexpected surprise and like an expected surprise

An Unexpected Surprise/Treasure

An Expected Surprise/Pearl

Levi the tax collector  
Mark 2:14

Zacchaeus  
Luke 19:1-10

Paul  
Acts 9:1-22

Simeon and Anna  
Luke 2:25-38

John the Baptist  
Matthew 3:13-17

Video, Part 3 – David Garland

The real question the parable poses is:  
“What are the disciples of the kingdom of heaven like?”

Willing to take action

Willing to risk

Investing in the kingdom of heaven costs all that a person has, but the reward surpasses all earthly riches and provides a joy beyond all earthly joy that extends into the life to come.

### **The Fishnet / 13:47-50**

### **\*The Unforgiving Slave / 18:21-35**

Does Jesus ever turn anyone away who comes to him in repentance and faith? Of course not, never – no matter how great a sin he has committed. That’s our answer. And we know this because “the Bible tells us so.” But, how many times must we forgive our neighbor?

Simon Kistemaker, *The Parables*, p. 66

The Unforgiving Slave (Matthew 18:21-35, NIV – Parable occurs only in Mt.)

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts



with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Arland Hultgren divides the parables into 7 types:

1. Parables of the Revelation of God
  - ✓ Parables of Extraordinary Forgiveness and Grace
    - a. Unforgiving Slave
    - b. Workers in the Vineyard
  - ✓ Parables of God's Extraordinary Love for the Lost
    - a. Lost Sheep
    - b. Lost Coin
    - c. Prodigal Son
2. Parables of Exemplary Behavior
3. Parables of Wisdom
4. Parables of Life before God
5. Parables of Final Judgment
6. Allegorical Parables
7. Parables of the Kingdom

Biblical Math: 10,000 talents = over \$100 million

Matthew has added allegorical components to an otherwise straightforward parable (v. 34-35)

"Don't be like the unforgiving servant"

1. King = God
2. Debt = Sin
3. First Servant = the one who is forgiven an enormous debt of sin by God
4. Second Servant = one who has committed an ordinary sin against a fellow human being or fellow Christian

The Three Ways

1. Redemptive Violence (v.34-35)
2. Infinitive Forgiveness
  - a. v.22 – forgive 77 times (or 70x7 times)
  - b. Forgiveness overcomes revenge and stops the cycle of violence (Mt. 5:38-43)

- c. Lord's Prayer – we ask for forgiveness “as we forgive our debtors”
  - d. Cause of untold pain and grief for many, especially women (i.e. forgive an abusive partner 77 times)
3. The Third Way: Forgiveness with Conditions/Parameters  
 Debtor, insulter, or abuser is always confronted, but violence and revenge are avoided using the four steps Matthew reports in 18:15-20 (immediate context of this account)
- i. Negotiation : one-on-one negotiation
  - ii. Mediation: third party mediation
  - iii. Arbitration: by a larger group
  - iv. Leavitation: dismissal or moving beyond the debt, insult or abuse

Charles McCollough, *The Art of Parables*, p.209

So, what do we do when we have been forgiven? We forgive others fully and freely, without holding grudges or remembering the wrongs done to us.

To review the truths of this parable:

- One: There will always be a day of reckoning
- Two: The discipline of confession and repentance must be a daily part of our lives
- Three: God's merciful forgiveness is greater than our sin
- Four: Our receiving forgiveness is dependent upon our forgiving others

Maxie Dunnam, *Twelve Parables of Jesus*, p.118

“... forgiveness is expected of the disciple of Jesus. The message of the parable is clear. To live well means to live with a generous and forgiving heart. The presupposition of it all, however, is the extraordinary gospel of God's compassion and mercy.”

Arland Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, p.32

**The Vineyard Workers / 20:1-16**

**The Two Children / 21:22-32**

**The Young Women / 25:1-13**

**The Talents / 25:14-30**

**The Last Judgment / 25:31-46**

**Jesus' Parables**  
**Session 3: Jesus' Parables in Mark**  
**Dr. Greg Smith**

**Introduction to Mark's Parables**

DVD Presentation by Dr. Charles McCollough – Art with Music & Text

**\*The Sower/4:1-23 (Mt. 13:3-8 and Luke 8:5-8)**

The Sower (Mark 4:1-23, NIV)

Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: **"Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times." Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."** When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, "they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!" Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop--thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown."

He said to them, "Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don't you put it on its stand? For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

Comparative Chart: The Parable of the Sower  
 Mark 4:3-9 / Matthew 13:3-9 / Luke 8:4-8  
 Arland Hultgren, The Parables of Jesus, p. 184

**Bold** font indicates features distinctive to a particular Synoptic Gospel

	Destination of First Seed(s)	Destination of Second Seed(s)	Destination of Third Seed(s)	Destination of Fourth Seed(s)	Yield of Grain
Mark	One seed along the path; birds devoured it.	<b>One seed</b> on the rocky ground; lacked depth of soil, sprang up, withered away.	<b>One seed</b> in the thorns; it was choked by thorns.	Other seeds in the good soil; they brought forth grain, <b>growing up, increasing, and bearing.</b>	<b>30</b> fold, 60 fold, <b>100</b> fold.
Matthew	<b>Some seeds</b> along the path; birds devoured it.	<b>Other seeds</b> on the rocky ground; lacked depth of soil, sprang up, withered away.	<b>Other seeds</b> in the thorns; they were choked by the thorns.	Other seeds in good soil; they brought forth grain.	<b>100</b> fold, 60 fold, 30 fold.
Luke	One seed along the path; it was <b>trodden under foot</b> , and birds devoured it.	<b>Another</b> on <b>the rock</b> ; it withered away <b>because it lacked moisture.</b>	<b>Another</b> in the thorns; it was choked by the thorns.	<b>Another</b> in good soil; it grew and produced fruit.	<b>100</b> fold.

Comparative Chart: The Interpretation of the Parable of the Sower  
 Mark 4:13-20 / Matthew 13:18-23 / Luke 8:11-15  
 Arland Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, p. 186

	Comparison #1	Comparison #2	Comparison #3	Comparison #4
Mark	Some people are like terrain along a path where seeds are stolen by birds; they are robbed of the word by Satan.  <i>Analogy:</i> people and terrain.	Some people are like plants on rocky ground that lack roots; they fall away during tribulation or persecution.  <i>Analogy:</i> people and plants.	Some people are like a field with thorns in it; they are lovers of the word, and cares, delights, and desires choke the word, and it is unfruitful.  <i>Analogy:</i> people and a field.	Some people are like good soil; they hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit.  <i>Analogy:</i> people and good soil.
Matthew	One type of person is like a seed sown along a path, stolen by a bird; that one does not understand the word is a victim of the evil one.  <i>Analogy:</i> a [type of] person and a seed.	Another type of person is like a seed sown on rocky ground; that one hears the word, receives it with joy, but falls away due to tribulation and persecution.  <i>Analogy:</i> a [type of] person and a seed.	Another type of person is like a seed sown in the thorns; that one hears the word, but cares and delights choke it, and it is unfruitful.  <i>Analogy:</i> a [type of] person and a seed.	Another type of person is like a seed grown in good soil; that one hears the word, understands it, and bears fruit.  <i>Analogy:</i> a [type of] person and a seed.
Luke	Some persons are like terrain along a path where seeds are stolen by birds; they are robbed of the word by the devil.  <i>Analogy:</i> people and terrain.	Some persons are like plants on a rock that lack roots; they fall away during testing.  <i>Analogy:</i> people and plants.	Some people are like a seed sown among thorns; they hear the word but are choked by cares, riches, and pleasures of life.  <i>Analogy:</i> people and a seed.	Some people are like a seed down in good soil; they hear and hold fast the word and bear fruit.  <i>Analogy:</i> people and a seed.

“The faithful proclamation of the gospel will never fail to bring forth fruit, producing a crop thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times what was sown.”

Simon Kistemaker, *The Parables*, p. 40

**\*The Seed and the Harvest/4:26-29**

The Seed and the Harvest (Mark 4:26-29, NIV)

He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain--first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

The ONLY parable unique to Mark

**The Mustard Seed/4:30-32 (Mt. 13:31-32 and Luke 13:19)**

The Mustard Seed (Mark 4:30-32)

Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."

A Parable of Kingdom Growth

**The Absentee Landlord/12:1-8 (Mt. 21:33-46, Luke 20:9-19)**

## Jesus' Parables

## Session 4: Jesus' Parables in Luke, Part 1 of 3

### Dr. Greg Smith

#### Introduction to Luke's Parables

DVD Presentation by Dr. Charles McCollough – Art with Music & Text

#### **The Children in the Marketplace/7:18-35 (Mt. 11:16-19)**

#### **The Two Debtors/7:36-50**

#### **\*The Samaritan/10:25-37**

DVD – Modern Parables: *Samaritan*

The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37, NIV)

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" He answered: "'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, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

**In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."**

One of the Best Known Parables

## Parable of Exemplary Behavior

### Background

Traveling Down the Road

Oil and Wine

Two Coins/Two Denarii

### Characters

The Hurt Man

First Passerby – Priest

Second Passerby – Levite

Third Passerby - Samaritan

The Innkeeper

The parable of the Good Samaritan is timeless. Substitute today's occupations, nationalities, and races, and nothing has changed since the day Jesus taught the parable. . . Love your neighbor as yourself is a command that reaches out beyond the circle of friends and fellow Christians we meet on a regular basis. It is a call to show mercy to all the unfortunate people lying beside the Jericho road of human life.

Simon Kistemaker, *The Parables*, p.146-147

## The Good Samaritan - Parallels



Original Parable	Modern Parable
Dangerous road to Jericho	Inner city is a dangerous place
Hurt man is stripped of clothes and unidentifiable	Hurt man assumed to be drunk and unidentifiable
Priest: elite class, responsible for taking care of people spiritually	Deacon/Doctor: elite class, responsible for taking care of the poor and hurt
Religious uncleanness	Social uncleanness
Likely riding a horse or donkey	Riding in a car
Steering to the other side	Not getting close enough to see
Levite: middle class, with some spiritual responsibility	Youth Leader: middle class, with some spiritual responsibility
Likely on foot	On foot
Likely knew the priest ahead of him had already passed the man	Knew the deacon had come first and already passed the man
Goes closer to examine the man	Goes closer to examine the man
Faces issues of uncleanness as well as difficulty of how to move him	Faces social issues as well as not having a way to move him
Likely influenced by priest's actions	Likely influenced by deacon's actions
Samaritans were a different race with recognizable characteristics	Those of Arabic descent are of a different race, often recognizable
Samaritans were hated by Jews and held in deep distrust	Arabs sometimes disliked by Americans and distrusted
Samaritanism was a religion based on Judaism, but heretical	Islam is a religion based on Judaism and Christianity, but heretical
The Samaritan used oil and wine to clean the man, symbolic of a Jewish temple ritual	The Arab used water to clean the man, symbolic of Christian baptismal ritual
The Samaritan put him on his horse	The Arab put him in his car
The Samaritan stayed to take care of him	The Arab stayed to ensure he was okay
Those in the inn would have been suspicious of the Samaritan	Those in the ER were suspicious of the Arab
The Samaritan acted out of compassion	The Arab acted out of compassion

Modern Parables – *Samaritan* DVD (Compass Cinema, 2008)

What does this parable mean to you?

What does it demand of us as 21<sup>st</sup> century disciples of Jesus?

**The Friend at Midnight/11:5-10**

The Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-10, NIV)

Then he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.' "Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs. "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

### **The Rich Farmer/ 12:13-21**

The Rich Farmer (Luke 12:13-21, NIV)

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

### **The Doorkeeper and the Overseer/12:35-46**

## **Jesus' Parables**

### **Session 5: Jesus' Parables in Luke, Part 2 of 3**

## Dr. Greg Smith

### **The Great Supper/14:15-24 (Mt. 22:2-10)**

### **\*The Tower and the Warring King/14:25-33**

The Tower and the Warring King (Luke 14:25-33, NIV)

Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

Only in Luke

Wisdom Parables

Twin Parable

Cost of Discipleship

The parable is not present in Luke's gospel to drive persons away, but to get them to consider their own situation. The hearer or reader has already crossed over into discipleship. The building of the tower has begun. It is necessary therefore to continue and complete that which has been commenced.

Arland Hultrgen, *The Parables of Jesus*, p.140

### **The Lost Coin and the Lost Sheep/15:1-10**

### **\*The Prodigal and Elder Sons / 15:11-32 / DVD – Modern Parables: *Prodigal Sons***

The Prodigal and Elder Sons (Luke 15:11-32)

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father,

'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

"Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' "

'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

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Only in Luke & Longest of Jesus' Parables

One of the Best Known Jesus' Parables (alongside The Good Samaritan)

Consider these alternate titles: Parable of the Father's Love or Parable of the Waiting Father

Context: Lost Sons follow Lost Coin and Lost Sheep

## **The Prodigal Sons – Parallels**

### **Luke 15:11-32**

<b>Original Parable</b>	<b>Modern Parable</b>
The father is a wealthy landowner	Mr. Hawthorne, the father, is a wealthy owner of a company
He has two sons who work on the family estate	He has two sons who work for the family company
Younger son asks for his share of the estate	Jake, the younger son, asks for his share of the company
The younger son asking for his inheritance while the father is still alive is like saying, "I want you dead"	Jake asking for his inheritance while his father is still alive is like saying, "I want you dead"
Older brother is expected to intercede as peacemaker between the father and younger son, but does nothing	Andrew, the older brother, is expected to intercede as peacemaker between the father and younger son, but does nothing
Father divides his property between two sons	Mr. Hawthorne divides his ownership in the company between his two sons
Younger son sells of the family property for cash	Jake cashes out his ownership in the company
Younger son leaves for a gentile country, far from home both geographically and morally	Jake leaves for New York City, far from home geographically and morally
Younger son wastes his money by lavish spending on his friends and himself	Jake wastes his money by lavish spending on expensive cars, apartments, and lifestyle
Younger son spends all his money	Jake spends all his money
There was a severe famine in the country	There is a severe recession in the country
Younger son is broke	Jake is broke
Younger son finds a job with a gentile farmer	Jake finds a job with a hospital hiring manager
The gentile farmer gives him a job feeding pigs, a detestable job for a Jew	The hiring manager gives him a job helping out in the morgue, a detestable job for most people
He was hungry and wanted to eat what the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything	Jake is out of money, but no one cares for him in his situation
He comes to his senses working with the pigs and realizes the true nature of his situation	Jake comes to his senses working in the hospital and realizes the true nature of his situation
He thinks about his father's hired men and how well they are taken care of in comparison to his situation	Jake sees the hospital administrator and thinks about the men his father hires, and how well they are taken care of in comparison to his situation

The younger son reflects on his bad situation and it motivates him to return to his father	Jake reflects on his bad situation and it motivates him to return to his father
The younger son realizes he has forfeited the right to be a son, but thinks he can still make a living by being a skilled artisan (instead of either an owner or a servant)	Jake realizes he has forfeited the right to be a son, but thinks he can still make a living by being a hospital administrator (instead of either an owner or an hourly worker)
He returns to his father, traveling a long distance	He returns to his father, traveling a long distance
His father sees his younger son while still a long way off, and before he sees his father	Mr. Hawthorne sees Jake while he is coming toward him, and before Jake sees him
His father feels great love for him when he sees him and runs to meet him, disregarding what others think of such an unexpected and undignified response	Mr. Hawthorne feels great love for him when he sees him and runs to meet him, disregarding what others think of such an unexpected and undignified response
His father hugs and kisses him before his younger son can give a speech	Mr. Hawthorne hugs and kisses Jake before he can get out his speech
The younger son tells his father he's sinned and that he's no longer worthy to be his son, but leaves off the request to be made a skilled artisan – signs that he has reached true repentance	Jake tells his father he's sorry and that he's no longer worthy to be his son, but leaves off the request to be made a hospital administrator – signs he has reached true repentance
The father tells his servants to dress him with the finest robe and puts a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet – all signs that he has been accepted and reinstated into the family	Mr. Hawthorne tells his secretary to call the board to welcome him back and to clean out his office – all signs that he has been completely reaccepted and reinstated to the family business
The father tells his servants to bring the fatted calf and kill it, and to have a feast and celebrate in order to show the community his son has been reaccepted as well as to celebrate his return	Mr. Hawthorne tells his secretary to hire the best restaurant to provide the best food for a party in order to show the company that his son has been reaccepted as well as to celebrate his return
The older son was in the field working	Andrew, the older son, was away from the office working
When the older son comes back into the house he hears music and dancing and is curious as to what is happening	When Andrew comes into the office he sees the party and is curious as to what is happening
One of the servants tells him what has happened	His father's secretary tells him what has happened

The older brother becomes angry and refuses to go into the party – a sign of contempt for his brother and disrespect to his father	Andrew becomes angry and refuses to greet his brother and reaccept him – a sign of contempt for his brother and disrespect for his father
The father goes out and pleads with him to come in	Mr. Hawthorne goes out and talks gently to him to come in
The older brother speaks to his father harshly and complains that he’s been treated unfairly	Andrew speaks to his father harshly and complains that he’s been treated unfairly
The older brother argues that his father does not really love him because he hasn’t thrown him a party	Andrew argues that his father does not really love him because he has not thrown him a party
The older son reminds his father that the younger son has lost his money, then says he lost it with prostitutes, a shocking, slanderous statement for which he has no proof	Andrew reminds his father that the younger son has lost his money, then says that he wasted it on drugs and whores, a shocking, slanderous statement for which he has no proof
The older son implies that the father is wasting more money on the younger son who first squandered his property and now is the cause behind losing the fattened calf, an expensive piece of property	Andrew says that Mr. Hawthorne is wasting more money on Jake who first squandered his property and now is the cause behind losing all the money spent on the expensive party
In spite of the older son’s anger, the father answers him gently	In spite of Andrew’s anger, Mr. Hawthorne answers him gently
The father reminds his son that everything he has is his since he divided the estate with him	Mr. Hawthorne reminds Andrew that everything he has is his since he divided the company between them
The father encourages his older son to celebrate and be glad because his brother was lost and is now found	Mr. Hawthorne encourages his older son to celebrate and be glad because his brother was lost and is now found
We are left wondering what the older son chose to do	We are left wondering what Andrew chose to do

*Modern Parables: Prodigal Sons (Compass Cinema, 2008)*

**Jesus’ Parables**  
**Session 6: Jesus’ Parables in Luke, Part 3 of 3**

## Dr. Greg Smith

**The Dishonest Manager/ 16:1-13**

**The Rich Man and Lazarus/16:19-31**

**\*The Corrupt Judge/18:1-8 / DVD – Modern Parables: *The Widow and The Judge***

The Corrupt Judge (Luke 18:1-8, NIV)

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. **He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!'"**

And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

Only in Luke

Twin with Visitor at Midnight (also consistent with Luke's preference for male-female balance)

The Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-10, NIV)

Then he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.' "Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs. "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Context

Chapter 17

First of two parables about prayer

Unjust Judge – for disciples

Pharisee and Tax Collector – for wider audience

### The Corrupt Judge – Parallels

Original Parable	Modern Parable
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Set in a village	Set in a small Southern town
A judge whose responsibility is to provide justice for the people	A judge whose responsibility is to provide justice for the people
The judge does not fear God	The judge says he doesn't care if the man waiting at the top of the stairs worked "for God almighty himself"
The judge does not care about men	The judge shows respect for no one besides himself
A widow	A widow – Hannah Jackson
In Biblical times, an old widow was often helpless, even to the point of being oppressed	Even in recent times, some older African-American women are helpless, even to the point of being oppressed
The widow had been the victim of an injustice, likely financial	Hannah had been the victim of injustice, clearly financial
A widow would have been poor	Hannah is poor
Comes to him with a plea	Brings her case to the court as she knows best
Likely cried out to him every day, as would have been allowed in a middle eastern court	Came every day and even approached him, as is the custom in modern courts
The case was likely a situation of a wealthy person exploiting her helpless state and either taking something from her or not allowing her to have what was hers	The case is a situation of a wealthy landowner exploiting Hannah's helpless state and not wanting to pay for her house
The widow wants the judge to "grant her justice"	Hannah wants the judge to take up her case and decide in her favor
The judge is clearly corrupt, most likely taking fees/bribes on the side in order to even hear a case	The judge is corrupt, having set up a means of taking bribes through "donations to the courthouse"
The judge is not moved by mercy or compassion to help	The judge is not moved by mercy or compassion to help
For some time he refused	Hannah must wait a number of days for her case to be heard
He realizes that she is not going anywhere and her continual presence is causing him a headache	He realizes that she is going wait him out and her presence is bothering him greatly
He decides to give her justice so that she will go away	He decides to hear her case so that she will go away
He finds the case in her favor, otherwise she would just come back	He will find the case in her favor, otherwise she would just bother him more

Modern Parables – *Prodigal Sons* DVD (Compass Cinema, 2008)

### **The Pharisee and the Tax Collector/18:9-14**

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9-14, NIV)

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: **"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'** "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'  
**"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."**

Only in Luke

Only Parable with a Pharisee as a Main Character

Context

Part 2 of the 2 Parables on Prayer

Main Characters

Pharisee

Tax Collector

Concluding Saying

The application of this parable is not limited to time or culture. "Pharisees" and "tax collectors" are present in the church today. If we look in the mirror of God's Word, we can catch glimpses of them in our own lives. Jesus teaches that true humility leads to exaltation.

Simon Kistemaker, *The Parables*, p. 213

**Living the Jesus' Parables**

The Kingdom/Reign/Empire of God

Already Here / Yet to Come

The focus of Jesus' Parables

The focus of our Lives

Each writer introduces the parables of Jesus, but each one employs his own skills, insights, and abilities in presenting them. Nevertheless, the parables originated with Jesus. He created them, he now speaks through them, and in them he makes himself known to his people.

Simon Kistemaker, *The Parables*, p. 231

## Course Evaluation