

# PARABLES

- LIFE GROUP BOOKLET -



**JESUS SPOKE ALL THESE THINGS TO THE CROWD IN PARABLES; HE DID NOT SAY ANYTHING TO THEM WITHOUT USING A PARABLE. SO WAS FULFILLED WHAT WAS SPOKEN THROUGH THE PROPHET: "I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES, I WILL UTTER THINGS HIDDEN SINCE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD."**

**MATTHEW 13:34-35**

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# PARABLES

## **Jesus regularly spoke in parables.**

- Parables are stories of everyday people and places that point to an unseen spiritual reality.
- Parables make one simple point and provide a significant challenge for our everyday lives.
- Parables point to our need for a Saviour today and for all eternity.

Many of Jesus' parables, particularly in Matthew's gospel, begin with, "*The Kingdom of heaven is like...*" The Kingdom of heaven is not a place marked by physical boundaries that can be seen with the human eye, so Jesus points to everyday people and places that we can see to reveal the spiritual reality of the Kingdom we can't see. Nature becomes a witness to the spiritual world.

The people and places Jesus described in His parables are culturally different to our context today. We will explore the cultural understanding and the modern equivalent of the truth Jesus is teaching to help us see the reality of the unseen Kingdom of God in our everyday.

Parables are not allegories with a hidden meaning in every detail of the story. Parables are simple stories that make one simple point about the Kingdom and provide a significant challenge to the way we live our everyday lives. The point Jesus makes is always challenging because it requires us to surrender the right to rule our own lives and live under the rule and reign of God.

**Our prayer is that God will wake us up from complacency and convict us of our selfishness to become fully devoted followers of Jesus that seek first the Kingdom of God.**

# THE PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE

## Open the Bible

- Read Matthew 13:44-46 aloud
- Have someone else reread the passage in a different translation
- Retell the parable in your own words
- Spend some time in silence. Ask God to speak to you through His word. Silently reread the passage for yourself

## Reflect

What is God saying to you through this parable?

## Discuss

1. What does the treasure refer to? Describe what it looks like in your life.
2. What is the cost? What do you need to sacrifice to gain the treasure?
3. Describe the man seeking the treasure. What motivated him? What do you admire in him?
4. What treasure are you seeking? What cost are you prepared to pay for it?

## Take Action

What is the simple point that this parable is making?  
What is God calling you to do this week in response?

*This week I will...*

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## Pray

Pray for one another and the commitment you are making this week.

## Set a reminder

Load the image from the series media page on the website and save it as your phone wallpaper.

**"JOY of knowing Him > cost of following Him"**

## Fun for the family

Create a treasure hunt, leaving clues that point to the next clue until you find the treasure. Discuss:  
What treasure in life is worth pursuing?

# THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL

## How did you go?

Ask each other how you went with last week's action step. Celebrate and encourage one another.

## Read the Bible

- Read Luke 12:13-21 aloud
- Have someone else reread the passage in a different translation
- Retell the parable in your own words
- Spend some time in silence. Ask God to speak to you through His word. Silently reread the passage for yourself

## Share

What is God saying to you through this parable?

## Discuss

1. What was the situation Jesus was responding to in this parable (verse 13-14)? What would a modern equivalent be?
2. If you were retelling the parable in a modern context, what would the man be like?
3. Describe what his life might be like. What attitudes and behaviours in this character can you relate to for yourself or recognise in others?
4. What are the dangers of acquiring possessions? How can you ensure your priorities are aligned with God's purpose for your life?

## Take action

What is the simple point that this parable is making?  
What is God calling you to do this week in response?

*This week I will...*

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## Pray

Pray for one another and the commitment you are making this week.

## Set a reminder

Load the image from the series media page on the website and save it as your phone wallpaper.

**“My purpose is not in what I have  
but who I know”**

## Fun for the family

Show and tell. Show everyone an item that is valuable to you, explaining why it is precious.  
Discuss: What is the difference between earthly value and eternal value?

# THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

## How did you go?

Ask each other how you went with last week's action step. Celebrate and encourage one another.

## Open the Bible

- Read Luke 10:25-37 aloud
- Have someone else reread the passage in a different translation
- Retell the parable in your own words
- Spend some time in silence. Ask God to speak to you through His word. Silently reread the passage for yourself

## Reflect

What is God saying to you through this parable?

## Discuss

1. What question prompted the parable of the Good Samaritan? What was the answer?
2. What questions are people seeking answers to today?
3. Go through the parable again and describe a modern equivalent of each character (the man who was robbed, a priest, a Levite, a Samaritan). Who do you most identify with and why?
4. What are the things that make us reluctant to help in the way the Samaritan did? How can we overcome our reluctance and help those in need?

## Take action

What is the simple point that this parable is making?  
What is God calling you to do this week in response?

*This week I will...*

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## Pray

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## Set a reminder

Load the image from the series media page on the website and save it as your phone wallpaper.

**“Love fearlessly”**

## Fun for the family

Everyone in the family carry out a random act of kindness this week. Discuss: How can your family help people who are in need?

# THE PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

## How did you go?

Ask each other how you went with last week's action step. Celebrate and encourage one another.

## Open the Bible

- Read Luke 18:9-14 aloud
- Have someone else reread the passage in a different translation
- Retell the parable in your own words
- Spend some time in silence. Ask God to speak to you through His word. Silently reread the passage for yourself

## Reflect

What is God saying to you through this parable?

## Discuss

1. Who was Jesus telling this parable to? Who is the modern-day equivalent?
2. Describe a modern equivalent of a Pharisee.  
Describe a modern equivalent of a tax collector.  
What attitudes and behaviours in these characters can you relate to for yourself or recognise in others?
3. How do you see pride and humility exemplified in our culture today? How are these qualities valued? Can you think of an example from today's media?
4. What tools and strategies can you use to guard yourself against religious pride?

## Take action

What is the simple point that this parable is making?  
What is God calling you to do this week in response?

*This week I will...*

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## Pray

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## Set a reminder

Load the image from the series media page on the website and save it as your phone wallpaper.

**"God lifts up the humble"**

## Fun for the family

Write a letter of encouragement to someone who works to bless people without receiving public acknowledgement or praise. Discuss: What does 'pride' mean? What does 'humility' mean?

# THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

## How did you go?

Ask each other how you went with last week's action step. Celebrate and encourage one another.

## Open the Bible

- Read Matthew 25:14-30 aloud
- Have someone else reread the passage in a different translation
- Retell the parable in your own words
- Spend some time in silence. Ask God to speak to you through His word. Silently reread the passage for yourself

## Reflect

What is God saying to you through this parable?

## Discuss

1. What are the talents referring to in the parable?
2. Describe the character of each of the three servants. How are they similar? How are they different?
3. What are the consequences for each of the servants? How does this challenge you?
4. What talents has God entrusted to you? What are you doing to multiply them? How are you using what God has given you to grow His kingdom?

## Take action

What is the simple point that this parable is making?  
What is God calling you to do this week in response?

*This week I will...*

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## Pray

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## Set a reminder

Load the image from the series media page on the website and save it as your phone wallpaper.

**“Be faithful with whatever you have”**

## Fun for the family

Do you have a hidden talent? Perform a talent show with your family or life group. Discuss: What are you good at? How can you use your talents to serve God?

# THE PARABLE OF THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

## How did you go?

Ask each other how you went with last week's action step. Celebrate and encourage one another.

## Open the Bible

- Read Luke 18:1-8 aloud
- Have someone else reread the passage in a different translation
- Retell the parable in your own words
- Spend some time in silence. Ask God to speak to you through His word. Silently reread the passage for yourself

## Reflect

What is God saying to you through this parable?

## Discuss

1. Describe a modern equivalent of the widow. Have you ever persisted in prayer waiting for God to answer? What happened?
2. What challenges do people face that make them desperate and dependent on God?
3. What are the things that make it difficult for you to persevere in your prayer life? What are the things that encourage you to persevere in your prayer life?
4. What does this parable teach us about the character of God?

## Take action

What is the simple point that this parable is making?  
What is God calling you to do this week in response?

*This week I will...*

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## Pray

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## Set a reminder

Load the image from the series media page on the website and save it as your phone wallpaper.

**“Pray until you see it happen”**

## Fun for the family

Have a persistence challenge. Who can stand on one leg for the longest? Who can sing the longest note? Make up some of your own. Discuss: What have you had to wait a long time for? Why is persistence important?

# THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

## How did you go?

Ask each other how you went with last week's action step. Celebrate and encourage one another.

## Open the Bible

- Read Matthew 25:1-13 aloud
- Have someone else reread the passage in a different translation
- Retell the parable in your own words
- Spend some time in silence. Ask God to speak to you through His word. Silently reread the passage for yourself

## Reflect

What is God saying to you through this parable?

## Discuss

1. Compare the two groups of virgins. What did they have in common? What are the differences?
2. In what ways did the virgins honour or dishonour the bridegroom? What is the cost of honour?
3. Describe what it looks like to be prepared for Jesus' return. What makes it difficult?
4. Read Acts 2:38-39 and Acts 3:17-21. Describe the role of the Holy Spirit during the time between Jesus' ascension and His return. How can you experience the refreshing of the Spirit?

## Take action

What is the simple point that this parable is making?  
What is God calling you to do this week in response?

*This week I will...*

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## Pray

Pray for one another and the commitment you are making this week.

## Set a reminder

Load the image from the series media page on the website and save it as your phone wallpaper.

**“I choose to be filled with the Spirit to bring honour to Him”**

## Fun for the family

Create your own modern-day parable illustrating the same point as the parable of the ten virgins.

Discuss: What you have to do to be ready for Jesus to return?

A landscape photograph showing a field of tall, golden-brown grasses in the foreground. A railway track with gravel ballast runs diagonally from the bottom right towards the center. The background features a flat horizon line with a line of trees under a clear, bright blue sky. The text 'gateway BAPTIST CHURCH' is overlaid in the center of the image.

gateway  
BAPTIST CHURCH