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All words spoken by Jesus Christ are in **red text**.

(Hyperlinks are surrounded by parenthesis and are underlined.)

Everything Jesus said; everything Jesus did; and every person who interacted with Him had an instructional purpose and spiritual application for every believer. In addition, each lesson He taught was intended for the heart—because instructional information that reaches the heart has more transformative power than information that only enters the mind.

But here is something that is even more important to understand: the words spoken and the lessons taught by Jesus were not His own, but the Father's. Jesus declared:

- "My teaching is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me. Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." John 7:16-17
- "I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me." John 8:28
- "For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say." John 12:49-50

Jesus used different techniques to teach, including parables. The parables taught by Jesus were purposefully designed to facilitate understanding of spiritual truths by using familiar words and relatable stories that:

- Created a mental image of "something" that exists in the physical world the listeners were aware of or understood.
- Described how this "thing" operates in the physical world.
- Explained how the operation of this "thing" compares to the spiritual world.

In other words...this is what you know and understand, and here is how it relates to the spiritual realm.

The content of this lesson can provide you with significant spiritual nourishment if you take time to slowly "mentally chew" (meditate) upon one parable at a time. To fully extract and ingest all of the spiritual nutrients from each parable: (1) read each parable's scripture hyperlink, (2) read each parable's summary, then (3) read the associated scripture hyperlinks and lessons. For it is important to allow each parable's message to reach your heart and the depths of your innermost being, and not simply enter into your mind.

In addition, as you read, ask yourself the following...How does this parable:

- Relate to me?
- Reveal spiritual aspects within me that may be improved?
- Correlate to things I see in others?
- Enhance my spiritual insight, understanding, and my ability to see a "bigger picture" of God's truths?

The Purpose of Parables

"And the disciples came and said to Him, 'Why do You speak to them in parables?' He answered and said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.' But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, 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.'" Matthew 13:10-16

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Important Note: To read the parables and supportive scripture, click on the hyperlinks which are (surrounded by parenthesis and underlined).

New Cloth and New Wineskins

(Mat. 9:16-17; Mark 2:21-22; Luke 5:36-39)

Jesus' teachings were unlike any taught. His words caused the Jewish religious leaders to respond to Him with great opposition and caustic hostility. Jesus declared a new cloth (Himself) applied as a repair to an old garment (religious leaders) will not match the old garment, will fail, and make things worse. In addition, any attempt to put new wine (Himself) into an old rigid wineskin (religious leaders) will cause the old and unexpandable wineskin to burst (due to new wine fermentation gas expansion). Note the old garment symbolized what's portrayed on the outside, and the wineskin their internal turmoil.

Lamp's Light

(Mat. 5:14-16; Mark 4:21-23; Luke 8:16-17)

Jesus declared He is the light of the world and anyone who follows Him will have the light of life. (John 8:12). Jesus urges us to not hide our light, but let it shine for others to see. In addition, those things that are hidden and secret will be revealed by His light for our spiritual benefit, and to the demise of those who seek and remain in darkness.

Wise and Foolish Builders

(Mat. 7:24-27; Luke 6:47-49)

Jesus explained the benefits and consequences between hearing and obeying His words versus hearing and doing nothing in response—by comparing two foundations a house (the spiritual life of a person) is built upon. Jesus declared those who hear and obey His words is like a man who builds his house upon a rock—which can withstand the onslaught of rain, floods, and winds (trials and tribulations in life, especially during the last days). Whereas, a person who hears His words and does nothing in response is like a man who builds his house upon sand—which will not withstand tumultuous times because the unstable foundation will eventually cause the destruction of the house. Jesus is our “rock” foundation and the chief cornerstone for all of Christianity. Read (1 Cor. 3:11, James 1:22, 1 Pet. 2:1-10).

Two Debtors

(Luke 7:36–50)

This story reflects the graceful heart of Jesus, who was invited by Simon (a Jew) to eat with him in his home. As they sat at a table, a known sinful woman entered into Simon's home, kneeled at and washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and with her hair, kissed His feet, and anointed them with oil. Simon was outraged at what she did and questioned how a prophet would allow such a sinner to touch Him. In response, Jesus used a parable to compare the degree of love one would have towards someone based upon the amount of forgiven debt. Jesus asked Simon which person would love more if their debt was forgiven: one debtor who owned 500 denarii versus another debtor who owed 50 denarii. Simon correctly responded by saying the one who is forgiven more. From a spiritual perspective, Jesus revealed those who have been forgiven and saved from devastating sin will love Him more than those (i.e. Simon) who does not realize they are bound by sin. **“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.”** Luke 19:10 Read (John 8:1-12).

Rich Fool

(Luke 12:13–21)

The core message of this parable is for us to use our possessions for the glory of God, and not for our own vain purposes. Jesus spoke of a rich man who viewed his personal wellbeing as being based upon the increasing value of his earthly possessions. His wealth grew to a point where the rich man said to his soul to take **“ease; eat, drink, and be merry.”** However, Jesus warned, **“This night your soul will be required of you.”** Jesus then pointed out our earthly possessions—which do not glorify God—will provide no value after death, and will be passed on to others.

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21 Also read “Crowns” on UniqueBibleStudies.com

Barren Fig Tree

(Luke 13:6–9)

Jesus told this parable after He declared, **“Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”** Luke 13:3 The vineyard owner represents God; the fig tree represents the nation of Israel (and is relevant to each of us); and the gardener represents Jesus. **“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”** 2 Peter 3:9 However, if there is no repentance and no fruit, there is a time when God’s longsuffering patience will end and the unrepentant will be cut down. Read the following:

- God’s patience (and Mosaic Covenant) ended with the Israelites: (Is. 1:11-20; Ez. 16:59-63; Jer. 31:31-34).
- How we are “pruned” to produce fruit: (John 15:1-8).
- “Repentance” on UniqueBibleStudies.com.

Sower

(Mat. 13:3-23; Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:5-15)

The parable of the sower spiritually compares how the scattering of seed (the Gospel of Jesus Christ) will fall onto four different types of soil (persons): wayside, stony, thorns, and good ground. Jesus describes how the condition of each type of soil is able to support the germination and growth of the seed—which correlates to the motivational desires of people’s hearts when they hear and respond to the Gospel. The seed is unable to take hold in wayside ground: those who are hardened by sin and controlled by Satan. With stony ground, the seed may initially take hold but is unable to germinate because there is no depth of soil, and because their faith will wither when they encounter tribulation or persecution. The seed that lands on thorny ground is able to take hold and begins to germinate—but is overcome and choked off by thorns: the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. However, when the seed falls upon good ground (a heart that seeks God and desires His righteousness), the seed will germinate and will bear significant fruit.

Tares

(Mat. 13:24-30, 36-43)

This parable adds to the precepts of the parable of the sower, by providing spiritual insight as to why Christians (desirable wheat) exist amongst evil (unwanted tares or weeds). The seed sower is Jesus, the field is the world, the good seeds are followers of Christ, and the tares are the consequences of Satan’s lies. The tares have been allowed to remain because uprooting them will cause harm to the wheat. However, a great harvest will occur at the end of this age—when the tares will be gathered (by angels) and burned in fire, and the righteous will be gathered into the barn (Heaven).

Growing Seed

(Mark 4:26–29)

This parable also adds to the precepts of the parable of the sower and tares—for we are amazed at the miraculous transformation that occurs when one plants a seed and we watch the growth of a physical living organism. We are also amazed at the miraculous transformation that occurs spiritually within those who have received a “seed” of God’s word into the hearts, and as we witness the seed’s germination and their growth into the righteousness of Jesus. It is God who designed the physical transformational process of a seed unto a plant’s growth, and it is God who set in place the spiritual transformation process unto righteousness for those who place their faith in Jesus.

Mustard Seed

([Mat. 13:31-32](#); [Mark 4:30-32](#); [Luke 13:18-19](#))

This parable adds to the precepts of the parable of the growing seed. Jesus compared a mustard seed to the kingdom of God. A mustard seed is one of the smallest seeds in the plant kingdom. However, a planted mustard seed can grow into a living organism with a significant height and a wide diameter of foliage—sufficient to provide beneficial value to other physical organisms. From a spiritual perspective, it is the small “seeds of faith” that take root within our hearts that grow the kingdom of God by providing beneficial value to others.

Yeast

([Mat. 13:33](#); [Luke 13:20-21](#))

This parable is prophetic in that Jesus correlates how yeast will cause the components of bread to transform and rise—to how His sacrificial death will cause the kingdom of God to transform and grow. From a spiritual perspective, though the workings of the Holy Spirit are hidden (like yeast), His influence is evident to those who are able to spiritually see—starting with the twelve disciples, thereafter growing into His church during the past 2,000 years—all culminating into a great multitude who will receive their inheritance because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. Read ([Rev. 19:1-8](#)).

Hidden Treasure and Pearl

([Mat. 13:44-46](#))

These two parables convey our need to set priorities in our life in order to obtain the priceless eternal gift of being in the kingdom of Heaven. Both the one who finds the treasure and the one who finds a valuable pearl sell all that they possess in order to purchase something that has an inestimable value. In a similar manner, those of us who have been blessed by God will discount and disregard everything we own—so that we can run the race before us, cross the “finish line,” and receive an imperishable crown...which we will humbly place at the feet of Jesus...because He alone is worthy of any recognition as to why we are there.

Net

([Mat. 13:47-50](#))

The parable of the net aligns with the precepts of the parable of the tares. Jesus correlates casting a dragnet into the sea to gather “every kind.” When the dragnet is full it is drawn onto the shore. The catch that is good is kept, that which is bad is discarded. This scenario describes what will occur at the end of the age. The reference to a “full” dragnet may correlate to Romans 11:25-27: when the “fullness” or completion of the number of gentiles will be saved. Also in Revelation 6:9-11: when the completed number of fellow servants would be killed for their faith. Thereafter, the wicked will be separated and cast into a furnace of fire—where **“There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”** Read ([Rev. 19:19-21](#); [Rev. 20:10-15](#)).

Householder

([Mat. 13:52](#))

In this parable Jesus equates the disciples as being scribes (who have knowledge of Old Testament law)—who had also learned the new instructions Jesus taught—and who were now “householders” of informational treasures that enable them to explain (to Israelites) how He is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and the only means of salvation through faith. **“Then He said to them, ‘These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.”** Luke 24:44-45

This foundational treasure of knowledge was required for them to teach (after they received the Holy Spirit.)
“These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”
John 14:25-26

Lost Sheep

(Mat. 18:12–14; Luke 15:3–7)

This parable correlates how a shepherd will leave the flock they are watching and search for a lost sheep that goes astray. And if found he will call his friends and neighbors to rejoice—for that which was lost was found. Likewise, there is joy in Heaven when one sinner repents than over ninety-nine persons who need no repentance.

Lost Coin

(Luke 15:8–10)

This parable adds to the precepts of the lost sheep. A person who loses a valuable coin will do whatever it takes to find it. And when found, will share their joy of finding the lost coin with friends and neighbors. Likewise, joy is experienced by angels and God when one person repents from their sin.

Prodigal Son

(Luke 15:11–32)

This parable explains how we can use our free will to reject God, attempt to seek fulfillment elsewhere, and the heavenly joy that is experienced when there is a change in our heart towards God. A son asked his father for his portion of wealth he had earned, left his family, moved to a distant country, lost everything due to sinful living, and became destitute and hungry to the point where he was willing to eat the food that pigs ate. Living in the midst of the consequences of his sin he came to his senses, realized his foolish mistake, decided to return to his father, and confess his wrongdoings with humility and hope of assuming the role of becoming a hired servant—because he considered himself unworthy of enjoying the benefits of being his son—for what he had done against his father. However, because of the father’s great love for His son, He welcomed him with all of his heart, restored him as his son, and celebrated his return. For he was once dead and is alive; he was once lost and is found. Every Christian can relate to the foolish mistakes made by the prodigal son, and the wonderful experience when had when we came to our senses, repented, and humbly returned to God.

Master and Servant

(Luke 17:7–10)

This parable defines the desired perceptions, motivations and heart of one who is a servant of God. For those who serve God should do so with humility; with gratefulness for our salvation; because of our love for Him; and because it’s our duty to return to Him (and others) all that He has freely given us. As such, our efforts should not be motivated by rewards or recognition for what we do, nor should we believe God “owes” us something in return—because He has already given us the most valuable gift and greatest of all rewards—because of our faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

However, be assured, it is God’s desire to recognize and reward us for those things that we do for Him—which will be based upon a willing servant’s humble, grateful and loving heart.

Read (Mat. 6:1-4, 6; Luke 6:20-23, 35; Mat. 16:27; Rev. 22:12; 2 Cor. 5:10).

But what’s more, we will place any reward we receive at the feet of Jesus—because we know He alone is worthy of recognition for any aspect of our transformation into righteousness. Read “Crowns” on UniqueBibleStudy.com.

Unforgiving Servant

(Mat. 18:21–35)

Jesus explains our need to forgive others because we have been forgiven. The servant who had received forgiveness for the large amount that he owed, should have passed on that same forgiveness to the one who owed him money. Therefore, how can we—who are imperfect, filled with flaws, and are yet forgiven—not continually forgive others for their imperfections and flaws. “[And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.](#)” Ephesians 4:32 Read ([Mat. 6:12](#); [Col. 3:13](#); [Luke 23:34](#)).

Good Samaritan

(Luke 10:30–37)

Jesus declared the greatest commandment is to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength; and to love your neighbor as yourself. ([Mark 12:28-31](#)). Jesus defines neighbor in this parable—whom are those we encounter in our daily activities who have a need. The half dead man lying on the road spiritually represents someone who has been “wounded” by an attack by Satan, and had fallen due to their sin. Two “religious” persons walked by the man—both had hardened hearts—and they continued on without rendering aid. But the third man had compassion for the wounded and fallen man, and did everything possible to help him recover.

Friend at Night

(Luke 11:5–13)

In this parable Jesus compares how a neighbor will respond to the requested needs of a persistent friend, to our need to consistently pray to God for our needs. We should never approach God with a demanding, or disrespectful attitude, or the wrong motives. But rather, our petitions to God should be made with a humble heart and bold faith to the One who knows the number of hairs on our head ([Luke 12:6-7](#)); the One who loves us beyond measure; and the One who understands our needs and will fulfill them. “[For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.](#)” Matthew 6:32-33

Lowly Place

(Luke 14:7-11)

Jesus uses this parable to reinforce our need to be humble in every situation. Never consider yourself more important than others, and never seek praise and recognition in any form. However, if praise or recognition is given, do not allow it to “puff” up your heart, nor permit any form of pride to fester within your being. But rather, respond with a humble and gracious “thank you,” and seek additional responsive words that glorify God—who is the true source of any righteousness we possess.

Wedding Feast

(Mat. 22:1–14)

This parable encompasses God’s conditional Mosaic covenant with the Israelites (who broke the covenant), and God’s New (unconditional and everlasting) Covenant through His Son, Jesus. Read ([Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)). The King (God) sent His servants (the prophets) to invite the Jews to the wedding. But the prophets were disregarded by most and were killed by others. So God decided to open the doors to all who will believe in His Son: Jews and Gentiles. Jesus said, “[This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.](#)” Luke 22:20 God is preparing a wedding feast which will occur in the future between the bridegroom (Jesus) and His bride (the church). Read ([Rev.19:6-9](#)). The wedding garment (which the man was not wearing and was cast out) correlates to the righteousness of Christ. Read ([Mat. 7:21-23](#)).

Great Supper

([Luke 14:15–24](#))

This parable adds to the precepts of the wedding feast. God is represented by the man who prepared a great supper, and who sent his servant to invite many. But those who were invited gave excuses for not attending. Thereafter, the man told his servant to invite all who will come—except those who were invited but refused to attend. The core message is because of the rejection by the Israelites, God opened the door of salvation to the Gentiles who come to Jesus by faith. “[For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.](#)” Romans 10:13

Tower

([Luke 14:28–33](#))

Jesus explained the need to determine the cost requirements of building something (a tower) to the costs of following Him. Those who fail to determine the costs (and are unable to complete their project) will be mocked by others. This truth is exemplified by persons who accept Jesus, make a public declaration of their faith, are later seen involved in their prior sin, and are ridiculed for their hypocritical behavior—all of which facilitates Satan’s efforts to insert “justified reasons to continue sinning and reject Jesus” within darkened minds.

“[Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.’](#)” Matthew 16:24-25

Jesus then correlates the need to analyze military requirements when going to war against an adversary, and the spiritual requirements and demands of fighting against principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, and against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Read ([Ephesians 6:10-20](#)).

Divided Kingdom

([Mark 3:22-26](#); [Mat. 12:24-29](#); [Luke 11:15-22](#))

The Pharisees were spiritually blind to the truth that God’s promised Messiah was before them; their hearts were hardened by sin; and they sought any means possible to attack Jesus. As such, when Jesus healed a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute ([Mat. 12:22](#)), the Pharisees declared He did this through the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of demons.

In response, Jesus compared how a division within a kingdom, city or house (family / ourselves) will cause desolation (cohesive failure and complete destruction) from within. Therefore, if their accusation is true...Jesus asked how is it possible for Satan to cast out Satan? For if their accusation towards Him is true, it defines a consequence of division—which means Satan’s kingdom will fail. Jesus then flips their argument against them by asking under whose power are they casting out demons. Jesus then declares His divinity—for He has been given the power to bind Satan and plunder his house by reclaiming those whom he has stolen by deceitful lies—including you and me.

Defiled Heart

([Mark 7:14-23](#); [Mat. 15:10-20](#))

Jesus continually taught us about the importance of our “spiritual heart.” Some Pharisees and scribes witnessed some of the disciples eat bread with unwashed hands. They then made an accusatory question to Jesus (based upon works) as to why His disciples were not complying with the tradition of their religious elders. Jesus then explained a spiritual truth in that it is not what enters into the mouth that defiles a person—because that what enters the mouth is eventually eliminated from the body. However, it is the spiritual condition of the heart that determines if someone is defiled—which is evidenced by their spoken words and deeds.

All of us can relate to this truth of defilement—which is revealed by someone’s caustic words and persona (facial and behavioral mannerisms) that reflects the internal turmoil that exists within the heart.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” Jeremiah 17:9

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” Proverbs 4:23

Tree’s Fruit

([Luke 6:43-45](#))

This parable adds to the precepts of the defiled heart by comparing how a tree will produce good versus bad fruit to our good versus evil behavior. Jesus declares our fruit (the words we speak and our deeds) are based upon the types of treasure our heart desires and possesses.

Unjust Steward

([Luke 16:1–15](#))

This parable is different from the others in that the steward, the man, and the debtors are all wicked—in that they are willing to use money to accomplish their objectives—regardless of the cost to others. Although the disciples were present, Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees who were lovers of money. Jesus did not recommend for us to “buy” friends with unrighteous money. But rather, His words spoke to the Pharisee’s underlying motivations by declaring how they have been unfaithful to God by using money in unscrupulous ways to enhance their wellbeing. “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” 1 Timothy 6:10

The Pharisees were using money as a means to benefit themselves. As followers of Jesus Christ we should consider ourselves as obedient stewards of the gifts that God has given us—which should be used as we are led by the Holy Spirit—for the benefits of others.

Jesus also declared a core spiritual truth in that we can only serve one master at a time—because the influential power of one will conflict with the other. This truth also applies to other controlling influences in our lives that can misdirect us from serving God.

Rich Man and Lazarus

([Luke 16:19–31](#))

This parable contrasts a rich man and a poor man (Lazarus). The rich man lived in luxury, while Lazarus was a destitute beggar who desired to eat the scraps of food the rich man threw away. Upon their deaths Lazarus was carried to a place of comfort and rest, and the rich man found himself in the torment and agony of Hades. This scenario depicts the eternal blessings or painful consequences one will experience based upon the choices they make in life—which become final and irreversible when we die. The rich man asked Abraham for relief from his torment—which was denied because of the impassible division between them. The rich man then begged Abraham to warn his family members of his torment so that they would repent and change their lives—which was also denied because they rejected Moses and the prophets (who was sent by God to warn the Israelites)...they would also reject and justify their disbelief even if the messenger was raised from the dead.

In summary, the choices we make while we are alive will have eternal consequences after we die. Jesus declared, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” Mark 8:36-37

Workers In the Vineyard

(Matt. 20:1–16)

Some of the parables of Jesus require deep reflection and meditation to identify the hidden spiritual meaning of His teachings. Because in this parable, on the “surface” it seems unfair that a person who works all day will receive the same pay as one who works for a shorter time, and their complaints seem justified. However, the landowner’s act of paying all workers the same represents God who sheds His mercy equally upon those believe in His Son as Savior and Lord—regardless of the amount of time they work and their efforts during their lifetime—because the reward of eternal life is the same. As such, it is important for His laborers to work together for His glory—with humility, gratefulness, contentment, and joy.

Body’s Lamp

(Mat. 6:22-23; Luke 11:34-36)

This parable adds to the precepts of the defiled heart and a tree and its fruit. Jesus reveals our eyes are a direct portal (entrance) into our body (heart, soul, spirit and mind)—and what we allow our eyes to see will influence whether light or darkness exists within us. Therefore, Jesus instructs us to use attentive discernment in disallowing darkness to enter into our eyes, and seeking those things that illuminate His light within us.

“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” John 8:12

Note: When you take time to spiritually evaluate and discern the content of the different communication mediums that are available today—you will find many distribute darkness. As such, the relevance and prudence of His parable becomes more evident—especially as darkness becomes more prevalent as we enter into the last days.

Persistent Widow

(Luke 18:1–8)

Jesus declares in this parable that we should always pray and never give up. A widow repeatedly pleads her case before the judge—who ignores her. However, her persistence caused the judge to give her the justice she was seeking. Jesus explains if an uncaring and ungodly judge will eventually relent, how much more will a loving Father respond to the requests of His children. **“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”** Matthew 7:7-11

Pharisee and the Tax Collector

(Luke 18:9–14)

This parable speaks to the deep and hidden aspects of our heart. A Pharisee prayed to God (with pride and judgement towards others) by thanking Him that he is not like other sinners, and then listed the righteous deeds he has done. Whereas, a tax collector, praying with great humility and deep remorse, declared his sinful condition and asked God for mercy. The Pharisee exalted himself before God because of his unrepentance and hardened heart. Whereas, the tax collector humbled himself before God because he was aware of his deep imperfections, and reliance upon God for His mercy. As such we should never have judgmental thoughts towards anyone. But rather, when we continually compare ourselves against the righteousness of Jesus Christ, we are more likely to have empathetic compassion for those who lost and bound by sin, and not view them with a hardened heart. This truth was exemplified by Jesus when He declared, **“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.”** Luke 23:34

Two Sons

([Mat. 21:28–32](#))

Jesus is speaking to the temple chief priests and elders—who confronted Him by asking under what authority are you doing these things? His answer was in the form of a question that compared how they responded to their father when he asked them to do a task. The first son (who initially disobeyed) had a change of heart and obeyed his father—who represent sinners who believed, repented and did God’s will. Whereas, the leaders of Israel are represented by the second son who claimed obedience, but did not do the will of his earthly father (God’s will).

Wicked Vinedressers

([Mat. 21:33–46](#); [Mark 12:1–12](#); [Luke 20:9–19](#))

There are multiple persons in this parable—each with spiritual symbolism. The landowner is God; the vineyard is Israel; the vinedressers are the Jewish religious leaders; the landowner’s servants that were sent are God’s prophets; the son is Jesus; and the other tenants are the Gentiles.

This parable encapsulates how the Israelites (God’s chosen) have responded to Him. God rescued them from slavery; made a conditional covenant with them (the Mosaic Covenant); protected them, and gave them a land filled with abundance. All that He asked for (in His covenant with them) was their obedience—which they agreed to do ([Exodus 19:1-8](#)). However, shortly thereafter they broke the covenant by turning against Him by doing those things He had forbidden (sinned against God). God then sent His prophets to warn the Israelites. But they would not listen and put them in prison, stoned or killed them. As such, they were responsible for breaking the covenant.

God then sent His Son as His New Covenant—who would also be murdered by the Israelites. However, this was foreknown and had a planned purpose. For Jesus prewarned His disciples that He would die ([Mat. 16:21-23, 17:22-23](#); [Mark 8:31-32, 9:30-32](#); [Luke 9:21-22, 43-45](#)), and willingly submitted himself to the cross so that we could receive forgiveness for our sins. “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2 Read ([Isaiah 53:1-12](#)).

Talents

([Mat. 25:14–30](#); [Luke 19:12–27](#))

This parable conveys the importance of using the gifts that have been given to us by God to bless others (by facilitating spiritual and physical growth of the church body). A man gave 3 servants talents (money). One received 5 talents, another 2 talents, and the third 1 talent. Two of the servants doubled their allocation and received a reward. However, the one who received 1 talent hid it, did not seek an increase, and received punishment. As such, have you ever evaluated the various gifts you have been blessed with that may benefit others? In addition, is it possible you have a gift that you never considered? For more information read “Spiritual Gifts” on [UniqueBibleStudies.com](#).

Grain of Wheat

([John 12:23-26](#))

The words of Jesus in this parable correlates to His prophetic death and resurrection, and depicts our spiritual transformation. In verse 23, Jesus states His hour has come for Him to be glorified. His glorification is comparable to the transformation that occurs to a grain of wheat—for it must die before it is able to grow and produce more wheat grains. These new grains will also die and produce proportionately more. As such, Jesus died almost 2,000 years ago. During this time an uncountable number of “grains” have taken up His cross and have experienced the “death” of their sinful nature so that other grains may be produced. Read ([Rev. 7:9-12](#); [19:6-8](#)).

Birds and Flowers

([Matthew 6:25-34](#); [Luke 12:22-31](#))

There is an inverse relationship between faith and anxiety. As faith increases, anxiety decreases (and vice versa). However, because of our sinful nature we often struggle with our faith when we are faced with trials and tribulations in life. In this parable Jesus asks us to consider how God fulfills the physical needs of fauna, and how He has clothed flora in an array of colors and beauty that transcends what humans wear. Given the fact that we are more important than fauna and flora, and given the fact that God knows our needs...Jesus declares we should seek Him and His righteousness and not allow worrying to overtake and consume our faith in Him.

[“Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6](#)

Weather Signs

([Mat. 16:1-3](#); [Luke 12:54-56](#))

The religious leaders (Pharisees and Sadducees) rejected Jesus as God’s promised Messiah: the Savior whom God promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They believed the Messiah would come as a mighty warrior to defeat their earthly enemies. But God had a more important plan for His Son (which they were unable to comprehend...to this day): Jesus initially came to defeat their spiritual enemy: Satan and his minions. Israel’s earthly enemies will be defeated by Jesus when He returns.

The religious leader’s inability to see spiritually was evidenced by asking Jesus to show them a sign that proves He is divinely appointed by God. Jesus then spoke about our human ability to look outside and determine the pending weather—but yet they are unable to discern who is before them (based upon the miracles He performed and the words He had spoken).

The discernment Jesus referred to is applicable today—in that we must open our spiritual eyes to discern the ongoing events that are leading up to the last days. In addition, Jesus also gave us different last day signs to look for. For more information read [“Open your Spiritual Eyes,” “21 Signs of the Last Days,”](#) and other lessons listed under the Last Days section on [UniqueBibleStudies.com](#).

Salt

([Matt 5:13](#); [Mark 9:50](#); [Luke 14:34-35](#))

Salt provides us with many benefits. But the most value in salt is derived from its ability to enhance the flavor of food. As such, Jesus said we are the salt of the earth because of our ability to enhance the lives of others (by glorifying Him through our words and deeds). However, our ability to “season with saltiness” will be diluted if sin is allowed to contaminate our lives. Those who desire to regain their saltiness may be spiritually cleansed of their sinful impurities by:

- Realizing the eternal rewards of living for Christ far exceed the fleeting benefits of living a deceptional lie.
- Confessing their sins.
- Cleanse themselves by:
 - Prayer. ([Mat. 26:41](#); [1 Thes. 5:17](#); [Philip. 4:6](#); [Psalm 55:17](#))
 - Reading God’s word. ([2 Tim.3:16-17](#); [Heb. 4:12](#); [James 1:22](#))
 - Connecting with other Christians. ([Heb. 10:24-25](#); [James 5:16](#))
 - Obeying the Holy Spirit. ([John 14:26](#); [Romans 8:12-17](#); [Gal. 5:16-26](#))
 - Seeking God with all of your heart. ([Jer. 29:13](#); [Deu. 4:29](#); [Psalm 119:2](#); [Mat. 6:33](#))

For additional information read [“Backsliding”](#) on [UniqueBibleStudies.com](#).

Narrow Door

(Mat. 7:13-14; Luke 13:22-30)

Jesus symbolically used two entrance gates to represent life's two eternal options: a narrow and wide gate.

Narrow Gate	Wide Gate
Represents Himself	Represents Satan
Refrains from fulfilling the desires of the flesh	Seeks to fulfill the desires of the flesh
Benefit: eternal life in the Kingdom of God	Consequence: eternal death in the lake of fire
Few enter	Many enter

Jesus declared He is the one and only entrance gate, and the one and only means to enter into everlasting life.

Unfortunately, there are some who profess to be a Christian but they do not have a relationship with Jesus. These are those who did not enter through the narrow gate, but walked through the wide gate. These are those who will find themselves unable to enter into the Kingdom of God. These are those who will declare they “ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.” And these are those who will hear “I do not know you. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.” For Christianity is much more than simply attending a church, taking Communion, and complying with religious rituals. Christianity is about the desires of our heart; it's about our faith in what He did for us on the cross; and it's about our spiritual transformation from darkness and sin, and unto His light and His righteousness. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

True Shepherd

(John 10:1-16)

This parable adds to the precepts of the narrow door by correlating the relationship between a shepherd and his sheep.

- “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.” John 10:7-9
- “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” John 14:6

Jesus reinforces our need to enter into the sheepfold (a protective enclosure where sheep are safely kept) by going through the door (Himself). As our Shepherd—who gave His life for His sheep—we know His voice and we follow Him. Conversely, we know the voice of strangers (Satan and his minions who seek to kill and destroy), and we flee from them.

Speck and Log

(Mat. 7:1-5)

Jesus equated spiritual hypocrisy and self-centered pride as a plank of wood lodged in our eye that:

- Blocks our ability to spiritually see.
- Causes us to:
 - Erroneously view ourselves.
 - Inappropriately judge and criticize others.

When the plank has been removed we will:

- Clearly see our own sins and our need for God's grace.
- Humbly consider ourselves as not being better than others.
- View the sin of others:
 - As a reminder of our past sin that:
 - Caused us to live in darkness.
 - Remind us (through Jesus) we are now free from the bondage and consequences of sin.
 - With an underlying desire to help based upon heart-felt empathetic concern, compassion and mercy.
- Fulfill, **"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."** Mark 12:31

"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another." Colossians 3:12-13

Great Physician

(Mat. 9:10-13; Mark 2:15-17; Luke 5:29-31)

The words of Jesus illuminated spiritual truths to those in darkness. The Pharisees (Jewish religious leaders) asked the disciples why does Jesus eat with "sinners"...which provides insight into the hardened hearts of the Pharisees.

Jesus overheard what was asked and answered their question with a heart-piercing declaration—for the Pharisees thought they were righteous, but were unaware of the depths of their sin. Jesus declared He did not come for those who think they are "well" (righteous). But rather, He came for those who know they are spiritually sick (due to sin) and seek healing.

The Pharisees thought their righteousness was due to their adherence to the Law and by their works—but they completely missed the point—for **"I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."** Hosea 6:6 God is more interested in the desires of our heart than He is with our behavior.

Those who consider themselves as being righteous will never seek nor humble themselves to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. However, those who recognize their "sickness" due to their sinful nature, and humbly turn to Jesus for help...they will be healed and saved. **"For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."** Romans 10:13

The Return of Jesus Christ

The following parables provide instructional guidance for the last days.

Fig Tree

([Mat. 24:32–34](#); [Mark 13:28–31](#); [Luke 21:29–33](#))

Jesus first described what will occur prior to His return, and provided us with an indicative warning of the last days: the fig tree (which is used as a symbolic reference in the Bible to Israel). Israel became a nation in 1948, and has been in the center of global news—especially during the past few years. For the final days—the 7-year tribulation—will center around the Nation of Israel as Satan seeks to destroy God’s chosen elect. Jesus instructs us to use discernment of the events that are occurring in and around Israel—for these are indicators we are entering into the last days. For more information on the last days read “21 Signs of the Last Days,” “The Covenant,” and “The Great Tribulation and the Sovereignty of Israel,” plus additional lessons (under the section of Last Days on [UniqueBibleStudies.com](#)).

Watchful Servants

([Mark 13:34-37](#); [Luke 12:35-40](#))

This parable uses a metaphor of a master (Jesus) returning from a wedding (His second coming)—with the timing of his return unknown. The master gave his servants (us) authority, work to accomplish, and told to watch for his return—which will occur during at a time we do not expect. As such, we must be constantly ready for His return.

Faithful Servant

([Mat. 24:45-51](#); [Luke 12:42-48](#))

Jesus declared that no one knows when Jesus will return, “**but my Father only.**” [Mat. 24:36](#) This parable has a similar message to the Watchful Servants in that we must be ready for His return. However, this parable describes positive rewards for the wise and faithful servants who are obedient, and negative consequences for those who disregard His coming and makes unwise decisions to sin. This parable will help to strengthen the resolve of the faithful during the end times, for, “**Scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’**” [2 Peter 3:3](#)

Ten Virgins

([Mat. 25:1–13](#))

This parable adds to the precepts of the wedding feast and the fig tree in that we must be prudent, continually watch for, and be always ready for the return of Jesus (the Bridegroom)—whom we do not “**know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.**” The oil in the lamps is symbolic of salvation: faith in Christ and an indwelling Holy Spirit.

Thief in the Night

([Mat. 24:42-43](#); [Luke 12:35-40](#))

Jesus reinforces our need to be ready for His return by using the imagery of a thief who comes at night (last day darkness). We are servants of the Master who own’s our “homes” (our bodies where our soul resides). “**Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?**” “**For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.**” [1 Cor. 6:15, 20](#) Therefore, we should diligently protect our “home” from Satan’s intrusion as we actively watch for our Master’s return with a girded waist (signifies being ready for action), and our lamps burning (represents maintaining spiritual vigilance). Read ([Rev. 16:15](#); [1 Thes. 5:2](#); [2 Peter 3:10](#)).

Sheep and Goats

(Mat. 25:31-46)

The Sheep and Goat Judgment has interpreted by some that salvation is based upon works. However, while it is important for Christians to perform these acts from a pure heart, works are not required for salvation because salvation is based upon faith. **"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."** Ephesians 2:8-9

However, when God's covenant of unmerited grace through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, has ended (when **"the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."** Luke 21:24). Thereafter, works, deeds and action will be required for the Gentiles who survive the Tribulation to enter into the Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ.

God said regarding Israel, **"I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you."** Genesis 12:3 As such, during the last days God will provide a means to motivate assistance and protection for the Israelites during the Tribulation period, by providing a way for Gentiles to experience the fulfillment of God's promises to the Israelites. Those who do not assist the Israelites during the last days will be cast into an everlasting punishment. However, Gentiles who assist Israelites by providing food, drink, shelter, clothing, help with infirmities, and visiting the captives will enter into a new world that is:

- Under the reign of Jesus Christ (the promised Messiah, the Anointed One)—who shall rule with a rod of iron. Read (Psalms 2:7-9; Rev. 2:27; 19:15).
- No longer influenced by Satan. **"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished."** Revelation 20:1-3

"On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name," says the Lord who does this thing. 'Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. I will bring back the captives of My people Israel; they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them; they shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them. I will plant them in their land, and no longer shall they be pulled up from the land I have given them,' says the Lord your God." Amos 9:11-15



"All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 'I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.'" Matthew 13:34-35

I pray the content of this lesson has greatly expanded your understanding of the spiritual truths revealed to us through the parables that were spoken by our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ. But more important...these truths become deeply embedded within your heart and soul...for the benefits of others and for His glory.

For He alone is worthy!

Harold D. Thomas