

The Wisdom of JESUS

Seven Powerful Parables





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson One - The Good Samaritan

Lesson Two - The Rich Fool


Lesson Three - The Great Banquet

Lesson Four - The Two Lost Sons

Lesson Five - The Pharisee & Tax Collector

Lesson Six - The Wise Man & The Foolish Man

Lesson Seven - The Sower



THE GOOD SAMARITAN

IN PREPARATION

LUKE 10:25-37

QUESTIONS

WHERE DOES JESUS SEND THE MAN TO GET THE ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION?

WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN THE JEWS AND SAMARITANS?

WHO WERE THE PRIESTS AND LEVITES UNDER THE JEWISH SYSTEM?

Introduction

This all began with a simple question. The man was interested in eternal life! But that question took them down a course that directly connected them to God and mankind around them.

The Powerful Consequences

There's no other way around it. This discussion is at the very core of what it takes to enter into eternal life. Jesus said in a similar discussion that all the old law "depends" on these two principles (Matthew 22:37-40). Jesus' response is very simple and telling: "do this and live." There was no question as to their significance.


Why does Jesus start at these two principles when discussing how to inherit eternal life?

What was the context for these two verses?

The Powerful Parable

The man wasn't satisfied with the answer. In an effort to justify himself he asks the Lord another important question "Who is my neighbor?" The answer to the question made all the difference to the discussion. Jesus knew this, and He gives His parable.

Why might the man want to justify himself?



THE GOOD SAMARITAN

What is the scenario for the parable? Where are they located? Who are the people involved? What connection might they have to the lawyer?

Who was under the law of Leviticus 19:9-18 in the parable? _____

What might cause these different people to act this way? _____

Why did Jesus choose the Samaritan? _____

The Powerful Point

Jesus drives at the very heart of the discussion for this lawyer. The problem is not with the law. The problem is not with the question or the answer. The problem lies within the heart of the Jews. Jesus makes the point absolutely clear that the lawyer's neighbor was anyone around him who was in need, even if that was his enemy. The application of these two principles would determine if he would inherit eternal life or not.

How did the man prove he was a neighbor? How do we prove it?

Who are our Samaritans? _____

How does this one story change your world view? What does this parable mean for you? _____



THE RICH FOOL

IN PREPARATION

LUKE 12:13-34, (LUKE 18:18-30)

QUESTIONS

WAS THERE ANY PROBLEM WITH JESUS HELPING DIVIDE THIS MAN'S INHERITANCE?

WAS THERE ANY PROBLEM WITH THIS MAN BUILDING BIGGER BARNS?

WAS THERE A CONNECTION TO THE PARABLE IN VERSES 22-34?

Introduction

A statement from the crowd - that's all it took for Jesus to give powerful insight into what money is all about and to make his audience question their hearts in regard to physical things.

The Problem of Possessions

Was Jesus being rude? Was he not concerned about the issue at hand? The man had a problem, and he wanted what was rightfully his! What's the problem here? Jesus not only doesn't fulfill the man's request, he turns around and warns him about his possessions and tells this simple parable.

What was the problem? Did he not deserve his inheritance? _____

What was Jesus getting at with His parable? Was He condemning possessions? _____

What is missing in the productivity of the man in the parable? _____

The practice of preparation

The warning that Jesus gave was clearly against covetousness and a proper respect for the true nature of what life is all about. Now there are two kinds ...



THE RICH FOOL

...preparation under consideration in this parable. One type of preparation was in physical things. This man had been successful and because of his plenty he planned and prepared to build bigger barns. The second type of preparation was for what life is all about - heaven. Jesus lays down this powerful point: prepare for what truly matters.

Was the man in the parable sinning by having riches or preparing his physical things? What was the problem? _____

How many times does the man mention himself in the parable? _____

What type of preparation did he need to have? What specifics could he have done? What type of heart did he need in order to prepare properly? _____

The Promise of Provision

The final section is Jesus talking with His disciples about the promise of His Father. Man seeks the things of this life and in some ways rightly so, but Jesus tells His disciples to not focus on those things because God takes care of those who focus on Him. His disciples instead needed to be concerned about the needy and to lay up treasures in heaven.

What does Jesus mean when He says "these things will be added to you?" What does He not mean? _____

Was Jesus serious about our interest in the poor? Consider Luke 18:18-30 _____



THE GREAT BANQUET

IN PREPARATION

LUKE 14:12-24, (1-11)

QUESTIONS

WHERE IS THIS
PARABLE TAUGHT AT?
WHO IS IN
ATTENDANCE?

WHAT KIND OF
EVENT IS BEING
DISCUSSED IN THIS
CHAPTER?

WHO WAS JESUS
ADDRESSING WITH
HIS PARABLE?

Introduction

Eating a meal. This is one of the most simple and common events that took place in the time of Jesus, but Jesus was in a special situation for this meal, and He had a special audience. The situation was right for Him to readjust the thinking of His audience, and this parables is meant to do just that.

“When you give a banquet”

Jesus has already addressed His audience in regard to exaltation, and now He turns to the host and gives strong words concerning the purpose of His feast. Jesus wants the man to rethink the “why” behind the feast and the type of people to invite.

Is Jesus saying that the man should never invite his friends and family for a meal? If not, how do we know?

What type of people should the man invite? Why?

What can we learn from Jesus' statements?

“A man gave a banquet”

After Jesus had finished one man says “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God.” Jesus then takes that statement and begins to...

to.....anquet



THE GREAT BANQUET

... to tell His audience about another feast that a man prepared. In this story many are invited, but not everyone is interested in coming.

Did Jesus' audience understand that eating in the kingdom was important? What connection does that have to Jesus' parable? _____

If Jesus just told the man he should invite the poor, why doesn't the man in the parable invite the poor? _____

How valid were these excuses? What did their excuses say about the man's feast? _____

“None of these shall taste of my banquet”

Clearly not everyone was interested in the feast, and the reaction of the master tells us something about the nature of the feast and those who were invited. Despite the rejection he received, he did not shut the doors and allow none into the feast.

What type of people were extended the second invitation? Who might those figuratively represent? _____

What part of the feast do we fall into? How do we know? _____

What does Jesus think about our excuses? _____



THE TWO LOST SONS

IN PREPARATION

LUKE 15:11-32 (1-10)

QUESTIONS

WHAT WAS THE ACCUSATION AGAINST JESUS? WAS IT TRUE?

WHAT DO THE OTHER TWO PARABLES IN THIS CHAPTER HAVE TO DO WITH 11-32?

WHAT TYPE OF PROGRESSION IS JESUS MAKING IN HIS PARABLES?

Introduction

Every scripture has its context, and Luke 15 is no different. There is a reason Jesus told these parables. Jesus was seeing an attitude in the Pharisees that needed to be changed, and these stories drive right at the heart of what the Pharisees had a problem with.

The First Lost Son

The story begins with a man who has two sons, and one becomes enamored with life away from his father. He calls for his share of the property and launches out on his own, charting a very damaging course.

What did it mean that the son wanted his share of the property? How did that affect the relationship with his father? _____

What does the word “prodigal” mean?

What relationship did Jews have with pigs?

The Father’s Response

Once the young man “came to himself” things were going to be different. The first response was repentance and returning to the father. The son had planned on becoming a simple hired servant, but the father didn’t operate that way. The father was looking for his lost son.



THE TWO LOST SONS

Why did the son expect to only come back as a servant? What had changed?

How did the father see him a long way off? How did he receive him? Why did he not let his son finish his speech?

Who does the first lost son represent?

The Second Lost Son

After being in the field, the second son came back to the sound of music and dancing; however, he remained outside while all the festivities were going on for his brother. The father came out to him and entreated him, but he was unwilling. The young man could not understand his father, he was disappointed in how his father had treated him, and he could not forgive his brother.

Why was the second son so upset? What had he failed to learn from his father?

Was the young man's complaint undeserved? What was the actual problem?

Who do the different characters in the story represent?

How do we act when we have left our spiritual Father? What can we imitate in our Father? How do we act toward our fellow brethren who repent?



THE PHARISEE & TAX COLLECTOR

IN PREPARATION

LUKE 18:9-14

QUESTIONS

WHY DID JESUS SPEAK THIS PARABLE? WHO WAS IT TO?

WHAT TYPES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ARE ACCEPTABLE TO GOD AND WHAT TYPES ARE NOT?

HOW WERE THESE TWO INDIVIDUALS VIEWED IN THE JEWISH CULTURE?

Introduction

This parable is one of the most telling of any that Jesus ever spoke. This parable draws the line between those who worship in “spirit and truth” (John 4:23) and those who “worship in vain” (Matthew 15:9). These two characters were very prominent and both had a desire to please God, but they went about it in entirely different ways.

Who Were the Pharisees and Tax Collectors?

From our past parables we see that the Pharisees were interested in self-exaltation and not in the poor (Luke 14). We also learned that they disapproved of Jesus' interest in the lost who were socially unacceptable (Luke 15). This helps to give us insight into the kind of people Jesus dealt with.

What other places speak of the character of the Pharisees? _____

What were the primary spiritual issues of the Pharisees? _____

We have also learned some about the tax collectors from our past parables. Their name begins to tell the story of these people. They collected taxes for the Roman Empire, and this did not sit well with the Jews. The tax collectors were at the bottom of the social ladder because of their unsavory occupation in the Jews' eyes.



THE PHARISEE & TAX COLLECTOR

What other places speak of the tax collectors? What was the spiritual condition of many of them? _____

“God, I thank you”

There is a purpose behind this parable that starts in verse 9. Jesus didn't speak this parable idly, He spoke this parable with a specific purpose. Two men go to the temple to pray. These two have very different lives, and they have very different outcomes!

What was Jesus' purpose for this parable, and what was He saying about the Pharisees? _____

Should the Pharisees have not thought they were right? What is the problem Jesus is getting at? _____

What was wrong with the prayer of the Pharisee?

“God, be merciful”

Jesus then moves his story to the tax collector. This man doesn't speak the same way, he doesn't look at the world the same way, and he doesn't act the same way. The blessing is dealt out because of this difference

Why was the tax collector's prayer answered? What is missing in his prayer?

What was the major difference between these people? What was the outcome?

(Thought Question) Who are the modern day tax collectors and Pharisees?



THE WISE MAN & THE FOOLISH MAN

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THE SOWER

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