

The Greatest Story Teller

Lesson Twenty

Matthew 16-19; Mark 10;

Luke 10-18

More of Jesus' parables will be examined in this lesson. One of the most famous parables, the Parable of the Good Samaritan, is included. Some personal encounters of Jesus with His close friends will be studied.

The lesson begins with Peter's confession of his belief in Jesus as the Son of God and with the wonderful occurrence of the transfiguration of Jesus.

PETER'S CONFESSION CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION

Matthew 16:13-21, 17:1-9

Peter's confession took place in an area around Caesarea Philippi. This town was located about twenty miles north of the Sea of Galilee near Mount Hermon. The area was outside the concentration of Jews to the south and was, therefore, a place of pagan practices. Jesus and His disciples had gone out of Galilee, where the general public was aware of Him and the miraculous things He did, to an area where He could have time to concentrate on teaching His disciples. These episodes occur in the last year of Jesus' ministry on earth.

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" They said, "Some say that You are John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven." From that time on Jesus began to show His disciples how He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised again on the third day.

How does Peter come to know who Jesus is? _____

The transfiguration took place about a week after the above event. It is not known for certain on which mountain it took place. The best speculation is Mt. Hermon because it is tall, and it is near the area where Jesus had been teaching His disciples.

Read Matthew 17:1-9 for detail of the transfiguration.

Which three disciples go with Jesus? _____
(These three also accompanied Jesus into the room when He healed Jairus' daughter, and they went farther into the Garden of Gethsemene with Jesus than the other disciples.)

In what ways does Jesus' appearance change? _____

Who else appear? _____

What do they do? _____

What does Peter suggest they do? _____

What happens while he is speaking? _____

What is the reaction of the disciples? _____

Who is there when they look up? _____

What instructions does Jesus give them? _____

Luke's account of this event indicates that Jesus and Moses and Elijah talked about Jesus' upcoming trip to Jerusalem and His death. (Luke 9:31)

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

This parable is told in response to a question from a lawyer. Remember what was stated in an earlier lesson about the relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans. Having a Samaritan hero in this parable drives home the point of how to love one's neighbor and who that neighbor is. Notice that the Jews who did not stop to help were a religious leader and a devout layman.

Behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" And he answered, "You shall 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 your neighbor as yourself." And He said to him, "You have answered right. This do and you shall live."

This is not enough of an explanation for the lawyer. So he continues his inquiry.
Read Luke 10:29-37.

What further question does the lawyer ask Jesus? _____

What happens to the man on his trip? _____

Who passes by first? _____

Then who? _____

Then who? _____

Who helps? _____

List the ways in which he helps. _____

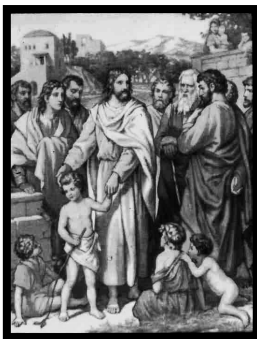
Who is our neighbor? _____

How are we to show our love for our neighbor? _____

JESUS BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN MARY AND MARTHA

Matthew 18; Mark 10;
Luke 10

And the disciples came to Jesus saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus called a little child to Him and set him in the midst of them and said, "Truly



I say to you, except you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such little child in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung about his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea. Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father who is in heaven."

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? _____

Are children important to the Lord? _____

What do these children and other believers have in heaven? _____

Jesus has more to say about children. The disciples do not understand that children are important to the Lord. **Read Mark 10:13-16.**

What are the people doing? _____

What is the response of the disciples? _____

What is Jesus' reaction to what the disciples are doing? _____

What qualities of children are necessary for entrance into the kingdom of God? _____

Jesus has good friends in the town of Bethany. Two sisters and their brother live there, and they each have a special relationship with the Lord. There are several instances in the Gospels that highlight the interaction of Jesus with this family.

Now it came to pass as they went, that He entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. She had a sister called Mary who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His Word. But Martha was troubled about the serving and came to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me." Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are careful and troubled about many things. One thing is needful and Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

What is Martha busy doing? _____

What is Mary doing? _____

What request does Martha make of Jesus? _____

Does Jesus do as she asks? _____

What is the point of what the Lord tells Martha? _____

THE GREAT SUPPER THE LOST SHEEP

Luke 14, 15

In the following parable, Jesus makes the point that not everyone will enter the kingdom of God. This point was especially meant for the Jews who were relying solely on their status as God's chosen people for entrance into His kingdom. In many parables, Jesus warns them not to reject Him as the Messiah, the Son of God.

Read Luke 14:16-21a.

What do the invited guests do? _____

Are the excuses valid? _____



Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servants, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind." The servants said, "Lord, it is done as you have commanded and yet there is room." The lord said to the servants, "Go out into the highways and the hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men which were invited shall taste of my supper."

Will the poor and the lame and the crippled and the blind be more appreciative of being invited to the banquet than the people originally invited? _____

Which group of people in the parable represents the Jews? _____

Which group represents the Gentiles? _____

The warning of Jesus to the Jews is important for us also. Explain how. _____

The next parable is told in response to the mutterings of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law that Jesus associated with "sinners" and "tax collectors." The religious leaders of the day lacked compassion and were angered when Jesus showed compassion for people they felt were worthless.

Read Luke 15:1-7.

Over whom is there much rejoicing in heaven? _____

Is there anyone who has no need of repentance? _____

It is probable that the last few words of this passage are ironic since they indicate a situation that is not possible.

THE WICKED SERVANT

Matthew 18

Forgiveness is of the utmost importance in the life of a Christian. We rely upon God to forgive us for the sins we commit. As Christians, we are to do the same for people who sin against us. This parable illustrates what happens when we accept God's forgiveness but refuse to extend the same kind of forgiveness to our fellow man.

Peter came to Jesus and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I say to you not until seven times, but until seventy times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But since he could not pay, his lord commanded him to be sold along with his wife and children and all that he had and payment to be made. The servant, therefore, fell down before him saying, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion and forgave him the debt."

Is there a number of times we are to forgive a person? _____

Does the servant owe his master a little or a lot? _____

Does his master forgive him the debt? _____

The parable does not end here. **Read Matthew 18:28-31** for more information.

Does the fellow servant owe the man a little or a lot? _____

Does the servant forgive the debt of the fellow servant? _____

What does he do instead? _____

Who see what has happened? _____

What do they do? _____

As can be imagined, the master is not pleased with the report he receives. Read on to see what happens to the unforgiving servant.

"Then his lord, after that, called him, and said to him, 'O you wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you asked me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant even as I had pity on you?' His lord was angry and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due to him. So, likewise, shall My heavenly Father do to you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Must we forgive others who treat us wrong and then ask our forgiveness? _____

THE RICH YOUNG RULER AND THE FOOLISH RICH MAN

Matthew 19; Mark 10; Luke 12, 18

The last section of this week's lesson deals with an encounter Jesus has with a rich young man and a parable Jesus tells concerning a rich man. Earthly riches can be, and often are, a barrier to one's relationship with the Lord.

Read Mark 10:17-23 for details of Jesus' encounter with the rich young man.

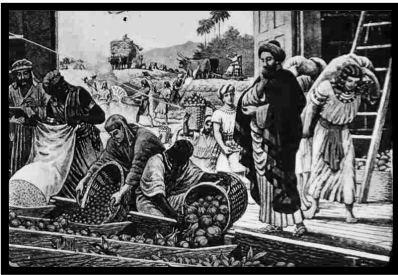
What is the first thing Jesus tells the man he must do? _____

The man has tried hard to do what is right and has kept the external nature of the commandments. However, he does have something that gets in the way of his relationship with the Lord. What is it?

Is everyone called to give away all that they have? _____

Under what circumstances might we be called to give away all we have? _____

The parable that follows was told after a man asked Jesus to tell his brother to divide his inheritance with him. Jesus rightly sees this as an issue of greed.



And He spoke a parable to them saying, "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought to himself, 'What shall I do because I have no room to store all my crops?' And he said, 'This is what I will do: I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones. There will I store all my crops and my goods. I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years. Take your ease. Eat, drink and be merry."'"

But God said to him, 'You fool! This night your soul shall be required of you. Then, whose shall those things be which you have stored?' So is he that lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

What is the point of this parable? _____

REVIEW

1. Why did Jesus go north of Galilee? _____
2. Who makes the confession of Jesus' identity? _____
3. How does he know this? _____
4. Who appear at the transfiguration? _____
5. About what does Jesus speak with them? _____
6. What is the purpose of the lawyer's questions? _____
7. Who is the hero of the parable Jesus tells the lawyer? _____
8. Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? _____
9. With whom does Jesus visit in Bethany? _____
10. Who better understands what is important? _____
11. Who will take the place of the Jews in God's kingdom? _____
12. How often are we to forgive? _____

13. What will happen if we don't forgive our fellow man? _____
14. Is entering God's kingdom easy or hard for those rich with worldly possessions? _____
15. Why? _____