

Jesus, Part 11

Teaching

Checklist:

- Copy of "Parable Handout" (attached) and pencil for each person.

Favorite Teachers

Ask: Who is one of your favorite teachers from any grade? Why?
(If students are homeschooled, they could say a favorite teacher from church or otherwise.)

Jesus' Teaching

Say:

- Today, we're going to talk a little bit about Jesus' teaching.
- Many people would agree Jesus was a good teacher...

- Matthew 7:28-29, which is right after the Sermon on the Mount, says: "And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes."

Ask:

- Jesus taught a lot. What are some examples of things you can think of that Jesus taught?
- What's something Jesus taught that you think is especially important to you? (Why?)

Ways of Teachings

Say:

- Sometimes Jesus taught His disciples and sometimes He taught large crowds.
- Sometimes He taught plainly (like "love your neighbor" or "don't worry") and a lot of times He taught with parables.

Ask: What's a parable? What are some examples?
(Basically, it's a short story or comparison with a point. Examples: Lost Son, Mustard Seed, etc.)

Say:

- For those of you that want a little deeper definition...
- Stuart Briscoe in a Parables of Luke commentary says: "The word comes from two Greek words para, meaning 'alongside,' and bole, which is the verb 'to throw.' So parable means literally, 'to throw alongside' or 'to compare.' A parable is a story designed to compare that which is patently obvious to that which may not be obvious at all."

Why Jesus Taught in Parables

Say: Let's see something Jesus said about why He taught in parables in Matthew 13:10-16...

Read Matthew 13:10-16 (while everyone follows along in Bibles)

Ask: Why did Jesus say He spoke in parables?

Say:

- Some of Jesus' parables seemed pretty clear and easy to understand - like the Parable of the Good Samaritan.
- But here, and perhaps other places, it seems Jesus used parables to make the meaning not understandable on the surface.

- Christians have understood this in different ways.
- Some think Jesus purposefully wanted some people to hear but not understand, based on God ordaining to save some and not others.
- Another idea is that they couldn't - or wouldn't - understand because they had hard hearts and shut their own eyes.
- A related possibility is that because of their own refusal to listen earlier, God was now judging them by not allowing them to hear in a way they would understand.

- Here's something *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says that may capture at least some of the key ideas: "Jesus spoke in parables to hide the truth from unbelievers. The secrets of the kingdom would be given to the disciples, but would be hidden from the religious leaders who rejected Him" and "Jesus' disciples heard the same truths as the national leaders, but their response was entirely different. The disciples saw and believed; the leaders saw and rejected. Since the leaders turned from the light they had been given, God gave them no additional light."

- We see Jesus gave His disciples, who He chose and who followed Him, further teaching and deeper meaning.

Personal Bible Study of a Passage

Give each student a "Parables Handout." Explain that now they'll get to spend a few minutes to read a parable Jesus taught and see how it can apply to life. Give them 5 minutes or so to work on it...

IF THERE IS A LOT OF TIME and plenty of interest, you can assign some of the students passage A, some passage B, and some passage C from the handout. Afterwards, allow volunteers to take turns sharing the answers they wrote (and you can gently help correct any wrong ideas)...

IF THERE IS NOT A LOT OF TIME or not plenty of interest, you can assign all the students the SAME passage, so there will be less time needed for discussion. Afterwards, have volunteers share answers they wrote (and gently correct any clearly wrong answers).

Learn and Obey Jesus' Teaching

Say:

- Jesus taught a lot, like the Sermon on the Mount, the Great Commandment, and lots of other things we can read, especially in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John...
- In the Great Commission, in Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus told His disciples to make disciples and teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded them.
- At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus said: "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."
- And, in John 14:15, Jesus said: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

Ask: What do all those things say about obeying Jesus?

Say:

- So, does this mean that we need to obey Jesus perfectly to be saved?...
- From looking at the Bible, we see that...
 - We're all sinful and we aren't saved by works, but by grace through faith in Jesus and His death and resurrection to pay for sin and give us eternal life.
 - We need God to be at work in our lives by the Holy Spirit, as we are connected to Jesus, to transform us into who God wants us to be.
 - Obeying Jesus is a fruit of a relationship with Him, but Christians continue to sin and continue to need Jesus' forgiveness.
- Continue to read, learn, and - with God's help - obey what Jesus teaches.
- Don't just try to do it on your own; be connected to Jesus and look for His help in your life.
- And ask for God's forgiveness when you fail.

Close in Prayer

References:

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Faithlife Study Bible, notes on Matthew 10:13-16

Matthew Henry, Comment on Matthew 13:10-17, accessed via blueletterbible.org on 4/22/2021

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Scripture References are from ESV unless noted otherwise.

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