

## Session 1 | Introduction to the Parables of Jesus

### Memory Verse:

**"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."**

*Matthew 7:24 / NIV*

### Opening Discussion:



1. What do you hope to contribute to this group, and what do you hope to gain from it?
2. Why is applying the Scriptures essential for spiritual growth?
3. How would you define a parable?

### Defining A Parable:

*A parable, in a Biblical context, means to "cast alongside" something else to illustrate a truth. A parable is an analogy or story that serves as a direct comparison to a truth. Therefore, Jesus' parables are inspired comparisons that help people grasp profound truths for practical application.*

### Locating Jesus' Parables:

The parables of Jesus are found exclusively in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke.)

#### **1 Jesus parables are earthly stories that conveyed a heavenly meaning.**

Mark 4:30-32 / NLT, Jesus said, "How can I describe the Kingdom of God? What story should I use to illustrate it? 31 It is like a mustard seed planted in the ground. It is the smallest of all seeds, 32 but it becomes the largest of all garden plants; it grows long branches, and birds can make nests in its shade."

Luke 7:41 / NIV, "Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty."

#### **2 Jesus frequently used parables to communicate His messages.**

Mark 4:33-34a / NLT, "Jesus used many similar stories and illustrations to teach the people as much as they could understand. 34 In fact, in his public ministry he never taught without using parables..."

Matthew 13:3 / NLT, "He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: "Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds."

### **3 Jesus provided His disciples with a more detailed explanation of the purpose of the parable.**

Mark 4:34b, *"...but afterward, when he was alone with his disciples, he explained everything to them."*

### **4 Jesus' parables were best received by sincere listeners.**

Matthew 13:12-14 / NLT, *"To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them. 13 That is why I use these parables, For they look, but they don't really see. They hear, but they don't really listen or understand. 14 This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah that says, 'When you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend.'"*

### **5 Jesus' parables provided inspirational principles**

Luke 18:1 / CSB, *"Now he told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not give up."*

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. In your own words, explain why Jesus used parables in His teaching?
2. How can understanding the cultural context of a parable help you interpret its meaning?

### **Praise and Prayer Requests:**