

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)

Lesson Plan: Parables (pt. 2)

Learning Goals: Students will be introduced to a method of analyzing and interpreting Jesus' parables and will practice analyzing one parable in groups.

One of the important things about Jesus' Parables is learning to interpret them well. Below are seven questions that you can ask of each parable. Be aware that some questions may not be equally applicable

How do we read/interpret parables?

1. Look at the context of the parable. What prompted Jesus to tell this parable? At whom is the parable directed?
2. Are there any cultural or historical elements for which we need to account? (Modern readers often miss the shock that the original hearers would have heard because we don't understand the cultural context.)
3. What is the "twist" or unexpected element? Many of the parables were shocking to their first hearers. What is shocking in your parable?
4. What is the main point(s) or lesson(s)? (Pay special attention to the end of the parable. There may be more than point or lesson.)
5. Does Jesus give an interpretation?
6. What kind of response is expected?
7. Summarize the parable in your own words.

**Be aware of the temptation to allegorize parables. While a few parables have an allegorical interpretation, we can greatly misunderstand many parables by trying to force an allegorical interpretation onto them.*

Interpreting the Parables

Split students into groups of 3 and have them analyze the following parables on their own. They will then present them to the class. If time allows, you may allow the students to act out their parables as they present them.

Group 1	The Parable of the Wedding Banquet	Matthew 22:1-14
Group 2	The Parable of The Unmerciful Servant	Matthew 18:23-35
Group 3	The Parable of the 10 Virgins	Matthew 25:1-12
Group 4	The Parable of the Rich Fool	Luke 12:16-21

Lesson Summary:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- Students should take notes on the presentations of the other groups so that they can identify each of the parables by their main ideas.

Group Number: _____

Names: _____

Parable Interpretation

Name and Scripture Reference of Parable: _____

1. Look at the context of the parable. What prompted Jesus to tell this parable? At whom is the parable directed?

2. Are there any cultural or historical elements for which we need to account? Are there any “stock metaphors” that may help you understand this parable?

3. What is the “twist” or unexpected element? What is shocking in your parable?

4. What is the main point(s) or lesson(s) of this parable?

5. Does Jesus give an interpretation? If so, what is it?

6. What kind of response is expected?

7. Summarize the parable in your own words. (One sentence.)
