

TEXT Review Quarter Texts

OBJECTIVE The students will review the past twelve lessons and be able to explain how Christ's parables illustrate many vital points relating to salvation and spiritual growth.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them. — Matthew 13:34

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. — Matthew 13:34-35

Quarter Review

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The word *parable* comes from the Greek verb *paraballo*. *Para* means "beside," and *ballo* means "to cast." It is literally a comparison or an illustration of one subject by another.

Parables were used chiefly in the New Testament and by Jesus only. The Old Testament made mention of the word *parable* fifteen times, but it is translated from a different word than in the New Testament. Also the usage is somewhat different. For an example, see Numbers 23:7.

A parable and an allegory are somewhat similar, as both

have a lesson to teach. However, a parable does not depart from the natural order of things, and its meaning has to be searched out. An allegory can readily be understood as the contents are read. A fable also is used to teach moral values, but may use animals talking or other mythical ideas to bring out the lesson to be learned.

Jesus found the use of parables in His teachings to be very valuable. When the disciples asked why He taught in parables, He told them that it was given unto them to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. But to those who loved darkness rather than light, the meanings of the parables were hidden. Matthew 13:10-15

YOUR OPENER

Quarter Review

TEXT: Review Quarter Texts.

KEY VERSE: All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

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RESPONSES

1. Guide the students' discussion toward the thought that the Lord will go to any length to restore a lost soul. Be sure to point out that God will never violate a person's free will. God's love to lost mankind is evidenced in the mercy that He extends to sinners (John 3:16). Lead into the next question by asking the class what a sinner can expect when he comes to God with a repentant heart.

2. "When he came to himself . . ." was the turning point in his wayward life. Help the class see that realization of one's need is the first step toward salvation. Use this opportunity to discuss with the class what it takes to bring sinners to the realization of their need of God. Personal experiences might be solicited.

3. Establish a definition for *forgiveness*. Then help the class understand how, according to the parable of the Creditor and the Debtors, the one who has been forgiven much will love Christ with a greater love than the person who has been forgiven little. You may want to emphasize the importance of being forgiven. Everyone who has had his sins forgiven owes the Lord an inestimable amount of love and thanksgiving. Direct the discussion toward the next question by asking how a person gets to the place where he realizes his need of forgiveness.

Look back over the last twelve lessons we have studied. We have examined individual parables that have to do with different aspects of becoming a Christian and living a Christian life. In this lesson, we will review several of these illustrations showing Christ's plan for our salvation and the ways we can be a fruit-bearing Christian.

1. God's love for lost mankind was beautifully proved when He gave His only Son for our salvation. His concern for the sinner is illustrated by the parable of the lost sheep. To what length will the Lord go to restore one who has gone astray? See Luke 15:4.

2. What was the turning point in the life of the prodigal son (Luke 15:17)? Compare this to the first step a sinner must take in turning to the Lord.

3. When we truly realize our need for salvation, the next step should be to seek for the forgiveness promised by God. Define forgiveness, and then explain the direct relationship between one's love for the Lord, and the amount of forgiveness that one has received. See Luke 7:47.

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ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. People who hear the Word of God, both before and after they are saved, seem to respond in different ways. How do the different types of soil spoken of in the parable of the sower relate to the response of a human heart (Luke 8:4-15)? In what way is the word "receptivity" a key to the explanation of this parable?

5. If we have received the Word of God in our hearts, there will be outward evidences of this. Explain the importance of bearing fruit, and list several kinds of spiritual fruit that the Lord is looking for in our lives.

6. God calls all Christians to serve Him, and willingness to work for Him is a part of the spiritual fruit He desires to see in our lives. What will be the final outcome of the people who persistently excuse themselves from the service of the Lord?

7. Prayer is a vital aspect of keeping close to the Lord in our daily lives. Praying in faith and believing are important, but Luke 11:8-9 brings out another key element in receiving an answer to one's prayers. What is it and why is it important?

8. The most important focus of our Christian life is anticipation of the Lord's return to earth, and making sure we are ready for this event. Using the words "uncertainty" and "certainty" as a basis, explain why it is so important to be ready and watching for Christ's second coming. See Luke 12:39-40.

4. Discuss with the class the different types of soil. Compare the types of soil to the various ways God's Word is received by different people. Stress the importance of cultivating a receptive attitude to the Word of God (even after being saved).

5. Allow students to give their explanations. Emphasize the point that Jesus made: There is a time where a person's failure to bear fruit is no longer tolerated by the Lord and separation follows. Use Matthew 7:20 to help the class understand that, both to God and man, they are known by their fruits. Reiterate the fruit of the Spirit.

6. Help the class to realize that excuses are unacceptable before God. If a person continues to excuse himself from His service, another person will assume that responsibility and ultimately receive the reward. Help the students realize that if a person does stray because of excuse-making, or for any other reason, the Lord will go to any length to restore that one in love.

7. Help the class discuss the importance of importuning (the act of coming with requests, persistently or repeatedly). Have the class turn to James 5:16 and read, "... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Discuss with the class the meaning of the words *effectual*, "to produce the desired effect," and *fervent*, "intensely devoted or earnest."

8. Lead the class in a discussion about the uncertainty of the hour, but the certainty of Christ's second coming. Discuss the necessity of being ready to meet Jesus in the hour when we "think not." Ask the class what a Christian should be doing while he is watching and waiting for Christ's return.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is a parable?

How does God speak to us today? Does He sometimes speak to us in parables?

Why did Jesus speak in parables?

Relate a specific thing that happened which opened your spiritual eyes and caused a deeper understanding and growth.

Of the twelve parables and applications taught in this quarter, which ones did you feel particularly applied to you or were a help to you? Why?

Which of the twelve parables were addressed mainly to sinners? Which were addressed to Christians?

What is the difference between a parable and some other account or story Jesus told?

Can the same principle be used today in teaching?

THINGS TO DO

Bring a miscellaneous assortment of articles to class, such as a clock, shoe, rubber band, or pocket knife. Allow each student to select one and, either in a circle response or briefly written summary, outline a short parable using that object.

For a review or departmental project, ask students to pantomime or present a freeze sculpture portraying the different parables studied. Have the audience identify each parable as it is portrayed.

Prepare a Hidden-Words puzzle for your group. Choose key words from all the lessons taught during this past quarter and write them on a grid. Fill in the blank spaces with random letters. Type, in alphabetical order, the list

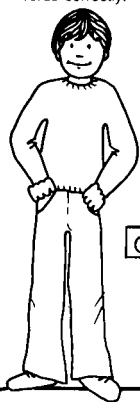
of words you chose. Give a copy of the word list and the puzzle to each student. Allow a certain amount of time for them to find the words in the puzzle. Also, next to each of the words have them write the different parables which they represent.

Plan a mini-quiz asking your students to identify the parable by key words or phrases taken from the twelve accounts studied.

Answers for ANSWER

Why Parables?

Christ spoke in parables so that people who heard Him could understand Him better. The acrostic below is about parables. Look up the verses and fill in the missing words. Then fit those words into the puzzle. They are not in order so be sure you spell the words correctly.



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S	T	E	W	A	R	D	S	H	I	P									
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"Give an account of thy stewardship" (Luke 16:2)

"There was a certain creditor which had two debtors" (Luke 7:41)

"For I have found my sheep which was lost" (Luke 8:5)

"A sower went out to sow his seed" (Luke 8:5)

"I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me" (Luke 18:5)

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching" (Luke 12:37)

"And if it bear fruit, well" (Luke 13:9)

"And they all with one consent began to make excuses" (Luke 14:18)