
A Bible Survey



A Three Year Course of Study for Adults

Section Nine: The Life of Christ
Year 3, Quarter 1

Compiled by Gene Taylor

Preface

These lessons were first compiled over a three year period from April 1988 through March 1991. The then Westside church of Christ in Tallahassee, Florida (Now the Centerville Road church relocated to 4015 Centerville Road in Tallahassee) determined to place all their Sunday morning Bible classes on the *Amplified Bible Curriculum* (Hereafter referred to as *ABC*) developed by JoLinda Crump and Cathy Valdes.

While their curriculum recommended materials from preschool through senior high, we desired to place our college, young adult, and adult classes on the same schedule. The volume of material in L.A. Mott's studies, recommended in the *ABC* for source material and lesson development, did not easily lend itself to a once a week study since he designed his lessons to be studied twice each week.

Considering these factors, I took it upon myself to compile these lessons. We used them successfully while cycling through the curriculum twice in our senior high, college, young adult, and adult classes from April 1988 through March 1994. They were edited and revised prior to the second study of them. They have been revised a second time and reformatted in 1997.

I have tried to parallel the *ABC* as much as possible so that adults and children would be studying the same lesson at the same time only on different levels. But this series, or any one of its twelve study guides, may be used independently.

Each lesson contains a schedule for daily Bible reading. It can be used as a format for family devotionals in the home even if the whole family is not on the curriculum.

I hope you enjoy your study.

Gene Taylor
July 1997

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Lesson One: The Birth of Christ

Lesson Text

Matthew 1:18; 2:23
Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-52

Daily Bible Reading



Monday
Matt. 1:18-25

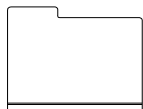
Tuesday
Luke 1:26-38

Thursday
Luke 1:46-56

Friday
Matt. 2:1-18

Saturday
Luke 2:1-18

Lesson Concept



OBEDIENCE
Recognizing Jesus as
the Son of God

The Announcement of His Birth to Mary and Joseph (Matt. 1:19-25; Luke 1:26-38)

1. What was Joseph of a mind to do when he learned that Mary was with child? Why?
2. Who appeared to Joseph in regard to the birth of the child? What was his message? What prophecy did he say that this birth would fulfill?
3. What was Joseph told to name the child? Why?
4. Who appeared to Mary? What was his message to her? Whose throne did he tell her that her child would occupy?
5. What was Mary's question when she was told she would bear a son? What response was given to her?

The Birth of Jesus (Matt. 2:1-12; Luke 2:1-39)

6. Why did Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem?
7. What caused the shepherds in the fields to note Jesus' birth? Why did they do when they heard of His birth? How would they know when they found the child?
8. Why was Jesus circumcised on the eighth day? Why was He then presented in the temple?
9. Who was Simeon? What had he been told by the Holy Spirit concerning the Christ? What did Simeon prophesy concerning Jesus?
10. Who was Anna? What did she speak concerning the Christ?
11. How did the wise men from the east learn of the birth of Jesus? Where did they go to seek help in finding Him? Why would they go there?
12. What request did Herod make of the wise men? Did they submit to his wishes? Why or why not?

The Flight to Egypt and the Return to Nazareth (Matt. 2:13-23; Luke 2:39-40)

13. What did the angel instruct Joseph to do with the child when he appeared to him soon after the wise men departed? Why? What prophecy(ies) did this fulfill? -
14. How did Joseph find out that Herod had died? Upon Herod's death, what did he do?
15. Why did Joseph go to Galilee instead of returning to Judea? What prophecy did this fulfill?

Jesus in the Temple at Age Twelve (Luke 2:40-52)

16. Why did Jesus accompany His parents to the temple?
17. After their departure from Jerusalem, what did Mary and Joseph learn? What was their response?
18. Where was Jesus when His parents found Him? What was He doing? Why?
19. Describe the development of Jesus as a child as Luke describes it in relation to the following four areas:
 - a. Wisdom.
 - b. Stature.
 - c. Favor with God.
 - d. Favor with men.

Lesson Two: John the Baptist

Lesson Text

Matthew 3:11-12; 14:1-12
Mark 1:1-11; 6:14-29
Luke 3:1-22
John 1:19-34; 3:22-36

Daily Bible Reading



Monday
Luke 1:5-25, 39-45

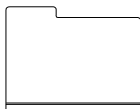
Tuesday
Luke 1:57-80

Thursday
Matt. 3:1-2; Mark 1:1-8;

Friday
Luke 3:1-20; John 1:1-42

Saturday
Matt. 6:17-29; 14:3-12

Lesson Concept



FAITH
Being faithful unto death

The Ministry of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1-12; Mark 1:1-11; Luke 3:1-19)

1. How do the prophecies of Mark 1:2-3 apply to John?
2. What was John's basic purpose? What was his basic message?
3. Describe John's lifestyle. What Old Testament character does he resemble? (See 2 Kings 1:7-8; cf. Luke 1:13-17) How does his lifestyle affect his message or vice versa?
4. What did John preach concerning baptism? How does that compare with the baptism Jesus preached while on earth? How does it compare with the baptism of the great commission?
5. Who went out to be baptized of John? Why did he rebuke the Pharisees and Sadducees when they came to be baptized of him?
6. Was John's baptism essential for the people of his day? Explain.

John's Witness of Jesus (Luke 3:15-20; John 1:19-51)

7. Who did the people speculate John to be? How did he answer their speculations?
8. How do you explain John's denial that he was Elijah (John 1:21) in light of Matthew 11:13-14; 17:10-13 and Luke 1:17?
9. Explain how John identified himself. (John 1:22-23)
10. How did John compare himself with Christ?
11. How did John recognize Jesus as the Messiah? What did he mean when he called Jesus "the Lamb of God?"
12. How did John's disciples come to believe on Jesus?

John's Final Witness of Jesus (John 3:22-36)

13. What incident served as the occasion for John's final testimony of Jesus? What are some obvious implications of this incident?
14. How did John explain the relationship between Christ and himself?
15. What do you learn about the character of John from verses 27 through 30?
16. Since in verses 31 through 36 John speaks of the importance of Christ, what does he say makes acceptance of Christ and obedience to His teaching crucial?

John's Imprisonment and Death (Matt. 11:1-19; 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29)

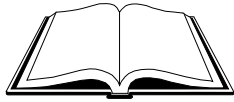
17. Why was John imprisoned?
18. Why did John, while in prison, send messengers to Jesus? Does such action show lack of faith on his part? Explain.
19. How did Jesus describe John to the multitudes? Why did He mean when He said that "among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist?" Why, though, is one "who is least in the kingdom of heaven greater than he?" (Matt. 11:11)
20. How did John come to be executed?
21. What kind of woman was Herodias? What is revealed about her character?
22. After John's death, what did Herod believe about Jesus? Why?

Lesson Three: The Baptism of Christ

Lesson Text

Matthew 3:13 - 4:11
Mark 1:9-13
Luke 3:21-22; 4:1-13

Daily Bible Reading



Monday

Matthew 3:13-17
Mark 1:9-11

Tuesday

Luke 3:21-23
Matthew 4:1-11

Thursday

Luke 4:1-13

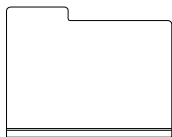
Friday

Isaiah 40:3-8

Saturday

1 John 2:15-29

Lesson Concept



OBEDIENCE

Overcoming temptation

The Baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-13; Luke 3:21-22; 4:1-13)

1. Why did Jesus come to be baptized of John?
2. What was John's initial reaction when he saw that Jesus had come to be baptized of him?
3. What sign from heaven was given immediately after Christ's baptism? For whom was this sign intended? What purpose did it serve?
4. What are the implications of the phrase "in whom I am well pleased?"

The Temptation of Jesus (Matt. 4: 1 -1 1; Mark 1: 12-13; Luke 4:1-13)

5. By whom was Jesus led into the wilderness? For what purpose?
6. Define "tempted."
7. Upon his arrival in the wilderness, how long did Jesus fast? What purpose was served by His fasting.? What were some consequences of it?
8. Briefly describe the following approaches Satan made to Jesus in the wilderness. For each approach, tell in what way(s) Jesus was tempted, how Jesus responded and what His response meant.
 - a. First approach.
 - b. Second approach.
 - c. Third approach.
9. What scriptures did Satan quote in the second temptation? What was his purpose in quoting them?
10. Summarize Jesus' temptation in the wilderness as to the following areas:
 - a. The avenues of sin found in 1 John 2:16.
 - b. The "It is written" responses of Jesus.
11. Is this the only occasion when Jesus was tempted by Satan? Explain.
12. Who ministered to Jesus following Satan's departure from Him?

Lesson Four: The Twelve Apostles

Lesson Text

Matt. 4:18-22; 9:9; 10:1-42
Mark 1:16-20; 2:13-14;
3:13-19; 6:7-13;
Luke 5:1-11, 27-28;
6:12-16; 9:1-6;
John 1:35-52

Daily Bible Reading



Monday

Mark 3:3-19
Luke 6:12-16

Tuesday

Matthew 10:1-15
Mark 6:8-11

Thursday

Luke 9:3-5
Matthew 10:16-33

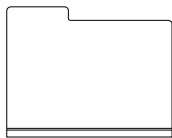
Friday

Matthew 10:34-40

Saturday

Matthew 16:13-19
Luke 9:6

Lesson Concept



FAITH

Following Jesus

Jesus' First Disciples (John 1:35-52)

1. How did John's disciples come to believe in Jesus?
2. What conclusions about Jesus were reached by the following men? On what grounds did they reach those conclusions?
 - a. Andrew.
 - b. Philip.
 - c. Nathaniel.
3. Seeing that verse 51 is an allusion to Genesis 28:10-17, what is its meaning?

The Call of Peter, Andrew, James and John

(Matt. 4:19-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11)

4. Where was Jesus when He called these men to be disciples? What was He doing there?
5. Before He commanded him to follow Him, what did Jesus command of Simon? What was the purpose of His command? What was Simon's initial response? What were the consequences of Simon's obedience?
6. What are the implications of Simon Peter's statement to Jesus, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord?"
7. What is meant by the phrase "fishers of men?"
8. What lesson(s) can we learn from the response of these men to the call of Jesus?

The Call of Matthew (Matt. 9:9-13; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 3:27-32)

9. Who was Matthew? By what other name was he known?
10. Briefly describe Matthew's profession.
11. What did Matthew do immediately after Jesus called him? What reaction did this have among the Scribes and Pharisees? How did Jesus respond to them?

The Separating of the Twelve (Matt. 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16)

12. What did Jesus do the night before He selected those who would serve as apostles? Is there a lesson in that for us? Explain.
13. Define “apostle.”
14. What did Jesus empower these men to do? Why?
15. List the twelve men chosen by Jesus to be His apostles and briefly summarize what you know about each man.

The Sending Out of the Twelve (Matt. 10:5-42; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6)

16. In what arrangement did Jesus send the apostles out? Where and to whom were they to go?
17. What were they to take with them? What were they not to take? How were they to provide their material needs? What assurance was given to them that their needs would be met?
18. Define “worthy” as it is used in Matthew 10:10,11 and 13.
19. What message were the apostles to proclaim?
20. What action were they to take when they and their message were rejected? What did this symbolic action indicate?

Lesson Five: Miracles

Lesson Text

Various Readings
in the Gospels

Daily Bible Reading



Monday

Matthew 8:23-27
Mark 4:35-31
Luke 8:22-25

Tuesday

Matthew 14:28-33
Mark 6:51-52

Thursday

Matthew 14:15-33
Mark 6:35-44

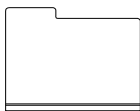
Friday

Luke 9:12-17
John 6:5-14

Saturday

Matthew 9:35 - 10:15;
Mark 6:7-13
Luke 9:1-6

Lesson Concept



GODHEAD

Confirming the word
by miracles

I. Miracles Defined and Classified

A. Definitions.

1. A miracle is an intervention of natural law.
2. Miracles are events in the external world wrought by the immediate power of God and intended as signs or attestations to confirm His word, to create and assure faith and to identify the credibility of His messenger.

B. Classifications.

1. Wonders. (Mark 2:12; Acts 2:22,43)
2. Signs. (Heb. 2:3-4; 2 Cor. 2:12; John 2:18; Matt. 12:38)
3. Mighty works (deeds). (Acts 6:8; 10:38; Rom 15:19; cf. 2 Cor. 12:12; Matt. 7:22; Mark 6:14; Luke 10:13; Acts 2:22; 19:11; 1 Cor. 12-10, 28; Gal. 3:5)
4. Great terrors (Deut. 4:34), a contrast to Law. (John 1:17)

II. Why Jesus Performed Miracles

- A. To create and/or assure faith in Him. (John 4:46-53; 20:30-31; Luke 7:20-23)
- B. To confirm the word He was revealing. (Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4; Acts 8:5-6)
- C. To establish the credibility of His claims. His works coupled with His character provide undeniable proof to His claims. (John 5:36)
- D. To demonstrate His unlimited power, thus establishing His deity.
 1. His miracles demonstrate His limitless power over:
 - a. Nature. (Matt. 14:22-33)
 - b. Disease. (Matt. 8:5-13)
 - c. Demons (Mark 5:1-19)
 - c. Material things. (Matt. 14:13-21)
 - d. Death. (John 11:1-44)
 2. His unlimited power proves the validity of His claims because the miracles that demonstrate that power:
 - a. Involved no tricks or gimmicks.
 - b. When healings, were not of psychosomatic afflictions but of actual physical maladies.
 - c. Were done openly before impartial witnesses.
 - d. Were not questioned even by those who attributed the source of His power. (cf. Matt. 12:22-30)
 - e. Were not limited in method. In some He merely spoke (Mark 1:40-42), in others He touched or was touched. (Mark 8:22-26; Luke 22:51; etc.)
- E. To show His Messiah link. (Isa. 42:7; 61:1)
- F. To show He was from the Father. (John 5:36; 9:3, 4; 10:25, 37)
- G. To demonstrate His infinite love and compassion. (Heb. 1:1-3; 1 John 4:16 - 5:1)

III. Man's "Explanations" of Miracles

- A. Miracles are legends, glorified hero stories, misunderstandings or complete fabrications.
 - 1. Exodus 14: Israel crossed through marsh land not through the sea.
 - 2. Exodus 16: The manna and quail were natural phenomena.
 - 3. Joshua 3: The Jordan River was dammed by an opportune earthquake.
 - 4. Joshua 6: The destruction of Jericho was by another convenient earthquake.
 - 5. Joshua 10:6-15: The "long day of Joshua" just seemed to be longer because it was so unpleasant.
- B. Christ's miracles were merely legendary stories about a popular hero.

Questions

1. In your own words, define "miracle."
2. Define each of the following classifications of miracles especially noting how they differ from one another and give an example of each.
 - a. Wonders.
 - b. Signs.
 - c. Mighty works/deeds.
 - d. Great terrors.
3. In what Biblical dispensations can miracles be found? Why?
4. How would Jesus' use of miracles:
 - a. Create faith in Him?
 - b. Confirm He was from the Father?
 - c. Authenticate His claims?
5. In what way did His miracles demonstrate the infinite love and compassion of Jesus?
6. How do the miracles performed by Jesus differ from the "miracles" of so-called "miracle workers" of today?
7. How would you answer the skeptics who scoff at the miraculous element of the Bible, especially considering the absence of miracles today?

Lesson Six: The Sermon on the Mount

Lesson Text

Matthew 5:1 - 7:29

Daily Bible Reading



Monday

Matthew 5:1-12
Luke 6:20-23

Tuesday

Matthew 5:13-48

Thursday

Matthew 6:1-26

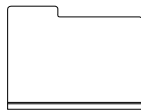
Friday

Matthew 6:27-49

Saturday

Matthew 7

Lesson Concept



CHRISTIANITY

Living prayerfully

Introduction and Beatitudes (5:1-12)

1. Where was Jesus when He began this sermon? Who comprised His audience? For whom was this teaching intended?
2. What is a “beatitude?” What does “blessed” mean?
3. Briefly define the following types of individuals and state the meaning of the beatitude for each type.
 - a. The poor in spirit.
 - b. Those who mourn.
 - c. The meek.
 - d. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.
 - e. The merciful.
 - f. The pure in heart.
 - g. The peacemakers.
 - h. Those persecuted for righteousness’ sake.

The Similitudes (5:13-16)

4. If the beatitudes teach the relation of disciples to the kingdom, about what relationship do these similitudes teach? Explain.
5. What does it mean to be “the salt of the earth?”
6. What does it mean to be “the light of the world?”
7. List the similarities between the two figures of questions five and six. List their differences.

Righteousness and the Law of Moses (5:17-19)

8. What was Jesus’ purpose in relationship to the Law of Moses? What is the difference between “fulfilling” and “destroying?”
9. Why was Jesus encouraging His audience to keep the Law of Moses? How does that affect the keeping of His teaching in the Sermon on the Mount today? Explain.

Relation to Jewish Traditions (5:20-26)

10. In what manner were the Scribes and Pharisees righteous? How can one's righteousness, then and now, exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees?
11. Why is being unjustly angry with a brother the same as being a murderer?

Lustful Looking and Divorce and Remarriage (5:27-32)

12. Why has one who has looked upon a woman to lust after her already committed adultery in his heart?
13. Is Jesus teaching self-mutilation in verses 29 and 30? Explain.
14. What is the guiding principle in marriage and divorce? When was this principle first stated? Does it apply today? Explain.

Oaths and Integrity (5:33-37)

15. What does it mean to "swear?" Why was such "swearing" forbidden?
16. May we "swear" or take an oath in any fashion today? Explain.
17. What does it mean to "let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No?'"

Retaliation and the Second Mile (5:38-42)

18. Instead of an "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," what principle does Jesus teach? Give a brief explanation of it.
19. Is one compelled to walk the "second mile?" Must one give to anyone who asks him? Explain.

The Law of Love (5:43-48)

20. What does it mean to "love" your enemies? How can one show such love?
21. What does it mean to be "perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect?" How does one attain such perfection?

Hypocrisy (6:1-18)

22. What warning is given to those who give their alms to be seen of men? What reward is granted to those who do it?
23. In teaching His disciples how to pray, for what did Jesus tell them to pray?
24. What purpose is served by fasting? Should we fast today? Explain.

Earthly Treasures and Trust in God (6:19-34)

25. Does the teaching of Jesus in this passage forbid having any earthly luxuries? Explain.
26. What does it mean to have a “good eye?” What does it mean to have a “bad eye?”
27. Does Jesus’ prohibition against worry over material things mean that it is wrong to be industrious and work for a living? Explain.
28. What does it mean to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness?”

Judging (7:1-12)

29. What “judging” is prohibited by this passage? Why?
30. What must first be removed from ones own life if he seeks to correct another?
31. What does it mean to:
 - a. Give that which is holy to dogs?
 - b. Cast pearls before swine?
32. What does it mean to “ask...seek...and knock?”

General Warnings and Exhortations (7:13-27)

33. Briefly describe the two ways that one may walk in life and the destination of each.
34. How can one recognize a false prophet?
35. What is necessary for one to enter the kingdom of heaven? What is “lawlessness?”
36. For what purpose does Jesus refer to the wise and foolish builders? What does each figure mean?

The Response of His Hearers (7:28-29)

37. What was the general response of those who had heard this discourse? Why?
38. What does “authority” mean as it is used in this passage?

Lesson Seven: The Parables

Lesson Text

Various Readings
in the Gospels

Daily Bible Reading



Monday

Luke 15:1-7
Matthew 13:24-43

Tuesday

Luke 15:11-32

Thursday

Matthew 25:1-13

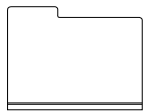
Friday

Matthew 13:10-17; 21:33-46

Saturday

Mark 12:1-12
Luke 20:9-19

Lesson Concept



CHRISTIANITY

Learning through
the parables

Introduction

The parables comprise more than one-third of the recorded teachings of Jesus. While they contain some of the most profound lessons taught by Him, at the same time they are some of His simplest, most easily understood lessons.

The writers of the New Testament, while using allegories and similitudes, do not use the story parable as Jesus did though it is found occasionally in the Old Testament such as the parabolic story of a vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7 and the parable of Nathan spoken to David (2 Samuel 12:1-7). In the New Testament, though, its use seemed to be unique to Jesus which was a fulfillment of prophecy. (Compare Matthew 13:34-35 with Psalms 78:2 and Matthew 13:13-14 with Isaiah 6:9-10)

By the time of His ministry which is recorded in Matthew chapters twelve and thirteen, Jesus' form of public instruction had become principally parabolic. Why? The leaders and people, as a whole, had hardened their hearts against Him and His message because they were filled with prejudice, moral hardness, blindness and willful ignorance. As opposition to Him grew in intensity, so did His parables in their force, solemnity and number. His purpose in them reflected the conditions which prompted Him to teach in such a way.

I. Parable Defined

- A. Many people define a parable as "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning," but such a definition is not broad enough to include all the parables.
 1. By the above definition, the teaching of Luke 4:23 would have to be called a proverb.
 2. Mark 7:15-17 would have to be a kind of riddle that would prompt the hearer to ask, "What is there that comes out of me that is more important than what I take in?"
- B. The parable "literally denotes a placing beside, (akin to *paraballo*, to throw or lay beside, to compare). It signifies a placing of one thing beside another with a view to comparison." (W.E. Vine, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words*)
- C. It is derived from the Greek word "*parabole*" that comes from two other Greek words, "*ballo*" (verb) "to throw or cast" and "*para*" (preposition) "alongside of." From its roots it literally meant "that which is thrown alongside of" thus resulting in a comparison.
- D. Generally speaking, a good working definition is a parable is a comparison or analogy drawn from nature or human circumstances the object of which is to set forth a spiritual lesson. In the parables of Jesus there are comparisons of spiritual realities and natural occurrences.

- E. A parable is not the same thing as an allegory.
1. In ancient and medieval times it was customary to treat the parables of Jesus as allegories. Some still treat them that way.
 2. Allegory defined:
 - c. “An allegory in the Gk. Came to signify ‘to speak so that the facts stated are applied to illustrate principles.’” (Vine)
 - d. Our modern dictionary defines allegory as “the veiled presentation, in a figurative story, of a meaning metaphorically implied but not expressly stated. That which figuratively stands for something else.” (*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*)
 3. An allegory is like a parable in that it is a story told to make a comparison but their difference lies in the fact that in an allegory every detail has an inner meaning while in a parable the details are not necessarily significant but are often there only to add color to the story.
 4. An illustration of an allegory is Galatians 4:24-31 where Hagar and Sarah are used to contrast the old and new covenants.

II. The Purpose of Parables

- A. While the New Testament does not state, in so many words, the exact purpose of the parabolic teaching of Jesus, it implies it in Matthew 13:10-13.
- B. The four goals of parables:
 1. The revelation of truth.
 - a. Parables often reveal more truth than a plain statement would.
 - b. Those seeking truth with a proper attitude would be able to understand more (Matt. 13:11-12) because they had seeing eyes and hearing ears (Matt. 13:16).
 - c. Christ revealed deep spiritual truths in a way easy for His disciples to understand.
 2. The concealment of truth. (Matthew 13:11-14)
 - a. The use of parables did not make His teaching plain to all because some of His hearers would not appreciate it for they loved darkness more than light. (John 3:19- 21)
 - b. Concealment of truth is not inconsistent with God. Consider Romans 1:28 and 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.
 3. The preservation of truth.
 - a. Parables are set forth in a vivid, striking form which commands attention and impresses the memory making them easy to recall.
 - b. Their use is especially beneficial to those who are just beginning to study spiritual things because it enables them to feed upon more simple things and to retain the stories more easily than just plain facts.
 4. The elicitation of truth from those otherwise reluctant to acknowledge it.
 - a. Nathan’s parable to David. (2 Samuel 12:1-7)
 - b. The parable of the wicked husbandman. (Matthew 21:23-46)

III. Understanding the Parables

- A. It is impossible to lay down strict rules for understanding parables.
 1. For example, in some parables small details have significance while in others details are not important.
 2. “The primary lesson or lessons of a parable must be grasped but not each and every detail is always to be forced to yield a distinct lesson. Parables are like pictures, in that they

require details to make up the general picture but without each detail having of necessity a special and separate lesson. It may or may not be so.” (G. H. Lang, *The Parabolic Teaching of Scripture*)

- B. In general, a parable has one central meaning.
 - 1. In most cases, the details or incidents of the parables are merely “drapery.”
 - 2. Some incidents, though, have meanings which are given to them by Jesus Himself.
- C. “In understanding the parables of Jesus, there are at least six points that we need to remember. (1) ‘The material of parables may be real or fictitious.’ (2) ‘The material of parables may borrow from nature or from human life.’ (3) ‘The purely fanciful details of a parable may correspond accurately to the men who are to be instructed, and to their doings.’ (4) ‘Parts or the whole of a parable may be a prophecy.’ (5) ‘The essential lesson taught is the main matter; details may or may not have separate significance.’ (6) ‘Application of details not explained must be on the lines of explanations given; then they will be sober and valuable, not fanciful or idle. Then also they will harmonize naturally with the whole picture, will add to its completeness, heighten its effect, and will not be foreign to it or irrelevant to the main lesson.” (Lang)

Questions

1. Why do you think so much of the recorded teachings of Jesus while He was on the earth were parabolic in form?
2. Why is “an earthly story with a heavenly meaning” not a good definition for a parable?
3. Give a working definition of “parable.”
4. What is an allegory? How does it and a parable compare? How do they differ?
5. What, in Matthew 13:10-13, does Jesus imply the purpose(s) of parables to be?
6. Explain how a parable is able to accomplish each of the following goals.
 - a. Revelation of truth.
 - b. Concealment of truth.
 - c. Preservation of truth.
 - d. Elicitation of truth from those who would be reluctant to acknowledge it.
7. What is a good general rule for interpreting parables?
8. Why do you think the apostles and the other inspired writers of the New Testament used the parabolic form of teaching so little?

Lesson Eight: Judean Ministry

Lesson Text

John 2:13 - 4:42

Daily Bible Reading



Monday
John 2:13-25

Tuesday
John 3:1-21

Thursday
John 3:22-36

Friday
John 4:1-26

Saturday
John 4:27-42

Lesson Concept



SALVATION
Being born again

Cleansing of the Temple (2:13-22)

1. What characteristic of Jesus is manifested in this incident?
2. What comparison(s) can be made between the physical temple in Jerusalem and the body of Jesus? What significance did the figure of His body as “this temple” have to the Jews?
3. What indication is given of the process by which faith grew in the disciples?

Results of the Signs (2:23-25)

4. What caused many of the people to have “believed on His name?”
5. What indicates that something is missing in the belief of the people in the previous question?

The Conversation with Nicodemus (3:1-21)

6. Who was Nicodemus? What had convinced him that Jesus was “a teacher come from God?”
7. How does the belief of Nicodemus compare with that of 2:23-25?
8. What is absolutely necessary in order for one to “see” (v. 3) or “enter” (v. 5) the kingdom of God? What do these verses suggest as to the nature of the kingdom of God?
9. How does Jesus further explain the new birth in verse 5? What basis would Nicodemus have for understanding Jesus’ explanation?
10. Explain verse six as a part of Jesus’ response to Nicodemus’ question in verse four.
11. What is the meaning of the expression “the wind blows where it wishes?” (v. 8)
12. Explain “earthly things” and “heavenly things” which are contrasted in verse 12.
13. How can verse 16 be harmonized with 2:23-25; 8:31-34 and 12:42-43 which mention believers who do not have eternal life?

14. What did Jesus mean when He said He did not come “into the world to condemn the world?” (v. 17)
15. What has brought judgment on the unbeliever? How did this judgment come about? Who is responsible for it? Why?

The Final Testimony of John the Baptist (3:22-36)

16. Describe the incident which served as the occasion for John’s final testimony to Jesus.
17. As you observe the connection between purifying (v. 25) and baptism (v. 26), tell what the implication is in relation to the significance of baptism.
18. How did John explain the relationship between Christ and him? Describe the character of John as manifested in these verses.
19. On the basis of verses 31 through 36:
 - a. How much is at stake in the decision one makes about Christ?
 - b. What issues are involved in the decision one makes about Christ?

Jesus in Samaria (4:1-42)

20. While the gospel of John as a whole puts great emphasis on the deity of Jesus, this passage emphasizes His humanity. List those details it contains which show the human side of Jesus.
21. What, in this passage, reveals the relationship between Jews and Samaritans? What were some of the causes of this relationship?
22. What caused this woman of Samaria to be a good prospect for the gospel? What valuable lesson(s) can we learn from this?
23. Trace the steps Jesus used to lead this woman to the truth and those by which the woman gradually came to a full realization of who Jesus was.
24. Describe the actions and reactions of His disciples when, upon their return, they saw Jesus talking to the woman. How did Jesus respond to them? What did His response mean?
25. Summarize the principle of worship set forth in verses 19 through 24.

Lesson Nine: Galilean Ministry

Lesson Text

Matthew 15:29 - 16:12;
17:1-8
Mark 8:1-21
John 5:17-47

Daily Bible Reading



Monday
Matthew 15:29-39

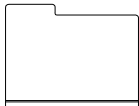
Tuesday
Matthew 16:1-4
Mark 8:11-13

Thursday
Matthew 16:5-12
Mark 8:14-21

Friday
Mark 8:22-26

Saturday
John 5:17-47

Lesson Concept



GODHEAD
Recognizing Jesus,
the Son

The Feeding of the Four Thousand (Matt. 15:29-39; Mark 9:1-10)

1. What characteristic of Jesus is expressed in this miracle?
2. How does this miracle compare and contrast with the feeding of the five thousand? (See Matt. 14:13-23; Mark 6:30-46; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15)

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 16:1-12; Mark 8:11-21)

3. What was the attitude of those who asked for a sign?
4. Was Jesus unwilling to provide people with evidence to back up His claims? Explain.
5. What evidence do you see of dullness of thinking on the part of the disciples? (Mark 8:14-21)
6. What did Jesus mean by "leaven?"

The Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-13)

7. Who did Jesus take with Him to the mountain where He was to be transfigured? Why?
8. Who appeared with Jesus on the mountain? Why do you think these men appeared? What did they do?
9. Upon seeing the events on that mountain, what did Peter suggest be done? Who replied to his suggestion? What was the reply?
10. What charge did Jesus give His disciples as they came down from the mountain? Why? What was their reply? How did Jesus respond to their query?
11. What purpose did the transfiguration serve?

The Claims of Jesus and the Evidence for Those Claims (John 5:17-47)

12. What is the relation between Jesus' speech recorded in these verses and the charges that had been made against Him, noting especially verse 17?

13. Explain the relation between Jesus and the Father as it is set forth in this text.
14. What is meant when Jesus says He does nothing but “what He sees the Father doing?” (v. 19f)
15. How is the claim of Jesus that He does the works of the Father elaborated in the context? Name the works mentioned by Jesus.
16. Explain the phrase “greater works than these” (v. 20) in context. What are “these?” What are the “greater works?”
17. What is the implication of verse 23? Compare it with Isaiah 42:8.
18. Explain the contrast between verses 25 through 27 and verses 28 and 29. What is the difference between the resurrections referred to in the two passages? (cf. Eph. 2:1-6)
19. List the witnesses to whom Jesus appeals to support His claims.
20. Explain the meaning of verse 31. Compare and contrast it with 8:12-20.
21. Seeing that in spite of all the testimony the Jews refused to believe in Jesus, what were the reasons for their refusal to believe in Him?

Lesson Ten: Perean Ministry

Lesson Text

John 9:1 - 12:11

Daily Bible Reading



Monday
John 9:1-23

Tuesday
John 10:1-21

Thursday
John 11:1-29

Friday
John 11:30-44

Saturday
John 11:45-57

Lesson Concept



GODHEAD
Proving power by
miracles

The Healing of the Blind Man (9:1-12)

1. What misconception of the disciples is removed by Jesus?
2. Explain the special significance of this miracle in relation to the claims of Jesus. (cf. 8:12)
3. List the various testimonies to the miracle given in verses 8 through 12. Relate the weight and significance of each.

The Blind Man and the Pharisees (9:13-34)

4. What two positions were taken by the Pharisees because of the testimony of the blind man? Explain how the different conclusions about Jesus are the result of different starting points.
5. What was the blind man's view of Jesus at this point? (v. 17) On what evidence?
6. What position with reference to the miracle did the Jews attempt to take?
7. Give the testimony of the blind man's parents. Of what value was their testimony? Why do you think they answered only one of the two questions raised by the Jews?
8. What was the basis for calling Jesus a sinner? (v. 24 with v. 16)
9. Do the Jewish leaders examine the evidence objectively? Explain.

The Conclusion of the Incident with the Blind Man (9:35-41)

10. Starting from verse 1 of this chapter, trace all stages of development of the blind man's faith and understanding of Jesus.
11. How does Jesus see the Pharisees? (vv. 39-41)
12. How can verse 39 be reconciled with 3:16-21? (cf. 12:44-50)

The Good Shepherd (10:1-42)

13. Analyze the parable given in verses 1 through 6.
14. Explain and discuss the significance of Jesus' claims to be the "door" and the "Good Shepherd."
15. What characteristics of the death of Jesus are brought out in this passage?
16. Who are the "other sheep" mentioned in verse 16? (cf. 11:51-52 and Eph. 2:11-18)
17. How did the Jews respond to this teaching? (vv. 19-21)
18. Explain what is meant by the claim "I and the Father are one." (v. 30)
19. What was the reason for the rejection of Jesus according to:
 - a. The Jews.
 - b. Jesus.

The Resurrection of Lazarus (11:1-57)

20. Drawing evidence from the text, explain and discuss the purpose and significance of this miracle.
21. Explain the significance of the resurrection of Lazarus as bringing:
 - a. The opposition to Jesus to a head.
 - b. The public ministry of Jesus to an end.
22. Why did not all the people accept Jesus even after the raising of Lazarus?

The Supper at Bethany and the Plot Against Lazarus (12:1-11)

23. Contrast the attitudes toward Jesus taken by Mary and Judas.
24. How was Mary's anointing of Jesus especially appropriate? (cf. Matt. 26:12)
25. Why did the chief priests want to get rid of Lazarus?
26. What is the significance of the word "also" in verse 10? (cf. John 11:53)

Lesson Eleven: The Trial of Jesus

Lesson Text

Mark 14:1 - 15:15
John 18:1 - 19:16
Matthew 26:1 - 27:26
Luke 22:31 - 23:25

Daily Bible Reading



Monday

Luke 22:14-20
Matthew 26:26-29

Tuesday

Matthew 26:20-25
John 13:18-30

Thursday

Luke 22:31-34
John 13:36-38

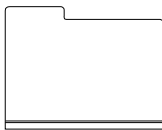
Friday

Matthew 26:36-56
Mark 14:32-52
Luke 22:40-53
John 18:2-12

Saturday

Matthew 27:1-26

Lesson Concept



FAITH

Holding fast your faith

The Plot Against Jesus (Mark 14:1-2)

1. What had the Jewish rulers made up their minds to do? What did they fear?
2. What solved the problem of the Jewish rulers for them?

The Anointing at Bethany (Mark 14:3-9)

3. Who was the woman in these verses? (cf. John 12:3) According to Jesus, what was the significance of her act?
4. Which disciple, according to John 12:4-6, voiced a complaint against her action? What was his complaint? What was his real motive in complaining?

The Bargain of Judas (Mark 14:10-11)

5. Compare Judas to the woman of verses 3 through 9. What lesson can be learned from his actions here?
6. Why was a betrayer of Jesus needed?

Preparation for the Passover (Mark 14:12-16)

7. Where were the disciples told to go in order to prepare to celebrate the Passover?
8. What reasons might Jesus have had for keeping the location where He and His disciples would keep the Passover so obscure?

The Prediction of the Betrayal (Mark 14:17-21)

9. Even though He had repeatedly announced His coming rejection and death, why do you think Jesus identified His betrayer at this supper?
10. What do you suppose the immediate effect of the above announcement was on Judas? On the other disciples who were present?

The Meaning of Jesus' Death (Mark 14:22-26)

11. While this text relates the establishment of the Lord's Supper, what was the immediate significance of this act of Jesus to the disciples who were at this supper?
12. Explain the "the blood of the covenant" in light of Exodus 24:8. (cf. Heb. 9:15-20)

Prediction of Peter's Denial (Mark 14:27-31)

13. What did Jesus predict concerning the disciples? Concerning Peter? What do these advance warnings reveal about Jesus?
14. Is there anything in these words to give the disciples hope after their denials? Explain.

Gethsemane (John 14:32-42)

15. What purpose(s) does the visit to Gethsemane serve for Jesus? What does it reveal about the nature of Jesus?
16. Why did the disciples also need to be watching and praying? To what can their failure to do it be attributed?

The Betrayal and Arrest (Mark 14:43-52; John 18:1-14)

17. Why, when the betrayer does appear, is Jesus ready to meet him?
18. Contrast the attitude of Jesus when the soldiers appear with that of His disciples. What caused such a difference?
19. In what manner did the arresting party come against Jesus?
20. Whose ear was cut off? Who did it? Why was it done? What did Jesus do concerning it?
21. What rebuke did Jesus give to those who arrested Him?

The Trial Before the Sanhedrin (Mark 14:53-65; John 18:19-24)

22. Who was Annas, the one who conducted a preliminary hearing of Jesus in John 18:19-24? What did he do when he was finished with Jesus?
23. Who was Caiaphas? What was his relation to Annas?

24. Explain how the testimony against Jesus before the Sanhedrin actually turned out to be a vindication of Him, especially in view of the efforts of His enemies to find some charge against Him.
25. Why did Jesus not answer the testimony against Him?
26. On what basis was Jesus finally condemned to death?

Peter's Denial (Mark 14:66-72; John 18:15-27)

27. List some lessons to be learned from Peter's denial.
28. How did the bystanders know that Peter was a Galilean? (See Matt. 26:73)
29. Explain how Jesus' way of specifying the time element of the denial turned out to be an aid to Peter's restoration.

Jesus Before Pilate (Mark 15:1-15; John 19:33-40)

30. Why was there a need for this second trial? (John 18:31)
31. In view of the context and setting, what do you think Pilate meant by his question, "What is truth?"
32. What counsel did Pilate's wife give him? (See Matt. 27:19)
33. What did Pilate conclude concerning the guilt of Jesus?
34. Seeing that it is evident that Pilate wanted to release Jesus, what was his first effort to set Jesus free? Considering that as governor and judge he could have set Jesus free, why did he not do so?

Crucifixion Determined (John 19:1-16)

35. Do you think the scourging and mockery are a second effort by Pilate to gain Jesus' release? How could this demonstration have persuaded the Jews to agree to it?
36. What was the real charge the Jews made against Jesus? (v. 7) What would be the significance if Jesus were raised from the grave after His death?
37. What seemed to be the final straw that caused Pilate to ultimately give in to the request of the Jews?
38. Why do you think Pilate said, "Behold your King" to the Jews? What was their response? What makes their response so astounding?

Lesson Twelve: The Crucifixion

Lesson Text

Matthew 27:26-54
Mark 15:15-40
Luke 23:25-49
John 19:17-42

Daily Bible Reading



Monday

Matthew 27:33-44
Mark 15:23-32
Luke 23:32-37

Tuesday

Luke 23:39-43
John 19:25-27

Thursday

Matthew 27:45-56
Mark 15:33-41
Luke 23:44-49

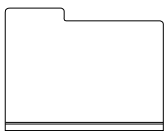
Friday

John 19:31-37

Saturday

Matthew 27:57-66
Mark 15:42-47
Luke 23:50-56
John 19:38-42

Lesson Concept



OBEDIENCE

Fulfilling prophecy

Mocking of Jesus (Matt. 27:27-31; Mark 15:16-20)

1. How was Jesus treated by the soldiers before He was crucified?
2. List the various ways Jesus' kingship was mocked.

Simon of Cyrene (Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21)

3. How can these verses be reconciled with John 19:17 which indicates that Jesus was "bearing His cross?"

Crucifixion

(Matt. 27:32-44; Mark 15:22-32; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:17-27)

4. What does the fact that two robbers were crucified at the same time indicate about the death of Jesus?
5. Who mocked Jesus while He was on the cross? Of what did the mockery consist?
6. Why did Jesus submit to such mockery? Could He not have saved Himself? (cf. Matt. 26:53)
7. Was there a sense in which the statement "himself he cannot save" was true? Explain.
8. How did they dispose of the garments of Jesus? Why?
9. What do the statements in John 19:25b-27 reveal about the character of Jesus?

Death (Matt. 27:45-56; Mark 15:33-41; Luke 23:44-49; John 19:28-37)

10. How long was Jesus on the cross before He died?
11. What were some events that surrounded His death? What, individually and collectively, was their significance?

12. What was the testimony of the centurion? Why would it seem to have a special impact?
13. What group, sympathetic to Jesus, is singled out as being present at the cross?
14. Since John alone mentions that it was “blood and water” which flowed from the side of Jesus, what is its significance in connection with Jesus’ death?

Burial (Matt. 27:57-66; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42)

15. What was the “day of preparation?” How did it affect the actions at the death of Jesus?
16. Who took responsibility for burying Jesus? Who does John say helped him? Tell what you know about these men.
17. Why would the two men who buried Jesus do it? What were the ramifications of their bold action?
18. Does the manner of Jesus’ burial seem to contrast with the circumstances of His life and the manner of His death? Explain. (cf. Isaiah 53:9)
19. Why were the guards placed around Jesus’ tomb?

Lesson Thirteen: The Resurrection

Lesson Text

Matthew 27:57 - 28:20

Mark 15:42 - 16:20

Luke 23:50 - 24:53

John 19:38 - 21:25

Daily Bible Reading



Monday

Matthew 28:2-20

Tuesday

Mark 16:1-14

Thursday

Luke 24:1-12

Friday

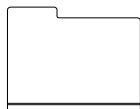
John 20:1-29

Saturday

Matt. 28:16-20

Mark 16:15-18

Lesson Concept



GODHEAD

Fulfilling God's eternal plan
in the Son

The Resurrection (Mark 16:1-9; John 20:1-10)

1. Who came to the tomb of Jesus the morning of the first day of the week? Why did they come? What concerned them while on the way to it? What did they find when they arrived? What order was given to them? Who gave it?
2. Describe, as best you can, the emotions of the disciples who found the empty tomb.

The Appearance to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18)

3. Why was Mary weeping?
4. What was Mary's reaction when she learned the identity of Jesus? How can you explain her slowness to recognize Jesus?
5. Explain why Jesus prohibited Mary from "clinging" to Him? (v. 17)
6. Why does Jesus distinguish between "my Father and your Father, and my God and your God?" (v. 17)

The Appearance to Two Disciples on the Road to Emmaus (Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-27)

7. What were these men talking about prior to Jesus' appearance to them?
8. Did they recognize Jesus at first? Explain.
9. Why did they tell Jesus in their conversation with Him? How did He answer them?

Appearances to the Disciples (John 20:19-29)

10. Describe Jesus' first appearance to His disciples.
11. Who was missing from the disciples when Jesus first appeared to them? What was his reaction to the report of His appearance?
12. Describe the second appearance of Jesus to His disciples.

The Manifestation of Jesus in Galilee (John 21:1-22)

13. What did Jesus do to cause His disciples to recognize Him because when He first appeared on the beach they did not recognize Him? What was their reaction?
14. What was the purpose of Jesus' discussion with Peter? What did it accomplish?
15. What was suggested concerning the manner of Peter's death? About whose death did Peter inquire? What was Jesus' response to His inquiry? What did that response mean?

The Great Commission Given by Jesus

(Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:44-49; John 20:19-23)

16. What did Jesus commission His disciples to do? Why could He give such a command?
17. Before acting upon His command, what were His disciples to do? Why?
18. What signs were to accompany the "believers?" Why?

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