



JESUS TAUGHT  
**PARABLES**

A STUDY OF THE PARABLES IN LUKE



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# WELCOME

The book of Luke is a brimming account of Jesus's life and ministry, including parables that Jesus taught. A parable is a timeless truth or lesson packaged in a simple, memorable story. The characters and events in the parable often point to a spiritual reality of God and people. In this eight lesson study on the parables in Luke, we will see how Jesus lived among and taught crowds and disciples alike about the kingdom of God and how to live for it now.

This study will guide you to:

**CONNECT** in authentic community as you and your group share the joys and struggles of life and pray together for big things.

**GROW** in biblical truth by searching the scripture and actively applying this truth to your life.

**ENGAGE** in helping people find and follow Jesus by practicing simple disciple-making tools and spiritual practices that tune your heart to those who are far from God.

## PERSONAL STUDY + PRAYER

God's word, the Bible, is a unique and wonderful book. It is one of His greatest gifts to us. By reading it regularly, meditating on it, and studying it with others, we begin to hear God's voice and to know Him more deeply. As we put biblical truth into practice, cooperating with the Holy Spirit, our relationship with God grows. We become more like Jesus, transforming into mature sons and daughters of God.

"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does." **James 1:22-25**

Each lesson begins with personal study sections designed for you to walk through the selected passage verse by verse. The Survey provides the big picture and background information on parables and for the book of Luke. Lessons 1-4 and 6-8 focus on studying various parables in detail. For Lesson 5, we've included time for Spiritual Practices which will help you apply what you've learned so far and specifically the foundational practices of prayer and silence, which are introduced in Lesson 3 and 4. The Synthesis is a place to record an overall summary of what you learned in the study.

In this study, you will practice a basic Bible study method that answers three questions:

**Look it Over** (Observation): What do I see?

**Think it Through** (Interpretation): What does it mean?

**Make it Real** (Application): How does it work?

An overview of this method is summarized in the Bible Study Tools section in the Appendix beginning on page 103.

## PRAYER REMINDERS

We need God Himself to illuminate His Word to us. As we prayerfully approach the study of His Word, God shows up! Pray before, during, and at the end of each lesson for eyes to see and ears to hear the things the Holy Spirit has planned to reveal to you.

## GROUP DISCUSSION

At the end of every lesson, there is a Group Discussion Guide that provides a balanced plan for the time you spend together as a group - connecting, growing and engaging. Use this guide to plan your group time.

## APPENDIX

**Leader Helps:** This section contains a few helpful ideas for anyone leading others through this study. See pages 101-102.

**Bible Study Tools:** Each lesson contains descriptions of tools that will help you to observe, interpret, and apply scripture. These are summarized on pages 103-109.

**New Testament Chronology:** A list of the approximate dates of major events in the New Testament can be found on pages 110-111.

**Engage Tools:** We are called to partner with God in helping people find and follow Jesus. Some of the basic tools for becoming a disciple maker will be introduced in the lessons and can be found on pages 112-118.

**Spiritual Practices:** Following Jesus involves learning from His teachings, putting into practice His commands, and imitating the rhythms of His life. Some of these key spiritual practices will be introduced in the lessons and can be found on pages 119-122.

**Additional Study Resources:** This section contains a list of recommended books and online tools on page 123.

# WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The Gospel is the good news of how we can be reconciled to God through Jesus.

## GOD'S DESIGN

Out of God's great love, He created a world that was good. He made people to enjoy a deeply connected relationship with Him and to represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries to protect us and to allow us to fully enjoy our relationships with Him and with other people (Genesis 2:15-17).

## BROKENNESS

Yet, when we look around our world, brokenness and evil are evident everywhere - war, famine, disease, corruption. If we are honest, we also see brokenness and evil inside ourselves - deceit, hatred, greed, lust.

This is because we have rejected God's design and chosen to follow our own way.

Our rejection of God and His ways is what the Bible calls sin. (Romans 3:23)

Our sin results in separation from God which the Bible calls death. (Romans 6:23a)

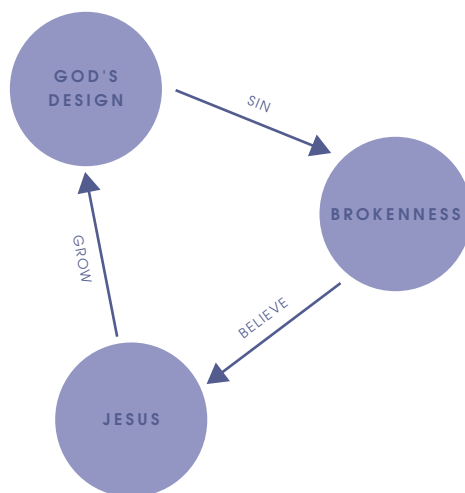
Unless our sin is forgiven, we will remain separated from God forever.

## JESUS

God does not want to leave us in our sin and brokenness!

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and to freely give us eternal life - a life connected to God both now and forever. (Romans 6:23b; John 17:3)

God's only Son Jesus died in our place. He took upon Himself the penalty that we deserve because of our sin. Then, Jesus rose from the dead, and forever defeated the power of sin and death. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)



## BELIEVE

We respond to Jesus by believing in Him for the forgiveness of our sin.

To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God's approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and rescue. Instead, you accept God's free gift of eternal life. Belief or faith is simply being convinced or persuaded that something or someone is trustworthy. (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Everyone who believes in Jesus is forgiven of their sin and receives eternal life. We can now know God personally and experience the life we were designed to live. (John 3:16-17)

**Which circle or arrow best represents your life right now?**

**Have you put your trust (believed) in Jesus alone to be reconciled to God?**

# SURVEY

## WHY PARABLES?

Jesus' ministry was designed around teaching God's people about the kingdom of God. His longest recorded sermon, the Sermon on the Mount, is a detailed description of the "upside down" kingdom of God. Jesus' teachings called people to a radically different way of life! Parables are yet another way that Jesus shared the truth about what it looked like to live kingdom-minded lives here on earth. Jesus told parables as a way of communicating truth in a simple story that would be easy to remember and retell. Everyone loves to hear a story; in fact, an interesting story can attract a crowd. Stories grab the attention and intrigue of a listener. For these reasons, Jesus used parables to share kingdom truth and teach His disciples how to communicate and remember these truths when he was no longer beside them.

## SIMPLE STORY...

The word parable comes from the Greek word, "Para-balo." "Para," meaning beside, and "balo," meaning to throw. Therefore by definition, a parable is a literary device that lays an unfamiliar spiritual truth "thrown beside" a story that is easily understood.

## SPIRITUAL TRUTH + SIMPLE STORY

The stories Jesus used in parables were simple, made-up, and would relate to the Near East culture at that time. For example, the parable of the soils found in Luke 8 would relate easily in the cultural context of an agrarian culture dependent on good soil to grow produce and crops. The fruit of the soil affects their livelihood. The spiritual truths taught through parables would make sense to those who were seeking the kingdom of God and believed the gospel.

## EASY TO REMEMBER

Jesus spoke in parables as a teaching technique to help his disciples remember the truths of the kingdom. Most of His disciples memorized much of the Old Testament, and they may have even been able to recite much of the Scriptures, but rote memorization would be more challenging than to remember than a story that recalled a spiritual truth. Stories are much more organic. Everyone loves a good story, so when Jesus shared a story, no doubt people gathered to listen. By teaching in parables Jesus made his teaching relatable, mysterious at times, and memorable.

## MEANT FOR RETELLING

Throughout his ministry, Jesus was preparing his chosen disciples to disseminate the gospel—His story, throughout the world (Acts 1:9). The parables served as an effective way for the disciples not only to remember spiritual truths for themselves, but to retell them in hopes of making more disciples to spread the gospel. We can read, remember and retell parables in the same way today!



## STARTING GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS

Just as the disciples retold the parables of Jesus to share the good news, we can use simple stories to enter into gospel conversations with others. Parables are simple, made-up stories that can draw the interest and spur on conversation. This evangelism strategy can be used with any true story from the Bible as well. A story is a great place to start when you seek to share about the Lord. The Bible is full of incredible things God has done, showing His goodness and faithfulness throughout generations! As you study the parables in the gospel of Luke, may you remember these truths in your own walk with the Lord, and retell them to those who need to hear. Pray for opportunities to share a parable with others, and all that God is teaching you through these spiritual truths "thrown beside" simple stories.

### WHY THE MYSTERY?

Parables can be challenging to understand and leave us scratching our heads, wondering what Jesus is attempting to teach us. Know that this was exactly how many felt who heard from Jesus himself, even the twelve closest to him. There were times when Jesus would teach using a parable to a larger crowd, then take his chosen disciples aside to explain the spiritual truth (see Luke 8:9-10). Jesus explains to his disciples, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables" (Luke 8:9a). Jesus is revealing the secrets of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:11). These mysteries are hidden in stories or parables, meant for his disciples to understand and be fruitful, growing the kingdom of God, and becoming disciple-making-disciples. When encountering Jesus Christ, those who just want more of Jesus the man, and what He can do, can listen intently but never understand and truly hear. Their heart's motivation is not to further the kingdom of God.

In Luke 10:23-24, Jesus turns to his disciples privately and says,

**"Blessed are the eyes that see the things you see, for I tell you, that many prophets and kings wanted to see the things that you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things that you hear, and did not hear them."**

When the intention of our heart is to know Jesus more through the Spirit of Truth, we are given eyes to see and ears to hear. Jesus intentionally uses parables as a powerful teaching tool—one we can learn so much from today. What a privilege it is to hear from Jesus himself and through His Spirit in us, and learn from His words! In Luke 10, Jesus speaks to 72 people that He sent out in pairs ahead of Him to teach about the kingdom of God. Upon their return, Jesus explained, "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." (Luke 10:22) As you open the Word of God and begin to search the truths of the parables, begin with prayer. Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to you.

## INTERPRETATION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

If parables are a spiritual truth thrown alongside a simple story, the reader or listener can use the story to figure out the spiritual truth being taught. A grid is a useful tool in “breaking down” a parable to better understand its meaning. This parable grid divides the spiritual reality and the simple story by lining up the relationship of characters in the story alongside the relationship of God and His people. We will use this grid throughout this study to aid in the process of observation and interpretation of each parable. Here you will find a guide to help you fill out the parable grid. Refer back to this example as often as you need. The authors of all the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, write about Jesus teaching in parables. By the end of this study, the hope is that you will have a new study tool to use when reading any parable in the Word of God.

Here’s a general example:

PARABLE TITLE AND SCRIPTURE REFERENCE		
<b>Pieces of the Parable</b> People, places, or things that Jesus uses to tell the story.	<b>Describe the Parable</b> What does the parable say about each of those things?	<b>Spiritual Meaning</b> Who do you think those things represent in our spiritual reality?  <b>Examples</b> God, Jesus, religious leaders at the time, etc.
<b>Jesus’s Final Word</b> Jesus ends each parable with a statement that usually points to the spiritual truth and lesson that He hopes to convey. Write that verse here, and/or the Scripture reference.		
<b>In Your Own Words</b> What is the main idea or overall truth that Jesus is trying to teach? This will be the last part you fill in... what is Jesus teaching you?		

Here’s a completed example for the Parable of the Mustard Seed from Luke 13:18-19.

PARABLE THE MUSTARD SEED		LUKE 13:18-19
<b>Pieces of the Parable</b> A mustard seed Sower Birds	<b>Describe the Parable</b> Small seed that grew into a tree with branches Sowed the seed, or threw it, into his garden Nested in the branches	<b>Spiritual Meaning</b> Kingdom of God God God’s people - Jews, Gentiles, anyone who has or will come to believe
<b>Jesus’s Final Word</b> “What is the kingdom of God like... It is like a mustard seed...” Luke 13:18, 19		
<b>In Your Own Words</b> While the kingdom of God may appear to have insignificant and unnoticeable beginnings, it will someday be great and expansive, inviting all who believe in Jesus to take shelter and enjoy its abundance.		

## BACKGROUND OF LUKE

The book of Luke is actually one of nine books in the New Testament whose author is not named in the text. It is commonly believed to be authored by Luke, a very close travel companion of Paul. He was a medical doctor and historian who encountered Paul and the gospel early in Paul's ministry, and the two were thought to have become inseparable. Four times in the book of Acts, Luke uses the word "we," to convey that he was present with Paul; in Acts 16, Acts 27, in Paul's ministry at Philippi, and during Paul's sea journey to Rome. Luke's connection to Paul allowed him to know the nature and intimate details of Paul's ministry.

The books of Luke and Acts are thought to be one work, written by the same author at the same time. The two books refer to each other and are connected by the single event of Jesus' ascension into heaven found at the end of Luke (Luke 24:50-53) and beginning of Acts (Acts 1:1-9). Luke is commonly believed to be written in the early to mid 60's, after the events at the end of Acts occurred. Luke's account of the life of Jesus covers approximately 5 BC-AD 33, including His birth, youth, ministry, death and resurrection. As a historian writing for Paul, Luke wrote to a Gentile audience, most likely Greek.

This Gospel focuses on Jesus' humanity and continually points to the divine nature of Jesus as man and Jesus as deity (God). Jesus is revealed as the Son of man, who lived a sinless life and acted as a suffering servant. Thus, He alone has a perfect compassion for humanity and the power to bring salvation to humanity. Luke contains 35% unique material, not found in the other gospels, most notably the births of Jesus and John the Baptist (Luke 1-2), stories of Jesus' childhood and pre-ministry adult life, as well as the ascension of Christ after His resurrection. Luke gives us a glimpse into Jesus' diverse ministry of healing, teaching and discipling. We thank God for the gift of the Gospel of Luke and its insight to a deeper knowledge and love of Jesus.

The title, "Son of man" was used 81 times to describe Jesus, by the Gospel writers and 25 times in the Gospel of Luke.

LESSON 1

# SOWER, SEED, AND SOILS

LUKE 8:4-15

Jesus lived among and ministered to a highly agrarian society, meaning people who worked in and owned land and farms. It makes sense that Jesus taught farming parables with these people in mind! They not only understood his agricultural metaphors, but they were especially intrigued when He spoke about how to achieve farming success.

In ancient Israel, typical yield for a crop was about ten times, meaning for every seed the farmer sowed or tossed into the field, he could expect ten seeds in return. In this parable, Jesus describes a type of soil that would produce a yield of one hundred times. That would be an incredible harvest!

But that's only one type of soil in the parable, and the other soils were not so fertile and fruitful. But why?

**"THE ONE  
WHO HAS  
EARS TO  
HEAR, LET  
THEM HEAR."**

**MATTHEW 11:15**



# LOOK IT OVER

## OBSERVATION

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is “What do I see?” This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of your study. Simply read the passage and write one or two observations for each verse. Your observations might identify people, places, and events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences. The first few observations have been done for you as an example.

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

### LUKE 8:4-15

Now when a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were  
*a large crowd had gathered*

journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: 5 “The sower went out to sow his seed; and  
*they traveled to hear Him*

as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the

sky ate it up. 6 Other seed fell on rocky soil, and when it came up, it withered away because

it had no moisture. 7 Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and

choked it out. 8 And yet other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop

a hundred times as much.” As He said these things, He would call out, “The one who has ears

to hear, let him hear.”

9 Now His disciples began asking Him what this parable meant. 10 And He said, “To you it

has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest they are told in

parables, so that while seeing they may not see, and while hearing they may not understand.

11 “Now this is the parable: the seed is the word of God. 12 And those beside the road are the ones who have heard, then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. 13 Those on the rocky soil are the ones who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and yet these do not have a firm root; they believe for a while, and in a time of temptation they fall away. 14 And the seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked by worries, riches, and pleasures of this life, and they bring no fruit to maturity. 15 But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word with a good and virtuous heart, and hold it firmly, and produce fruit with perseverance.

## **OBSERVATION QUESTIONS**

1. What's the purpose of teaching with parables? Why not just be straight forward?  
(Refer back to the Survey)

2. What is the “seed” in this passage?

# THINK IT THROUGH

## INTERPRETATION

Our observations of a passage should stir interesting and challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study, the skill of interpretation. Simply put, “What does it mean?” Each lesson in this study will give suggestions for interpretation questions, but feel free to come up with your own. Interpretative questions might include why, how, what is the purpose, among many others.

1. What about the setting/location and audience of this parable (8:1-4) is significant? Why were the crowds following him?

2. Read Matthew 13:1-23 and Mark 4:1-20 for other Gospel accounts of the parable of the soils. How are the three accounts similar and different? Why do some accounts include details that others leave out?

3. In Matthew 13:13-15 and Mark 4:10-12, Jesus describes different reactions to His teachings. What are the different reactions and how might they relate to the parable of the soils?

Typically, fruit trees do not bear fruit their first year after planting, and some never bore fruit. Olive trees, which are common in Israel, can take up to 20 years to bear fruit. Regardless of if and when they bore fruit, they were still considered fruit trees.

4. What is the “kingdom of God” in this passage?

5. What does it mean to “bear fruit?” What is the fruit that is produced by the seed growing in the good soil?



## INTERPRETATION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

The book of Luke is filled with parables that are story-metaphors that compare the spiritual reality of the relationship of God and his people to characters and events in a story. Fill out your grid below by reading the text and recording your observations. Refer back to the Survey on page 10 for a full explanation of the grid components.

PARABLE SOWER, SEED, AND SOILS				LUKE 8:4-15
	Describe the Parable	Parable Problem	Spiritual Meaning	Spiritual Solution
Soil 1	the trampled path	Seed cannot sink into the ground, so birds come and take it away	Have not believed, because Satan has prevented them from it (See 2 Corinthians 4:3-4)	1. Choose to believe if you haven't yet. Let the word sink into your heart, then it cannot be taken away. 2. Pray for people who do not yet know Jesus, that God would banish Satan who prevents them from believing.
Soil 2				
Soil 3				
Soil 4				
Jesus's Final Word				
In Your Own Words				

# MAKE IT REAL

## APPLICATION

The goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. This leads us into a deeper relationship with Him and to becoming more like Him.

Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you. Answer the reflection questions designed to demonstrate how each passage relates to our lives.

Next, step back and look at the passage as a whole and begin to list things God has shown you including ideas, images, biblical truths and principles. A principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is relevant to our lives. A principle is not specific to a particular person or time.

Finally, prayerfully decide on specific action steps that you will begin to take right away to live out biblical truth in your daily life.

### 3 STEPS TO APPLY → REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. How can you tell if someone is living a fruitful life? Is living a "fruitful life" a true desire of yours and how often do you think about it?
2. Consider which soil your life is reflective of right now, and why. What are 1-2 best next steps that would help you move towards the good soil?
3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:
  - Is there a promise for me to claim?
  - Is there a truth for me to believe?
  - Is there a command for me to obey?
  - Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?
  - How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?

4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.

5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your goal in the box below.

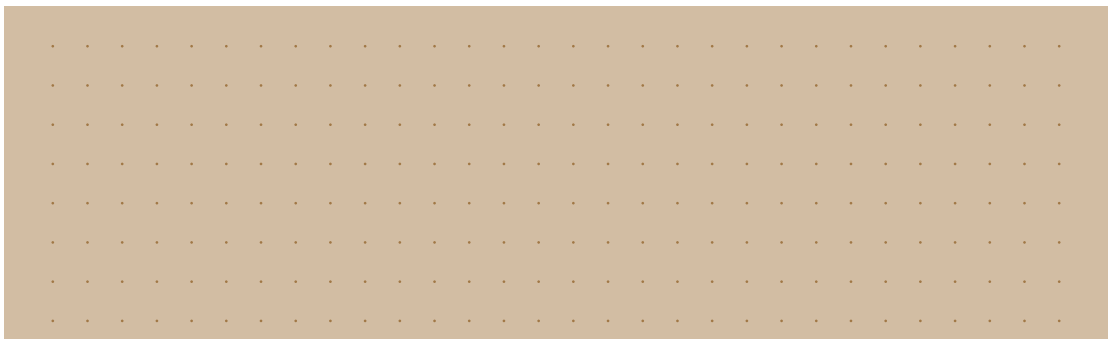
## ENGAGE TOOL

### EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Jesus noticed and cared for the people around Him. He taught His disciples to do the same. As His followers, we are also called to love our neighbors, the people with whom we live, learn, work and play. Allow lessons learned from the parable of the soils to move you towards your neighbors in compassion and love.

Turn to page 113 and prayerfully fill in your Every Neighbor Map. Be ready to share it with your group next week. For more insight, watch the Every Neighbor Map video at [grace-bible.org/disciplemaker](http://grace-bible.org/disciplemaker).

Create a personal goal expressing how you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## CONNECT

### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share something you are celebrating or something that disappointed you during the last week.
2. Ask 1-2 people to take 5 minutes and share how they found healing in Jesus and began to follow Him.

### WHY ARE WE HERE?

Spend a few minutes discussing your group's purpose. Of all the things we could be doing, why are we here? Why is this time important to be present for and to prioritize?

Pray for your time together.

## GROW

### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

1. How do we observe scripture? What are we looking for and what questions are we asking?
2. Read Luke 8:4-15. Share some of your observations.
3. What is the "seed" in this passage?

### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

1. Review your grids together.
2. Discuss 2-3 questions.
3. In Your Own Words: Ask one person in your group to summarize and share the parable in their own words. Try to capture the meaning of the metaphor. Use your grid to help.

## ENGAGE

### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

1. Why is it important to personally apply biblical truth to your life?
2. Consider which soil your life is reflective of right now, and why.
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

### ENGAGE TOOL - **Every Neighbor Map (p. 113)**

Share your maps with your group or fill them out together now.

Spend some time praying for these friends. Ask God for opportunities to deepen friendships and to practically bless them with His Love. Ask God to reveal Himself to them and to open their eyes to His grace.

## GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

## PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

A large grid of small dots arranged in 20 rows and 30 columns, providing a space for writing notes or prayers.

LESSON 2

# THE GOOD SAMARITAN

LUKE 10:25-37

“Who is my neighbor?” That question rang in the air as the people looked to Jesus for an answer, and it continues to reverberate into today’s context. Jesus turned the tables and challenged cultural norms to highlight that the heart matters more than religious piety. In their culture, Samaritans were social outcasts to be avoided. Yet in this parable, it is the Samaritan that shows a heart of compassion, not the religious leaders who should have exemplified care for the needy. This story begs its audience to ask, “What does it mean to be a good neighbor? To what extent am I willing to stop and care for a neighbor in need?”

"YOU SHALL LOVE  
THE LORD YOUR  
GOD WITH ALL  
YOUR HEART,  
AND WITH ALL  
YOUR SOUL, AND  
WITH ALL YOUR  
STRENGTH, AND  
WITH ALL YOUR  
MIND; AND YOUR  
NEIGHBOR AS  
YOURSELF."

LUKE 10:27



# LOOK IT OVER

## OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

LUKE 10:25-37

25 And behold, a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” 26 And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?” 27 And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” 28 And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.” 29 But wanting to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” 30 Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he encountered robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. 31 And by coincidence a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan who was on a journey came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, 34 and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own animal, and brought him to an



inn and took care of him. 35 On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return, I will repay you.’ 36 Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands?” 37 And he said, “The one who showed compassion to him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”

## OBSERVATION SKILL

### ASKING INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS

This week, we will begin to write our own questions as well. Just record the questions that naturally come to mind as you try to understand and apply the passage. If you need help getting started, you can use these examples:

WHO IS...	WHAT IS THE...	WHY DID THE AUTHOR...	HOW...
the author talking about? accomplishing the action? benefiting from the action?	meaning of this word? significance of this phrase? implication of this statement? relationship between these phrases?	choose this word? include this phrase, statement, or command? not say _____ ?	was this action accomplished? will this situation occur?

### OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. List your interpretive questions.
2. What is the greatest commandment?
3. How might the lawyer be trying to limit Jesus with his question (v. 25, 29)? What do you learn about his motives?
4. List the ways that the Samaritan cares for the wounded man.

Oil and wine were expensive disinfectants and the Samaritan pays the innkeeper 12x the amount required to live for a day.

# THINK IT THROUGH

## INTERPRETATION

### INTERPRETATION SKILL: LOOK UP BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Fortunately, we don't have to run to a commentary or study Bible for answers; however these tools can be very helpful in providing additional background information not given in the text. To learn more about this critical skill, refer to page 106 in the Appendix.

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus describes several characters that were prominent in the original audience's culture but we are not as familiar in our contemporary context. By reading a commentary online, we can learn about the significance of the priest, for example, and why it was culturally relevant to the story.

"...The priest failed to act in love, even though common courtesy demanded that he stop and render aid. However a priest, of all people, should have shown compassion. He served in a 'helping occupation,' and he had frequent contact with the Scriptures and their demands. Moreover, this priest had recently been in Jerusalem, the center of worship and spiritual influence."

*Dr. Thomas L. Constable's Expository Notes Bible Commentary*

Spend a few minutes researching the background of a priest, Levite, and Samaritan in this context to gain greater insight to Jesus' command to love your neighbor as yourself.

## INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

1. How do the Priest and Levite respond to the wounded man? Why do you think they respond this way? What could have been their fears/motives?

2. Consider all that the Samaritan gives to this man in need. What did it cost him to be a good neighbor? What does it mean to be compassionate and how is this different from empathy?

3. Why is it significant that Jesus says the Samaritan is the one to show compassion? Why would this have been so offensive to the Jews?

4. Based on this parable, who is one's neighbor? How does Jesus define loving your neighbor?

## INTERPRETATION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

The book of Luke is filled with parables that are story-metaphors that compare the spiritual reality of the relationship of God and his people to characters and events in a story. Fill out your grid below by reading the text and recording your observations. Refer back to the Survey on page 10 for a full explanation of the grid components.

PARABLE THE GOOD SAMARITAN		LUKE 10:25-37
<b>Pieces of the Parable</b> (story components)	<b>Describe the Parable</b> (what does it say?)	<b>Spiritual Meaning</b> (what does it represent?)
<b>Jesus's Final Word</b>		
<b>In Your Own Words</b>		

# MAKE IT REAL

## APPLICATION

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

### 3 STEPS TO APPLY → REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. What have you received from God's love, and how can that help you become a good neighbor? How does accepting God's compassion towards you compel you to view and interact with others differently this week?

2. In what ways have you tried to limit the scope of God's love to others? In other words, toward whom do you find it difficult to show compassion and why?

3. Do you have margin in your life that would enable you to stop and care for a neighbor in need? What patterns in your life can you alter to be a better neighbor?

4. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?

5. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.

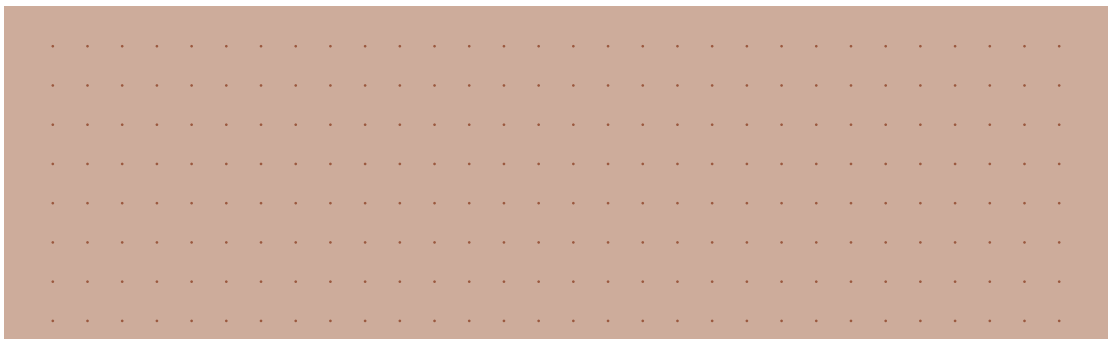
6. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your goal in the box below.

## **SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**

### **SERVE OTHERS**

Jesus said of Himself that He came to serve, not to be served (Matthew 20:28). He served people by meeting their physical and spiritual needs. Begin asking God to show you how you can meet needs among people in your life - neighbors, co-workers, friends, acquaintances. Consider ways to serve in your local community - at your church, non-profits, service organizations. Make it a weekly, intentional practice to meet a physical or spiritual need.

Create a personal goal expressing how you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## CONNECT

### CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share high or low from the week.
2. Ask 1-2 people to take 5 minutes and share how they found Jesus and began to follow Him.
3. Goals: how did you do on your application of truth last week?

### WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to summarize your group's purpose.

Pray for your time together.

## GROW

### DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

1. Read Luke 10:25-37. Share some of your observations.
2. What is the greatest commandment?
3. List the ways that the Samaritan cares for the wounded man.

### DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

1. Review your grids together.
2. Discuss 2-3 questions.
3. In Your Own Words: Ask one person in your group to summarize and share the parable in their own words. Try to capture the meaning of the metaphor. Use your grid to help.

## ENGAGE

### DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

1. In what ways have you attempted to limit the scope of God's love to others?
2. How can you go out of your way to help someone who is experiencing need or suffering?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

### SPIRITUAL PRACTICE **Serve Others**

Begin asking God to show you how you can meet needs among people in your life - neighbors, co-workers, friends, acquaintances. Consider ways to serve in your local community - at your church, non-profits, service organizations. Share with a partner who or what came to mind and your idea to serve this week. Ask your partner to remind you and follow up with encouragement. Offer to do the same!

## GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

## PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

# LESSON 3

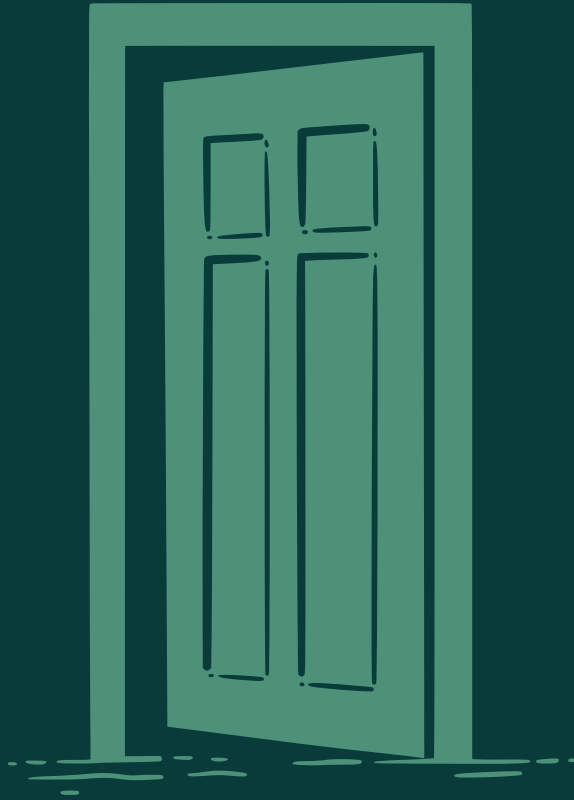
## THE BOTHERED FRIEND AND THE UNJUST JUDGE

### LUKE 11:1-13, 18:1-8

Prayer is simply a conversation with God. Jesus finds His disciples asking Him, “teach us to pray.” In other words, teach us to talk with God the way You do. The disciples looked at Jesus as their Rabbi, their teacher. In their religious culture, it would have been common for Rabbis to have a pre-made prayer for their disciples to pray, specific to their ministry.

In these passages, Jesus, our teacher, shows us how, what, and when to pray. He gives a model prayer; known as The Lord’s Prayer. Then, Jesus uses two parables to deepen our understanding about how to pray. A bothered neighbor and an unfair judge stand in stark comparison to our compassionate God, yet they grant the requests asked of them because of persistent petition. Jesus tells his disciples (and us) to ask (and keep asking), seek (and keep seeking), knock (and keep knocking). The persistence in our prayer life reflects our belief in the goodness of God, a trust in His timing, and points to our Father’s desire to give good gifts to his children. The greatest of these is the hope that all believers have in Jesus. (1 Peter 1:3-9)





*"ASK, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN  
TO YOU; SEEK, AND YOU WILL  
FIND; KNOCK, AND IT WILL  
BE OPENED TO YOU."*

*MATTHEW 7:7*

# LOOK IT OVER

## OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

### LUKE 11:1-13

It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, when He had finished, one of

His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John also taught his disciples.”

2 And He said to them, “When you pray, say:

‘Father, hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

3 Give us each day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins,

For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And do not lead us into temptation.’”

5 And He said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight

and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, 6 because a friend of mine has come to

me from a journey and I have nothing to serve him’; 7 and from inside he answers and

says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in

bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ 8 I tell you, even if he will not get up and give him anything just because he is his friend, yet because of his shamelessness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

9 “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened. 11 Now which one of you fathers will his son ask for a fish, and instead of a fish, he will give him a snake? 12 Or he will even ask for an egg, and his father will give him a scorpion? 13 So if you, despite being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

## LUKE 18:1-8

Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not become discouraged, 2 saying, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect any person. 3 Now there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me justice against my opponent.’ 4 For a while he was unwilling; but later he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect

any person, 5 yet because this widow is bothering me, I will give her justice; otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.” 6 And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unrighteous judge said; 7 now, will God not bring about justice for His elect who cry out to Him day and night, and will He delay long for them? 8 I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

## **OBSERVATION SKILL**

### **LIST PRIMARY THEMES**

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as “how to pray”. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

## **OBSERVATION QUESTIONS**

1. List any themes or big ideas you see in this passage.
2. Highlight repeated words or phrases.

3. Jesus begins by modeling prayer in Luke 11:2-4.

How does Jesus address God? Why is that significant for how we approach God in prayer?

Jesus introduces, for the first time in Scripture, the title of Father for God. How surprisingly radical! Understanding God as Our Father serves as the foundation for how we approach Him in prayer and how He responds to us, His children.

Underline and write out the verbs in order below. What observations can you make about the progression of the prayer? What does Jesus begin with? What does He end with?

4. List the different ways Jesus describes prayer to his disciples. (model prayer, parable describing how to pray, imperative commands for how to pray)

# THINK IT THROUGH

## INTERPRETATION

1. Compare and contrast the Judge from the Luke 18 parable with God. What do they have in common? How do they differ as authorities over their people?
2. Widows and orphans are used in biblical text to represent the vulnerable of society. How do we as believers embody this vulnerability in our relationship with God? (See Luke 11:2-3)
3. Think of this as a "how much more" parable, actually called a "lesser to greater" parable because Jesus compares the lesser to the greater expression of love to draw emphasis to the superior nature of His love for us. Read Luke 11:5-8 and 11:11-13. What relationship examples does Jesus use that we experience and relate to on earth? (friend-neighbor, parent-child). How does Jesus emphasize the way God relates to praying believers?

## INTERPRETATION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

The book of Luke is filled with parables that are story-metaphors that compare the spiritual reality of the relationship of God and his people to characters and events in a story. Fill out your grids below by reading the text and recording your observations. Refer back to the Survey on page 10 for a full explanation of the grid components.

#### PARABLE THE BOTHERED FRIEND

LUKE 11:5-13

##### Pieces of the Parable

##### Describe the Parable

##### Spiritual Meaning

##### Jesus's Final Word

##### In Your Own Words

#### PARABLE THE UNJUST JUDGE

LUKE 18:1-8

##### Pieces of the Parable

##### Describe the Parable

##### Spiritual Meaning

##### Jesus's Final Word

##### In Your Own Words

# MAKE IT REAL

## APPLICATION

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

### 3 STEPS TO APPLY → REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. Through these two parables about prayer, how is Jesus telling us we should pray? Is there any prayer that you have quit praying or maybe even forgotten about because you thought the Lord was not hearing or answering? List any that come to mind and take a few minutes to pray for each of these requests, allowing them to sit before the Lord.

2. Read Luke 11:9-13. God delights in giving good gifts to his children. He hears and answers our prayers—every one of them... Our prayers do not fall on deaf ears; however, we may not like the answer. God always answers our prayers in one of three ways:

1. Yes
2. Not right now...
3. I have something else in mind for you...

How would your prayer life change if you believed this truth? Can you remember a time that you believed He wasn't listening (Read David's lament in Psalm 13) or thought He would never answer your prayer?



3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?

4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.

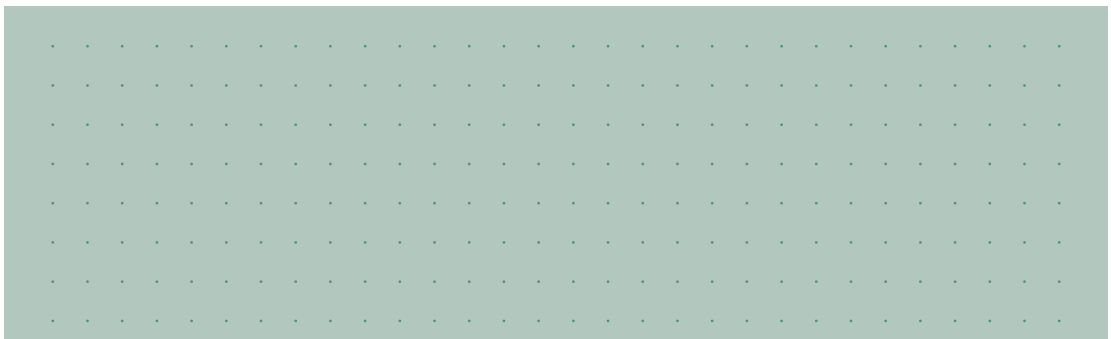
5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your goal in the box below.

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

### THE LORD'S PRAYER MODEL

Turn to page 119 in the Appendix and allow the prayer model to shape your conversation with God.

Create a personal goal expressing how you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. Split into pairs and discuss how your week was. Did you see God working in any specific ways?
2. Ask 1-2 people to take 5 minutes and share how they found Jesus and began to follow Him.

## WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to summarize your group's purpose, then pray for your time together.

Ask the Lord to open your minds to understand this week's passage of scripture.

## GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. What is the big idea, or primary theme, of these passages?
2. Read Luke 11:1-13 and 18:1-8. Share some of your observations.

## DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

1. Review your grids together.
2. Discuss 2-3 questions.
3. In Your Own Words: Ask one person in your group to summarize and share the parable in their own words. Try to capture the meaning of the metaphor. Use your grid to help.

## ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Is there any prayer that you have quit praying?
2. Why is it important to personally apply biblical truth to your life?
3. What aspects of prayer could you grow in this week?

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE **The Lord's Prayer Model (p.119)**

While Christians have been praying this prayer for centuries, the prayer isn't merely something to recite from memory. It is also a model to shape times of prayer. Use the suggestions on page 119 to develop a regular rhythm of prayer using the concepts from Jesus's model prayer.

## GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

## PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

## LESSON 4

# THE RICH FOOL

### LUKE 12:13-34

Jesus taught that the richness of life does not depend on earthly wealth. Material possessions cannot provide the quality of life that intimacy with God can. In fact, storing up our wealth on earth may even hinder our closeness with God if we become reliant upon it for our wellbeing. Ultimately, God alone brings fulfillment to this present life, not riches, so we are wise to seek Him and find refuge in His provision.



*"FOR WHERE YOUR  
TREASURE IS, THERE YOUR  
HEART WILL BE ALSO."*

*MATTHEW 6:21*

# LOOK IT OVER

## OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

### LUKE 12:13-34

13 Now someone in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” 14 But He said to him, “You there—who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over the two of you?” 15 But He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one is affluent does his life consist of his possessions.” 16 And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man was very productive. 17 And he began thinking to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’ 18 And he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and I will store all my grain and my goods there. 19 And I will say to myself, “You have many goods stored up for many years to come; relax, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself!”’ 20 But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is demanded of you; and as for all that you have prepared, who will own it now?’ 21 Such is the one who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich in relation to God.”

22 And He said to His disciples, “For this reason I tell you, do not worry about your life, as to what you are to eat; nor for your body, as to what you are to wear. 23 For life is more

than food, and the body is more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens, that they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! 25 And which of you by worrying can add a day to his life's span? 26 Therefore if you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about the other things? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither labor nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 28 Now if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You of little faith! 29 And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. 30 For all these things are what the nations of the world eagerly seek; and your Father knows that you need these things. 31 But seek His kingdom, and these things will be provided to you. 32 Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father has chosen to give you the kingdom. 33 "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor does a moth destroy. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

## OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. In Luke 12:13-21, who is Jesus' audience? Does the audience change in 12:22-34? Why is this significant?
2. Circle each thing that God cares for and list how He provides for them.

# THINK IT THROUGH

## INTERPRETATION

### LOOK UP KEY WORDS

Key words are words or short phrases that are important theologically or thematically (they set the theme or main idea for the passage). While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek provides deeper understanding and is surprisingly easy, thanks to online tools such as [net.bible.org](http://net.bible.org). To learn more about this critical skill, see pg. 106 in the Appendix.

### INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

1. One key word in this parable is “greed” (v. 15), which simply means “the desire to have more.” Why does Jesus warn the crowd and his disciples against every form of greed? Do you think anyone is exempt from this temptation? Why or why not?

2. What was the rich man’s folly? Is God saying it’s foolish to make plans and prepare? What about God’s response demonstrates what He values most?

3. What does it mean to “seek His kingdom and these things will be provided to you”? (See Matthew 6:33, Colossians 3:1-4 and 1 Timothy 6:17-19).



4. Read Matthew 6:19-21. Try looking up the repeated word “treasure” in v. 19-21 using the online method above. What does it mean to seek heavenly treasure? See Luke 6:35-36 and 1 Peter 1:3-4. How does it impact someone’s daily life as well as their eventual reward?

## INTERPRETATION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

The book of Luke is filled with parables that are story-metaphors that compare the spiritual reality of the relationship of God and his people to characters and events in a story. Fill out your grid below by reading the text and recording your observations. Refer back to the Survey on page 10 for a full explanation of the grid components.

PARABLE THE RICH FOOL		LUKE 12:13-34
Pieces of the Parable	Describe the Parable	Spiritual Meaning
Jesus's Final Word		
In Your Own Words		

# MAKE IT REAL

## APPLICATION

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

### 3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. What prevents you from living with an eternal perspective? Do you believe that living for Christ is worth it? Why or why not?

Take a moment to be silent and listen to the Lord's voice. What is He revealing? How is He calling you to respond to any conviction that arises?

2. Wealth is a window to the soul. It can reveal what we value, love, and worship. Spend some time evaluating what God has given you and how you use it. How does that reflect your heart?

What would it look like for you to invest the resources God has given you for His eternal kingdom?

3. What things do you tend to worry about? In what ways is God asking you to be generous towards others and grow your trust in Him to provide what you need?

4. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?

5. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.

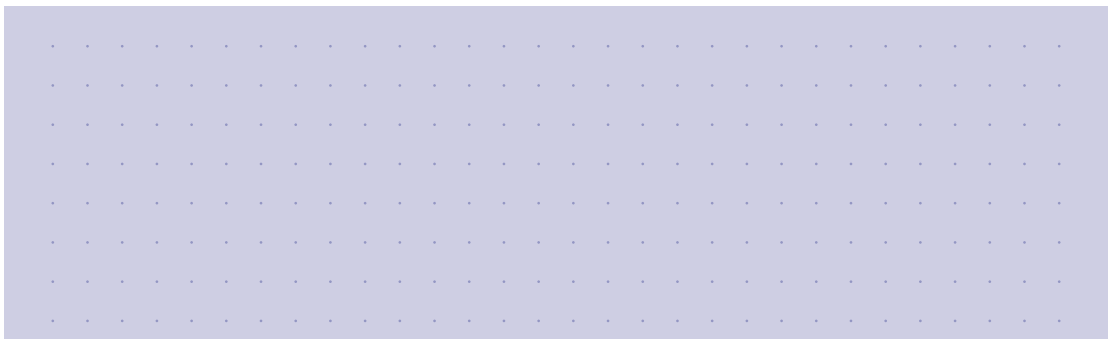
6. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your goal in the box below.

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

### SOLITUDE + SILENCE

Try to incorporate solitude and silence into your time with God. turn to page 120 for a helpful guide to get you started.

Create a personal goal expressing how you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. Read Psalm 84. Identify who or what God cares for and discuss the ways that He provides. Make a list of what your group is thankful for, then offer short prayers of gratitude to God.
2. How did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?

## WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to summarize your group's purpose, then pray for your time together.

Ask the Lord to open your minds to understand this week's passage of scripture.

## GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Luke 12:13-34. Share some of your observations.
2. Highlight every phrase or instance that carries the tone of a loving caretaker.

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

1. Review your grids together.
2. Discuss 2-3 questions.
3. In Your Own Words: Ask one person in your group to summarize and share the parable in their own words. Try to capture the meaning of the metaphor. Use your grid to help.

## ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Spend some time evaluating what God has given you and how you use it.
2. Are there ways you can build up heavenly treasure with what you've been given?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE **Solitude + Silence (p.120)**

Try taking two minutes of silence before God together now. Practice listening to God in prayer, focused on hearing from Him, rather than talking or requesting from Him. Then, share how those two minutes felt: Long? Short? Hard to focus? As a group, commit to spending more time regularly listening to God in prayer.

## GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

## PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

## LESSON 5

# PRAYER + SOLITUDE

Learning to implement spiritual practices in your everyday routine will be a lifelong journey of walking with God. Over the last two lessons we learned from Jesus about the persistence of our prayer life. He calls us to radically trust Him with our prayers, but we must remember that our prayers are not limited by petitions; they include thanksgiving and praise also. Most importantly, when we do not include a time of listening to God, we miss half the conversation. For this reason, prayer and solitude with silence are inexplicably linked.



**"DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO PRAYER,  
KEEPING ALERT IN IT WITH AN  
ATTITUDE OF THANKSGIVING."**

**COLOSSIANS 4:2**

# PRAYER + SOLITUDE

This lesson will focus on two timeless disciplines of the Christian walk, prayer and solitude alongside silence. Try incorporating these practices into your time with God, and explore them in community with other believers. Remember, spiritual transformation happens most often as a slow, gradual formation; it's not about content mastery. Paul captures this well when he writes,

"But we all, with unveiled faces, looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

Take time to commune with the Lord and enjoy walking with Him. Remember you are strengthening spiritual muscles that might be weak or atrophied.





*"FOR EVERYONE WHO ASKS RECEIVES,  
AND THE ONE WHO SEEKS FINDS,  
AND TO THE ONE WHO KNOCKS, IT  
WILL BE OPENED."*

*LUKE 11:10*

# PRAYER

## TRY IT OUT

Here is a simple model to guide your time in prayer. You also have The Lord's Prayer model on pg. 119. These examples show both perspective and priorities when talking and listening to God. Choose either prayer model and engage in prayer now.

**PRAY\*** is a simple acronym to help frame your time of prayer.

### P - PAUSE

- Take a deep breath and center your mind and heart on God's presence with you.
- Don't rush; be still and sit quietly with Him.
- Slowly let go of distractions surrounding you and focus on the nearness of God.

Silence and stillness reorient our minds and hearts to pray from a place of love, joy and peace.

"But as for me, the nearness of God is good for me; I have made the Lord God my refuge,"

**Psalms 73:28**

### R - REJOICE

- Begin praising God for who He is and for how He loves His good creation: the natural world, all people, and you.
- Thank Him for specific things in your life, family, church, community and the world.
- Acknowledge your identity as a "gift recipient" of the abundant grace of God.

"For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace." **John 1:16**

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." **Psalms 150:6**

### A - ASK

- Tell God what is on your heart and mind.
- Ask Him for what you need and want.
- Cast your burdens upon Him because He cares for you (1 Peter 5:6-7).
- Listen to Him as He reveals His heart to you as well.
- Try keeping a list of people and specific areas of your life that you are praying about.

Prayer is a conversation of talking and listening; communion and communication.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." **Philippians 4:6**

### Y - YIELD

- Finish your prayers with a heart posture of surrender; trusting in His love for you.
- Try opening your hands, palms up, as an outward expression of your inward desire.

Jesus is our great example of both asking God for His deepest needs and of yielding the outcome to the Father's will.

"And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.'" **Matthew 26:39**

## REFLECT

Did you grow up praying in your family? What were some of your childhood prayers or thoughts of God?

Is there a prayer for which you've given up hope? Try bringing it before the Lord once again or writing out some of the barriers you feel.

## BUILD IT IN

Here are a few ideas to begin building prayer into your daily life. Choose one of these, or create your own, to help you continue a consistent time of conversation with God.

**First thoughts:** Pray before your feet hit the ground. Let prayer be the first thoughts of your day.

**Drive time:** When you get in your car, do not turn on music right away. Spend some time talking to God.

**Last thoughts:** Reflect on your day before falling asleep. Remember where you saw God working today.

## PRAYER OF REFLECTION

Prayerful reflection on the events of your day helps to detect God's presence and activity in your life. It also helps us to both grow in communion with God and in awareness of the motives, desires, struggles, and opportunities in our daily lives. This type of prayer is often practiced at the end of the day using a journal to record thoughts.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts." Psalm 139:23

### 1. Become aware of God's presence.

- Take a deep breath.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to increase your awareness of God's promised presence with you.

### 2. Review your day. Consider a few of the following prompts:

- For what am I most grateful today? For what am I least grateful?
- When did I give and receive the most love today? When did I give and receive the least love today?
- When did I sense the deepest connection with God, others and myself? When did I have the least sense of connection?
- What was the most life-giving part of my day? What was the most life-thwarting part of my day?
- When was I aware of living out of the fruit of the Spirit? When was there an absence of the fruit of the Spirit?

### 3. Pay attention to your emotions.

- List a few feelings that were present throughout the day: Embarrassment? Fear? Elation? Contentment?
- What was the context of these emotions?

### 4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to bring one element of your day to mind. Focus specifically on that experience.
- Sit with it, listening in prayer, and journal what you sense God is speaking.

### 5. Look toward tomorrow.

- As you look toward tomorrow, what emotions or feelings are present: Excitement? Anxiety? Dread? Delight?
- Allow your expectation of the coming day to form a prayer to God.

# SOLITUDE + SILENCE

## TRY IT OUT

Spend a short amount of time listening to God in silence. Refrain from reading a book or listening to music or even praying with words. Just be with God in the quiet. Give Him your full attention and time. Receive from Him love, truth from His word, and peace. Focus on His presence and nearness. Slowly add more time as you are led by God. You may need to start with 2 minutes, but stick with it and watch how God can strengthen this discipline of sitting in silence in His presence.

“I have set the LORD continually before me;  
Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.”  
**Psalm 16:8**

While the concepts of silence and solitude are easy to understand, you may be surprised at how difficult they can be to put into practice in the moment. When we get alone and quiet, we discover just how much people, productivity and pleasures occupy our thoughts. Painful emotions that we have pushed away may also emerge. Our minds may jump from one thought to another (sometimes called monkey mind!) causing frustration.

Allow God to lead you through these challenges by returning your attention to Him when it strays. God’s promise is that when we “seek Him” we will find Him. In solitude and silence, we can find renewal, healing, and a centered peace from God that passes all understanding.

## REFLECT

What invitation do you sense from God regarding practicing solitude with Him?

## BUILD IT IN

Here are a few ideas to begin practicing the habit of solitude and silence. Choose one of these, or create your own, to help you carve out an intentional time of listening to God.

**Breathe:** Take a few deep breaths to calm your mind and body, making it easier to sit in stillness.

**Posture:** If you find yourself distracted, try a new prayer posture. Kneel, open your hands, palms up, lie on your back, or kneel face down.

**Imagine:** Close your eyes and imagine meeting God somewhere, sit in His presence. After a while, consider asking Him a question. Do you want me to know anything?

# MAKE IT REAL

What could communing with God and listening by His Spirit look like in your daily and weekly rhythms? (A rhythm is something you do regularly; a habit or pattern that becomes part of your day)

A large rectangular area with a light pink background and a grid of small dots, intended for writing or drawing. The grid consists of 20 columns and 30 rows of dots, providing a structured space for the user to outline their daily and weekly rhythms.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## PRAYER

As a group, spend 10 minutes praying through the PRAY model provided. Debrief together after with prompts like, what was that time like for you? Were you challenged or surprised by anything during that time of prayer? Continue to discuss the topic of prayer using the questions below or create your own questions.

How does the picture of prayer as conversation impact you?

What challenged you the most in practicing prayer this week?

What excites you about growing in the area of prayer?

Ask the group for a few volunteers to share how they hope to build prayer into their upcoming week. As the leader, try sharing your plan to grow in prayer first.

## SOLITUDE + SILENCE

Then as a group, spend 10 minutes practicing silence and solitude. Follow the same flow as your prayer practice. Debrief together after with prompts like, what was that time like for you? Were you challenged or surprised by anything during that time of solitude and silence? Continue to discuss using the questions below or create your own questions.

What emotions does the practice of solitude and silence bring up in you?

What challenged you as you practiced solitude and silence this week?

What excites you about growing in the area of solitude and silence?

Ask the group for a few volunteers to share how they hope to be intentional about creating time for solitude and silence this upcoming week. As the leader, try sharing your plan to grow in this area first.

*LESSON 6*

# *GUESTS AT THE BANQUET*

*LUKE 14:12-24*

Throughout His ministry on earth, Jesus described the kingdom of God in ways that completely contrasted with social and religious norms. He went so far as to say "...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). This upside-down kingdom mindset confused and angered the religious leaders in Jesus's day. These two parables in Luke 14 provide Pharisees then, and us now, with challenging wisdom on attending and hosting social gatherings. We are given a glimpse into God's own great banquet to come, but not all who anticipate the banquet will accept the invitation. Some will enjoy the banquet while others are far from it. Why? And how will you respond to the banquet invitation?



**"BLESSED IS  
EVERYONE  
WHO WILL  
EAT BREAD  
IN THE  
KINGDOM  
OF GOD"**

**LUKE 14:15**



# LOOK IT OVER

## OBSERVATION

The context given in Luke 14:1-11 helps us better understand the parable that follows. Luke 14:1 says that Jesus is eating with Pharisees, who are “watching him closely,” implying their suspicion of him and his teachings. Luke 14:7-11 shares a short parable and lesson about humility as the guest of an event. Notice Jesus uses several different types of gatherings: wedding feast, luncheon, dinner, meal, banquet. Regardless of event size or occasion, Jesus emphasizes the importance of remaining humble by saying, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted (Luke 14:11).” Then Jesus shifts his teaching by sharing a parable and lesson on humility as the host of an event.

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

### LUKE 14:12-24

12 Now He also went on to say to the one who had invited Him, “Whenever you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor wealthy neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you to a meal in return, and that will be your repayment. 13 But whenever you give a banquet, invite people who are poor, who have disabilities, who are limping, and people who are blind; 14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

15 Now when one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!”

16 But He said to him, “A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; 17 and at

the dinner hour he sent his slave to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, because everything is ready now.' 18 And yet they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I purchased a field and I need to go out to look at it; please consider me excused.' 19 And another one said, 'I bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.' 20 And another one said, 'I took a woman as my wife, and for that reason I cannot come.' 21 And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here those who are poor, those with disabilities, those who are blind, and those who are limping.' 22 And later the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' 23 And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the roads and the hedges and press upon them to come in, so that my house will be filled. 24 For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my dinner.'"

## OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. Circle any key words.
2. What is the mood or tone of this passage?
3. What are some primary themes you see?

# THINK IT THROUGH

## INTERPRETATION

### INTERPRETATION SKILL: COMPARE MULTIPLE TRANSLATIONS

To learn more about this skill, see page 107.

### INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

1. How does comparing multiple translations enhance your understanding of its themes?
2. In Luke 14:15, one Pharisee makes a comment about who he thinks will be blessed in the kingdom of God. How might Jesus's response through the parable contrast what the Pharisee believed?
3. Who were initially invited to the banquet of God's coming kingdom (cf. Romans 9:4-5)?
4. Why did those invited to the banquet refuse to participate? What's underneath each of the three individuals' excuses to not attend?
5. Who did the host open up the banquet to in verse 23? How does this correspond to the character and compassion of God?

## INTERPRETATION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

The book of Luke is filled with parables that are story-metaphors that compare the spiritual reality of the relationship of God and his people to characters and events in a story. Fill out your grid below by reading the text and recording your observations. Refer back to the Survey on page 10 for a full explanation of the grid components.

To dive deeper,  
Read Romans 11.

#### PARABLE GUESTS AT THE BANQUET

LUKE 14:12-24

##### Pieces of the Parable

##### Describe the Parable

##### Spiritual Meaning

##### Jesus's Final Word

##### In Your Own Words

# MAKE IT REAL

## APPLICATION

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

### 3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. What is your response to God's invitation? Have you accepted or are you still considering it? Share with a friend what might be holding you back.

2. Do you consider it a privilege and urgency to be part of God's mission - to invite others into the kingdom of God by grace through faith in Jesus Christ? How can you joyfully live out that mission this week?

3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:

Is there a promise for me to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there a command for me to obey?

Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?

How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word.

4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.

5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your goal in the box below.

## ENGAGE TOOL

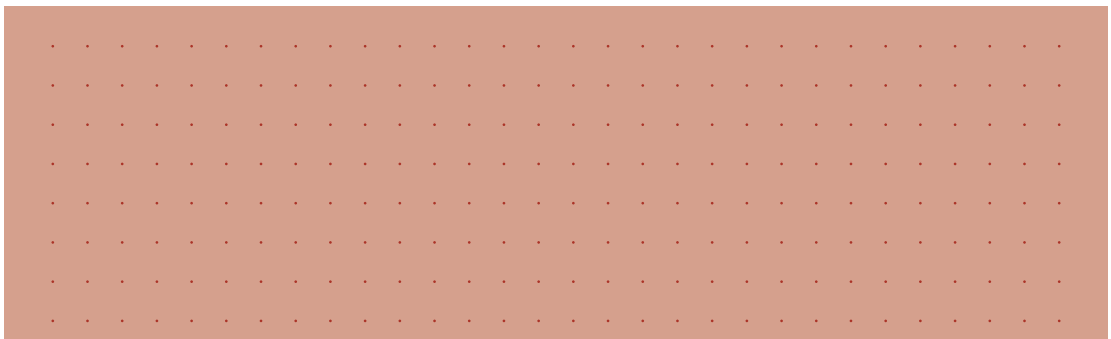
### STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

Simply talking about Jesus as part of your everyday conversations is a great way to bring His light into the spiritual darkness all around us. Be sure your conversations include asking lots of questions and listening! Most people are open to talking about spiritual things IF they feel heard and respected.

Turn to page 114 and to learn how to guide conversations toward spiritual things.

Also, watch the video on Starting a Spiritual Conversation at [grace-bible.org/disciplemaker](http://grace-bible.org/disciplemaker).

Create a personal goal expressing how you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share something you are celebrating or something that disappointed you during the last week.
2. Were you able to practice a time of silence and solitude and/or prayer?

## WHY ARE WE HERE?

What is the main goal of our group? Pray for your time together.

## GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Luke 14:12-24. Share some of your observations.
2. In what ways did you see the theme of humility?

## DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

1. Why is it helpful to compare multiple translations?
2. Review your grids together.
3. Discuss 2-3 questions.
4. In Your Own Words: Ask one person in your group to summarize and share the parable in their own words. Try to capture the meaning of the metaphor. Use your grid to help.

## ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Have you accepted or are you still considering God's invitation? Share with a friend what might be holding you back.
2. What specific steps will you take to apply what you learned this week?

## ENGAGE TOOL: **Starting a Spiritual Conversation** (p.???)

Read over and discuss how to start a spiritual conversation. What has been your experience talking about your faith with friends? Is there a friend or neighbor you could have a spiritual conversation with this week? Pray for opportunities!

## GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?



## PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

# LESSON 7

## THE LOST SON

### LUKE 15:11-32

We all seek after the approval of something or someone. We may look to the things of this world or we may look inside ourselves, but we all end up lost and discontent. In the Parable of the Lost Son, the younger son demands his inheritance prematurely and seeks satisfaction from the pleasures of this world, leaving him hungry, ashamed, and alone. The older son looks to himself, finding satisfaction in success and self-righteousness as if he can earn his father's approval, but is left bitter and ungrateful. Prodigal simply means "extravagant", so in this parable it is really the father's prodigal love that outshines the son's prodigal spending. God as our heavenly Father, is the One who deeply loves us and offers forgiveness when we run away. He is the Father who runs towards us in celebration of our return.



**"HE WAS LOST AND  
HAS BEEN FOUND"**

**LUKE 15:24**

# LOOK IT OVER

## OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

LUKE 15:11-32

11 And He said, "A man had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that is coming to me.' And so he divided his wealth between them. 13 And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey to a distant country, and there he squandered his estate in wild living. 14 Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began doing without. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 And he longed to have his fill of the carob pods that the pigs were eating, and no one was giving him anything. 17 But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired laborers have more than enough bread, but I am dying here from hunger! 18 I will set out and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired laborers."' 20 So he set out and came to his father. But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly

bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet; 23 and bring the fattened calf, slaughter it, and let's eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate.

25 "Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. 27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.' 28 But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. 29 But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you never gave me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; 30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.' 31 And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.'"

## OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. Follow the theme of hunger in this story. Make note of what each character hungers for and how needs are met even in the midst of famine.

# THINK IT THROUGH

## INTERPRETATION

1. Based on the setting and audience (see Luke 15:1-11), what types of responses would this parable have provoked? In what ways was this teaching of Jesus countercultural to his original audience?

2. Consider what the younger son asks of his father. What does he value most and how does he view their relationship?

3. How does the son anticipate his father to respond (see Luke 15:18-19)? What does he believe about his own sin and his father's response?

A robe is a sign of honor, a ring is a sign of authority, and sandals represented freedom.

4. Why is the father's reaction significant? What is this parable meant to say about our heavenly Father's character?

5. What does the older brother's reaction tell you about his values and relationship with his father?

## INTERPRETAION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

The book of Luke is filled with parables that are story-metaphors that compare the spiritual reality of the relationship of God and his people to characters and events in a story. Fill out your grid below by reading the text and recording your observations. Refer back to the Survey on page 10 for a full explanation of the grid components.

PARABLE THE LOST SON		LUKE 15:1-32
<b>Pieces of the Parable</b>	<b>Describe the Parable</b>	<b>Spiritual Meaning</b>
<b>Jesus's Final Word</b>		
<b>In Your Own Words</b>		

# MAKE IT REAL

## APPLICATION

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

### 3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. In what ways are you like each of the two sons in this story?  
How have you hungered after the things of this world, believing that they will be what satisfies you?  
How have you tried to earn God's favor through good works, pride, and self-sufficiency?
  
2. Knowing the Father's character, how does this change the way you view your sin/idolatry and interact with the Lord? What does it look like to live in full belief that God is the one who satisfies?
  
3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:
  - Is there a promise for me to claim?
  - Is there a truth for me to believe?
  - Is there a command for me to obey?
  - Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?
  - How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?



4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.

5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your goal in the box below.

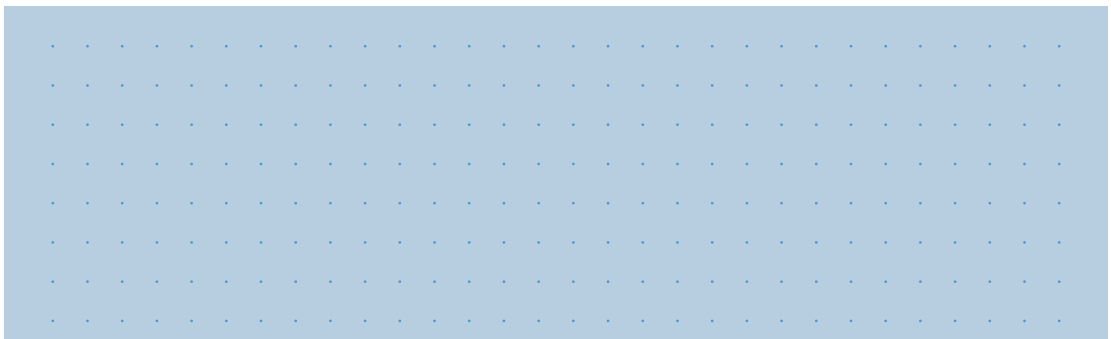
## ENGAGE TOOL

### SHARING YOUR STORY

One of the most powerful ways to help people find Jesus is to share with them your own story of meeting and trusting in Him.

Turn to page 115 and write a simple draft of your faith story. Trace the theme of God's grace throughout your story, as you have in this study of the Parable of the Lost Son. For more insight, watch the Sharing Your Story video at [grace-bible.org/disciplemaker](http://grace-bible.org/disciplemaker).

Create a personal goal expressing how you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. How was your week? Did you see God working in any specific ways?
2. Were you able to start a spiritual conversation with any friends from your Every Neighbor Map?

## WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to share why they prioritize biblical community in their life. Pray for your time together.

Ask the Lord to open your minds to understand this week's passage of scripture.

## GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Luke 15:11-32. Share some of your observations.
2. Trace the theme of hunger throughout this story. How does this enhance your understanding of the passage?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

1. Review your grids together.
2. Discuss 2-3 questions.
3. In Your Own Words: Ask one person in your group to summarize and share the parable in their own words. Try to capture the meaning of the metaphor. Use your grid to help.

## ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. In what ways are you like each of the two sons in this story?
2. Knowing the Father's character, how does this change the way you interact with God?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Sharing Your Story (p.115)**

Practice sharing your story in groups of 2-3.

## GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

## PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

**LESSON 8**

**THE WICKED  
VINE-GROWERS**

**LUKE 20:9-18**

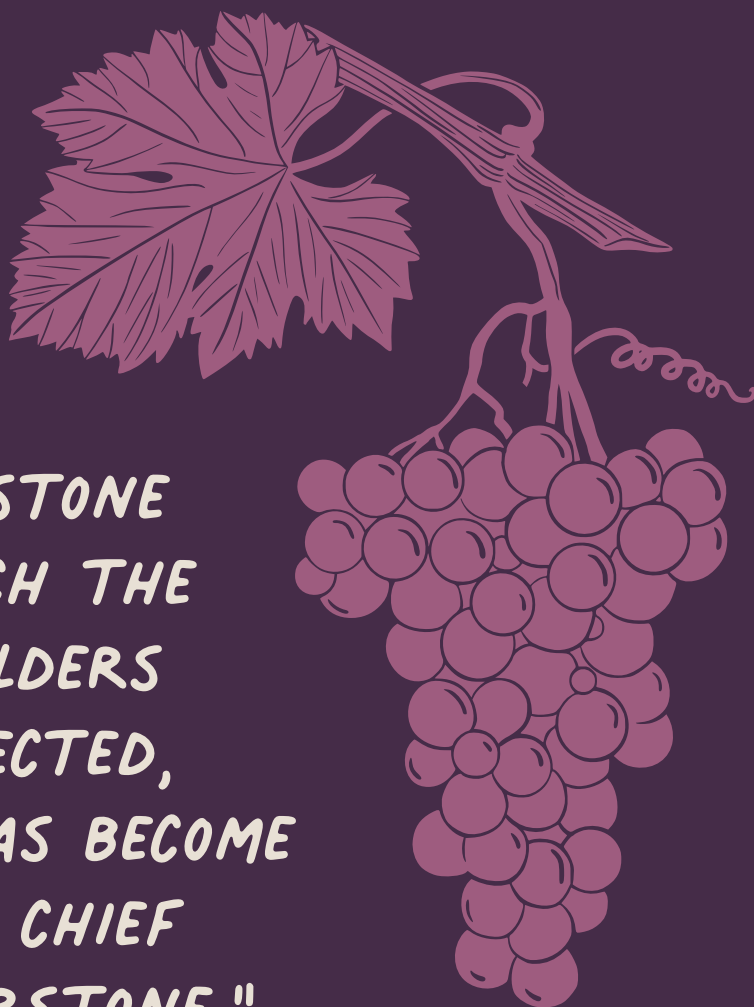
As the book of Luke comes to close, Jesus nears His imminent sacrificial death. In this parable He brings clarity about His own relationship to God the Father. The beauty in this parable comes with the value it places on believers.

Just like the vineyard owner values the harvest enough to send his beloved son to check on the produce of the vineyard, “God so loved the world that he sent His only beloved Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

The harvest is of great value to God. What an inheritance we have in Christ as co-heirs of the kingdom!

**"A STONE  
WHICH THE  
BUILDERS  
REJECTED,  
THIS HAS BECOME  
THE CHIEF  
CORNERSTONE."**

**MARK 12:10**



# LOOK IT OVER

## OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

LUKE 20:9-18

9 But He began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard and leased it to vine-growers, and went on a journey for a long time. 10 At the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers, so that they would give him his share of the produce of the vineyard; but the vine-growers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 11 And he proceeded to send another slave; but they beat him also and treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. 12 And he proceeded to send a third; but this one too they wounded and threw out. 13 Now the owner of the vineyard said, 'What am I to do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.' 14 But when the vine-growers saw him, they discussed with one another, saying, 'This is the heir; let's kill him so that the inheritance will be ours.' 15 And so they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and put these vine-growers to death, and will give the vineyard to others." However, when they heard this, they said, "May it never happen!" 17 But Jesus looked at them and said, "Then what

is this statement that has been written:

‘A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED,

THIS HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE’?

18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will crush him.”

## OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. Notice the vineyard owner sends someone to check on his vineyard four times. Record who was sent and how they were treated by the tenants.

2. What are some primary themes or patterns that you see?

# THINK IT THROUGH

## INTERPRETATION

### INTERPRETATION SKILL: USE THE CONTEXT

This interpretive skill greatly improves our understanding of what a passage meant to its original readers. When approaching a parable or any passage of Scripture, it is helpful to look at what happened before and what happens after the passage. Try to follow the flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous passages or cause you to read ahead for clues.

### INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

1. Practice using context. Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the passage to answer the following questions.

Who? (Those present)

What?

When? (What happened right before? Right after?)

Where?

Why? (What is timely about this teaching of Jesus?)

2. Jesus taught this parable a few days before He was crucified. What is the significance of His timing?

3. Do you think the Pharisees and religious leaders knew that this parable was spoken against them? If so, why would they allow Jesus to continue teaching?



4. What do we learn about Jesus's character and authority from this account?

Character:

Authority:

Jesus is asserting His authority over the chief priests, scribes, and elders. Will they recognize Him as Messiah and submit? Or reject His authority which leads to destruction?

## INTERPRETATION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

The book of Luke is filled with parables that are story-metaphors that compare the spiritual reality of the relationship of God and his people to characters and events in a story. Fill out your grid below by reading the text and recording your observations. Refer back to the Survey on page 10 for a full explanation of the grid components.

#### PARABLE THE VINE-GROWERS

LUKE 20:9-18

Pieces of the Parable

Describe the Parable

Spiritual Meaning

Jesus's Final Word

In Your Own Words

# MAKE IT REAL

## APPLICATION

Remember, the goal of application is to internalize and embody God's life-giving love and truth. Begin in prayer, asking God's Spirit to reveal what He is saying specifically to you.

### 3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. Read and reflect on Jesus's grace and humility in Matthew 25:34-40. Consider the contrast of how the vine-growers treated others and how the Lord calls believers to treat others. Then, ask the Lord to reveal anyone you have slighted in this area, and to remind you that grace and humility shown to others matters now.
2. The vine-growers were given a lavish blessing by the vineyard owner. They had land to cultivate and all their needs provided. Yet, they did not recognize the blessing. Pray that the Lord would reveal areas of your life or circumstances that you are missing the blessing. Record any thoughts that surface and consider sharing them in community, asking for accountability in these areas.
3. List some of the biblical truths, principles, ideas, or images God has revealed to you from this passage. A few questions to consider are:
  - Is there a promise for me to claim?
  - Is there a truth for me to believe?
  - Is there a command for me to obey?
  - Is God showing me a picture or image of what He desires?
  - How does this passage connect to what God has been saying to me lately in prayer, in conversations with fellow believers and through His word?

4. Continuing in prayer, write down the main biblical truth, principle, idea, or image that God revealed to you during your study.

5. What is God's invitation to you this week as you seek to apply what you've learned? What specific steps will you take? How could this impact relationships where you live, work, and play? Write your goal in the box below.

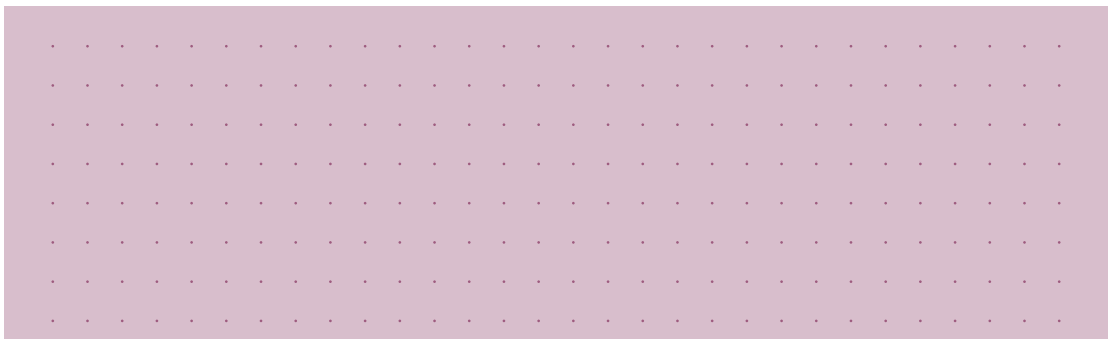
## ENGAGE TOOL

### SHARING THE GOSPEL: 3 CIRCLES

As we pray, ask questions, and listen to people with a heart of compassion, the Holy Spirit may lead us into sharing with someone how they can turn from trusting in themselves to trusting in Jesus. This simple tool using a diagram of three circles is really helpful to share the good news of the gospel with people.

Turn to page 116 and practice sharing the gospel this week. Pray for opportunities to share with non-believing friends. See a demonstration video at [grace-bible.org/disciplemaker](http://grace-bible.org/disciplemaker).

Create a personal goal expressing how you will actively embody biblical truth and engage missionally this week.



# GROUP DISCUSSION

## CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. What are you thankful for this week?
2. What are you asking God for currently?
3. Goals: how did you do on your goals this week? Were you able to share your story with any friends or neighbors?

## WHY ARE WE HERE?

If a friend asked you why you study the Bible in a group, what would you say?

Pray for your time together.

## GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION:

1. Read Luke 20:9-18. Share some of your observations.
2. How might using context help you better understand scripture?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

1. Review your grids together.
2. Discuss 2-3 questions.
3. In Your Own Words: Ask one person in your group to summarize and share the parable in their own words. Try to capture the meaning of the metaphor. Use your grid to help.

## ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Is there someone in your life that you can show grace and humility towards this week?
2. Are there any areas of your life or circumstances where you are missing the blessing? Record any thoughts that surface and consider sharing them in community. Ask for accountability in these areas.
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Sharing the Gospel: 3 Circles (p.116)**

Read over and discuss the 3 Circles Gospel tool. Practice sharing it in groups of 2-3.

## GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

## PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

# SYNTHESIS

## PUT IT BACK TOGETHER

Before we get to the synthesis, one word of encouragement ... please realize how much you have grown as a student of God's Word through your study of the Parables in Luke! Each week, you've learned how to better observe, interpret, and apply the stories of scripture. Those same three steps will serve you well as you continue to study God's story throughout the Bible. Continue to practice and refine these skills so that you become, "a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the Word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15) Finally, as you consider what you have learned, or heard from scripture in this study, know that that is only the first step. Now go and do these things! James encourages us in his letter to believers saying, "prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves." (James 1:22)

Now, look back at each lesson to your parable grids and summarize what God has taught you. These could be theological truths, life lessons, insights, or timeless principles.

Lesson 1 - Sower, Seed, and Soils

Lesson 2 - The Good Samaritan

Lesson 3 - The Bothered Friend and The Unjust Judge

Lesson 4 - The Rich Fool

Lesson 5 - Spiritual Formation: Prayer + Solitude

Lesson 6 - Guests at The Banquet

Lesson 7 - The Lost Son

Lesson 8 - The Wicked Vine-Growers

## INTERPRETATION TOOL

### BREAK IT DOWN

We have looked closely at several parables in the Gospel of Luke, learning how to discover the spiritual truth about how to live a life following Jesus. Parables are a useful tool for teaching, remembering and sharing biblical truths. As you open scripture, you will notice that parables can be found all throughout the Old and New Testaments, not just in the Gospels! Jesus told over thirty parables that are recorded by the Gospel writers (Matthew, Mark and Luke), but you will find parables used in the books of the prophets and wisdom literature as well. Continue to use this grid with any parable you encounter in scripture. This is a valuable skill to carry with you as you journey through God's Word.

Review the general example that was introduced in the Survey.

PARABLE TITLE AND SCRIPTURE REFERENCE		
<b>Pieces of the Parable</b> People, places, or things that Jesus uses to tell the story.	<b>Describe the Parable</b> What does the parable say about each of those things?	<b>Spiritual Meaning</b> Who do you think those things represent in our spiritual reality?  <b>Examples</b> God, Jesus, religious leaders at the time, etc.
<b>Jesus's Final Word</b> Jesus ends each parable with a statement that usually points to the spiritual truth and lesson that He hopes to convey. Write that verse here, and/or the Scripture reference.		
<b>In Your Own Words</b> In your own words, what is the overall truth or lesson that Jesus is trying to teach? This will be the last part you fill in... what is Jesus teaching you?		

How has practicing this grid helped you understand parables? Throughout the study have you improved in using this tool?

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

The overarching purpose of this study is to discover what Jesus says the kingdom of God is like through His parables and how to live a fruitful life that honors God and blesses others. With that banner overhead plus keeping in mind all the spiritual truths learned from each lesson, application can follow. It's with this heart posture and understanding that we commit to change and improve - to lead lives that reflect more of Christ.

1. Summarize what Jesus teaches us about the kingdom of God through these parables. List all the ways His kingdom stands out from our own kingdom or the kingdoms in culture around us.

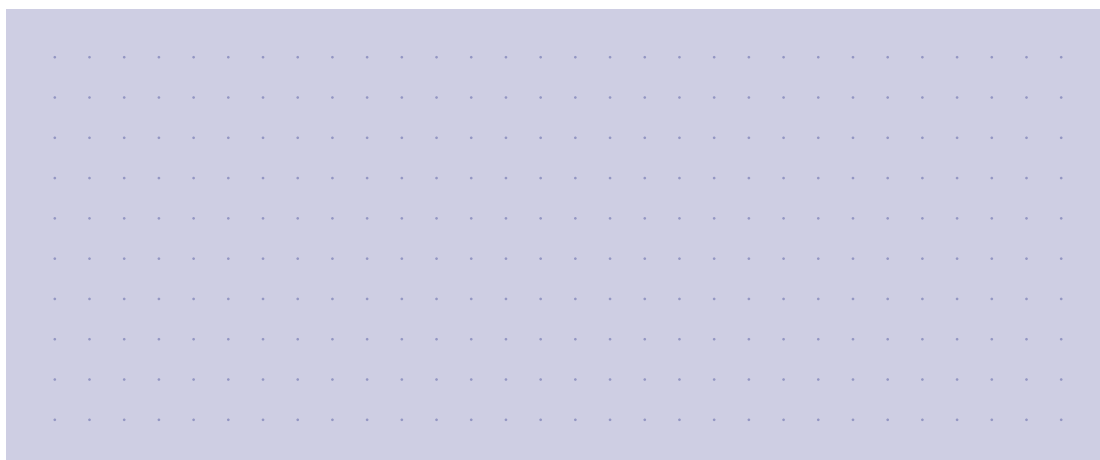
2. Jesus used parables to speak the word to His disciples. Mark wrote about Jesus, "and He did not speak to them without a parable." (Mark 4:34) According to Jesus, what specific actions and attitudes should characterize the life of a believer? List them below.

## REFLECTION

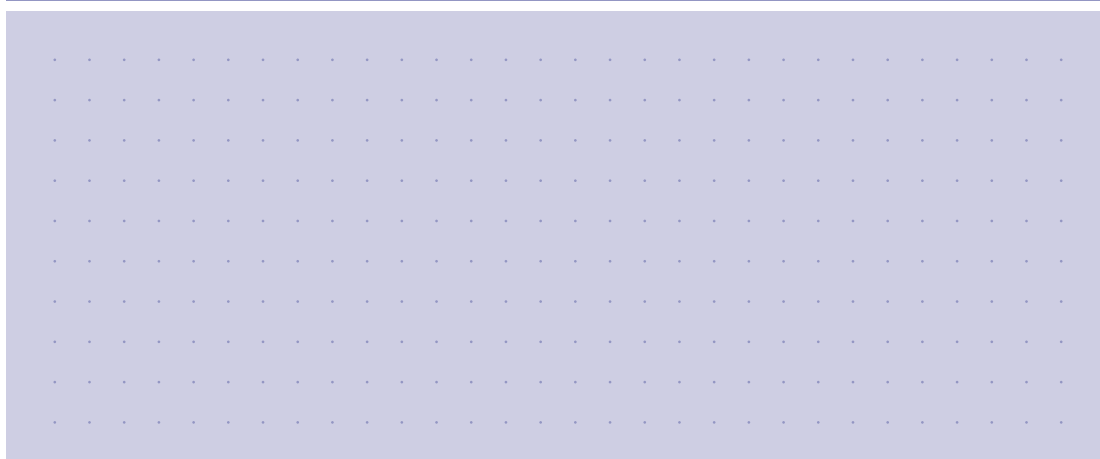
You have reviewed each lesson and summarized what God taught you in each of Jesus' parables. These could be theological truths, life lessons, insights, or timeless principles. Using your reflections, create a list of the theological truths and life lessons you have either learned for the first time or been reminded of from your study of parables of Jesus. As an example of a theological truth, you might write "I was taught that God does not tire of my prayers. He desires for me to keep asking Him persistently and that I can trust God to answer my prayers (Luke 11:9-13)." As an example of a life lesson, you might write "This study reminded me of the power of a story to share about how God works in my life and encouraged me to be bold in sharing with others." List a few theological truths and a few life lessons that you learned from your study of these parables of Jesus, and record the verses where each one is addressed.



## THEOLOGICAL TRUTH I'VE LEARNED



## LIFE LESSONS I'VE LEARNED



The final step of the synthesis is to prayerfully choose two applications to practice. These can be applications that you developed and began to practice during previous lessons, or you can create entirely new applications. Whatever your choice, two things must be true about them:

Both applications should relate to areas of your life where you are currently in need of growth. Do not choose “be kind to others” if this is already something you do very well.

Both applications should be specific with a clear plan for growth and the name of someone who will hold you accountable. “Pray more” is not specific enough. Instead, develop a specific plan, such as, “I will go on a prayer walk, alone, three mornings a week for 20 minutes. Sam will hold me accountable on a weekly basis.”

## APPLICATION #1

Spiritual truth from Jesus:

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Verses where it's discussed:

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Plan of Action: I will ...

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## APPLICATION #2

Spiritual truth from Jesus:

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Verses where it's discussed:

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Plan of Action: I will ...

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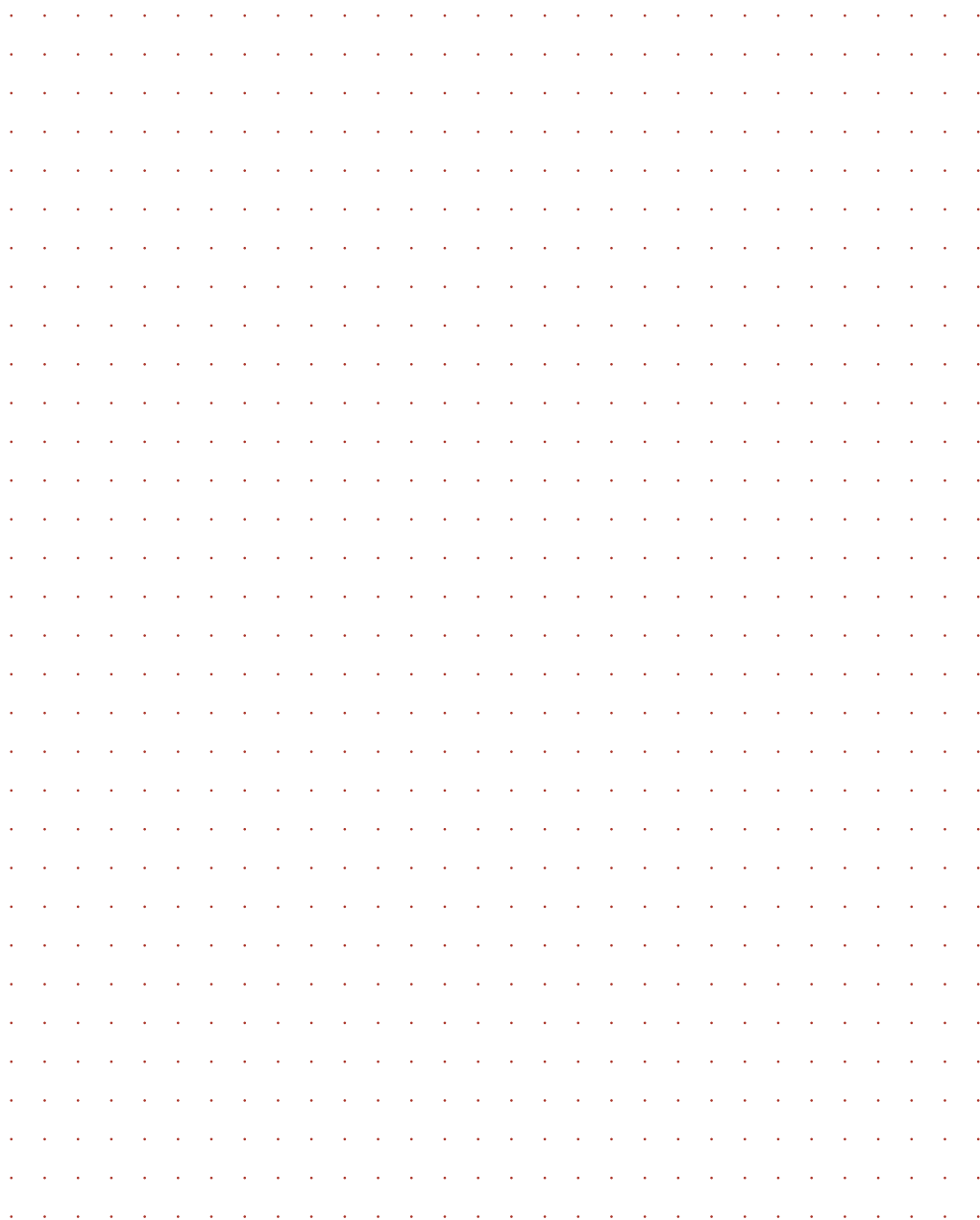
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## GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Begin your time in your small group by taking a moment to share a testimony about how you experienced transformation in your life from lesson one of this study until today. What has the Lord been teaching you that is changing how you desire to live? Is there one lesson that stands out to you, or spoke to you in this season of life?

Pray a prayer of thanksgiving for all the Lord has done. Praise Him for who He is and what He alone can do in the lives of those in your group who seek Him. Open it up for anyone in the group to join in conversation with the Lord. Use the space below to journal your prayers.



# *APPENDIX*

**101 LEADER HELPS**

**103 BIBLE STUDY TOOLS**

**110 NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY**

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# LEADER HELPS

## WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION

The best preparation for leading a Bible study is following Jesus closely yourself.

- Spend time with God daily to keep your relationship with Him fresh and growing! Healthy leadership is ultimately an overflow of your personal relationship with God.
- Spend time in the passage throughout the week.
- Pray regularly with your co-leader for each person in your group.
- Prepare ahead of time and make a plan (see next page) for your group time. Discuss with your co-leader.
- As a facilitator of discussion rather than a teacher, you are encouraged to be a co-learner with your group. Your job is not to know “everything.” It is acceptable to leave some questions partially answered or unresolved, trusting for clarity at a later time. Reach out to ministry leaders and pastors at your church for clarification as needed.
- Lead and walk by faith in the Holy Spirit’s work in your life and in the lives of your group members.

## LEADING WELL

- Set a regular meeting place and time. Consistency helps avoid obstacles that will keep people from being there and a plan helps people know what to expect.
- Create a welcoming environment! Learn people’s names and make sure everyone is introduced to each other. Possibly have a snack each week, alternating between healthy and “less healthy.” Everyone likes a snack!
- Regularly remind people of the group’s purpose to:

**CONNECT** Relationally

**GROW** Biblically

**ENGAGE** Missionally

- Regularly break up into smaller groups of 2-3, starting from the very first meeting. Smaller groups help people feel known. Keep the groups no bigger than 3. This will pay off in the long run.
- Stress confidentiality about what is shared in the group.
- Try reaching out to different people each week to grab lunch or coffee outside of group time as your schedule allows.

## MAKE A PLAN EACH WEEK

Utilize the Group Discussion Guide located at the end of each lesson. Divide your time into three relatively equal parts that focus on **CONNECT, GROW, ENGAGE**. For example, if your group meets for one hour, try intentionally focusing about 20 minutes on Connect, 20 minutes on Grow, and 20 minutes on Engage. Each one of us can easily drift towards overemphasizing one category and neglecting another, which is why making a plan is an important step. Here are some leading tips for connecting, growing, and engaging.

1 / 3

### CONNECT

Build group community by using the connect suggestions in the Group Discussion Guide. Depending on your group size, try getting into groups of 2-3 for an icebreaker question, to catch up on application from last week, and for prayer. The question could vary from more fun or more serious. For example: "What was a highlight and lowlight of your week?" or "How did you apply last week's lesson?"

Then pray in the small groups. (Prayer at the beginning is a good way to help make it an emphasis.) Suggest something for them to pray for as a group, that is bigger than themselves and the group. Some ideas: For neighbors, family members, friends, or classmates who they would like to point to Jesus; for a missionary or a people group in need of the gospel.

2 / 3

### GROW

Gather back as one group and have one person pray for your time in God's Word. Discuss the passage using the Grow suggestions in the Group Discussion Guide. Summarize or read aloud the passage together.

3 / 3

### ENGAGE

Read and discuss the tool or spiritual practice in the lesson. Give time to try out sharing the tool or spiritual practice as a group. Reflect on the biblical truth God revealed to you this week. Create a plan of action to apply what you have learned. Gather in small groups (of 2-3) again. Discuss your plan of action and pray for one another.

# BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

## OBSERVE

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is, “What do I see?” This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of our study. Here are four tasks involved in observation which should be performed in the order below. All examples are taken from the book of Galatians.

### OBSERVATION TASK 1

Mark up the passage by visually identifying the following specific elements:

**Underline all verbs.** A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action is taking place (“we will reign with Him”) or that a state or condition exists (“we are faithless”). Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author’s flow of thought.

**Circle key words or phrases.** These are words or short phrases that are important theologically (like “gospel” in 1:6) or thematically (they set the theme or main idea for the passage, such as “approved” and “works of the law” in 3:2,5,10).

**Highlight repeated words or phrases.** Also, include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as “suffer hardship” and “endure suffering”). You’ll also want to highlight things that are repeated from previous passages (such as “son” in 4:23 and 4:30)

**Box connecting words.** These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses. Here are eight types of common connecting words to look for:

1. **Comparison** either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include *and, like, as, just as, also, so also, even so* (e.g., “like the Gentiles” in 2:14).
2. **Contrast** points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include *but, rather, yet, however* (e.g., “No longer I... but Christ” in 2:20).
3. **Purpose** indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words and phrases include *that, so that, in order that* (e.g., “Christ redeemed us... in order that in Christ Jesus...” in 3:13-14).
4. **Result** is similar to “purpose,” but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words and phrases include *that, so that, as a result, with the result that* (e.g., “The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.” in 2:13).
5. **Cause** expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include *because, since, and sometimes for*. (e.g., “Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions” in 3:19)

6. **Explanation** is what follows further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the key word *for*. (e.g., “For prior to the coming of certain men from James” in 2:12).

7. **Inference** provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words and phrases include *therefore* and *for this reason*. (e.g., “Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.” in 3:7)

8. **Condition** presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can occur. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be hypothetical). Key word is “if.” (e.g., “For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise...” in 3:18)

## OBSERVATION TASK 2

List 2-3 primary themes you see in the passage each week.

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as “humility” in 5:16-26. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

## OBSERVATION TASK 3

Write two or more observations per verse.

Our observations might identify people, places, or events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences, or even point out something missing that we expected to see.

## OBSERVATION TASK 4

Ask your own interpretive questions.

Here are a few examples:

WHO IS...	WHAT IS THE...	WHY DID THE AUTHOR...	HOW...
the author talking about? accomplishing the action? benefiting from the action?	meaning of this word? significance of this phrase? implication of this statement? relationship between these phrases?	choose this word? include this phrase, statement, or command? not say _____?	was this action accomplished? will this situation occur?

## OBSERVATION TASK 5 **Figurative Language**

As every writer knows, one of the most powerful ways to emotionally engage an audience with your words is to use figurative language. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE uses words and phrases in an unexpected way to create a vivid image in the mind of a listener. This image adds color to the author’s message, holds the listener’s attention, forces the listener to slow down and reflect on the idea being communicated, makes the abstract more concrete, and aids in retention of the author’s point. While there are many types of figurative language, here are the eight major types you should be looking for as you study the Bible:



1. Simile: compares two things by using the explicit formula *like* or *as*. “He will be like a tree firmly planted.” Psalm 1:3
2. Metaphor: compares two things but omits *like* or *as* and instead simply equates them (A is B) “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.” Matthew 5:14
3. Metonymy: one word is substituted for another word closely associated with it, such as referring to military officers as “brass.” A biblical example would be James’ use of “tongue” to refer to one’s speech (e.g. James 3:5).
4. Hyperbole: conscious exaggeration for the sake of effect or emphasis “I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to serve you;” 2 Corinthians 11:8
5. Personification: treating something non-human (and frequently inanimate) as though it were a human. Example: “And their tongue struts through the earth.” Psalm 73:9 “Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed,” Isaiah 24:23
6. Anthropomorphism: attributing human characteristics, even body parts, to God. Example: “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not so short that it cannot save; neither is His ear so dull that it cannot hear.” Isaiah 59:1
7. Apostrophe: addressing a thing as if it were a person or an imaginary person as if he were present. Example: “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” 1 Corinthians 15:55
8. Symbol: a concrete image that points to or embodies other meanings. Examples include “light” used to represent God, goodness, truth, or blessing (such as in Psalm 27:1) and “throne” to represent power and authority (such as in Psalm 89:4 and 14).

## INTERPRET

Our observation of a passage should stir interesting yet challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study: interpretation. Fortunately, we do not have to run to a commentary or study Bible for answers (though these are helpful tools to check our conclusions). Use the following six methods, as needed, to tackle a variety of questions. Also, make sure to familiarize yourself with the three “Principles of Interpretation” on page 107.

## INTERPRETATION METHODS

### **Interpretation Method 1** | Use the context.

Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow the author’s flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous lesson, so have it handy as a review. You may need to read ahead in the book for clues.

### Interpretation Method 2 | Study cross-references.

Cross references are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such cross references can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting online tool such as [netbible.org](http://netbible.org). Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Greek” on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong’s definition in the opposite window. Then, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, and choose to run a “Word Search” that will provide all Biblical references that use the English term.

### Interpretation Method 3 | Look up key words.

While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek provides deeper understanding and is surprisingly easy, thanks to online tools such as [net.bible.org](http://net.bible.org). Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Greek” on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong’s definition in the opposite window. For even further study, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, then choose to run a “Word Search,” “Strong’s Search,” or “Word Study.” The first will provide all Biblical references that use the English term. The second will provide all Biblical references that use the Greek term. And the third will provide the full definition and derivatives of the Greek term. What used to take multiple books & many hours now takes one internet browser & a few seconds!

### Interpretation Method 4 | Look up background information.

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is *The New Bible Dictionary* by Wood & Marshall. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary. Background information can be found by visiting the online reference [netbible.org](http://netbible.org). Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Notes” on the right side of the screen. Now, anytime you select one of the numbered annotations above particular words or verses, you can immediately see the relevant Biblical or historical context for that term or passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

### Interpretation Method 5 | Tackle tough questions step-by-step.

When trying to answer the most challenging questions, follow this four-step process:

1. List all the options. Always start by brainstorming every possible answer to your question.
2. List pros and cons for each option. See all the evidence you can find that either argues for or against a particular option. This evidence comes from your study of key words, the grammar of the sentence, the context of surrounding verses and the book as a whole, cross references to other books, and comparison with your overall understanding of Christian theology.

3. Choose the most likely option. Look at your evidence for each option. Typically, evidence from the immediate context is most important, followed closely by evidence from the book as a whole. Evidence from other books of the Bible, or from Christian theology as a whole, does not carry quite as much weight unless the solution contradicts a clear passage elsewhere or a major tenant of Christian doctrine. In that case, since Scripture never lies and God cannot contradict Himself, you must eliminate that option.

4. Decide on your certainty level. Once you have chosen the best solution, step back for a second and humbly gauge how certain you are of its accuracy (90% = I am very sure this is correct ... 60% = This solution is just a bit more likely than the others!). Finally, talk with others and check commentaries or reference books to see what solutions they have chosen and why.

### **Interpretation Method 6** | Compare multiple translations.

This packet uses the New American Standard (NASB) translation. You can often find helpful interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. The New King James Version (NKJV), like the NASB, is a fairly word-for-word translation of the Greek text. The New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are excellent phrase-to-phrase translations of the Greek and thus often easier to read. Another excellent phrase-to-phrase Bible, which includes extensive translation notes, is the New English Translation (NET) available online for free at [netbible.org](http://netbible.org). You can find and compare numerous translations of any Bible passage at [www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com).

## **INTERPRETATION PRINCIPLES**

There are three fundamental principles of interpretation that help us to use our interpretive skills accurately.

### **Interpretation Principle 1** | Discern the author's intended meaning.

Your goal is to discern the author's intended meaning to the original audience. Unfortunately, most people begin their Bible study by asking, "What does this passage mean to me?" While there may be multiple possible applications to my life, there is only one meaning, the author's intended meaning, and we must first seek this out. This involves three important steps:

1. Always start your study with prayer, asking the same God who composed Scripture through these ancient authors to give you insight to understand His intended meaning.
2. Avoid inserting your 21st century circumstances and theological issues into the text as they can skew understanding.
3. Work diligently to see the text from the point of view of the original readers. To do this: (a) dig into the historical and cultural background using Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and (b) spend a few moments thinking about the original audience's religious understanding by asking, "What books of the Bible did they have access to? What did they know about God? About Jesus? About salvation? etc."

### **Interpretation Principle 2** | Assume a “Normal” Use of Language

The Bible was given to us because God desired to communicate with us, not to hide Himself from us. Therefore, we should not be looking for “hidden” meanings as we study. Instead, we should use the “normal” techniques we would use to understand any piece of literature:

1. Study the grammar. Pay attention to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions. Think through any figures of speech. Observe how phrases and clauses are connected into sentences and how sentences are linked together into paragraphs.
2. Remember that chapter divisions came later. When Paul wrote Corinthians or Luke wrote the book of Acts, they wrote single, unified stories without verse or chapter divisions. These books were meant to be read just like you would read a letter or a novel. Always keep the overall story in mind as you study each passage.

### **Interpretation Principle 3** | Let Scripture Interpret Scripture

This is the third and last principle of interpretation. Because God is unchangingly truthful and always consistent (John 17:17; Hebrews 3:6; James 1:17), we can, and should, expect the same of His Word. This has two practical applications:

1. Check your conclusions. Always compare your conclusions with the teachings of scripture as a whole. If you find your interpretation of a passage contradicts the clear teaching of scripture elsewhere, you probably need to revise your conclusions.
2. Allow clear passages to illuminate ambiguous passages. Whenever you encounter a passage that is confusing or open to multiple possible interpretations, use clearer passages of scripture to guide you to the correct interpretation.

One last caution: remember that God revealed scripture progressively, not all at once. Therefore, we should not be surprised by differences between how people related to and understood God at different times in the history of scripture. For example, while Abraham needed only believe that God was faithful in order to be justified (Genesis 15:6), in the New Testament era, we must believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to be saved (1 Corinthians 15:1-7).

## APPLY

Our Bible study is not over until we apply what we have learned to our everyday lives. And lest we underestimate the value of this last step, remember that in God's eyes it is the person who does not just know His Word, but also obeys His Word that truly loves Him (see John 14:21). So how do we apply a passage to our lives? Application involves the following two tasks:

### APPLICATION TASK 1

#### **List potential principles from your passage.**

A "principle" is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. Legitimate principles are not specific to a particular person (e.g., 1 Timothy 5:23 is just for Timothy) nor a particular time (e.g., "do not leave Jerusalem" in Acts 1:4). It is often helpful when listing principles to consider the following questions:

- Is there something to worship or thank God for?
- Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?
- Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?
- Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?
- Is there any relationship I need to work on?

### APPLICATION TASK 2

#### **Choose one principle, and create a plan to apply it to your life this week.**

Once you complete your principle list, prayerfully choose the one principle you most need to work on (Do not just choose the easiest to apply!). If you felt deeply convicted about one in particular, that is probably the principle God is leading you to apply. Once you have chosen a specific principle, answer these two questions:

1. What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

# CHRONOLOGY

EVENT	APPROXIMATE DATE
Crucifixion of Jesus	April 33
Pentecost (Acts 2)	May 33
Paul's conversion (Acts 9)	Summer 35
Paul in Jerusalem, 1st visit (Acts 9:26-29; Gal. 1:18-20)	35-43
Paul to Antioch (Acts 11:25-26)	Spring 43
Epistle of James written	45
Paul in Jerusalem, relief visit (Acts 11:30; Gal. 2:1-10)	Autumn 47
Paul to Antioch (Acts 12:25-13:1)	Autumn 47 – Spring 48
Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14)	April 48 – September 49
Peter at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-16)	Autumn 49
Galatians written from Antioch	Autumn 49
Paul in Jerusalem, Jerusalem council (Acts 15)	Autumn 49
Paul in Antioch (Acts 15:30-35)	Winter 49/50
Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22)	April 50 – September 52
1 & 2 Thessalonians written	Spring – Summer 51
Paul in Jerusalem and Antioch	End of September 52; Winter 52/53
Paul's third missionary journey (Acts 18:23-21:16)	Spring 53 – May 57
1 & 2 Corinthians written	Spring – Fall 56
Romans written	Winter 56/57
Ephesian elders visit Paul at Miletus (Acts 20)	May 57
Paul in Jerusalem	Eve of Pentecost, May 27, 57
Paul's arrest and trial before Felix (Acts 21:26-24:22)	June 57
Paul's appearance before Felix (Acts 24:24-26)	June 57
Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea (Acts 24:27)	June 57 – Aug 59
Paul's trial before Festus (Acts 25:7-12) & Agrippa (Acts 26)	July 59; Aug 59
Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:29)	Aug 59 – Feb 60
Paul's first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28:30)	Feb 60 – Mar 62
Luke written	60

Acts Written	60
Ephesians written	Autumn 60
Colossians and Philemon written	Autumn 61
Philippians written	Spring 62
Paul's release	Spring 62
Mark written	62
Paul in Ephesus and Colossae	Spring – Autumn 62
Peter in Rome	62
Paul in Macedonia	Summer 62 – Winter 62/63
1 Timothy written	Autumn 62
Paul in Asia Minor	Spring 62
Peter martyred	Summer 64 (67?)
Paul in Spain and Crete	Spring 64 – Spring 66; Summer 66
Titus written	Summer 66
Paul arrested and taken to Rome	Autumn 67
2 Timothy written	Autumn 67
Paul's death	Spring 68
Matthew written	60's
Hebrews written	60's
Destruction of Jerusalem	September 2, 70
Jude written	60's or 70's
John written	80's or 90's
1,2,3 John written	80's or 90's
Revelation written	Early 90's

*Adapted from Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ, Harold H. Hoehner, Zondervan, 1978.*

# ENGAGE TOOLS

Because God loves all people, He is constantly working to draw men and women to Himself. He invites believers to partner with Him in this great mission of redemption and restoration. We do this by helping people find and follow Jesus — this is disciple-making. Jesus summarized this calling in Matthew 28:18-20.

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying,

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

On the following pages are some foundational tools, practices, and resources to engage in helping people find and follow Jesus.

Visit [grace-bible.org/disciplemaker](https://grace-bible.org/disciplemaker) for more resources.



## EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Just as Jesus entered into a specific time and place, God has placed each of us into a unique context in which to share His love and to represent Him. Our context includes anyone that we commonly encounter on a regular basis which gives us the ability to have influence in their lives.

Think about the people in your spheres of influence; the people with whom you live, learn, work, and play who are near to you but might be far from God.

Also, think about people that are just beyond your normal spheres. Perhaps there is an acquaintance that you don't know well, or a neighbor who is different from you ethnically or socio-economically, or a community member that the Holy Spirit has put in your path but is more a stranger than friend. Be creative and think outside the box!

**Pray Big - diligently pray for these friends to find and follow Jesus.**

**Map - write down at least three names in each of these spheres.**

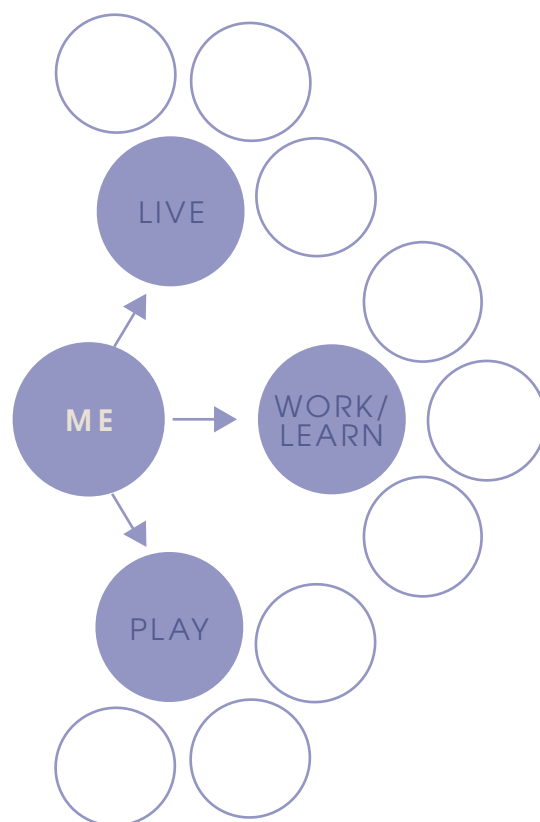
Ask God:

Who might be seeking Him or is asking hard questions about life?

Who needs acts of love and concern shown to them?

How to serve and share the love of Christ with them?

For opportunities to share your story and the gospel.



## STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

During His life on earth, Jesus told stories using illustrations from everyday life that created an interest in His Kingdom. Jesus made His message accessible to those who would hear. Sadly, we have become conditioned to put on a filter and not speak of Jesus because we imagine that it is awkward, pushy, or politically incorrect. What would it be like to take off this filter and grow in boldness and love as we share stories about who He is and what He is about?

Marking ourselves as a “spiritual” person can help us gauge whether others are interested in God and His message. Some people will “lean in” as you speak about such topics, asking additional questions, sharing their own beliefs, telling about their own journey. Some will not; they will “lean back” and change the topic, become silent, or shut down altogether.

Allow the Holy Spirit to prompt you as you initiate and let Him do the work of speaking to a person’s soul.

### **Practice talking about two or three of the following “interest creating” topics:**

Recently, God/Jesus has been teaching me that...

I am realizing more and more that God has blessed me by...

I used to struggle with (insert fear, stronghold, idolatry) but now I see God wants me to believe...

I decided to follow Jesus because...

I’ve really been learning to pray more lately. Do you have anything in your life that I can commit to pray for?

Think of common topics that come up as you meet people, for example: career, living situation, family history, educational background. Pick one of these and tell how God changed your path in the past, or how He is guiding you in the present.

### **As you practice talking about these things, try to end with a learning question such as:**

Have you ever considered God in this way before?

Do you think God is teaching/blessing/asking you to believe anything right now?

Do you consider yourself on a spiritual journey? What is that like?

What does your tradition say about Jesus?

Your questions are to gauge a response and to allow space for them to interact with your story.

**Now, be prayerful and alert as to who God brings across your path!**

## SHARING YOUR STORY

You have a unique story of how you came to know and follow Jesus. Your story is one of the most powerful tools you have for helping other people find and follow Jesus as well. As you begin to let people know that you are following Jesus, simply ask, “Can I share with you the story of my spiritual journey?” Those who are interested in spiritual things are likely to demonstrate their interest in one way or another (asking questions, making a comment) and that often provides an open door to share your story.

### HOW TO BEGIN

Write out your thoughts on the following topics and questions. These ideas will help you share the story of your spiritual journey, sometimes called your “testimony.”

### MY LIFE BEFORE JESUS

My life revolved around \_\_\_\_\_, and I found my identity, happiness and security from \_\_\_\_\_.

Use an example from your personal life here. For instance, did your security come from money, your relationships, etc.?

How did this disappoint me? How was this unfulfilling? How did I come to realize this?

What was I struggling with (if anything) just before I believed in Jesus?

*Note: Some people trusted Jesus when they were very young, and don't have clear memories of the time before they knew Him. If that is you, simply share this as part of your story.*

### HOW I FIRST BELIEVED IN JESUS

This part of your story is where you came to a transition in your life.

When and how did I first hear about Jesus?

What did I learn about the life He offers all who believe in Him?

When and why did my perspective about Jesus begin to change?

Why did I decide to believe in Jesus?

*Note: Some of us may be able to point to specific times or circumstances regarding how or when we believed. For others of us, we can only point to a time period or gradual understanding. Both are great. Everyone's story is significant and the biggest point is that you now believe in Jesus.*

### MY LIFE SINCE I FIRST BELIEVED IN JESUS

How is my life different now? List some specific changes in your character, attitude, and perspective on life.

How am I motivated differently now? What do I live for now?

How do I experience God now?

### BRING IT ALL TOGETHER

Think about your answers to the questions above, and ask yourself the following:

Is this a continuous story that makes sense?

Are there any consistent themes in my story?

Can I share my story in 3-4 minutes?

Was I clear about what I believed about Jesus?

## SHARING THE GOSPEL: THREE CIRCLES

In Christianity, the word “gospel” simply means the “good news” about Jesus - His life, death and resurrection. The message that through belief in Jesus we can enter into a loving relationship with God, experiencing forgiveness and receiving the gift of eternal life, is good news, indeed! Let’s look at a concise and understandable way to communicate the gospel to your friends and family who do not yet know Jesus.

**These three circles help us explain the gospel according to the Bible.**  
**Read each section and the scripture verses that follow.**

### GOD’S DESIGN

Out of God’s great love, He created a world that was good. He made people to enjoy a deeply connected relationship with Him and to represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries to protect us and to allow us to fully enjoy our relationships with Him and with other people (Genesis 2:15-17).

### BROKENNESS

Yet, when we look around our world, brokenness and evil are evident everywhere - war, famine, disease, corruption. If we are honest, we also see brokenness and evil inside ourselves - deceit, hatred, greed, lust. This is because we have rejected God’s design and chosen to follow our own way. Our rejection of God and His ways is what the Bible calls sin. (Romans 3:23) Our sin results in separation from God which the Bible calls death. (Romans 6:23a) Unless our sin is forgiven, we will remain separated from God forever.

### JESUS

God does not want to leave us in our sin and brokenness!

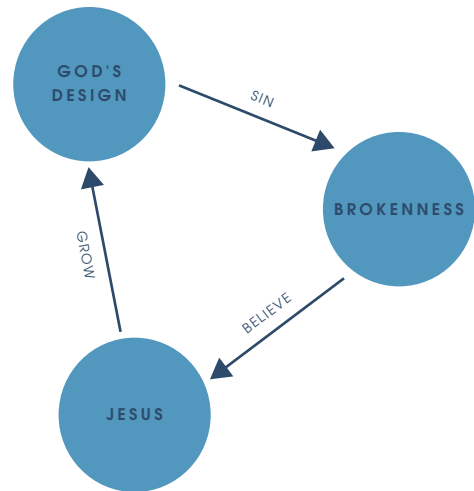
God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and to freely give us eternal life - a life connected to God both now and forever. (Romans 6:23b; John 17:3)

God’s only Son Jesus died in our place. He took upon Himself the penalty that we deserve because of our sin. Then, Jesus rose from the dead, and forever defeated the power of sin and death. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

### BELIEVE

We respond to Jesus by believing in Him for the forgiveness of our sin.

To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God’s approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and rescue. Instead, you accept God’s free gift of eternal life. Belief or faith is simply being convinced or persuaded that something or someone is trustworthy (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9).



Everyone who believes in Jesus is forgiven of their sin and receives eternal life. We can now know God personally and experience the life we were designed to live (John 3:16-17).

**Which circle or arrow in the diagram best represents your life right now? Have you put your trust (believed) in Jesus alone to be reconciled to God?**

## POSSIBLE ANSWERS AND NEXT STEPS:

### **“Yes.”**

Ask: “Tell me about that. When and how did that happen for you?”

Try to discern if the person is trusting in anything other than Christ alone.

Move to Grow and Go

### **“No, but I want to.”**

Affirm their decision to believe and help them to tell God in prayer of their belief in Jesus.

Example: “Thank you God for loving me by sending your Son Jesus to die for me. I believe in His life, death and resurrection to rescue me from my sin and spiritual death. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me the free gift of eternal life.”

Welcome them to the Family of God!

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Move to Grow and Go

### **“Not Sure” / “Not Yet” / “No.”**

Ask: “What is keeping you from trusting in Jesus?”

Try to discern their willingness or unwillingness to believe.

For those willing, help answer their questions if possible.

For those unwilling, offer to pray for them and talk further at another time.

## GROW

Everyone who believes in Jesus should then grow in their relationship with God. We grow by knowing God more deeply and living more like Him personally.

We begin to know Him and we become like Him by following His way of living (Ephesians 4:15).

## GO

Followers of Jesus have the great calling and opportunity to go into the broken world to share the love of God and the good news of the gospel message (Matthew 28:19-20).

## DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

Discovery Bible Study is an easy and meaningful way to read the Bible with friends in your life who do not know Jesus. The simple practice consists of reading a section of scripture and answering five basic questions. The goal is to facilitate an encounter between God's truth and your friend's heart. Be praying for God to reveal Himself to your friend through His Word.

Choose a passage of scripture, read it aloud (1-2 times).

Ask someone to retell it in their own words.

Answer these five questions:

1. What does this passage teach about God?
2. What does this passage teach about people or myself?
3. What stands out most in this passage?
4. Since God's word is true, how should I change as a result? What will I do in response to this passage?

Consider the following:

- Is there an example for me to follow?
- Is there a sin for me to avoid?
- Is there a command for me to obey?
- Is there a promise for me to claim?
- Is there a challenge for me to face?

5. With whom am I going to share this passage and what I am learning from the Bible?

### Suggested Passages

Read through these 4 Core Passages about Jesus:

- John 3:1-21 (You must be born again)
- Mark 2:1-12 (Jesus has authority to forgive)
- Luke 7:36-50 (Forgive much/Love much)
- Luke 18:7-14 (Self-righteous/irreligious)

Read through the book of John.

### Creation to Christ

Read through these passages for bigger picture of the Biblical narrative.

- ☐ Genesis 1:1-25
- ☐ Genesis 2:4-24
- ☐ Genesis 3:1-13
- ☐ Genesis 3:14-24
- ☐ Genesis 6:5-8
- ☐ Genesis 6:9-8:14
- ☐ Genesis 8:15-9:17
- ☐ Genesis 12:1-8, 15:1-6, 17:1-7
- ☐ Genesis 22:1-19
- ☐ Exodus 12:1-28
- ☐ Exodus 20:1-21
- ☐ Leviticus 4:1-35
- ☐ Isaiah 53
- ☐ Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20
- ☐ Matthew 3; John 1:29-34
- ☐ Matthew 4:1-11
- ☐ John 3:1-21
- ☐ John 4:1-26, 39-42
- ☐ Luke 5:17-26
- ☐ Mark 4:35-41
- ☐ Mark 5:1-20
- ☐ John 11:1-44
- ☐ Matthew 26:17-30
- ☐ John 18:1-19:16
- ☐ Luke 23:32-56
- ☐ Luke 24:1-35
- ☐ Luke 24:36-53
- ☐ John 3:1-21

# SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

### MATTHEW 6:9-13

When His disciples asked Jesus, “teach us to pray,” His answer became known as “The Lord’s Prayer.” While Christians have been praying this prayer for centuries, the prayer isn’t merely something to recite from memory. It is also a model to shape times of prayer. Use the suggestions below to develop a regular rhythm of prayer using the concepts from Jesus’ model prayer.

#### **“Our Father who is in heaven...”**

- Take a moment and think about the idea of God as your Father. He is full of love and good intentions toward you. He is the King of heaven and earth. He lovingly rules over all created things and knows each one personally.

#### **“Hallowed be Your name...”**

- Spend a few minutes just sitting with the Father in joyful, grateful, worship for who He is and His greatness. You might want to sit in silence for a few moments. Or sing a worship chorus. Or list the things you’re grateful for. Or praise God with specific things you love about Him.

#### **“Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...”**

- Spend a few minutes asking for God’s will to be done in specific aspects of your life, community, city and world.
- Give to God specific things in your life that you’re wrestling with and trying to control. A simple prayer of, “Your will be done in \_\_\_\_\_,” is a great place to start.

#### **“Give us each day our daily bread...”**

- Spend a few minutes praying for specific needs and wants in your life or that of your family, friends, neighbors, church, city, and world.

#### **“Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors...”**

- Spend a few minutes in quiet asking God for forgiveness in specific areas in your life. Release others through forgiveness.

#### **“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”**

- Spend a few minutes praying against temptation (the word can also be translated as trouble) in your life.
- Pray against specific sins....
- Pray against any kind of evil - spiritual or human evil.
- Pray against trouble in your life or community and for God’s blessing - the divine flow of good into your life and community.

Close by thanking the Father for hearing you in the name of Jesus.

## SOLITUDE + SILENCE

Busyness, distraction, noise, hurry - these are the waters in which we all swim, often unconsciously. We can easily occupy every waking moment with some kind of activity or stimulus. If we are honest, we will admit that digital distraction is likely the first thing most of us turn to when we have a “free moment”, making it possible for days and even weeks to go by without acknowledging God’s presence or spending quality time with Him.

By contrast, Jesus often went to a solitary place to spend time alone with God the Father. He taught His disciples to do the same in the midst of life’s demands and busyness. (Luke 5:15-16)

### START SIMPLY

You may already be spending regular time alone reading your Bible and praying ... that is great! Continue to build on this practice by incorporating Solitude and Silence into your time with God.

#### Solitude

Find a quiet place where you can be alone and can actually focus on God. This may require kindly letting the people you live with know you’d like to be alone without interruption.

#### Silence

Spend a short amount of time (5 minutes) listening to God in silence. Refrain from reading a book or listening to music or even praying with words. Just be with God in the quiet. Give Him your full attention and time. Receive from Him love, truth, and peace. Focus on His presence and nearness. Slowly add more time as you are led by God.

“But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all Your works.” **Psalms 73:28**

### SIMPLE YET CHALLENGING

While the concepts of silence and solitude are easy to understand, you may be surprised at how difficult they can be to put into practice in the moment. When we get alone and quiet, we discover just how much people, productivity and pleasures occupy our thoughts. Painful emotions that we have pushed away may also emerge. Our minds may jump from one thought to another (sometimes called monkey mind!) causing frustration.

### CHALLENGING BUT SO WORTH IT

Allow God to lead you through these challenges by returning your attention to Him when it strays. God’s promise is that when we “seek Him” we will find Him. In solitude and silence, we can find renewal, healing, and a centered peace from God that passes all understanding. Slowly our hearts and minds are realigned to His ways and will. Slowly, we become like Jesus Himself, the great lover of God and people.



## PRAYER OF EXAMEN

The Examen is prayerful reflection on the events of your day in order to detect God's presence and activity in your life. This type of prayer was developed by Ignatius of Loyola in the 1500s. Its regular practice helps us to both grow in communion with God and in awareness of the motives, desires, struggles, and opportunities in our daily lives. The Examen is often practiced at the end of the day using a journal to record thoughts.

### 1. Become aware of God's presence.

- Take a few deep breaths.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to increase your awareness of God's promised presence with you.

### 2. Review your day. Consider a few of the following prompts:

- For what am I most grateful today? For what am I least grateful?
- When did I give and receive the most love today? When did I give and receive the least love today?
- When did I sense the deepest connection with God, others and myself? When did I have the least sense of connection?
- What was the most life-giving part of my day? What was the most life-thwarting part of my day?
- When was I aware of living out of the fruit of the Spirit? When was there an absence of the fruit of the Spirit?

### 3. Pay attention to your emotions.

- List a few feelings that were present throughout the day: Embarrassment? Fear? Elation? Contentment?
- What was the context of these emotions?

### 4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to bring one element of your day to mind. Focus specifically on that experience.
- Sit with it, listening in prayer, and journal what you sense God is speaking.

### 5. Look toward tomorrow.

- As you look toward tomorrow, what emotions or feelings are present: Excitement? Anxiety? Dread? Delight?
- Allow your expectation of the coming day to form a prayer to God.

## PRAY MODEL

**PRAY\*** is a simple acronym to help frame your time of prayer.

### P - PAUSE

- Take a deep breath and center your mind and heart on God's presence with you.
- Don't rush; be still and sit quietly with Him.
- Slowly let go of distractions surrounding you and focus on the nearness of God.

Silence and stillness reorient our minds and hearts to pray from a place of love, joy and peace.

“But as for me, the nearness of God is good for me; I have made the Lord  
God my refuge,” **Psalms 73:28**

### R - REJOICE

- Begin praising God for who He is and for how He loves His good creation; the natural world, all people and you.
- Thank Him for specific things in your life, family, church, community and the world.
- Acknowledge your identity as a “gift recipient” of the abundant grace of God.

“For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.” **John 1:16**  
“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.” **Psalms 150:6**

### A - ASK

- Tell God what is on your heart and mind.
- Ask Him for what you need and want.
- Cast your burdens upon Him because He cares for you (1 Peter 5:6-7).
- Listen to Him as He reveals His heart to you as well.
- Try keeping a list of people and specific areas of your life that you are praying about.

Prayer is a conversation of talking and listening; communion and communication.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition,  
with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” **Philippians 4:6**

### Y - YIELD

- Finish your prayers with a heart posture of surrender; trusting in His love for you.
- Try opening your hands, palms up, as an outward expression of your inward desire.

Jesus is our great example of both asking God for His deepest needs and of yielding the outcome to the Father's will.

“And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My  
Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.'”  
**Matthew 26:39**

# ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES

## ONLINE RESOURCES

netbible.org | cross references, word studies  
biblestudytools.net | word studies  
blueletterbible.org | word studies  
planobiblechapel.org/soniclight | commentary  
bestcommentaries.com | commentary database

*Grace Bible Church does not always agree with the views of these commentaries. These are good tools to help understand hard passages, but the particular theological views reflect the author of the commentary and not those of Grace Bible Church.*

## DISCIPLESHIP/BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES

*Living By the Book* by Howard Hendricks and Charles Swindoll

A more in-depth book on how to study the Bible using the tools discussed in this packet.

*The Master Plan of Evangelism* by Robert Coleman

A highly motivational analysis of Jesus' own principles of evangelism and discipleship.

*The Lost Art of Disciple Making* by Leroy Eims

This practical resource will give you a detailed structure to follow and great content to cover as you begin to disciple a new believer.

*A Survey of Bible Doctrine* by Charles Ryrie

An easy-to-read, relatively short systematic theology primer that you can walk a new believer through to ground them in the faith.

*Rooted* by Grace Bible Church, College Station, TX

Nine conversations that establish a new believer with foundational truths and practices to follow Jesus for a lifetime. <https://www.grace-bible.org/resources/bible-study/46/rooted>

FIND MORE RESOURCES AT **GRACE-BIBLE.ORG**

