

## HomeWord<sup>1</sup>

For Parents

**O**ne of the hallmarks of the teaching of Jesus was His use of parables. Simply put, a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Parables help the listener to discover the deeper, or spiritual, meaning and underlying truth of Jesus's teaching.

Depending on which ones you include, there are between 35 and 45 different parables of Jesus recorded in the Gospels. Some of these were longer, including such popular ones as the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) and the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32). Others were short, pithy statements such as, “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened” (Matthew 13:33).

But, why did Jesus teach in parables? There are two reasons given in the Bible: to conceal and to reveal. By resorting to parables, Jesus effectively separated the truth-seekers from the merely curious. Those seeking the truth would say, “Explain to us the parable . . .” (Matthew 13:36), while the merely curious could easily be dismissed. They would not ask and were unwilling to receive Jesus's message. The truths were heard by unbelievers, but the

meaning was hidden because they did not want to hear.

In a way only God could contrive, the very things which were useful to reveal and make clear the truths about the kingdom to those willing to hear were also used to conceal truths about the kingdom from those who would not believe.

Jesus started teaching the crowds almost exclusively in parables after He had begun to receive much opposition from the religious leaders and had been accused of blasphemy. Mark tells us that He did not speak to them without a parable and that when He was alone with His disciples, He would explain the meaning of His teachings (Mark 4:33–34).

The parables of Jesus contain great volumes of truth in very few words. The images Christ presents through them are not easily forgotten. And He has promised that for those with eyes to see and ears to hear His truths will be revealed (Matthew 13:16).

*Go to the Online Resource Page for more information.*

## OutWord<sup>1</sup>

For Family Discussion

What if your friend told you he just doesn't believe that Jesus would care if he believes the Bible and the gospel? **What could you say?**

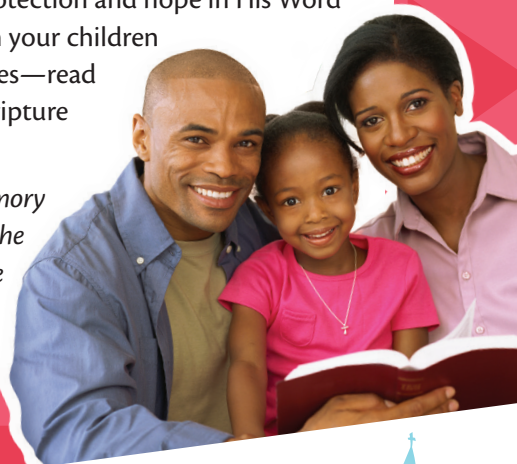
*God is so big and so powerful, and we are so little, it does seem hard to believe that He would care for us and for our souls. But I can tell you that He does care! After all, Jesus lived, died, and rose again so that everyone who believes could have eternal life. That isn't the sacrifice of someone who doesn't care! And the Bible tells us that all of heaven rejoices when one sinner repents of his sins and turns to Jesus for salvation. It isn't just Jesus who cares—but ALL of heaven! And all of heaven will rejoice if you repent of your sins, turn away from sin, and turn to Jesus.*

## inWord<sup>1</sup>

For Family Study

“You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word” (Psalm 119:114). Where does confidence in God's protection and hope in His Word come from? Teach your children where real hope lies—read and memorize Scripture together.

*Begin with the memory verse in the Learn the Word section inside this handout.*



# Jesus Teaches in Parables

## KEY THEME

- Jesus teaches His disciples.

## KEY PASSAGES

- Matthew 13:3–9, 13:19–23
- Luke 15:4–7



## What You HEARD<sup>1</sup> in the Word

- Jesus taught in short stories, or parables, that taught a spiritual lesson. Followers of Jesus understood the parables. They had “ears to hear.”
- Jesus told a parable about a shepherd who found his lost sheep. The lost sheep stood for a sinner who repents of his sins.

**Ask your child these questions from today's lesson.**

- 1** In the parable of the sower, what do the different soils stand for?
- 2** In the parable of the lost sheep, what does the sheep stand for?
- 3** Jesus taught \_\_\_\_\_. They were short stories about everyday things that taught a spiritual lesson.



## Read the Word with Mom & Dad

**Monday** (Psalm 1:3)

What is the righteous man like?

**Tuesday** (Luke 8:11)

What is the seed in Jesus's parable?

**Wednesday** (Luke 8:12)

Why does the devil take God's Word out of the hearts of those who hear it?

**Thursday** (Psalm 23:1)

How is the Lord described?

**Friday** (Luke 15:7)

Who does the lost sheep stand for?

**Saturday** (John 14:6)

What is the only way to get to the Father in heaven? (Your memory verse!)

## Learn the Word!

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*  
John 14:6

## The Lost Sheep

Can you read the story? Look at the code below to see what word each picture stands for in the story. Finish the story by writing the words below the pictures. Read the story to your family!



Shepherd



Sheep



Happy



Heaven



Sinner







Friends



Jesus

A  had 100 . One of his  got lost, and he only had 99 .

But the  went out to look for his . When the  found his lost , he was .

He told his . They were , too.  is the good . The lost  is a .

who repents.  said there is joy in  when one  repents.

## LIVE the Word with Maria and Her Dad

Dad, does God really care that I believe in Jesus?



We are very small compared to God. But why did God send Jesus to earth? How did He die?



He died on the cross for sinners.



That's right. And that is a BIG price to pay.

You're right, Dad! God must care very much about every sinner who repents.



**SNEAK PEEK**  
Do you know about the shocking claim Jesus made to the Pharisees? Come next week to find out.