

1st Quarter of 2026: January - March 2026

Parables of Jesus



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Credits

Author:

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Suggested Readings:

Christ's Object Lessons. https://egwwritings.org/ read? panels=p15.5&index=0#hig hlight=15.5|0



Abbreviations

Books mentioned in the lesson:

COL Christ Object Lessons





ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Matthew 13:13-35; 25:1-12.

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 1 - Teaching in Parables

Hymns:

#286 Wonderful words of life #272 Give me the Bible

MEMORY VERSE:

Psalms 78:1-3

"O my people, listen to my instructions. Open your ears to what I am saying, for I will speak to you in a parable. I will teach you hidden lessons from our past stories we have heard and known, stories our ancestors handed down to us (NLT)

1. In what way did Jesus teach the multitudes? Matthew 13:34.	
2. What prediction was thus fulfilled? What did He utter? Matthew 13:35.	
3. As a basis of His parables, from what sources did He principally draw? Matthew 13:24-32; 25:1-12.	
4. Why did Christ speak in parables? Matthew 13:13.	
5. What are people supposed to see in the things around them? Romans 1:20.	

6. In how many things is God revealed? Jeremiah 23:23, 24.
7. When failing to see Him in each daily scene and event, what happens to the heart? Romans 1:20, 21.
8. Was this the condition of the people to whom Jesus opened His mouth in parables? Matthew 13:13-15.
9. Then, in showing God in common things, what was revealed? Matthew 13:35, last clause.
10. How do you express your thoughts? Does God express His thoughts this way? Reflect on Isaiah 55:8-11.
11. Give two reasons showing why the natural man sees so little of God now in His created works. Ephesians 4:18; Genesis 3:17,18.
Consider: Do you think these parables are still needed today? Why? Why are our senses so blind to spiritual things? Do you think it would be good to spend more time in nature in order to be able to reflect on what God has to tell us? Why?
NOTES ////////////////////////////////////

To Adam and Eve in their Eden home nature was full of the knowledge of God, teeming with divine instruction. Wisdom spoke to the eye and was received into the heart; for they communed with God in His created works. As soon as the holy pair transgressed the law of the Most High, the brightness from the face of God departed from the face of nature. The earth is now marred and defiled by sin. Yet even in its blighted state much that is beautiful remains. God's object lessons are not obliterated; rightly understood, nature speaks of her Creator, COL 18.1

- In the days of Christ these lessons had been lost sight of. Men had well-2. nigh ceased to discern God in His works. The sinfulness of humanity had cast a pall over the fair face of creation; and instead of manifesting God, His works became a barrier that concealed Him. Men "worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator." Thus the heathen "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Romans 1:25, 21. So in Israel, man's teaching had been put in the place of God's. Not only the things of nature, but the sacrificial service and the Scriptures themselves—all given to reveal God were so perverted that they became the means of concealing Him. COL 18.2
- Jesus sought an avenue to every heart. By using a variety of illustrations, 3. He not only presented truth in its different phases, but appealed to the different hearers. Their interest was aroused by figures drawn from the surroundings of their daily life. COL 21.2
- In the Saviour's parable teaching is an indication of what constitutes the 4. true "higher education." COL 22.2
- Too often the minds of students are occupied with men's theories and speculations, falsely called science and philosophy. They need to be brought into close contact with nature. Let them learn that creation and Christianity have one God. COL 24.2
- 6. Christ's purpose in parable teaching was in direct line with the purpose of the Sabbath. God gave to men the memorial of His creative power, that they might discern Him in the works of His hand. The Sabbath bids us behold in His created works the glory of the Creator. And it was because He desired us to do this that Jesus bound up His precious lessons with the beauty of natural things. On the holy rest day, above all other days, we should study the messages that God has written for us in nature. We should study the Saviour's parables where He spoke them, in the fields and groves, under the open sky, among the grass and flowers. As we come close to the heart of nature, Christ makes His presence real to us, and speaks to our hearts of His peace and love. COL 25.1





ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15.

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 2 - The Sower Went Forth to Sow

Hymns:

#273 Lord, I Have Made Thy Word My Choice #676 Thy Word Is a Lantern

MEMORY VERSE:

Mark 4:13

And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

	QUESTIONS ////////////////////////////////////
1.	What seed is the sower sowing? Luke 8:5. What does the seed represent? Luke 8:11.
2.	How is humanity kept alive? Acts 17:24-25. What is the relation between God's Word and His life? John 6:63. Does this mean that God's life is found in His word? Who is "The Word"? Juan 1:1-4.
3.	What is said of the sower? Where did he go? For what purpose? Where did some of the seed fall? What became of it? Matthew 13:4. Where did other seeds fall? How soon did these grow? Why? Matthew 13:5. What effect did the sun have upon them? Why did they wither? Matthew 13:6.

4. What has made the heart of the wayside hearer hard, like the beaten path? Romans 1:21; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 3:13.

 5.	In this condition, how do people treat the word? What gives Satan an opportunity to snatch it away? Does Satan have any assistants in this work? Matthew 12:30; Ephesians 2:2; Revelation 18:2.
6.	Who receives the seed in stony places? How does this person receive the word? Matthew 13:20-21. What is the meaning of "offend"? Matthew 16:23; Matthew 11:6. What is lacking? How does he become offended? What is understood by the word "offended" in this context? Galatians 5:11.
7.	If a hearer is like the wayside or the stony ground, does this necessarily prove that there is no hope for this person? Hebrews 7:25; Isaiah 1:18; Isaiah 5:1-2; Ezekiel 36:26.
8.	Where did the other seed fall? What effect did the thorns have upon the growing seed? What do thorns represent? What expression in the text shows that the thorns grew rapidly? Besides hindering the growth of the seed-stalks, what do thorns prevent? Mark 4:7; Luke 8:14. Ezekiel 2:6; 2 Samuel 23:6.
9.	In these very days, what are we warned against? Luke 21:34.

10. What class is more likely to be absorbed with the cares of this life? What class is more likely to be absorbed with the pleasures? Reflect on the existence of a connection between the thorns, the Word of God and the crucifixion of Christ. Is this a sign of what is done to Christ when we are absorbed by the cares of this life, pleasures and the seeking of riches? Matthew 13:7; Matthew 13:22.

11. Where did the other seed fall? What was brought forth? In what proportions? Matthew 13:8.
12.What, then, is the evidence of good ground? Matthew 13:23.
13.What kind of fruit-bearing is equal to none at all? Hosea 10:1, 2, Jude 11-12.
14.For whom, then, does good ground bring forth fruit? Hebrews 13:15, John 15:8.
Consider: Looking into your heart, which type of hearer have you identified with throughout your life? Which one would you like to be, with God's help? Understanding the relation between the written Word and the living Word, how necessary do you think it is to hear the Word? How often should we hear it? Does our daily life depend on this, or does this refer only to eternal life? Do we have life in ourselves in this world?



- They expected the Messiah to prove His claims by mighty deeds of 1. conquest, to establish His empire on the ruins of earthly kingdoms. This expectation Christ answered in the parable of the sower. Not by force of arms, not by violent interpositions, was the kingdom of God to prevail, but by the implanting of a new principle in the hearts of men. COL 34.4
- The word of God is the seed. Every seed has in itself a germinating principle. In it the life of the plant is enfolded. So there is life in God's word. Christ says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life." John 5:24. In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God. COL 38.1
- But the teacher of sacred truth can impart only that which he himself 3. knows by experience. "The sower sowed his seed." Christ taught the truth because He was the truth. His own thought, His character, His life-experience, were embodied in His teaching. So with His servants: those who would teach the word are to make it their own by a personal experience. COL 43.1
- Satan has many helpers. Many who profess to be Christians are aiding the 4. tempter to catch away the seeds of truth from other hearts. Many who listen to the preaching of the word of God make it the subject of criticism at home. They sit in judgment on the sermon as they would on the words of a lecturer or a political speaker. COL 45.1
- It is not because men receive the word immediately, nor because they 5. rejoice in it, that they fall away. As soon as Matthew heard the Saviour's call, immediately he rose up, left all, and followed Him. As soon as the divine word comes to our hearts, God desires us to receive it; and it is right to accept it with joy. "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." COL 46.4
- Throughout the parable of the sower, Christ represents the different results 6. of the sowing as depending upon the soil. In every case the sower and the seed are the same. Thus He teaches that if the word of God fails of accomplishing its work in our hearts and lives, the reason is to be found in ourselves. COL 56.1
- The garden of the heart must be cultivated. The soil must be broken up by deep repentance for sin. Poisonous, Satanic plants must be uprooted. The soil once overgrown by thorns can be reclaimed only by diligent labor. So the evil tendencies of the natural heart can be overcome only by earnest effort in the name and strength of Jesus. COL 56.2

The "honest and good heart" of which the parable speaks, is not a heart without sin; for the gospel is to be preached to the lost. Christ said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mark 2:17. He has an honest heart who yields to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He confesses his guilt, and feels his need of the mercy and love of God. He has a sincere desire to know the truth, that he may obey it. The good heart is a believing heart, one that has faith in the word of God. Without faith it is impossible to receive the word. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6. COL 58.2





ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Matthew 13:33; 44-52. Luke 13:20,21

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 7 - Like Unto Leaven

Hymns:

#428 Sweet By And By #420 Jerusalem, My Happy Home

Isaiah 55:1-2; Revelation 3:18.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 13:49

So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

	QUESTIONS ////////////////////////////////////
1.	In this scripture, how many comparisons are made? What are they? Matthew 13:33,44,45,47.
2.	What was hidden? Where? Until when? Was the leaven naturally in the meal? Matthew 13:33.
3.	What practical lesson do you get from this fact? At the beginning, which was the greater in bulk: the leaven or the meal? Finally, what did everything become? What does this tell us about the effectiveness / relevance of the invisible principles of God's Kingdom?
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truly finds it do? Does he reluctantly part with his former possessions in order to obtain the "hidden treasure"? What are you willing to give up for heaven?

4. What is the second comparison? **Matthew 13:44.** What will the man who

5.	In the parable, who is the merchant and who is the pearl? Malachi 3:17.
6.	What price did He pay for us? Give scriptural proof. Does the merchantman regret parting with all his former possessions in order to procure the "pearl of great price"? Romans 11:29.
7.	What is the fourth comparison? What is gathered in the net? Matthew 13:47. What is done with the bad? With the good? Matthew 13:48.
8.	In reference to the kingdom, when does He say He will "sever the wicked from among the just"? How long, then, will bad fish be found in the gospel net? How does this agree with the parable of the tares? In this case, who separates the bad from the good? Where were the tares cast? Where are these cast in this parable? Matthew 13:40-43, 49-50.
9.	What question did Jesus ask? What did they answer? Matthew 13:51 . What further instruction came, then? If we are among the "scribes instructed unto the kingdom of heaven", what may we do? Matthew 13:52 .

Consider: Being that leaven is a symbol of God's Kingdom, hidden in the flour, in your consideration; what would the fundamental principles be that leaven the meal? Summarize in brief concepts which are the principles being taught in regard to God's Kingdom in these four parables.



- The leaven hidden in the flour works invisibly to bring the whole mass under its leavening process; so the leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up—the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are roused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened. We are endowed with traits of character that enable us to do service for God. COL 98.3
- The word of God is to have a sanctifying effect on our association with 2. every member of the human family. The leaven of truth will not produce the spirit of rivalry, the love of ambition, the desire to be first. True, heaven-born love is not selfish and changeable. It is not dependent on human praise. The heart of him who receives the grace of God overflows with love for God and for those for whom Christ died, COL 101.3
- 3. The grace of Christ is to control the temper and the voice. Its working will be seen in politeness and tender regard shown by brother for brother, in kind, encouraging words. An angel presence is in the home. The life breathes a sweet perfume, which ascends to God as holy incense. Love is manifested in kindness, gentleness, forbearance, and long-suffering. COL 102.1



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ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Luke 18:9-14

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 13 Two worshipers

Hymns:

It's Me, It's Me, Oh Lord If I Have Wounded Any Soul Today

MEMORY VERSE:

Luke 18:14

"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted".

	QUESTIONS ////////////////////////////////////
1.	To whom was this parable spoken? Luke 18:9.
2. Wha	Who went up into the temple? For what purpose? What was "the one"? at was "the other"? Luke 18:10.
3. his g	With whom did the Pharisee pray? For what was he thankful? What were good deeds? Luke 18:11-12.
4. were	While praying, where did the publican stand? What was his attitude? What e his words? Luke 18:13.
5.	Which of the two went home justified? Who says so? Luke 18:14.

6. the e	How many will be abased? Who will be exalted? Luke 14:10. By whom will exalting and the abasing be done?
7. the p	Indicate where Peter's experience fulfills both the place of the Pharisee and publican. Mark 14:29-31; Matthew 26:69-75; John 21:15-17.
8.	Whom only can Christ save? Mark 2:16, 17; Luke 19:10.
9.	How only can a true knowledge of self be obtained? Isaiah 6:1-5.
10.	What causes men to uplift themselves in self-righteousness? Romans 10:3.
11. How	What is the process for one to empty himself of self? Philippians 2:5-9. can this be done? Romans 6:6; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15.
12.	How often must this experience be repeated? Luke 9:23.
13.	Who will loathe themselves most? Job 42:5,6.
14. their	To what point will God exalt those who humble themselves here, accepting Redeemer as their all in all? Romans 8:16, 17.

Consider: How have you considered yourself throughout your life? How have you considered yourself in regard to others? What do you think of Jesus' words: "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again"? (Matthew 7:2). What do

you think about the fact that the only means for salvation is to accept Christ's righteousness? Is that advantageous to us, or would it be better to depend on our own righteousness?			

- Whoever trusts in himself that he is righteous, will despise others. As the Pharisee judges himself by other men, so he judges other men by himself. His righteousness is estimated by theirs, and the worse they are the more righteous by contrast he appears. His self-righteousness leads to accusing. "Other men" he condemns as transgressors of God's law. Thus he is making manifest the very spirit of Satan, the accuser of the brethren. With this spirit it is impossible for him to enter into communion with God. He goes down to his house destitute of the divine blessing. COL 151.2
- The sense of need, the recognition of our poverty and sin, is the very first condition of acceptance with God. "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:3. COL 152.1
- The nearer we come to Jesus and the more clearly we discern the purity of 3. His character, the more clearly we shall discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the less we shall feel like exalting ourselves. Those whom heaven recognizes as holy ones are the last to parade their own goodness. COL 160.1
- Great as is the shame and degradation through sin, even greater will be 4. the honor and exaltation through redeeming love. To human beings striving for conformity to the divine image there is imparted an outlay of heaven's treasure, an excellency of power, that will place them higher than even the angels who have never fallen, COL 162.4



Main reading: Luke 18:1-8	MEMORY VERSE:		
A 1 1242 1 12	Luke 18:8		
Additional reading: Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 14 - "Shall Not God Avenge His Own?"	I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the		
Hymns: O Jesus, My Redeemer Tell It to Jesus	Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"		
QUESTIONS ////////////////////////////////////			
1. For what purpose was this parable spoken? Luke	18:1.		
2. What sort of judge is mentioned here? Luke 18:2 reason? Luke 18:3. For a while, how did he act? V with her request? Luke 18:4-5.			
3. What are we admonished to "hear"? Luke 18:6. Is woes of His own chosen ones? 1 Peter 3:12.	s God less mindful of the		
4. Which requires stronger faith: an immediate answars? Why? 2 Peter 3:9.	wer to prayer or a delayed		
5. In persevering prayer, what encouragement may 3:1-3 ?	we gather from Zechariah		

O.	whom only, then, should we appeal? Psalms 34:7; Psalms 46:1.
7.	Why are trials permitted to come? 1 Peter 4:12-14.
8.	What encouragement can we gain from the experience of the Syrophoenician woman? Mark 7:25-30.
9.	What admonitions are given further to encourage patience on our part? Hebrews 10:35-37; James 5:7,8.
10	.Why is a crisis sometimes permitted? 2 Crónicas 20.
11	. What may we know in this time of prevailing iniquity? 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Matthew 24:13; 42; 25:13; 26:41.
12	.From where will Jesus gather His people? Mark 13:27.
Wab	onsider: Thy does God allow trials where His work is expected? What does this reveal yout our need and condition? Consider and reflect on the story of Saul, in 1 amuel 13:5-15. What does this story of Saul reveal?



- The Lord permits trials in order that we may be cleansed from earthliness, from selfishness, from harsh, unchristlike traits of character. He suffers the deep waters of affliction to go over our souls in order that we may know Him and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, in order that we may have deep heart longings to be cleansed from defilement, and may come forth from the trial purer, holier, happier. Often we enter the furnace of trial with our souls darkened with selfishness; but if patient under the crucial test, we shall come forth reflecting the divine character. When His purpose in the affliction is accomplished, "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." Psalm 37:6. COL 174.3
- There is no danger that the Lord will neglect the prayers of His people. The 2. danger is that in temptation and trial they will become discouraged, and fail to persevere in prayer. COL 175.1
- From age to age the Lord has made known the manner of His working. When a crisis has come, He has revealed Himself, and has interposed to hinder the working out of Satan's plans. With nations, with families, and with individuals, He has often permitted matters to come to a crisis, that His interference might become marked. Then He has made manifest that there is a God in Israel who will maintain His law and vindicate His people. COL 178.2
- In this time of prevailing iniquity we may know that the last great crisis is at hand. When the defiance of God's law is almost universal, when His people are oppressed and afflicted by their fellow men, the Lord will interpose. COL 178.3

The Prodigal Son

LESSON 6



ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Luke 15:11-32

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 16 — "Lost, and is Found"

Hymns:

#156 O Sacred Head Now Wounded #287 Softly and Tenderly

MEMORY VERSE:

Luke 15:20

"And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."



- 1. What did a certain man have? Luke 15:11.
- 2. What request did the younger one make? Was it granted? **Luke 15:12.**
- 3. How soon afterward did he take a journey? How much of his inheritance did he take with him? Where did he settle? Luke 15:13.
- 4. How was his money used? When all was spent, what happened? What state did this bring him into? Luke 15:13-14.
- 5. What did he do to relieve his dire need? What employment did he find? To what extremes did his hunger bring him? Did anyone supply his need? **Luke** 15:15-16.

6.	How did he begin to reason? When was this? The KJV renders it as "when he came to himself". What idea does this phrase convey? What did he remember? Luke 15:17.
7.	What did he desire to do? What did intend to say when he reached home? Luke 15:18-19.
8.	When did his father see him? How was he greeted? Did he say to his father all that he had thought to say? Luke 15:20-21.
9.	What command was immediately given to the servants? Why this great demonstration of rejoicing? Luke 15:22-24.
10	.With what illustrations has the Lord elsewhere shown His joy over the return of the wanderer? Isaiah 62:5; Zephaniah 3:17.
111	.When the elder son heard the sound of rejoicing, what question did he ask? Luke 15:26. Did he share in the joy? How did he act? What did he say to his father? Luke 15:27-30.
12	.What did he call the returned penitent? What was the father's kind reply? Luke 15:31-32.

Consider: What type of experience is typified by each brother's experience? How do we consider ourselves in the kingdom of God when we return repentant to the Father's heavenly house? Why did the younger brother leave? Did the older
brother consider himself free? Is it possible to still be in the house and be lost? Did both sons truly know the character of the Father?

- 1. In the parable of the prodigal son is presented the Lord's dealing with those who have once known the Father's love, but who have allowed the tempter to lead them captive at his will. {COL 198.2}
- 2. Whatever the appearance may be, every life centered in self is squandered. Whoever attempts to live apart from God is wasting his substance. He is squandering the precious years, squandering the powers of mind and heart and soul, and working to make himself bankrupt for eternity. The man who separates from God that he may serve himself, is the slave of mammon. The mind that God created for the companionship of angels has become degraded to the service of that which is earthly and bestial. This is the end to which self-serving tends. COL 200.3
- 3. The love of God still yearns over the one who has chosen to separate from Him, and He sets in operation influences to bring him back to the Father's house. The prodigal son in his wretchedness "came to himself." The deceptive power that Satan had exercised over him was broken. He saw that his suffering was the result of his own folly, and he said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father." Miserable as he was, the prodigal found hope in the conviction of his father's love. It was that love which was drawing him toward home. So it is the assurance of God's love that constrains the sinner to return to God. "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Romans 2:4. A golden chain, the mercy and compassion of divine love, is passed around every imperiled soul. The Lord declares, "I have loved

thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3. {COL 202.1}

In his restless youth the prodigal looked upon his father as stern and severe. 4. How different his conception of him now! So those who are deceived by Satan look upon God as hard and exacting. They regard Him as watching to denounce and condemn, as unwilling to receive the sinner so long as there is a legal excuse for not helping him. His law they regard as a restriction upon men's happiness, a burdensome yoke from which they are glad to escape. But he whose eyes have been opened by the love of Christ will behold God as full of compassion. He does not appear as a tyrannical, relentless being, but as a father longing to embrace his repenting son. The sinner will exclaim with the Psalmist, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." Psalm 103:13. {COL 204.2}

7 The two debtors

LESSON 7

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ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Matthew 18:21-35.

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 19 —The Measure of Forgiveness

Hymns:

#299 Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive #298 I Lay My Sins On Jesus

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 18:27

Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt."

QUESTIONS	
1. By what guest	ion was this parable suggested? What was Christ's answer?

- **Matthew 18:21-22.** See also **Luke 17:3-4.**
- 2. What experience should cause every child of the kingdom to cultivate a forgiving spirit? **Ephesians 4:32; 1 John 4:11.**
- 3. Unto what did Jesus liken the kingdom of heaven? What irregularity did the king discover in his household? How much did the servant owe? What was the king's sentence? **Matthew 18:23-25.**

- 4. What did the servant do? How was his plea for mercy received? Compare the servant's request with the king's answer. **Matthew 18:26-27.**
- 5. What shows that the servant did not truly appreciate the favor received? What plea did his fellow servant make? How was the plea received? **Matthew** 18:28-30.

6.	How did the evil servant's course affect his relationship with the king? What happened with the debt that had once been freely forgiven? What emotion did the king experience, and what did he do after that? Matthew 18:31-34.
7.	Whom does the king in the parable represent? Who are represented by the servants? How do all men stand before God? Romans 3:23.
8.	What does the debt consist of? Romans 13:8.
9.	How only may the debt be canceled? Romans 3:24-25; Psalms 51:1-4; Exodus 19:5-6. With what declaration does Jesus close the parable? Matthew 18:35.
10	What thought is to be associated with our daily prayer for forgiveness? Matthew 6:12; 5:23-24.
11.	Is this spirit to be cherished only when the one who has done the injury asks forgiveness? Luke 23:34; Romans 5:8; Matthew 5:43-48.
12.	What is the spring of the forgiving mercy of God toward men? Ephesians 2:4. How may we receive the same spirit of forgiveness? Romans 5:5; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; John 3:16.

Consider: Think again about Matthew 5:43-48. Does God make any distinction in how He loves people? What are God's feelings towards those who do not do His will? In what way is God perfect, and in what sense should we be perfect as

He is?		

NOTES

- 1. The pardon granted by this king represents a divine forgiveness of all sin. Christ is represented by the king, who, moved with compassion, forgave the debt of his servant. Man was under the condemnation of the broken law. He could not save himself, and for this reason Christ came to this world, clothed His divinity with humanity, and gave His life, the just for the unjust. He gave Himself for our sins, and to every soul He freely offers the blood-bought pardon. "With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption." Psalm 130:7. {COL 244.3}
- 2. How many are today manifesting the same spirit. When the debtor pleaded with his lord for mercy, he had no true sense of the greatness of his debt. He did not realize his helplessness. He hoped to deliver himself. "Have patience with me," he said, "and I will pay thee all." So there are many who hope by their own works to merit God's favor. They do not realize their helplessness. They do not accept the grace of God as a free gift, but are trying to build themselves up in self-righteousness. Their own hearts are not broken and humbled on account of sin, and they are exacting and unforgiving toward others. Their own sins against God, compared with their brother's sins against them, are as ten thousand talents to one hundred pence—nearly one million to one; yet they dare to be unforgiving. {COL 245.3}
- 3. If your brethren err, you are to forgive them. When they come to you with confession, you should not say, I do not think they are humble enough. I do not think they feel their confession. What right have you to judge them, as if you could read the heart? The word of God says, "If he repent, forgive him. And if he trespasses against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Luke 17:3, 4. And not only seven times, but seventy times seven—just as often as God forgives you. {COL 249.2}

We ourselves owe everything to God's free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirship with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others. {COL 250.1}

4. It is true that he may once have received forgiveness; but his unmerciful spirit shows that he now rejects God's pardoning love. He has separated himself from God, and is in the same condition as before he was forgiven. He has denied his repentance, and his sins are upon him as if he had not repented. {COL 251.2}

But the great lesson of the parable lies in the contrast between God's compassion and man's hardheartedness; in the fact that God's forgiving mercy is to be the measure of our own. "Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?" {COL 251.3}

We are not forgiven because we forgive, but as we forgive. The ground of all forgiveness is found in the unmerited love of God, but by our attitude toward others we show whether we have made that love our own. Wherefore Christ says, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matthew 7:2. {COL 251.4}



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ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Luke 10:25-37.

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 27 —"Who is my Neighbor?"

Hymns:

Rescue the Perishing Can the World See Jesus in You?

MEMORY VERSE:

Luke 10:26-27

"He said unto him,
What is written in the
law? how readest thou?
And he answering said,
Thou shalt love the
Lord thy God with all
thy heart, and with all
thy soul, and with all
thy strength, and with
all thy mind; and thy
neighbour as thyself."

	QUESTIONS ////////////////////////////////////
1.	What incident led Jesus to speak the parable of the good Samaritan? Luke 10:25-28.
2.	Why did this certain lawyer question Jesus? Luke 10:29.
3.	How did Jesus answer? What happened to the man that travelled from Jericho to Jerusalem? Luke 10:30.
4.	How was he treated by the priest? By the Levite? Luke 10:31-32.
4.	How was he treated by the priest? By the Levite? Luke 10:31-32.

5. From where was the man who helped him? What was the relationship between the Jewish nation and this kind man's people? Luke 10:33; John 4:7-9.

6. Why didn't the Samaritan treat him in the same manner? What did he do for the unfortunate man? Luke 10:33-35.
7. After relating this incident, what question did Jesus ask the lawyer? What evidence do we have that he saw the lesson that the Savior designed to teach? Luke 10:36.
8. Then, what answer did he receive to the question, "who is my neighbor?" What did Jesus tell him to do? Luke 10:37.
9. What motive should prompt all true service? What ministry is being given unto us? 2 Corinthians 5:14-20.
10. What does it profit to be religious but without love? 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.
11. How does the Bible define true love? 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.
12.What is the fulfillment of the law? Is it only a relationship towards God? Romans 13:8-11.

Consider: Think about Jesus's life. What examples do you remember of Jesus' treatment toward people who were rejected or despised by society? Examples: women, children, the poor or hungry, the sick, soldiers, tax collectors, thieves, demon-possessed people, foreigners, etc. Could it be that we have prejudices toward some groups of people?

- The lawyer was not satisfied with the position and works of the Pharisees. He had been studying the scriptures with a desire to learn their real meaning. He had a vital interest in the matter, and he asked in sincerity, "What shall I do?" In his answer as to the requirements of the law, he passed by all the mass of ceremonial and ritualistic precepts. For these he claimed no value, but presented the two great principles on which hang all the law and the prophets. The Saviour's commendation of this answer placed Him on vantage ground with the rabbis. They could not condemn Him for sanctioning that which had been advanced by an expositor of the law. {COL 377.3}
- In giving this lesson, Christ presented the principles of the law in a direct, 2. forcible way, showing His hearers that they had neglected to carry out these principles. His words were so definite and pointed that the listeners could find no opportunity to cavil. The lawyer found in the lesson nothing that he could criticize. His prejudice in regard to Christ was removed. But he had not overcome his national dislike sufficiently to give credit to the Samaritan by name. When Christ asked, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" he answered, "He that showed mercy on him." {COL 380.1}

"Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." Show the same tender kindness to those in need. Thus you will give evidence that you keep the whole law. {COL 380.2}

- There are those who would think it lowering to their dignity to minister to suffering humanity. Many look with indifference and contempt upon those who have laid the temple of the soul in ruins. Others neglect the poor from a different motive. They are working, as they believe, in the cause of Christ, seeking to build up some worthy enterprise. They feel that they are doing a great work, and they cannot stop to notice the wants of the needy and distressed. In advancing their supposedly great work they may even oppress the poor. They may place them in hard and trying circumstances, deprive them of their rights, or neglect their needs. Yet they feel that all this is justifiable because they are, as they think, advancing the cause of Christ. {COL 382.3}
- It is not possible for the heart in which Christ abides to be destitute of love. 4 If we love God because He first loved us, we shall love all for whom Christ died.

We cannot come in touch with divinity without coming in touch with humanity; for in Him who sits upon the throne of the universe, divinity and humanity are combined. Connected with Christ, we are connected with our fellow men by the golden links of the chain of love. Then the pity and compassion of Christ will be manifest in our life. We shall not wait to have the needy and unfortunate brought to us. We shall not need to be entreated to feel for the woes of others. It will be as natural for us to minister to the needy and suffering as it was for Christ to go about doing good. {COL 384.3}

The wicked servants

LESSON 9

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ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Matthew 21:33-44.

treated? Matthew 21:36.

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 23 - The Lord's Vineyard

Hymns:

Lamb of God One Day

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 21:38-39

"But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him."

	QUESTIONS ////////////////////////////////////
1.	Who is the main character in this parable? Who is he a symbol of? Do you see any parallel with the previous lessons' parables? Matthew 21:33 (first part).
2.	What did the householder do? Matthew 21:33 (complete).
3.	What did the householder have a right to receive from his vineyard? Who did he send to receive what was his? Matthew 21:34.
4.	How were these servants received? Matthew 21:35.

5. When other servants were sent to the husbandman, how were they also

6. L	ast of all, who did the householder send? Matthew 21:37.
7. V	Vhat treatment did the son receive? Why? Matthew 21:38-39.
	When the parable was finished, what question did Jesus ask His hearers?
9. V	Vith what words did they answer? Matthew 21:41.
	Who does Jesus identify as being the son in the parable? How does He refer o Himself? Matthew 21:42.
	What did Jesus pronounce upon them? From whom did this sentence come rom? Matthew 21:43-44.
	Who are the wicked servants in this parable? How did Jesus's hearers react to he parable? Matthew 21:45-46.
	Can you see any parallel with the parable found in Isaiah 5:1-7 ? Who is the rineyard of the Lord?
has	Isider: Having read the parable found in Isaiah 5:1-7, Can you see what God done for His people throughout all time? How does He act toward a people to does not produce fruit? What does He do, and what does He not do? What

special responsibility do the spiritual leaders of God's people have, represented by the wicked tenants? What does God expect from them? What is the fruit that

the owner of the vineyard expects?

- The husbandmen who had been placed in charge of the Lord's vineyard were untrue to their trust. The priests and teachers were not faithful instructors of the people. They did not keep before them the goodness and mercy of God and His claim to their love and service. These husbandmen sought their own glory. They desired to appropriate the fruits of the vineyard. It was their study to attract attention and homage to themselves. {COL 292.1}
- The Lord had instructed His people that He was the owner of the vineyard, 2. and that all their possessions were given them in trust to be used for Him. But the priests and teachers did not perform the work of their sacred office as if they were handling the property of God. They were systematically robbing Him of the means and facilities entrusted to them for the advancement of His work. Their covetousness and greed caused them to be despised even by the heathen. Thus the Gentile world was given occasion to misinterpret the character of God and the laws of His kingdom. {COL 292.3}
- With a father's heart, God bore with His people. He pleaded with them by mercies given and mercies withdrawn. Patiently He set their sins before them, and in forbearance waited for their acknowledgment. Prophets and messengers were sent to urge God's claim upon the husbandmen; but instead of being welcomed, they were treated as enemies. The husbandmen persecuted and killed them. God sent still other messengers, but they received the same treatment as the first, only that the husbandmen showed still more determined hatred. {COL 293.1}

As a last resource, God sent His Son, saying, "They will reverence My Son." But their resistance had made them vindictive, and they said among themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, and let us seize on His inheritance." We shall then be left to enjoy the vineyard, and to do as we please with the fruit. {COL 293.2}

God claims the whole earth as His vineyard. Though now in the hands of the usurper, it belongs to God. By redemption no less than by creation it is His. For the world Christ's sacrifice was made. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." John 3:16. It is through that one gift that every other is imparted to men. Daily the whole world receives blessing from God. Every drop of rain, every ray of light shed on our unthankful race, every leaf and flower and fruit, testifies to God's long forbearance and His great love. {COL 301.3}

And what returns are made to the great Giver? How are men treating the claims of God? To whom are the masses of mankind giving the service of their lives? They are serving mammon. Wealth, position, pleasure in the world, is their aim. Wealth is gained by robbery, not of man only, but of God. Men are using His gifts to gratify their selfishness. Everything they can grasp is made to minister to their greed and their love of selfish pleasure. {COL 302.1}

The sin of the world today is the sin that brought destruction upon Israel. Ingratitude to God, the neglect of opportunities and blessings, the selfish appropriation of God's gifts—these were comprised in the sin that brought wrath upon Israel. They are bringing ruin upon the world today. {COL 302.2}



LESSON 10

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ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Matthew 25:14-30

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 25 — Talents.

Hymns:

#360 Hark! The Voice of Jesus Calling #330 Take My Life and Let It Be

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 25:23

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."



- 1. What illustration did Christ use to represent the kingdom of heaven? Where did the man go? To whom did he give his goods? Matthew 25:14.
- 2. How were these gifts distributed? Did any of the servants receive more or less than they were able to use? Matthew 25:15.
- 3. What did the first and second servants do with the talents entrusted to them? Matthew 25:16-17.
- 4. Unlike the first two, what did the other servant do? Matthew 20:18.
- 5. When he returned, what did the Lord do? What report did the first two servants bring? What reward was given to the one who had received five talents? What was given to the one who had received two? Matthew 25:19-23.

6.	What did the one who had received one talent say? What did this servant think about the character of his Lord? Matthew 25:24-25.
7.	What did the Lord answer? What was done with his talent? Matthew 25:26-28.
8.	Why was the talent given to the one who had 10? What is the principle? Matthew 25:29.
9. —	What are the talents in the parable a symbol of? 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-30.
10	Who gives us the talents? Why are these talents given to us? Ephesians 4:11-16.
11	.What is naturally expected of someone who has been entrusted with goods? How much do we possess that does not belong to the Lord? Romans 12:6-13.
12	What lesson is taught in this parable? What warning does it contain for those who think that the smallness of their gift excuses them from service? What encouragement does it give regarding faithfulness? Finally, who are we serving? Colossians 3:23-25.

Consider: How important do you think the evangelical order and gifts are in

see this in your group, church, or movement today? What should we ask G help us improve in?				

All men have been bought with this infinite price. By pouring the whole treasury of heaven into this world, by giving us in Christ all heaven, God has purchased the will, the affections, the mind, the soul, of every human being. Whether believers or unbelievers, all men are the Lord's property. All are called to do service for Him, and for the manner in which they have met this claim, all will be required to render an account at the great judgment day. - {COL 326.1}

But the claims of God are not recognized by all. It is those who profess to have accepted Christ's service who in the parable are represented as His own servants. - {COL 326.2}

- Christ's followers have been redeemed for service. Our Lord teaches that the true object of life is ministry. Christ Himself was a worker, and to all His followers He gives the law of service-service to God and to their fellow men. Here Christ has presented to the world a higher conception of life than they had ever known. By living to minister for others, man is brought into connection with Christ. The law of service becomes the connecting link which binds us to God and to our fellow men. - {COL 326.3}
- The talents that Christ entrusts to His church represent especially the gifts 3. and blessings imparted by the Holy Spirit. "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." 1 Corinthians 12:8-11. All men do not receive the same gifts, but to every servant of the Master some gift of the Spirit is promised. -{COL 327.1}
- The promise of the Spirit is not appreciated as it should be. Its fulfillment is not realized as it might be. It is the absence of the Spirit that makes the gospel ministry so powerless. Learning, talents, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but without the presence of the Spirit of God,

no heart will be touched, no sinner be won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them the channel for the outworking of the highest influence in the universe. - {COL 328.1}

LESSON 11



ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Matthew 19:23-30; 20:1-16.

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 28-The Reward of Grace.

Hymns:

#616 Soldiers of Christ, Arise #613 Fight the Good Fight

Matthew 20:3-4.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 20:16

"So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

	QUESTIONS ////////////////////////////////////
1.	What circumstance gave rise to the parable of the workers? Matthew 19:23-30.
2.	What did Jesus compare the kingdom of heaven to in this parable? What is the householder pictured as doing? What is his occupation? Matthew 20:1.
3.	When did he hire the first laborers? What agreement did he make with them? Matthew 20:2.

5. At what other times did the father of the family do the same? Matthew 20:5. Could you recognize these hours in our current way of measuring time? What would be the eleventh hour, considering that the 12th hour would be equivalent to 6 p.m., already at the end of the workday? Note 1.

4. At what time did he hire more workers? What reward did he offer them?

	What did he say to those he found unemployed at the eleventh hour? What id they answer? Matthew 20:6-7.
to	When evening came, what instruction did the master of the vineyard give be his steward? In what order did he begin to pay the wages? Matthew 20:8. Were the offers made to each group different?
8. W	Vhat complaint did those who worked all day make? Matthew 20:10-12.
9. W	Vhat reason did the Lord give for this? Matthew 20:13-15.
	What application did Jesus make regarding what will be the reality in the ingdom of heaven? Matthew 20:16.
said dena just of th acte as th God	sider: To each group, the Father of the family who managed the vineyard, "Go to work and you will receive what is just," promising each one a arius. What is the difference between God's justice and what we consider in the light of this parable? How would we have acted if we were the father ne family? Would we have paid everyone the same? How would we have d if we were part of the group that worked all day receiving the same salary ne last ones? Could we be harboring some kind of selfishness contrary to 's justice when we work to carry the gospel? What did God's mercy and ness provoke in the first group? Why do you think this happened?

1. The Jewish day began at sunset and ended at sunset the next day. They always allotted 12 hours in daylight and 12 hours at night, no matter the time of year. This resulted in something called relative or seasonal time.

"A relative hour does not have a fixed radical, but changes with the length of each day, depending on summer (when the days are long and the nights short) and winter (when the days are short and the nights long). Even so, in all seasons a day is always divided into 12 hours and a night is always divided into 12 hours, which inevitably results in a longer hour or a shorter hour" (https://handwiki.org/wiki/Astronomy:Relative_hour_(Jewish_law)).

When the Bible mentions a specific time of day, it is almost always referring to Jewish time (John's gospel may have some exceptions); Therefore:

The third hour of the day (about 3 hours after sunrise) = approximately 9:00 a.m. our time.

The sixth hour of the day (about 6 hours after sunrise) = approximately 12:00 p.m. (noon) our time.

The ninth hour of the day (about 9 hours after sunrise) = approximately 3:00 p.m. our time.

Source: https://www.2belikechrist.com/articles/telling-time-in-the-bible

2. In the parable the first laborers agreed to work for a stipulated sum, and they received the amount specified, nothing more. Those later hired believed the master's promise, "Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive." They showed their confidence in him by asking no question in regard to wages. They trusted to his justice and equity. They were rewarded, not according to the amount of their labor, but according to the generosity of his purpose. – {COL 397.1}

So God desires us to trust in Him who justifieth the ungodly. His reward is given not according to our merit but according to His own purpose, "which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Ephesians 3:11. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." Titus 3:5. And for those who trust in Him He will do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Ephesians 3:20. – {COL 397.2}

3. The Lord desires us to rest in Him without a question as to our measure of reward. When Christ abides in the soul, the thought of reward is not uppermost. This is not the motive that actuates our service. It is true that in a subordinate

sense we should have respect to the recompense of reward. God desires us to appreciate His promised blessings. But He would not have us eager for rewards nor feel that for every duty we must receive compensation. We should not be so anxious to gain the reward as to do what is right, irrespective of all gain. Love to God and to our fellow men should be our motive. - {COL 398.1}

- The first laborers of the parable represent those who, because of their 4 services, claim preference above others. They take up their work in a selfgratulatory spirit, and do not bring into it self-denial and sacrifice. They may have professed to serve God all their lives; they may have been foremost in enduring hardship, privation, and trial, and they therefore think themselves entitled to a large reward. They think more of the reward than of the privilege of being servants of Christ. In their view their labors and sacrifices entitle them to receive honor above others, and because this claim is not recognized, they are offended. Did they bring into their work a loving, trusting spirit, they would continue to be first; but their querulous, complaining disposition is un-Christlike, and proves them to be untrustworthy. It reveals their desire for self-advancement, their distrust of God, and their jealous, grudging spirit toward their brethren. The Lord's goodness and liberality is to them only an occasion of murmuring. Thus they show that there is no connection between their souls and God. They do not know the joy of co-operation with the Master Worker. - {COL 399.5}
- This parable is a warning to all laborers, however long their service, 5. however abundant their labors, that without love to their brethren, without humility before God, they are nothing. There is no religion in the enthronement of self. He who makes self-glorification his aim will find himself destitute of that grace which alone can make him efficient in Christ's service. Whenever pride and self-complacency are indulged, the work is marred. - {COL 402.2}

The Great

LESSON 12



ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Luke 14:12-24

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 18 -Go into the Highways and Hedges.

Hymns:

#280 - Come, Ye Sinners #287 - Softly and Tenderly

MEMORY VERSE:

Luke 14:15

"And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."



1. What kind of people did Jesus say it was not necessary to invite to "a supper"? What reason did he give for this instruction? Who should be invited? Luke 14:12-13.

2. What would be the result for the one offering the banquet? Why would he be blessed? When would the reward be received? Luke 14:14.

3. In the parable Jesus began to tell, how were the guests reminded of their commitment? What was the message sent to them? Luke 14:16-17.

- 4. How did they behave in response to this call when everything was ready? What did the first guest consider more important than the privilege of being present at the banquet? Luke 14:18.

5. How did the second guest show that he held his oxen in higher esteem than his host? Luke 14:19.

6.	What was the reason why the third guest did not respond to the call? Luke 14:20.
7.	What did the servant do in the face of these excuses? What effect did the excuses have on the owner of the house? Where was the servant told to go next? What kinds of people were to be brought? Luke 14:21.
8.	What report did the servant then give? Luke 14:22.
9.	Where did his master send him? What urgency should the invitation have? What result was expected? Luke 14:23.
10	.What statement was made about the guests who were called first? Luke 14:24
11	Read Matthew 22:1-14. Seeing the similarity in these two parables, what additional elements can you mention that enrich what is studied in Luke 14:12-24 ?
Co	onsider: What might be the excuses today that might lead us to delay our

response to God's invitation? Let us meditate on our actions, even when preaching the gospel, are we expecting something in return? How can this lead us to rank the people we want to reach first? What does it mean for dinner to be ready? Does this tell us that Christ is ready

at that moment to receive the wedding guests? In light of Adventist prophetic understanding, could it be pointed out at what point the dinner begins or will begin to be ready?

- Christ was here repeating the instruction He had given to Israel through Moses. At their sacred feasts the Lord had directed that "the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat, and be satisfied." Deuteronomy 14:29. These gatherings were to be as object lessons to Israel. Being thus taught the joy of true hospitality, the people were throughout the year to care for the bereaved and the poor. And these feasts had a wider lesson. The spiritual blessings given to Israel were not for themselves alone. God had given the bread of life to them, that they might break it to the world. - {COL 220.2}
- 2 None of the excuses were founded on a real necessity. The man who "must needs go and see" his piece of ground, had already purchased it. His haste to go and see it was due to the fact that his interest was absorbed in his purchase. The oxen, too, had been bought. The proving of them was only to satisfy the interest of the buyer. The third excuse had no more semblance of reason. The fact that the intended guest had married a wife need not have prevented his presence at the feast. His wife also would have been made welcome. But he had his own plans for enjoyment, and these seemed to him more desirable than the feast he had promised to attend. He had learned to find pleasure in other society than that of the host. He did not ask to be excused, made not even a pretense of courtesy in his refusal. The "I cannot" was only a veil for the truth—"I do not care to come." - {COL 222.1}

All the excuses betray a preoccupied mind. To these intended guests other interests had become all-absorbing. The invitation they had pledged themselves to accept was put aside, and the generous friend was insulted by their indifference. - {COL 222.2}

3. So it is now. The excuses urged for refusing the invitation to the feast cover the whole ground of excuses for refusing the gospel invitation. Men declare that they cannot imperil their worldly prospects by giving attention to the claims of the gospel. They count their temporal interests as of more value than the things of eternity. The very blessings they have received from God become a barrier to separate their souls from their Creator and Redeemer. They will not be interrupted in their worldly pursuits, and they say to the messenger of mercy, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

Acts 24:25. Others urge the difficulties that would arise in their social relations should they obey the call of God. They say they cannot afford to be out of harmony with their relatives and acquaintances. Thus they prove themselves to be the very actors described in the parable. The Master of the feast regards their flimsy excuses as showing contempt for His invitation. - {COL 224.1}

The world is perishing for want of the gospel. There is a famine for the 4. word of God. There are few who preach the word unmixed with human tradition. Though men have the Bible in their hands, they do not receive the blessing that God has placed in it for them. The Lord calls upon His servants to carry His message to the people. The word of everlasting life must be given to those who are perishing in their sins. - {COL 228.4}

In the command to go into the highways and hedges, Christ sets forth the work of all whom He calls to minister in His name. The whole world is the field for Christ's ministers. The whole human family is comprised in their congregation. The Lord desires that His word of grace shall be brought home to every soul. - {COL 229.1}

The Ten Virgins

LESSON 13

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ADDITIONAL READING:

Main reading: Matthew 25:1-13

Additional reading:

Christ's Object Lessons - Chapter 29 —To Meet the Bridegroom

Hymns:

#260 Hover o'er Me, Holy Spirit #264 O for That Flame of Living Fire

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 25:13

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

1. —	With what expression did Jesus introduce the parable of the ten virgins? What did they all carry equally? For what purpose did they go out? Matthew 25:1.
2.	What two kinds of people are presented in the parable? Matthew 25:2.
3.	What evidence is given to show that five were foolish? Matthew 25:3.
4.	What did the wise women do differently to be identified as such? Matthew 25:4.
5.	Why did they need an additional supply of oil? What experience exposed the condition of the two classes? Matthew 25:5.

6. What announcement awakened the sleeping virgins? Why were they not all

	Matthew 25:5-7. What does the Bible tell us about God's slackness/slowness? Is this slackness real? 2 Peter 3:9.
7.	To what source did foolish virgins turn for oil? Why couldn't they borrow from their friends? Matthew 25:8-9 ; Ezekiel 14:20 .
3.	What was the result of not being prepared when the husband arrived? How did their experience compare with those who had oil in their lamps? Matthew 25:10-11.
9.	What response did the foolish virgins receive when they asked for the door to be opened for them? Matthew 25:11.
10	With what solemn warning did Christ close this parable? What experience of God's people does it represent? Matthew 25:12-13.
oil sib	Onsider: What do you think is the meaning of the virgins, the lamps, the l, the delay of the bridegroom, his coming at midnight, the closed door, the sappointment of those who were not ready to enter? What practical lesson bes this parable teach? Does it refer to any particular prophetic time?

- 1. Without the Spirit of God a knowledge of His word is of no avail. The theory of truth, unaccompanied by the Holy Spirit, cannot quicken the soul or sanctify the heart. One may be familiar with the commands and promises of the Bible; but unless the Spirit of God sets the truth home, the character will not be transformed. Without the enlightenment of the Spirit, men will not be able to distinguish truth from error, and they will fall under the masterful temptations of Satan. {COL 408.3}
- 2. This is the class that in time of peril are found crying, Peace and safety. They lull their hearts into security, and dream not of danger. When startled from their lethargy, they discern their destitution, and entreat others to supply their lack; but in spiritual things no man can make up another's deficiency. The grace of God has been freely offered to every soul. The message of the gospel has been heralded, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17. But character is not transferable. No man can believe for another. No man can receive the Spirit for another. No man can impart to another the character which is the fruit of the Spirit's working. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it [the land], as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Ezekiel 14:20. {COL 411.2}
- 3. So the followers of Christ are to shed light into the darkness of the world. Through the Holy Spirit, God's word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth in His followers. Thus they are to glorify God, to lighten the path to the Bridegroom's home, to the city of God, to the marriage supper of the Lamb. {COL 414.2}
- 4. "Behold," says the Scripture, "the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee." Isaiah 60:2. {COL 415.2}

It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth. – {COL 415.3}

This is the work outlined by the prophet Isaiah in the words, "O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." Isaiah 40:9, 10. – {COL 415.4}

Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people,

"Behold your God." The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them. - {COL 415.5}

