

Jesus' Parables - Guide to Christian Living

06/26/19

"In every case Jesus is throwing into bold relief one aspect of the truth, then when we put the parables all together we shall gain an unmatched insight into the mind of the Master Teacher." William Barclay, The Parables of Jesus, p 17, 1970.

Cross Index for Parables in Jefferson's Bible, Wikipedia, Barclay and Chronological Order							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
1	Wise & Foolish Builders	22	15,130	7	34	4	Applying Jesus teachings as described in these Parables and avoiding wasteful practices will put your life on firm foundation.
2	Two Debtors	24	133	2	Lk 7:41-43	5	Of the two, greater love will be shown by the one with the greater debt. The woman gave more, possibly because she felt a greater debt, because of her knowledge of a sinful past.
3	Rich Fool	27	150-151	6	17	7	Avoid greed. Trust God to provide and be wary of excess material security Just set aside what you need, and a little extra, and give the rest to the needy.
4	Faithful Servant	30 & 103	151	33	LK 12:35-40	8	Think ahead, keep your bags packed and be prepared for unexpected eventualities, No way of knowing when you may be called upon. Intentional acts are rewarded more favorably than accidental ones.
5	Barren Fig Tree	32	153-154	12	18	10	Don't destroy things in haste, be patient. Know science and fertilize the tree and it could bear fruit.
6	The Sower	35	28,75-76,134-135	10	2	11	Seeds falling by the wayside could be devoured by birds and not grow. Those falling on rocky ground might sprout, but not grow. On thorny ground seeds could sprout but the plants would have life choked out of them. On good ground, seeds sprout and grow. Understand this, and Jesus' teachings, demonstrates differences in good and evil. Seed sprouting governed by science and the use here shows Jesus practical understanding of the process.

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
7	Lamp Under Bushel	36	10, 76, 135 Mt 5:14-15, Mk 4:21-22, Lk 8:16, 11:13	3		3	A lamp enables searching at greater distances and discovering more objects or opportunities. Nothing can be kept secret, all will be revealed with a lamp at hand. Requires knowledge of burning rate of the oil as well as diligent use of the oil in the lamp.
8	Tares	37	29	11	5	12	Conflict of good and evil. Tares or weeds represent evil. They were sown by the devil along with good wheat (Kingdom of God). Once the sprouts appear, the question is raised about trying to remove all of the tares. Response is that that would damage much of the remaining yield so the best policy is to be patient and let all of the seeds develop and then to simply pull up the tares, once they are easily recognized. Develop a plan for removal. Requires knowledge of appearance and different growth characteristics of wheat and tares, and confidence in the science.
9	Hidden Treasure	38	30	17	9	16	Hidden treasure represents the Kingdom of God. Recognize value as per custom of the day, i.e. right of ownership goes to the finder, therefore put all effort into obtaining it. Don't go about shouting "I have found it" QED
10	The Pearl	39	30	15	10	17	The pearl is a visible symbol of the feeling of joy that one can get from a special relationship, in this case the Kingdom of God. Give all of your life for this feeling.

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
11	Drawing the Net	39	30	16	6	18	The net draws in everything, but must be sorted so that good are kept and bad discarded. Requires knowledge of fish species.
12	Growing Seed	39	77	1	4	13	The seed will germinate and grow with little care. Knowledge of seed growing & sprouting characteristics needed to produce a crop is required, along with faith. Likewise, Jesus' message must be nurtured in order for it to grow. Interesting to note that Jefferson, using the King James version as his source, refers to the Earth in the feminine where the RSV and others use neutral gender wording. Kingdom of God
13	Mustard seed	40	29, 77, 154	13	Mt 13:31-32, Mk 4:30-32, Lk 13:18-19	14	The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed sowed in a field. It is the smallest of seeds but when full grown it produces the greatest of shrubs, where birds nest in its branches. The information stored in the seed enables the growth, so similarly the Kingdom of God grows through the entire universe, with Jesus' teachings. (Relates to #5, #6 and #12)
14	Wineskins	42	18, 72, 127	8	Mt 9:16-17, Mk 2:21-22, Lk 5:36-38	1/2	New wine releases gas as the wine ferments and old wine skins will be clogged with sediment, not allowing any gas to pass through the walls, and the pressure will increase. Fabric with different stiffness sewn in for repair will create high stress at the boundaries and initiate a tear. Jesus' teachings conflicted with Jewish practices and this parable suggests that practicing his teachings will cause a rift in the fabric of Jewish faith.

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
15	Man is defiled through the mind, not the belly	46	34, 85	-	Mt 15:17, MK 7:19	-	What enters the mouth goes to the sewer, but what comes out of the mouth comes from the mind. Man is defiled only by things which come from the heart (mind) and not by things introduced through the belly. Response to Jewish obsession with washing hands.
16	Lost Sheep	48	158 Lk 15:1-7	19	27	19-22	Trust and confidence that the remaining sheep will not stray and joy at the recovery of the one that did. Even so, we cannot assume an outcome with absolute certainty, there is always risk. (Jefferson, pp. 57. lines 1-5, (Jn 9. 1-3))
17	Unforgiving Servant	49	40 Mt 18:21-35	20	12	23	We must forgive all who trespass against us. Forgiveness in Kingdom of God may still be reasonable.
18	Good shepherd	57	210 Jn 10:1-14	--	27	21	The sheep recognize their shepherd by voice, and will follow him through the door.
19	Good Samaritan	59	144 Lk 10:25-37	4	11	24	Simply be ready to act compassionately when chance gives the opportunity, realizing that risk might be encountered.
20	Friend at Night	61	146 Lk 11:5-8	5	16	25	Neighbor should deliver out of kindness when asked by host, regardless of the circumstances. For host, if the needs are legitimate, be persistent and they will be met.
21	Wedding Feast	63	156 Lk 14:7-11	37	33	26	At feast, always sit at the lowest seat and then you may be invited by the host to move to a higher seat. He that exalts himself shall be abased. Do not expect a return invitation based on your hosting the feast (recompense).

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
22	Great Banquet	64	48, 156 Mt 22:1-10 Lk 14:15-24	31A	22	27	Appears that the giver of the banquet did so more to impress his associates than to feed them, and they rejected him. Better to invite and feed the hungry and have a household full of grateful people. Barclay suggests that using compelled might have been mistaken.
23	Count the Cost	65	157 Lk 14:25-33	18	31	28	First, you must evaluate the objective, is it worth the cost? You must assess the risk and then assess your resources. Can I achieve the goal? If yes to these, then proceed. If no, then change the objective to meet your capabilities. Compare to Strong Man. This may be applied in the encounter with cancer cells (https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/understanding/what-is-cancer) where at best the situation is in negotiation, not a battle.
24	Lost Sheep	66	158 Lk 15:1-7	19	27	29	Trust, knowledge and hope that the remaining sheep will not stray and that the lost sheep can be found. Joy over found sheep, i.e. the one that repents. And, love of the shepherd for his flock (1 Cor 13:13).
25	Lost Coin	67	158 Lk 15:8-10	21	27	30	Have faith, be joyful for what is found.
26	Prodigal Son	67	158 Lk 15:11-32	22	27	31	Be joyful at one who was lost and is now found. Do not be envious, but glad for the father and the recovered brother. Unexpected event such as the drought forced the famine.

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
27	Unjust Steward	69	159 Lk 16:1-12	23	21	32	<p>Master is possibly an illiterate money lender, and the steward was skimming off of the top as debts were repaid. Nonetheless, he was stealing, enriching himself for purpose of buying mammon, or possessions. Possibly, the rates charged by the "Master" might have been exorbitant and the mark downs given by the steward were refunds to where the overall rates should have been. Steward still had been stealing from the Master. In the final tally, the lean shall have much, and the wealthy, not so much.</p>
28	Rich man and Lazarus	72	161 Lk 16:19-31	24	13	33	<p>Being charitable is essential, independent of social or financial situation. In this reversal of status, we see that all have some wealth and therefore must be charitable at every opportunity in life.</p>
29	Master and Servant	74	162 Lk 17:7-10	25	32	22	<p>God and His Creation (Earth and nature) are the Master and we are the slave. We do well to think of God as a Master who, having given His best to us, demands our very best in return, https://www.conservation.org/nature-is-speaking/Pages/default.aspx</p>
30	Unjust Judge - Unfortunate Widow	76	164 Lk 18:1-7	26	16	35	<p>If you are correct, pray for wisdom and be persistent and you may win out.</p>
31	Pharases & Publican	77	164 Lk 18:9-14	27	14	36	<p>True humility in your life is needed. How does one emulate the Publican; by quickly and quietly doing positive things out of love, rather than talking? Jesus taught a positive, proactive life style, not a negative, "don't sin" behavior. See Wesley "What is Man."</p>

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
32	Laborers in Vineyard	82	43 Mt 20:1-16	28	24	34	This could be called the Square Wave parable, where the value, or what a person does with their life, is represented by the area under the wave rather than its length. No matter when in a person's life that they accept Jesus' teachings, the reward is the same. Here, the pay rate is as set by the owner at 1 p per day, for the first hired, after that it is "whatsoever is right", and yes there would be a difference in pay rate between the first and the last, but the value could be something else.
33	Talents A (see also Talent B below)	85	167 Lk 19:11-27	35B	26	37	This is the "value added" parable, where the benefit and the costs are considered. We need to handle the small tasks to demonstrate ability to handle larger tasks. And, the benefit may be greater for larger talents. Further, the costs should reflect the true cost, including the costs for nature to restore back to the state at the creation. Based on actual historically verifiable events re Archelaus and Antipas.
34	Two Sons	90	47 Mt 21:28-32	29	30	38	Getting the job done is more important than obeying the law or the custom, i.e. the father. First son realizes his mistake and says to himself "I was wrong," and proceeds to the vineyard, to work. Tax collectors and harlots first refused Jesus, but then came to him, something which the Pharisees and scribes never did.

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
35	Husbandman (tenant farmer)	90	47,98.170 Mt 21:33-44 Mk 12:1-41 Lk 20:9-18	30	20	39	This is the most significant parable and is the cornerstone of our faith. The farmer represents people who received gifts from God, and who abused them. Those who do not believe in him will be broken. Sin is the willful defiance of God. Here the owner contracts with the farmer for a return of the proceeds. The farmer refuses to honor his agreement and in the end kills the owners son. In the farming of the land, the resources are depleted and the value of the land reduced. The higher man reaches in knowledge and power, the more terrible the consequences of willful disobedience. This parable is notable in regards to the Laws of Nature, i.e. God.
36	Great Banquet/No Wedding Garment	92	48 Mt 22:11-14	31B	23	40	General population did respond to the invitation and attended the wedding feast properly attired. Not wearing a wedding garment was wrong in any case, and showed contempt for the King and the event. Where the king represents God the Creator, not wearing the proper garment shows a lack of respect for the Creation, i.e. Mother Earth.
37	Budding Fig Tree	102	54, 102, 174 Mt 24:32-35 , Mk 13:28-29 , Lk 21:29-31	32		41	When the fig tree puts forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh. When the skies darken and the stars fall, know that it is near. While the meaning of the word it is not clear, the implication is that it is the resurrection of Jesus. Phillips uses "he." And, while Jefferson does not mention the resurrected Jesus in his "bible," the phrasing here suggests that he would not reject it. Meteor showers occur at various times in the year, (Perseids are notable for Summer)

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
38	Faithful Servant	103	102,151 Mk 13:32-37, Lk 12:39-40	33 (9A)		44 & 8	Be always watchful and prepared, for the lord of the servant may come in a day when he is not expected.
39	Ten Virgins	104	55 Mt 25:1-13	34	19	43	These lamps are used for signaling, attracting the attention of the bridal party. If the bridegroom's arrival is missed, the door is closed and there are no more opportunities. Properly gauge the amount of oil needed for this event and bring extra if required. Be prepared for uncertainty.
40	Talents - B (see also WH#30 above)	105	56 Mt 25:14-30	35	25	45	The story tells of the benefits of using your knowledge and skill to better your estate through investing. The one who risked the most received the greatest benefit. This is very real since all men are not given equal skills but we are expected to properly use the skills and talents which we have been given. We should not envy someone else for their skills and talents but rather keep ours fresh by practicing their application.
41	Sheep & Goats	108	57 Mt 25:31-46	36	15	—	Christian charity is the key, we do not make judgement; we should simply give to others with no expectation of reward. Don't keep score. Jefferson gives this terminal emphasis.
42	The Leaven		29, 154 Mt 13:33. Lk 13:20.21	14	8	15	Leaven puts the dough in upheaval as does Christianity in society through these Parables. Be aware that there are many levens, some good and some not so good. First amongst Christians is but a servant to society.

Cross							
No.	Description	Jefferson page No.	Phillips page no. & NT Ref	Wikipedia Harmony Number	Barclay Chapter info.	Chronological Order	Comments
43	Strong Man	103	26 Mt 12:29, Mk 3:27 and Lk 11:21:22	9B			Good vs. evil. If good (Jesus) casts out the demon (Satan) then good is saved. The Strong Man is given by Meeks to be Satan. OK to speak against Jesus but one must believe in God.

Note For parables not covered in Barclay please see commentary in, e.g. Meeks

References

Jefferson, Thomas, The Jefferson Bible, Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, New York, 2012, 132 pp.

Barclay William, The Parables of Jesus, Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville, 1999, 222 pp.

Meeks, W. A., The Harper Collins Study Bible, London, Harper Collins, 1993. 2355 pp.

Phillips, J. B., The New Testament in Modern English, Translation, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1958. 583 pp.

Wikipedia, Harmony. Parables of Jesus, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parables_of_Jesus#Canonical_gospels

Wikipedia, Chronological order of Parables. <http://swapmeetdave.com/Bible/Parables/List-In-Order.pdf>

Don E. Bray, College Station, Texas 20 June 2019

http://www.debccltx.com/?page_id=1514