

Daily Bible – Stories Jesus Told: Kingdom Stories in the Gospels

Scripture taken from *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2011)

Day	Stories Jesus Told	Verse reference	Questions
1	<p>The Parable of the Sower</p> <p>Then Jesus told them many things in parables, saying: ‘A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear.’</p>	Matthew 13:3–9	The parable of the sower has been described as “the mother of all parables.” Assuming this is not a set of farming tips, how is this provoking the hearers? Why does Jesus draw on farming pictures to explain the Kingdom of God? How do you respond to this parable? What other information do you need?
2	<p>The disciples came to him and asked, ‘Why do you speak to the people in parables?’</p> <p>He replied, ‘Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. This is why I speak to them in parables:</p> <p>‘Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.</p> <p>In the parables is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:</p> <p>“You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.”</p> <p>But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.</p>	Matthew 13:10–17	Between the parable of the sower and its explanation, Matthew gives us a theological explanation about how parables work. How do parables work? What does Isaiah 6 teach us about parables? What are the different responses to parables anticipated?

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3	<p>The Parable of the Sower – continued</p> <p>‘Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: when anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.’</p>	Matthew 13:18–23	Jesus rarely explains his parables. The parable of the sower is an exception. What is the parable really about? What different responses are there to the proclaiming of God’s Kingdom? Which of these resonate with your experience? What are the marks of a fruitful life?
4	<p>The Parable of the Weeds</p> <p>Jesus told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed ears, then the weeds also appeared.</p> <p>‘The owner’s servants came to him and said, “Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?”</p> <p>“An enemy did this,” he replied.</p> <p>‘The servants asked him, “Do you want us to go and pull them up?”</p> <p>“No,” he answered, “because while you are pulling up the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: first collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.”’</p>	Matthew 13:24–30	How is the Kingdom of God like a man who sowed good seed? If this is not about farming, what is it about? How did the owner show wisdom?

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5	<p>The Parable of the Weeds Explained</p> <p>Then Jesus left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, ‘Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.’</p> <p>He answered, ‘The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.</p> <p>‘As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.</p>	Matthew 13:36–43	<p>The parable of the weeds also has an explanation. How does Jesus help us to understand the parable? What do the seeds and weeds represent? What is this teaching us about judgement? How do you feel about its warning?</p>
6	<p>The Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl</p> <p>‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.</p> <p>‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.</p>	Matthew 13:44–46	<p>How is the kingdom of heaven like a treasure? What value should we put on the kingdom of heaven? How do these parables encourage us? How do you value God’s Kingdom?</p>

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7	<p>The Parable of the Net</p> <p>‘Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.</p> <p>‘Have you understood all these things?’ Jesus asked.</p> <p>‘Yes,’ they replied.</p> <p>He said to them, ‘Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.’</p>	Matthew 13:47–52	How is the kingdom of heaven like a net? What does Jesus teach us about judgement? How do you feel about the future of the bad fish? What are these parables challenging us about?
8	<p>The Parable of the Growing Seed & The Parable of the Mustard Seed</p> <p>Jesus also said, ‘This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces corn—first the stalk, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. As soon as the corn is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.’</p> <p>Again he said, ‘What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.’</p> <p>With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.</p>	Mark 4:26–34	Why does Jesus use farming pictures in parables? How is the kingdom of God like a sower? How is the kingdom of God like a mustard seed? Why do you think Jesus spoke publically in this parable? What do these parables teach us?

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9	<p>The Parable of the Wandering Sheep</p> <p>‘See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.</p> <p>‘What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.</p>	Matthew 18:10–14	What is Jesus teaching us with the parable of the lost sheep? How do you feel about this parable? What is it teaching you?
10	<p>The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant</p> <p>‘Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.</p> <p>‘At this the servant fell on his knees before him. “Be patient with me,” he begged, “and I will pay back everything.” The servant’s master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go.</p> <p>‘But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. “Pay back what you owe me!” he demanded.</p>	Matthew 18:23–35	Jesus illustrates the idea of forgiveness with this parable. How is the Kingdom of God like a man who forgives debts? How does this teach us to respond to God’s forgiveness? What is it warning us about? How do you feel about the master’s response to the unforgiving man? What do we learn here?

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11	<p>The Sheep and the Goats</p> <p>‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.</p> <p>‘Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”</p> <p>‘Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison and go to visit you?”</p> <p>‘The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”</p>	Matthew 25:31–40	<p>What does the parable of the sheep and the goats teach us about judgement? Why are the sheep commended? What is the basis of a positive judgement? How does this challenge you?</p>
12	<p>‘Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was ill and in prison and you did not look after me.”</p> <p>‘They also will answer, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or ill or in prison, and did not help you?”</p> <p>‘He will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.”</p> <p>‘Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.’</p>	Matthew 25:41–46	<p>The parable of the sheep and the goats also shows the dark side of judgement. Why are the goats condemned? How do you feel about the fate of the goats? How do you feel about Jesus’ teaching on judgement and eternal punishment? What is the grounds on which the goats are condemned? How is this a warning to you?</p>

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13	<p>The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard</p> <p>‘For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.</p> <p>‘About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the market-place doing nothing. He told them, “You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.” So they went.</p> <p>‘He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, “Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?”</p> <p>‘ “Because no one has hired us,” they answered.</p> <p>‘He said to them, “You also go and work in my vineyard.”</p> <p>‘When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, “Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.”</p> <p>‘The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. “These who were hired last worked only one hour,” they said, “and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.”</p> <p>‘But he answered one of them, “I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn’t you agree to work for a denarius? Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?”</p> <p>‘So the last will be first, and the first will be last.’</p>	Matthew 20:1-16	How is the Kingdom of God like a landowner hiring workers? Is the landowner unfair in his payments? Why do the longer workers complain? What does this teach us about God’s grace?

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14	<p>The Parable of the Two Sons</p> <p>‘What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, “Son, go and work today in the vineyard.”</p> <p>“I will not,” he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.</p> <p>‘Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, “I will, sir,” but he did not go. ‘Which of the two did what his father wanted?’</p> <p>‘The first,’ they answered.</p> <p>Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.</p>	Matthew 21:28–32	<p>What is the parable of two sons teaching us? Which son failed? How is this parable connected to God’s response to tax collectors and prostitutes? Who is Jesus challenging? How is nominalism challenged in you?</p>
15	<p>The Parable of the Tenants</p> <p>‘Listen to another parable: there was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall round it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.</p> <p>‘The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them in the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. “They will respect my son,” he said.</p> <p>‘But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, “This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.” So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.</p> <p>‘Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’</p> <p>‘He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,’ they replied, ‘and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.’</p>	Matthew 21:33–41	<p>Jesus tells this parable in the week of his crucifixion? What point is he trying to make? Why do the tenants kill the son? What is the fate of the tenants? Who would have been upset by this parable? What does it show us about what Jesus anticipated?</p>

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16	<p>Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the Scriptures:</p> <p>“‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes”?’</p> <p>‘Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.’</p> <p>When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus’ parables, they knew he was talking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.</p>	Matthew 21:42–46	<p>Jesus explains further the parable of the vineyard and the tenants. How does he use the picture of the cornerstone? Jesus applies the parable via Isaiah? How is Jesus like the cornerstone of Isaiah? Why did this parable and explanation upset the Pharisees? What did they plan to do? How does this help you see Jesus?</p>

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17	<p data-bbox="154 288 651 320">The Parable of the Wedding Banquet</p> <p data-bbox="154 344 1272 448">Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.</p> <p data-bbox="154 472 1301 576">‘Then he sent some more servants and said, “Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.”</p> <p data-bbox="154 600 1301 703">‘But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, ill-treated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.</p> <p data-bbox="154 727 1301 863">‘Then he said to his servants, “The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.” So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.</p> <p data-bbox="154 887 1301 991">‘But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. He asked, “How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?” The man was speechless.</p> <p data-bbox="154 1015 1301 1086">‘Then the king told the attendants, “Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”</p> <p data-bbox="154 1110 689 1142">‘For many are invited, but few are chosen.’</p>	Matthew 22:1-14	How is the kingdom of heaven like a wedding feast? What kinds of excuses did invitees make? Who was invited to the wedding feast? Why was the man tossed out of the feast? What do we learn from this parable?

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18	<p>The Parable of the Ten Virgins</p> <p>‘At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.</p> <p>‘At midnight the cry rang out: “Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!”</p> <p>‘Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.”</p> <p>““No,” they replied, “there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.”</p> <p>‘But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.</p> <p>‘Later the others also came. “Lord, Lord,” they said, “open the door for us!” ‘But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.”</p> <p>‘Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.</p>	Matthew 25:1-13	The parable of the bridal party reflects first century wedding practises. What makes the bridesmaids wise? What makes the bridesmaids foolish? How should they have prepared for the coming of the bridegroom? What is this parable teaching us about being ready for Jesus?

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19	<p>The Parable of the Talents</p> <p>‘Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.</p> <p>‘After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. “Master,” he said, “you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.”</p> <p>‘His master replied, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”</p> <p>‘The man with two bags of gold also came. “Master,” he said, “you entrusted me with two bags of gold: see, I have gained two more.”</p> <p>‘His master replied, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”</p> <p>‘Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. “Master,” he said, “I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.”</p> <p>‘His master replied, “You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.</p> <p>““So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”</p>	Matthew 25:14-30	What is the parable of talents teaching us? What does this parable teach us about living wisely? Who is commended in the parable? Why is the one man judged harshly? How do you feel about this? How is this challenging you?

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20	<p>The Parable of the Rich Fool</p> <p>Someone in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.’</p> <p>Jesus replied, ‘Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?’ Then he said to them, ‘Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.’</p> <p>And he told them this parable: ‘The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, “What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.”</p> <p>‘Then he said, “This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I’ll say to myself, ‘You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’”</p> <p>‘But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?”</p> <p>‘This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich towards God.’</p>	Luke 12:13–21	<p>What is the context of the parable of the rich fool? What is the mistake of the rich fool? How does this challenge our culture? What does it mean to be rich towards God?</p>
21	<p>The Parable of the Lost Sheep</p> <p>Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering round to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, ‘This man welcomes sinners, and eats with them.’</p> <p>Then Jesus told them this parable: ‘Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, “Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.” I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who do not need to repent.</p>	Luke 15:1–7	<p>What does the Luke’s parable of the lost sheep teach us? What does this teach us about the persistence of God? Why is there rejoicing in heaven? How can you help someone repent and believe in Jesus?</p>

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22	<p>The Parable of the Lost Coin</p> <p>‘Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together and says, “Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.” In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.’</p>	Luke 15:8-10	What is the parable of the lost coin teaching us? What is this teaching us about God? Why is there rejoicing amongst the angels? How can we help God find lost people around you?
23	<p>The Parable of the Lost Son</p> <p>Jesus continued: ‘There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the estate.” So he divided his property between them.</p> <p>‘Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.</p> <p>‘When he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.” So he got up and went to his father.</p>	Luke 15:11-20a	What does the parable of the prodigal son teach us? What do we learn about how the younger son treats his father? What brought the son to his senses? What does the son resolve to do? What do we learn about the father and the son in the first part of the parable?
24	<p>The Parable of the Lost Son – continued</p> <p>But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms round him and kissed him. ‘The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”</p> <p>‘But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate.</p>	Luke 15:20b-24	What does this part of the parable teach us about the father? What do we learn about God from this? What does the Son do? How does the father respond? How is this a picture of abundant grace? How are you encouraged by this part of the parable?

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Day	Stories Jesus Told	Verse reference	Questions
25	<p>The Parable of the Lost Son – continued</p> <p>‘Meanwhile, the elder son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. “Your brother has come,” he replied, “and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.”</p> <p>‘The elder brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, “Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!”</p> <p>““My son,” the father said, “you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.””</p>	Luke 15:25-32	The third part of the parable focusses on the older son. Why does the older son get angry? Who is this challenging? How does the father feel about the older son? What does the older son need to learn? What does this parable teach us?

Daily Bible – Stories Jesus Told: Kingdom Stories in the Gospels (continued)

Day	Stories Jesus Told	Verse reference	Questions
26	<p>The Parable of the Shrewd Manager</p> <p>Jesus told his disciples: ‘There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, “What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.”</p> <p>‘The manager said to himself, “What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg—I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.”</p> <p>‘So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, “How much do you owe my master?”</p> <p>“Three thousand litres of olive oil,” he replied.</p> <p>‘The manager told him, “Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifteen hundred.”</p> <p>‘Then he asked the second, “And how much do you owe?”</p> <p>“Thirty tons of wheat,” he replied.</p> <p>‘He told him, “Take your bill and make it twenty-four.”</p> <p>‘The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.</p> <p>‘Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?</p>	Luke 16:1-12	The parable of the unjust steward is surprising? Why is the unjust steward commended by the master? What is the parable teaching us about our earthly possessions? How are you challenged here?

Daily Bible – Stories Jesus Told: Kingdom Stories in the Gospels (continued)

Day	Stories Jesus Told	Verse reference	Questions
27	<p>The Parable of the Good Samaritan</p> <p>But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’</p> <p>In reply Jesus said: ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. “Look after him,” he said, “and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.”</p> <p>‘Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?’</p> <p>The expert in the law replied, ‘The one who had mercy on him.’</p> <p>Jesus told him, ‘Go and do likewise.’</p>	Luke 10:29–37	<p>What is the context for the parable of the good Samaritan? Which character loves his neighbour? Why is it significant that it is a Samaritan helping a Jew? How does the parable answer the question ‘who is my neighbour?’ How does this challenge you?</p>

Daily Bible – Stories Jesus Told: Kingdom Stories in the Gospels (continued)

Day	Stories Jesus Told	Verse reference	Questions
28	<p>The Parable of the Persistent Widow</p> <p>Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: ‘In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, “Grant me justice against my adversary.”</p> <p>‘For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, “Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!”’</p> <p>And the Lord said, ‘Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?’</p>	Luke 18:1–8	What does this parable teach us about persistence in prayer? What changes the judge’s mind? What do you think Jesus is teaching us? How can this be applied to prayer? How will God bring justice?
29	<p>The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector</p> <p>To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: “God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.”</p> <p>‘But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”</p> <p>‘I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.’</p>	Luke 18:9–14	Who is this parable addressed to? How are the two praying men contrasted? What is the error of the Pharisee? How does the tax collector approach God? Who is the righteous man here? What does it mean for you to humble yourself before God?

Daily Bible – Stories Jesus Told: Kingdom Stories in the Gospels (continued)

Day	Stories Jesus Told	Verse reference	Questions
30	<p>The Rich Man and Lazarus</p> <p>‘There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.</p> <p>‘The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, “Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.”</p> <p>‘But Abraham replied, “Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.”</p> <p>‘He answered, “Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.”</p> <p>‘Abraham replied, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.”</p> <p>““No, father Abraham,” he said, “but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.”</p> <p>‘He said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.””</p>	Luke 16:19–31	<p>Why did Jesus tell the parable of Lazarus and the rich man? How is Lazarus described? How is the rich man described? How do you feel about their respective fates? Why can’t the rich man find relief? What is the punchline of the parable? What responses to resurrection are anticipated here? How should we respond to the parable?</p>