

A photograph of a field of golden wheat, slightly out of focus, with a parable title overlaid. The title is in a large, black, sans-serif font. Below the main title is a horizontal line, and below that is the subtitle in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

parables:  
secrets of the kingdom of heaven

Week 6 to 10

September 2022

## 6. The Lost Coin : Luke 15:8-10

This is the second in a series of parables Jesus told in response to the accusation, by the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, that He welcomed and ate with sinners. By inference they were labelling Jesus a “sinner”; and declaring that they would never lower themselves to such “unlawful” actions. Jesus teaches through this series of three parables in Luke 15 of God’s heart for the lost.

### Questions:

1. Why do you suppose that Jesus uses a woman as the person in this parable?
2. One thought is that the silver coin is part of a set that was worn by a married woman across her forehead. What does this say about the significance of the coin? How does this speak to you about the significance of what you think?
3. In the Lost Sheep it was 1 out of 100; in this parable it is 1 of 10. Is the ratio significant or is it the fact that one was lost? And what does this say to you about your attitude to anyone who is spiritually lost?

4. The woman lights a lamp to help her search.  
Read Ps 119: 5. What does this say to you about the light that we need when we are searching for the truth? When we are searching for the lost?
5. Why do you think that the woman in the parable made the search by herself? What does this say about individual witness as compared to the witness of the Church as a corporate whole?
6. In what way does the whole Church, and even heavenly multitudes, rejoice when one sinner comes to repentance?
7. Who has God placed on your heart to seek and, through the work of His Spirit, find?

*Ask for any questions that the group might have.*

*Close with a simple prayer, asking for God's help to go out and live like the Samaritan did.*

## 7. The Prodigal Son : Luke 15:11-32

The story of the prodigal son is a picture of God's love for us as His children. God's love for us does not depend on our faithfulness; it is unconditional. He loved us while we were still sinners. Though we are demanding and do not remain faithful, God is still our faithful and loving Father.

### Questions:

1. What stages does the younger son go through in his pilgrimage?
2. What brings him to his senses and with what sort of attitude does he approach his father?
3. What do you think the father was doing when his son was away? How does he receive him?
4. How does the older brother feel about his younger brother's return? Why?
5. What does Jesus want to teach the Pharisees with the story of the older son in v.25-31 in light of v.2?
6. How have you experienced God as the Father?

7. When have you been like the older brother, quietly resentful of God's lavishness to less deserving people?
8. What does it feel like to be forgiven and accepted and loved?

*Ask for any questions that the group might have.*

*Close with a simple prayer, that we can pray without fear, but with the eagerness because we have complete access to our heavenly.*

## 8. The Rich Man & Lazarus : Luke 16:19-31

False beliefs about Heaven and Hell abound. This, and other single passages of Scripture, must never be used to build a doctrine about the afterlife; we must use the whole breadth of Scripture. In this parable Jesus is pointing to the fact that people who reject the witness of things they already have access to will also reject the truths brought by new and/or miraculous to them.

### Questions:

1. Discuss what you think the Rich Man was like, his attitudes and actions, etc. In what ways do you fit the description of the Rich Man?
2. Talk about Lazarus' lot in life and his attitudes to his lot. When have you felt like you fit the description of Lazarus?
3. Read verse 22. What do you see different about the descriptions of the two men's deaths? What does this indicate to you about their lives and their relationships to others and to God? Personally, what challenges do these thoughts present to you about your life and relationships to others and to God?
4. Apart from the "fire and brimstone" of hell, what do you think might have contributed to the formerly rich man's "agony" and "torment" (v28)? Are there things that are tormenting you at this moment? What can you do? See John 14: 1

5. Riches, or the lack of them, do not determine our destination after this life: so, what is the determining factor with regard to our eternal destination?  
See John 1: 12; Romans 10: 11; Revelation 1: 20
6. How do you interpret "the witness of Moses and the Prophets"?  
What other witness(es) do people have today?  
How, specifically, are you part of this witness?
7. Why do you think that if a person does not receive the witness of "Moses and the Prophets" he/she will not receive the witness of some-one who is raised from the dead? To whom is Jesus referring to in these verses?
8. What areas in your life are you refusing to act upon the witness of "Moses and the Prophets" and the other witnesses that may be speaking to you?  
Why? What must you do?

*Ask for any final comments or questions from the group.  
Close with a prayer asking God to help us to recognize what is truly important in life.*

## 9. The Persistent Widow : Luke 18:1-8

We are given in verse 1 the reason Jesus told this parable – to encourage the disciples to be persistent and continuous in prayer. Yet He also teaches about the goodness of His Heavenly Father, and questions whether at His Second Coming there will still be people who have the faith to be persistent in prayer.

### Questions:

1. Discuss how “persistence” can be a virtue related to perseverance but also be an undesirable characteristic that is seen as annoyance, nagging, or the like. What are the things that can move persistence from a virtue to a character flaw?
2. Considering the description in verse 2 of the judge, describe how you think he would have acted towards others. In light of this how do you think he would have normally acted to a widow if a case involving one came before him?
3. Again, considering your assessment of the judge, what characteristics that he displayed do you see yourself displaying? What do you need to do to see these things in your life change?

4. What did it mean to a person's status, etc. to be a widow in Jesus' day? Where do you see people in our day that have the same social standing and challenges before them? What is your attitude towards these people?
5. Compare the motives of the unjust judge for granting the widows request to the motives of our Heavenly Father for granting our requests.
6. Why, when Jesus so often speaks of His Father's love; mercy; compassion; desire to give us all good things; generosity; etc.; etc., do we sometimes think that the Lord is no different to the unjust judge?
7. What requests have you not been persistent in bringing to our Heavenly Father? What can you do to ensure that you are faithful in praying persistently for these things?
8. How does thanking the Lord; remembering; perhaps recording; and/or sharing answers to prayers help you to be persistent in prayer?

*Ask for any final comments or questions from the group.*

*Close with a prayer asking that you might be an example of His mercy and patience this week.*

## 10. The Pharisee & The Tax Collector : Luke 18:9-14

The Pharisee prayed about how good he was, but the tax collector asked for God's mercy as he was a sinner. Jesus said that it was the tax collector who went home justified before God. He concluded, "Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

### Questions:

1. If Jesus told this story today, what group of people would be the Pharisees?  
What group the Tax collector?
2. How does this parable demonstrate authentic faith?
3. What does this parable teach about God?
4. When have you been like the Pharisee in this story?  
When have you been like the tax collector?
5. What accounts for the difference?
6. We talked a few weeks ago about humility, let's recap. Why is humility so important for us as followers of Jesus?
7. Considering your attitude towards others in the present time, which are you most like? Why?



