

# Open Bible Stories — Jesus Teaches Other Stories

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## Introduction

### Key Idea

The story of Jesus teaching parables teaches us about the nature of God's kingdom.

### Core Belief Verse

*"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Matthew 6:33*

### God's Big Story

The eternal God created all things in six days.

He made a good and perfect world.

He made humans in his image to fill the earth and rule over creation.

But humans rebelled against God and ruined God's creation.

God set to restore his world through his promise.

God made a covenant with Abraham. He promised to bless all nations through Abraham.

God kept his promises across the generations.

God provided Abraham with a promised child, Isaac.

God gave Isaac a wife, and she bore twins, Jacob and Esau.

God blessed Jacob and his sons, and the blessing continued to the next generation.

God rescued Joseph, one of Jacob's sons, and used him to rescue his family.

God caused his people, the Israelites, to multiply in the land of Egypt; eventually, they became slaves.

But, God raised up a deliverer, Moses, to deliver his people from their slavery.

God judged the Egyptians with harsh plagues; in the final judgment, he passed over his people, who covered their doorposts with the blood of a sacrificed lamb.

Then, God delivered the Israelites by bringing them out of Egypt and crossing the Red Sea on dry land.

God made a covenant with the Israelites and made them his people.

God tested Israel in a series of wilderness wanderings and eventually brought his people into the promised land of Canaan.

God raised up deliverers to lead Israel and rescue them from their enemies.

God formed Israel into a kingdom. He made a covenant with King David and promised to send a king that would rule his people forever.

Many of Israel's kings were evil, and the kingdom of Israel was divided into two kingdoms.

God sent prophets to warn his people of God's judgment and call them to repent.

When Israel did not repent, God sent his people into exile. After many years, he brought them back to the land.

Throughout the Old Testament, God promised to send his Messiah to deliver his people from their sin.

After many years, the prophet John was born. He would prepare people for the coming Messiah.

At the perfect time, God sent his Son, Jesus, to be born of a virgin Mary.

When John and Jesus grew up, John baptized Jesus as a sign that Jesus was God's beloved Son.

Jesus endured all manner of temptation without ever sinning.

When he was thirty years old, he launched a public ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing.

He taught his disciples about the life of compassion, sacrifice, and forgiveness.

Jesus performed many miracles: he fed a crowd of five thousand, he walked on water, he healed the sick, and he cast out demons.

He proclaimed to people the nature of real faith, God's kingdom.

## The Story: Jesus Teaches Other Stories

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34-01



Jesus told many other stories about the kingdom of God. For example, he said, "The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed that someone planted in his field. You know that the mustard seed is the smallest seed of all."

34-02



"But when the mustard seed grows, it becomes the largest of all of the garden plants, big enough that even the birds come and rest in its branches."

34-03



Telling another story, Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is like yeast that a woman mixes into some bread dough until it spreads throughout the dough."

34-04



"The kingdom of God is also like treasure that someone hid in a field. Another man found the treasure and wanted it very much. So he buried it again. He was so filled with joy that he went and sold everything he had so he could buy that field where the treasure was."

34-05



"The kingdom of God is also like a perfect pearl of great value. When a pearl merchant found it, he sold all that he had so he could buy it."

34-06



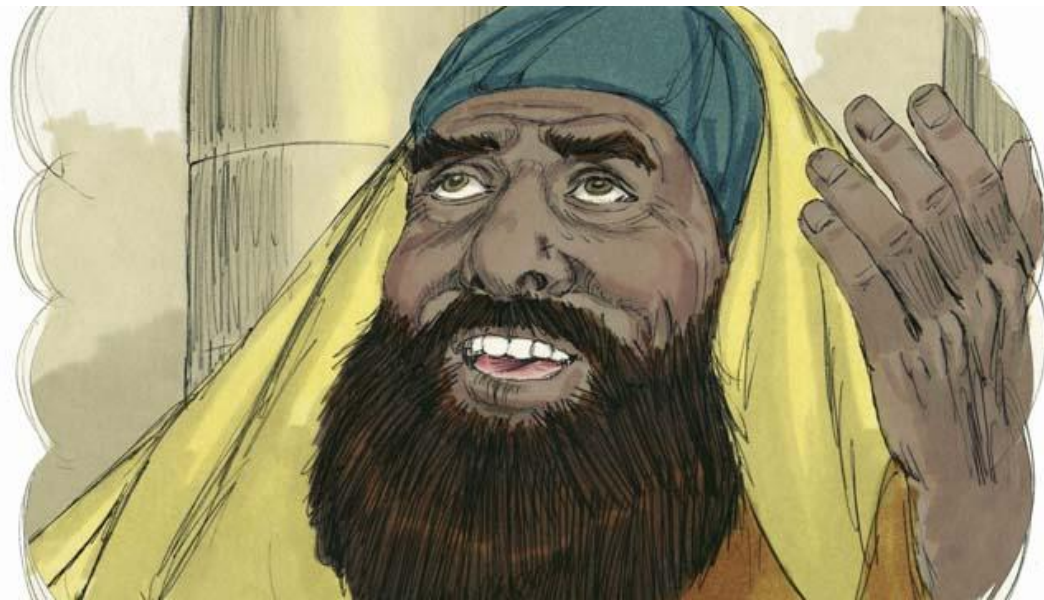
Some people thought God would accept them because they were doing good things. These people despised others who did not do those good things. So Jesus told them this story: "There were two men, both of whom went to the Temple to pray. One of them was a tax collector, and the other was a religious leader."

34-07



"The religious leader prayed like this, 'Thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like other men---such as robbers, unjust men, adulterers, or even like that tax collector over there.'"

34-08



"For example, I fast two times every week and I give you ten percent of all the money and goods that I receive."

34-09



"But the tax collector stood far away from the religious leader. He did not even look up to heaven. Instead, he pounded on his chest with his fist and prayed, 'God, please be merciful to me because I am a sinner.'"

34-10



Then Jesus said, "I tell you, God heard the tax collector's prayer, and declared him to be righteous rather than the religious leader. God will dishonor everyone who is proud, but he will honor whoever humbles himself."

*A Bible story from: Matthew 13:31-46; Mark 4:26-34; Luke 13:18-21; 18:9-14*

## Community Study: Approved Servants—Aiming to Please God Most of All

- **Key Idea:** seeking for God's approval in all that we do
- **Key Passage:** 2 Timothy 2:14-26
- **Main Session:** OBS 34 (Jesus Teaches Other Stories)

### Recite the Core Belief Verse (3-5 minutes)

The verse below summarizes the teaching of the current passage.

Read the verse out loud as a

community. Read it again several times as a group until the whole community can recite it from memory.

33 With many parables like this he spoke the word to them, as much as they were able to

understand. Mark 4:33

OR

33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you.

Matthew 6:33

### Describing Faithful Servants (5-10 minutes)

Think about faithful servants of God that you respect. As a community, describe together the

characteristics of these faithful servants.

One faithful servant that I respect is ...

I respect this servant because he/she is ...

### Read the Passage (3-5 minutes)

God wants us to serve him faithfully. Our lives and ministry are fully dedicated to God. As a community,

read the following Bible passage together to understand what it means to serve God faithfully in your life

and ministry.

14 Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is

of no value, and only ruins those who listen. 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one

approved, a worker who has no reason to be ashamed, who accurately teaches the word of truth. 16

Avoid profane talk, which leads to more and more godlessness. 17 Their talk will spread like cancer.

Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18 who have gone astray from the truth. They say that

the resurrection has already happened, and they destroy the faith of some. 19 However, the firm

foundation of God stands. It has this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his" and "Everyone

who names the name of the Lord must depart from unrighteousness." 20 In a wealthy home, there

are not only containers of gold and silver. There are also containers of wood and clay. Some of these

are for honorable use, and some for dishonorable. 21 If someone cleans himself from dishonorable

use, he is an honorable container. He is set apart, useful to the Master, and prepared for every good

work. 22 Flee youthful lusts. Pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the

Lord out of a clean heart. 23 But refuse foolish and ignorant questions. You know that they give birth

## **Movement 1: Understand the Story**

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*Read each question aloud. Give the group time to answer before sharing the answer.*

### **Observation Questions**

*34-01*

What were many of Jesus' stories about?

Jesus told many other stories about the kingdom of God.

To what kind of seed did Jesus compare the kingdom of God?

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God was like a mustard seed that someone planted in the field.

How does a mustard seed compare to other seeds?

It is the smallest seed of all.

*34-02*

What happens to a mustard seed when it grows?

It becomes the largest of all the garden plants.

How big does the mustard grow?

The mustard seed grows a large garden plant big enough for birds to come and rest in its branches.

*34-03*

To what cooking ingredient did Jesus compare the kingdom of God?

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is like yeast that a woman mixes into bread dough.

What happens to yeast when it is mixed into bread dough?

It spreads throughout the dough, causing it to rise.

*34-04*

To what valuable possession did Jesus compare the kingdom of God?

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God was like treasure that someone hid in a field.

Who found the treasure?

Another man found the treasure and wanted it very much.

What did the man do after finding the treasure hidden in the field?

He buried it again, sold all he had, and used the money to buy the field where the treasure was.

*34-05*

To what costly gem did Jesus compare the kingdom of God?

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God was like a perfect pearl of great value.

What did the pearl merchant do when he found a perfect pearl?

He sold all that he had and used the money to buy it.

*34-06*

How did some people think God would treat them because of their good deeds?

Some people thought God would accept them because they were doing good things.

What did these people think of others?

These people despised others who did not do those good things.

What story did Jesus tell the people who were confident in their good deeds?

Jesus told the story of two men who went to the temple to pray; a tax collector and a religious leader.

*34-07*

How did the religious leader pray?

The religious leader thanked God that he was a sinner like other men.

What kind of people did the religious leader think he was better than?

The religious leader thought he was better than robbers, unjust men, adulterers, and tax collectors.

*34-08*

Why did the religious leader think he was righteous?

He fasted two times every week and gave ten percent of his money and goods.

*34-09*

How did the tax collector pray to God?

The tax collector stood far away from the religious leader, did not look up to heaven, and pounded his chest with his fist as he prayed.

What did the tax collector request from God?

He asked God to be merciful to him because he was a sinner.

*34-10*

Which man did God declare to be righteous?

He declared that the tax collector was righteous.

What will God do to everyone who is proud?

God will dishonor everyone who is proud.

What will God do to everyone who is humble?

He will honor everyone who is humble.

## **Movement 2: Theological Questions**

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### **What Does This Story Teach Us?**

1. What is the kingdom of God like? What do we learn about God's kingdom from this series of Jesus' parables/stories?
2. How can sinful humans find acceptance before God? What does the story of the tax collector and the religious leader teach us about how to really be accepted by God?
3. How does pride become a part of our heart, and what are its dangers? How can one become humble, and what are its benefits? What does this story teach us about the danger of pride and the need for humility?

## **Movement 3: Live It Out**

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### **Personal Implications & Applications From The Story**

*Guide the group to discuss practical obedience from this story and name concrete next steps.*

1. Which story about the kingdom of God most resonates with you?
2. How does understanding God's kingdom instruct us how to live as followers of Jesus?
3. Do you most resemble the religious leader or the tax collector in your life? How do you know?

4. Think about this week. Where does "Jesus Teaches Other Stories" challenge you to obey God in a practical way?
5. How does this key idea shape one decision you need to make right now: The story of Jesus teaching parables teaches us about the nature of God's kingdom.

## **Movement 4: Retell the Story**

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*Invite the group to retell the story several times until they can tell it clearly and faithfully.*

1. Can someone retell "Jesus Teaches Other Stories" from beginning to end in their own words?
2. Retell this story again, but focus on what God did at each key moment.
3. Retell the story in three parts: beginning, middle, and ending. What changed in each part?
4. If you were teaching this story to your family tonight, how would you tell it simply and clearly?

### **Church Ministry**

**Ministry Preparation:** Take time to consider how you could minister this story to others. Record some ministry ideas below.

**Ministry Implementation:** Minister this story to a group of believers as you had planned. Use the information in this study to help develop a teaching/lesson or lead a discussion of this story with other believers. Record your ministry plan below.

**Ministry Reflection:** Think about what you learned from ministering this story to other believers. Reflect on your experience below.

## **Movement 5: Share It**

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*Help each person plan how they will share this story with others before the next gathering.*

1. Who is one specific person you will share "Jesus Teaches Other Stories" with this week?
2. When and where will you share this story with them?
3. What is the one main truth from this story you want them to remember?

Report-back next meeting: Who did you share with, and what happened?

### **Mission Engagement**

**Witness Preparation:** Take time to consider how you will witness this narrative to unbelievers. Record some ideas below.

**Witness Implementation:** Share this story with an unbeliever. Use the information in this study to help develop a teaching/lesson or lead a discussion of this story with unbelievers. Record your witness plan below.

**Witness Reflection:** Think about what you learned from ministering this story to unbelievers. Reflect on your experience below.