

KEY TERMS

Parable: a story told by Jesus to illustrate a deeper meaning.

Kingdom of God: Where God rules.

Prejudice: unfairly judging someone. Holding biased opinions about a group or individual.

Discrimination: actions or behaviour that come from prejudice.

Shema: Jewish statement of belief in one God.

Tax collectors: Jewish men who collected taxes on behalf of the Romans.

Exorcism: driving out evil spirits.

Disciple: anyone who is a follower of Jesus.

Haemorrhage: persistent bleeding which is potentially life threatening.

The woman with the haemorrhage

A large crowd were following Jesus including a woman who was suffering from bleeding for 12 years. She had been to many doctors but they could not make her better. She had heard about Jesus and said "If I just touch his clothes, I will be well". She touched him and was healed of her disease. Jesus was immediately aware that the power had gone out of him and said "who touched my clothes?" The disciples were confused as they saw many people crowding him but Jesus continued to look for the person who had touched him. The woman came trembling in fear, knelt down at His feet and told Him the whole truth. Jesus said "My daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace" With faith in God, all things are possible. Healing takes place in Lourdes today.

Peter's Denial

Peter was in the courtyard when the High Priests servant saw him & said "You too were with Jesus of Nazareth!" But Peter denied it "I do not understand what you are talking about!" A cock crowed. The woman began to repeat to bystanders, "He is one of them!" Peter denied it another 3 times and then a cock crowed. Peter broke down and cried when he remembered what Jesus had said. Even the closest of Jesus' disciples made mistakes and none of us are perfect. How we deal with our mistakes is more important. Peter's tears show that he was sorry & he goes on to lead the Church.

The Ascension

Jesus was taken up to heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. They went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere. The Lord worked with them and proved that their preaching was true by the miracles that they performed.

The Commission

Jesus said "Go throughout the whole world & preach the gospel to all people. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. Believers will be given the power to perform miracles; drive out demons in my name; speak in strange tongues. If they pick up snakes or drink poison they will not be harmed. They will place their hands on sick people, and these will get well. We are called to live out this commission today through preaching, teaching & healing with the help of the Holy Spirit.

The Cost of Discipleship

Jesus said to his disciples, if anyone wants to come with me, he must forget self, carry his cross and follow me. "Whoever wants to save his own life will lose it but whoever loses his life for me will save it." If anyone is ashamed of me and my teaching then the son of man will be ashamed of him. Discipleship is not always easy. It requires sacrifice. **Rewards in the Kingdom of God** Peter says "we have left everything to follow you!" Jesus replies "no one who has left home or brothers and sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age, & in the age to come, eternal life." "But many who are first will be last, and the last first" The rewards will be great. This would have appealed to early Christians, many of whom came from lower classes or were slaves.

ST. MARK' GOSPEL

THEME E: A SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL TRUTH

The Parable of the Sower

- Seed on the path is eaten by birds.
- Rocky ground soil wasn't deep enough so the sun burnt the young plants because the roots had not grown deep enough.
- Seed among thorns. The thorns grew and choked the plants.
- Seeds on good soil. The plants sprouted, grew and produced corn, some had 30 grains, some 60 and some 100.

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Sower

- The sower sows Gods message
- Path = Hear the message but Satan comes and takes it straight away.
- Rocky ground = take the message in but it does not sink in deeply enough so that when trouble comes along they give up.
- Among thorns = too distracted by worldly possessions.
- Good soil = hear the message, accept it and bear fruit, some 30, some 60 and some 100.

The Kingdom of God:

- Parable of the Sower The Mustard Seed
- The Growing Seed The Rich Man The Greatest Commandment

Jesus Relationship with those disregarded in society:

- The man with leprosy The call of Levi The Syrophenician Woman's daughter The Epileptic Boy
- The Widow's offering The anointing at Bethany

Faith and Discipleship:

- The call of the first 4 disciples The costs and rewards
- The woman with the haemorrhage Peter's Denial
- The commission The ascension

The Call of Levi (Tax Collector)

Jesus said to Levi "Follow me". & Levi got up and followed him. Later Jesus is criticised for eating in Levi's house with sinners. "Why does he eat with such people?" "I have not come to call respectable people but outcasts". Jesus' message is not for those who already get it. There would be no point in preaching to those who already love God. Instead, Jesus has come to call people to repentance and start again.

The Call of the Disciples

As Jesus was walking along the shore of Lake Galilee he saw 2 fishermen, Simon and his brother Andrew. Jesus said to them, "Come and follow me and I will teach you to catch people". They left their nets at once and followed him. Further on Jesus saw James and John, sons of Zebedee getting their nets ready. As soon as Jesus saw them, he called them and they left everything to follow him. Their response is immediate – without hesitation. They were ordinary men.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Mustard seed is the smallest seed in the world.

When it grows, it becomes the biggest of all plants.

It puts out such large branches that the birds come and make their nests in its shade.

The KoG starts small and grows to be very large. It provides shelter for all. Birds = gentiles. No one is excluded from the Kingdom.



Anointing at Bethany

A woman anoints Jesus with perfume & told is off. It could have been sold. Jesus says she did a beautiful thing to prepare for burial. The disciples have been listening to Jesus about wealth, but get this one wrong. They treat her poorly because she is a woman. She recognises Jesus as the Messiah (anoints him) and his impending death (preparation for burial).

Jesus Blesses the Children

Some people brought children to Jesus for blessings but the disciples scolded them. Jesus was angry and said to the disciples "Let the children come to me"

"the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these". "Whoever does not receive the KoG like a child will never enter it."

Children are loyal, obedient, accepting, trusting, innocent, humble and recognise their place before and reliance on God.

The Growing Seed

"The Kingdom of God is like this" A man scatters seed in his field. The seeds sprout & grow without help from the man – he does not know how. The soil makes the plants grow and bear fruit. When the grain is ripe, the man cuts it because harvest time has come. The parable serves as an encouragement for those who think their efforts for the Kingdom are fruitless, and a warning for those who think they can bring about the kingdom by their own projects and programs.

The Greatest Commandment

A teacher of the Law asks Jesus "Which commandment is the most important of all?" Jesus replied "Listen Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your mind, and with all your strength." "The second most important one is this: "Love your neighbour as you love yourself" There is no other commandment more important than these two." The teacher of the Law said to Jesus "Well done Teacher! It is true as you say that to love God and your neighbour is more important than to offer animals and other sacrifices to God." Jesus noticed how wise his answer was and so he told him "You are not far from the Kingdom of God. After this nobody dared to ask Jesus any more questions. Jesus recalls the Shema to prove his point. Loving God and loving your neighbour means that you would follow all the other commandments.

The Rich Man

A man asked Jesus "Good teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?" Jesus said to him "You know the commandments" & told him he should follow them. The man replied "ever since I was young I have obeyed these commandments". So Jesus said "Go and sell all that you have and give it to the poor, then come and follow me". "Gloom spread over his face" and the man went away sad because he was very rich. Jesus said to his disciples "It is much harder for a rich man to enter the KOG than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle." The disciples were amazed & asked "Who then can be saved?" "Jesus tells them that "everything is possible for God". Wealth is a good thing provided it is used for good. When we place too much importance on money, we forget about God. Jesus' teaching is revolutionary to a society that saw wealth as approval from God. It was a challenge to the rich Jewish authorities as they believed that they were the closest to God as they followed his rules precisely.

The Widow's offering

Jesus sat down and watched the crowd put their offerings at the temple.

Many people threw in large amounts.

A poor widow came and put two small copper coins worth only a few cents.

Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, this poor woman has put more into the treasury than all the others "They all gave out of their wealth; but she put in everything she had to live on."

Giving is not about the amount but the intention behind it. If the rich give what they can spare they are no more virtuous. This is a lesson on wealth but also giving everything to God. Give above and beyond.

Greek Woman's daughter

Gentile woman begs Jesus to help her daughter who has a demon inside her. Jesus says "It isn't right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs" She replies "even the dogs get to eat the children's leftovers" Jesus: "because of that answer, go home where you will find your daughter is well". This highlights the prejudices that the Jews had at the time. Jesus' reply to the woman seems rude but its probably more likely a test of faith. Because her answer shows faith despite Jesus' comments, her daughter is made well.

Epileptic Boy

A man says his son has an evil spirit in him that throws him to the ground and makes him foam at the mouth. He had asked the disciples but they could not heal his son. The boy was brought to Jesus and has a fit. Father says "have pity on us and help us, if you possibly can!" Jesus says "everything is possible for the person who has faith." The father said "I do have faith, but not enough, help me to have more!" Jesus commanded the spirit "I order you to come out of the boy" The spirit came out and everyone thought the boy was dead but Jesus got him up. The disciples want to know why they could not drive the spirit out. "Only prayer can drive this kind out" Jesus says "nothing else can". There is a clear link between faith, prayer and healing. Prayer is often linked to miracles – many churches hold healing services to pray for the sick and Lourdes in France is another great example of this.