

1. The Good Samaritan

1. Read Luke 10: 25 – 37
2. What do you make of the lawyer's questions? What was his motivation? How sincere was he?
3. The situation described in v30 was common on the dangerous road from Jerusalem to Jericho. In what situations today is non-involvement seen as a wise choice?
4. Why did Jesus choose a Samaritan, someone from an ethnic group despised by the Jews, as the 'hero' of the story?
5. (i) Consider the Samaritan's actions from the point of view of (a) personal inconvenience, (b) financial cost and (c) risk.

(ii) How big a factor is each of these elements in discouraging our own neighbourly actions? Can you give an example?
6. Jesus' question (v36) was not intended to prove that Samaritans could be better neighbours than Jews. What was he getting at?
7. 'Go and do likewise' (v37). What exactly was Jesus telling the lawyer to do?
8. In what practical ways can we 'go and do likewise' today?

2. The Rich Fool

1. Read Luke 12: 13 – 21
2. What should our attitude be towards greed, and why (v15)?
3. How would you assess the *actions* of the rich man in verses 16-18?
4. How would you assess his *attitude* in verse 19?
5. How does God expose the man's false sense of security (v20)?
6. How does this parable illustrate that 'a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions'?
7. Is Jesus condemning material prosperity in this parable (v21)? Is it possible to be prosperous without being greedy and, if so, how?
8. What does it mean to be 'rich towards God' (v21)? How can we be rich towards God?

3. The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

1. Read Luke 18: 9-14
2. The Pharisee addresses God, but to what extent does God occupy his attention? What does this reveal about his attitude to himself and God?
3. How does the way the tax collector views himself contrast with the Pharisee?
4. Notice the positions, postures and gestures of the Pharisee and the tax collector. What conclusions can we draw from these contrasts in body language?
5. When I first started going to church, we always used to kneel to pray. What different positions have you adopted when praying? What differences have you noticed while praying in these positions?
6. In the first century, Pharisees were viewed with great respect, while tax collectors were despised as traitors. Why then was the tax collector justified rather than the Pharisee? How would Jesus' listeners have reacted to this conclusion?
7. In what ways are we tempted to exalt ourselves today?
8. How can we humble ourselves in our attitudes and actions?

4. The Unforgiving Servant

1. Read Matthew 18: 15 and 21 – 35.
2. What is the ultimate goal we should have when we approach a fellow believer who has sinned against us? How difficult would we find it to obey this command?
3. What view of forgiveness does Peter's question reveal?
4. Jesus tells Peter to forgive his brother 77 times. What is Jesus' point?
5. 10,000 talents was the equivalent to several million euros. The king's intended action (v25) represented the justice of the day. If you were the man, how would you have felt before and after the king cancelled your debt (vv 25 – 27)?
6. A 100 denarii is a trivial amount compared to 10,000 talents. What message does Jesus intend to convey by this sum? How should the comparison of the two sums affect our view of the sins of others?
7. What can we conclude about those who profess the Christian faith yet do not appear to forgive? Or is it perhaps more complicated than this?
8. What happens to our spiritual freedom and our fellowship with God when we are critical and unforgiving?

5. The Widow and the Judge

1. Read Luke 18: 1-8.
2. The characters in the parable are drawn sketchily but vividly. What images come to mind when you think about the widow? The judge? Have you ever found yourself in a similar position to the widow?
3. Why do you think the widow is so persistent? And what finally motivates the judge to act?
4. Use your imagination to fill in the details about those praying to God in verses 6 – 8. How would you describe them and their circumstances?
5. In what ways can we expect God to do far more for those in v7 than the judge did for the widow?
6. Jesus told this parable to show us that we should always pray and not give up (v1). How can we explain the uncertainty of his final question in v8?
7. Can you share examples of times when you have been tempted to give up praying about someone or something? And examples of times when persistent prayer has led to an outcome of one sort or another?
8. How can this parable encourage us to keep on praying?