

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

PARABLES OF JESUS

International Sunday School Lesson For March 6

Memory Selection: "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap."—Galatians 6:7.

Lesson Text: Mark 4:1-9; Luke 15:11.

As the hostility of the synagogue leaders became more pronounced against Jesus he changed his method of teaching. Until now he had spoken plainly and proclaimed great truths so that all might understand but, with the Pharisees seeking to entrap him, Jesus began to speak in parables.

"Parables are scenes or short stories, taken from nature or from common life," says Hastings' Bible Dictionary, "which present in a picturesque and vivid way some thought or principle which is capable of being transformed to the high spiritual life of man." The parable teaches by comparison. The object of nature or human happenings is placed beside truth so that it illustrates and Jesus explains the latter.

To the large crowd which gathered around the Sea of Galilee, Jesus gave these parables, seated in a boat near the shore to avoid the crush of the multitude which had followed him and awaited his word. Our lesson this week considers what is generally accepted to have been the first parable used by Jesus, one which he explained himself in detail to his intimate followers and disciples.

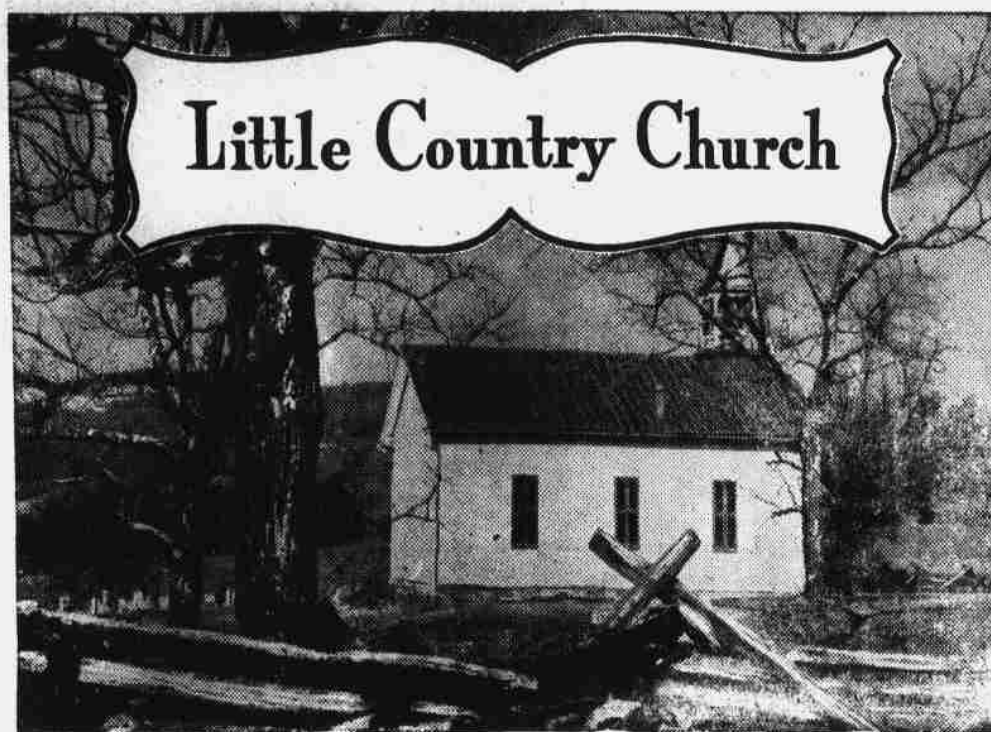
From his seaside seat Jesus doubtless looked over a field and this comparison came to his mind. The sower of grain depended largely upon the nature of the soil upon which his seed fell for the harvest which would follow. So, as seed was generally scattered by the sower, Jesus said, it fell on four kinds of soil, on the foot-trodden path shallow ground underlain with rock, in the midst of thorns, and on good tillable soil. In his explanation of the parable he likened each kind of soil to a kind of hearer of the word of truth spoken by him.

Seed which fell by the wayside had no chance to germinate because the birds found it easily and ate it. So, in life, many hearts have become hardened and if the word reaches them it is quickly destroyed and taken away by evil.

Happily for the sower, some seed falls on good ground, takes root, grows into maturity and yields a rich harvest. So with the life of those who hear the word, accept it fully and completely, pattern their lives according to its truth and become a benediction and a blessing to those who come in contact with them.

Jesus completed his parable by saying, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Almost every person can locate himself or herself in one or the other of the classes of hearers represented in the parable.

The parable of the prodigal son is related in Luke's and no other gospel. To many it is the outstanding parable of the New Testament. It tells the story of a younger son sent (Concluded on Page Two)



Little Country Church

Scattered along the roadsides of America are thousands of little country churches where the people of these rural communities have for generations worshipped God.

There is nothing pretentious about these plain, square buildings; only the little belfry on the front marks it as a shrine of God. Usually it is neat and orderly and the grounds are clean and well-kept—especially the cemetery, where sleep the honored dead.

Here the people come to sing and pray and listen, and thus renew their spiritual strength. Thousands who have left the rural areas and achieved success in the cities look back with nostalgic yearning to the little country church on the roadside.

These little churches have helped to build the faith and character of America. They have taught the people of the rural communities the simple truths of religion and the comfort and satisfaction of a life of faith.

Whether it be in the quiet rural areas or in the crowded purlieus of the cities, the Church is an indispensable factor in building a strong, happy, and useful life.

THE CHURCH FOR ALL . . . ALL FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.

Sunday Luke 19:11-17
Monday I Corinthians 5:6-8
Tuesday Proverbs 15:13-18
Wednesday Isaiah 10:20-23
Thursday Romans 8:12-17
Friday III John 1:5-8
Saturday John 3:26-30

For schedule of yearly readings, write American Bible Society, 450 Park Ave., N. Y. 22, N. Y.

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Be a Better Citizen! Go to Some Church Next Sunday

CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
A. H. Outlaw, Pastor
Sunday School, 2 P. M. every first Sunday.
Church Service 3 P. M. every first Sunday.
Sunday School at 11 A. M. every second, third and fourth Sunday.

BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST
Walker Perry, Pastor
Bible School 10:30 A. M., except first Sunday, at 10 A. M.
Morning worship on first Sunday at 11 A. M.
Evening worship first Sunday at 7 P. M.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
E. T. Jilson, Rector
Holy Communion, 9:00 A. M.
Every Sunday except first Sunday at 9:00 A. M.
Church School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Prayer and Sermon, 11:00 o'clock.
Holy Communion first Sunday at 11 A. M.

BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM
Coy S. Saunders, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

Go To Church Your Church Any Church But Do Go

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