

Kenneth Bailey - Parables of Jesus in Luke - 1/9/08

Cultural-anthropological approach to study

How did the people of Jesus' day understand and respond to Jesus and his parables

Looking at Jesus as a theologian - metaphorical

example: metaphors of God as Mother and God as Father

Metaphors are the theology - not examples or illustrations of the theology

Methodology we will use

1. What is culture of the world in which Jesus lived
2. What do these stories mean to the people to whom they were first spoken
3. Identify the original audience

Problems that can occur

1. Cut and paste - lose interpretation of the context
2. Turn scripture into a formula - timeless truth instead of contextual truth
3. **Bible is the Word of God through people in history**

A theology in picture form



A theology in picture form

GOD

THE COSTLY  
DEMONSTRATION OF  
UNEXPECTED LOVE

THANKFULNESS

RIGHTEOUS  
REPENTANCE

LAW BREAKING SINNERS  
LAW KEEPING SINNERS

DOCTRINE

LAW

Parable levels:

1. Entertaining story
2. Ethical example
3. Revelation of the secrets of the kingdom (theology) - often
4. Hint about the nature of Jesus - sometimes

**Luke 10:25-37**

ROUND 1

Lawyer: Question 1: <sup>25</sup> On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus: Questions 2: <sup>26</sup> "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

Lawyer: Answer 2: <sup>27</sup> He answered: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Jesus: Answer 1: <sup>28</sup> "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

ROUND 2

Lawyer: Question 1: <sup>29</sup> But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus: Questions 2: :30-35(parable)

fell into the <sup>36</sup> "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who  
hands of robbers?"

Lawyer: Answer 2: <sup>37</sup> The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus: Answer 1: <sup>37b</sup> Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

1 <sup>30</sup> In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

2 <sup>31</sup> A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

3 <sup>32</sup> So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

4 <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

3' <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.

2' <sup>34b</sup> Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.

1 <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

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Repentance definition

Old: Confess

Make compensation

Demonstrate sincerity

New: Accept being found

**Luke 15:1-10**

<sup>1</sup> Now the tax collectors and "sinners" were all gathering around to hear him.

<sup>2</sup> But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

<sup>3</sup> Then Jesus told them this parable:

A <sup>4</sup> "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep

B and loses one (hadh) of them.

C Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country

1 and go after the lost sheep

2 until he finds it? <sup>5</sup> And when he finds it,

3 he joyfully (hedhwa) puts it on his shoulders

4 <sup>6</sup> and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together

3' and says, 'Rejoice (hedhwa) with me;

2' I have found my sheep.

1' which was lost.'

A' <sup>7</sup> I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven

B' over one (hadh)sinner who repents

C' than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

A <sup>8</sup> "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins

B and loses one.

C

1 Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully

2 until she finds it? <sup>9</sup> And when she finds it,

3

4 she calls her friends and neighbors together

3' and says, 'Rejoice with me;

2' I have found my coin

1' lost.'

A' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God

B' over one sinner who repents."

C'

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**Luke 15:11-24**

<sup>11</sup> Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons.

**1** <sup>12</sup> The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

**2** <sup>13</sup> "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.

**3** <sup>14</sup> After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need.

**4** <sup>15</sup> So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs.

**5** <sup>16</sup> He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

**6** <sup>17</sup> "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!

**6'** <sup>18</sup> I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'

**5'** <sup>20</sup> So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

**4'** <sup>21</sup> "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

**3'** <sup>22</sup> "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

**2'** <sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate.

**1'** <sup>24</sup> For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

**1** A son is lost

**2** Goods wasted in extravagant living

**3** Everything lost

**4** The great sin

**5** Total rejection

**6** A change of mind

**6'** An initial repentance

**5'** Total acceptance

**4'** The great repentance

**3'** Everything gained

**2'** Goods used in joyful celebration

**1'** A son is found

--- or ---

**1** Speech 1

**2** He leaves

**3** In need but unrepentant

**4** Becomes a pig herder

**5** Eats nothing

**6** Is dying

**1** Speech 2

**2** He returns

**3** In need and truly repentant

**4** Becomes an honored son

**5** Feeds on fatted calf

**6** Is alive

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**Luke 15:25-32**

<sup>25</sup> "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field.

1 When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.

OLDER SON AWAY  
OLDER SON COMES

2 <sup>27</sup> 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

BROTHER SAFE-FEAST

3 <sup>28</sup> "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.

FATHER COMES TO  
RECONCILE

4 <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for

COMPLAINT 1 - TREAT

ME

you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.

4' <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with

COMPLAINT 2 - TREAT

HIM

prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!

3' <sup>31</sup> "My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.

FATHER TRIES TO  
RECONCILE

2' <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

BROTHER SAFE-FEAST

1' (no parallel ending)

??

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- 1 Introduction (the Pharisee, Jesus, Woman)
- 2 The outpouring of the woman's love (in action)
- 3 A Dialogue (Simon judges wrongly)
- 4 A Parable
- 5 A Dialog (Simon judges rightly)
- 6 The outpouring of the woman's love (in retrospect)
- 7 Conclusion (the Pharisees, Jesus, the woman)

**Luke 7:36-50**

1 <sup>36</sup> One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him,  
and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table.

INTRODUCTION

<sup>37</sup> And a woman in the city, who was a sinner,

2 having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house,  
brought an alabaster jar of ointment.

<sup>38</sup> She stood behind him at his feet,  
weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears  
and to dry them with her hair.

Then she continued kissing his feet  
and anointing them with the ointment.

IN THE HOUSE  
OF THE PHARISEE  
A WOMAN ACTS

3 <sup>39</sup> Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself,  
"If this man were a prophet, he would have known  
who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him  
-- that she is a sinner."

A DIALOGUE

SIMON JUDGES

<sup>40</sup> Jesus spoke up and said to him,  
"Simon, I have something to say to you."  
"Teacher," he replied, "Speak."

WRONGLY

4 <sup>41</sup> "A certain creditor had two debtors;  
one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

A PARABLE

<sup>42</sup> When they could not pay,  
he canceled the debts for both of them.

5 Now which of them will love him more?"

A DIALOGUE

43 Simon answered,  
"I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt."  
"And Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly."

SIMON JUDGES  
RIGHTLY

6 44 Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon,  
"Do you see this woman? I entered your house;  
  
you gave me no water for my feet,  
but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair.

IN THE HOUSE  
OF THE PHARISEE

A WOMAN ACTS

45 You gave me no kiss,  
but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet.

46 You did not anoint my head with oil,  
but she has anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Therefore, I tell you,  
her sins, which were many, have been forgiven;  
hence she has shown great love.  
But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little."

48 Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

CONCLUSION

7 49 But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves,  
"Who is this who even forgives sins?"

JESUS

50 And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

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GENERAL PRINCIPLE

- 1 GOODS GIVEN
  - 2 PROBLEM
  - 3 PLAN (PRESENT)
  - 4 PLAN (FUTURE)
  - 5 GOODS LEFT
- GENERAL PRINCIPLE

**Luke 12:13-21**

- <sup>13</sup> Someone in the crowd said to him,  
"Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me."  
<sup>14</sup> But he said to him,  
"Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?"

- <sup>15</sup> And he said to them,  
"Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed;  
for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions."

GENERAL PRINCIPLE

- 1 <sup>16</sup> Then he told them a parable:  
"The land of a rich man  
produced abundantly.

GOODS GIVEN

- 2 <sup>17</sup> And he thought to himself,  
'What should I do,  
for I have no place to store my crops?'

PROBLEM

- 3 <sup>18</sup> Then he said, 'I will do this:  
I will pull down my barns and build larger ones,  
and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

PLAN (PRESENT)

- 4 <sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul,  
'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years;  
relax, eat, drink, be merry.'

PLAN (FUTURE)

- 5 <sup>20</sup> But God said to him, 'You fool!  
This very night your life is being demanded of you.  
And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'

GOODS LEFT

- <sup>21</sup> So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves  
but are not rich toward God."

GENERAL PRINCIPLE

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**Luke 14:15-24**

When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

<sup>16</sup> Jesus replied:

"A certain man was preparing a great banquet  
and invited many guests.

<sup>17</sup> At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited,  
'Come, for everything is now ready.'

<sup>18</sup> "But they all alike began to make excuses.

The first said, 'I have just bought a field,  
and I must go and see it.  
Please excuse me.'

<sup>19</sup> "Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen,  
and I'm on my way to try them out.  
Please excuse me.'

<sup>20</sup> "Still another said, 'I just got married,  
so  
I can't come.'

<sup>21</sup> "The servant came back and reported this to his master.

Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out  
quickly into the streets and alleys of the town  
and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'

<sup>22</sup> "'Sir,' the servant said,  
'what you ordered has been done,  
but there is still room.'

<sup>23</sup> "Then the master told his servant,  
'Go out to the roads and country lanes  
and make them come in, so that my house will be full.'

<sup>24</sup> I tell you,  
not one of those men who were invited  
will get a taste of my banquet."

**Luke 8:4-8**

<sup>4</sup> While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town,  
he told this parable:

<sup>5</sup> "A farmer went out  
to sow his seed.

As he was scattering the seed,

some fell along the path;

it was trampled on,

and the birds of the air ate it up.

<sup>6</sup> Some fell on rock,

and when it came up,

the plants withered because they had no moisture.

<sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorns,

which grew up with it

and choked the plants.

<sup>8</sup> Still other seed fell on good soil.

It came up

and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."

When he said this, he called out,

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

**Luke 6:47-49**

<sup>47</sup> I will show you what he is like who comes to me

and hears my words

and puts them into practice.

<sup>48</sup> He is like a man building a house,

who dug down deep

and laid the foundation on rock.

When a flood came,

the torrent struck that house

but could not shake it, because it was well built.

<sup>49</sup> But the one

who hears my words

and does not put them into practice

is like a man who built a house

on the ground

without a foundation.

The moment the torrent struck that house,

it collapsed

and its destruction was complete."