

tired and fell asleep.

⁶ "At midnight someone cried out, 'Here's the groom! Come out to meet him!'

⁷ "Then all the bridesmaids woke up and got their lamps ready. ⁸ The foolish ones said to the wise ones, 'Give us some of your oil. Our lamps are going out.'

⁹ " 'No,' they replied. 'There may not be enough for all of us. Instead, go to those who sell oil. Buy some for yourselves.'

¹⁰ "So they went to buy the oil. But while they were on their way, the groom arrived. The bridesmaids who were ready went in with him to the wedding dinner. Then the door was shut.

¹¹ "Later, the other bridesmaids also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'

¹² "But he replied, 'What I'm about to tell you is true. I don't know you.'

¹³ "So keep watch. You do not know the day or the hour that the groom will come.



UU Christian Fellowship
The Parables of Jesus
“The Parable of the Ten Maidens”

ORDER OF SERVICE

Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship

Lighting of the Chalice

In the freedom of the truth
And in the spirit of Jesus
We unite for the worship of God
And the service of all—Charles Gordon Ames. (Ames Covenant)

Joys and Concerns i.e. “*How goes it with Thy Spirit?*”

Prayers of the People

Didactic on The Parables

Parable Study

1. **Read** the Parable out loud, sharing text if it is long.
2. **Reflect in silence** on the parable
3. **Respond** to the Parable, allowing space for silences, for more deliberative thinkers, for new insights
4. **Rest** with the Parable—which may be read a 2nd or even 3rd time.

Closing Words (unison)

Love is the Spirit of this Church and service its law.
This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
to seek the truth in love
and to help one another.—James Vila Blake (Blake Covenant)

way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. ³³ So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

The Unjust Manager

Luke 16: 1-8/New King James

¹ He also said to His disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods.

² So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’

³ “Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.’

⁵ “So he called every one of his master’s debtors to *him*, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ And he said, ‘A hundred measures^[a] of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred measures^[b] of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ ⁸ So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.

The Faithful and Wise Slave

Matthew 24: 45-51/TheMessage

⁴⁵⁻⁴⁷“Who here qualifies for the job of overseeing the kitchen? A person the Master can depend on to feed the workers on time each day. Someone the Master can drop in on unannounced and always find him doing his job. A God-blessed man or woman, I tell you. It won’t be long before the Master will put this person in charge of the whole operation.

⁴⁸⁻⁵¹“But if that person only looks out for himself, and the minute the Master is away does what he pleases—abusing the help and throwing drunken parties for his friends—the Master is going to show up when he least expects it and make hash of him. He’ll end up in the dump with the hypocrites, out in the cold shivering, teeth chattering.”

The Story of Ten Maidens

Matthew 25: 1-13/New International Readers

¹ “Here is what the kingdom of heaven will be like at that time. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went out to meet the groom. ² Five of them were foolish. Five were wise. ³ The foolish ones took their lamps but didn’t take any olive oil with them. ⁴ The wise ones took oil in jars along with their lamps. ⁵ The groom did not come for a long time. So the bridesmaids all grew

Lesson Four—January 2010

The Wise and Foolish Builders

Matthew 7: 24-27/ King James Version

²⁴ “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

Luke 12: 42-46/ Amplified Bible

²⁶ “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” ⁷ For everyone who comes to Me and listens to My words [in order to heed their teaching] and does them, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸ He is like a man building a house, who dug and went down deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood arose, the torrent broke against that house and could not shake or move it, because it had been securely built or ⁴⁹ founded on a rock. ⁴⁹ But he who merely hears and does not practice doing My words is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation, against which the torrent burst, and immediately it collapsed and fell, and the breaking and ruin of that house was great.

Building a Tower

Luke 14: 28-30 /21st Century New King James

⁸ For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? ²⁹ Lest it may happen, after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all who behold it begin to mock him, ³⁰ saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’

The King Going to War, Luke 14: 31-33/ New International Version

³¹ “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³² If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. ³³ In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

The King Going to War

Luke 14:31-33 (New King James Version)

³¹ Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² Or else, while the other is still a great

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

(TWO PARABLES PER SESSION)

	Month
Forgiveness and Grace	October
The unforgiving slave, Matthew 18: 23-35	
The workers in the vineyard, Matthew 20: 1-6	
Love for the Lost and Hope for the Found	November
Lost sheep, Matthew 18: 12-14/Luke 15: 4-7	
Thomas 107; Gospel of Truth 31-32	
The Lost Coin, Luke 15: 8-10	
The Prodigal Son, Luke 15: 11-32	
Parables of Exemplary Behavior	December
The Good Samaritan, Luke 10: 25-37	
The Rich Fool, Luke 12: 16-21 Thomas 63	
The Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16: 19-31	
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector, Luke 18: 10-14	
Wisdom Parables	January
The Wise and Foolish Builders Matthew 7: 24-27/Luke 6: 47-49	
Building a Tower, Luke 14: 28-30	
The King Going to War, Luke 14: 31-33	
The Unjust Manager, Luke 16: 1-8	
The Faithful and Wise Slave, Matthew 24: 45-51/Luke 12: 42-46	
The Ten Maidens, Matthew 25: 1-13	
Parables of Life before God	February
The Sower and its interpretation: Mark 4: 3-8, 13-20	
Matthew 13: 3-8, 18-23//Luke 8:5-8, 11-15, Thomas 9	
Children in the Marketplace Matthew 11: 16-19/Luke 7:31-35	
The Two Debtors, Luke 7: 41-43	
The Two Sons, Matthew 21: 28-32	
The Friend at Midnight, Luke 11:5-8	
The Father’s Good Gifts, Matthew 7: 9-11/Luke 11:11-13	
The Barren Fig Tree, Luke 13: 6-9	
The Slave at Duty, Luke 17: 7-10	
The unjust Judge, Luke 18: 2-8	
The Waiting Slaves, Mark 13: 34-37/Luke 12: 35-38	
The Talents, Matthew 25: 14-30	
The Pounds, Luke 19: 12-27	

Parables of Final Judgment

The weeds in the wheat and its interpretation

Matthew 13: 24-30, 37-43, Thomas 57

The Dragnet and its interpretation, Matthew 13: 47

The Final Judgment, Matthew 25: 31-46

March

Allegorical Parables

The Great Banquet, Luke 14: 16-24, Thomas 64

The Wedding Feast, Matthew 22: 1-14

The Wicked Tenants, Mark 12: 1-12//Matthew 21: 33-46/
Luke 20: 9-19; Thomas 65-66

April

Parables of the Kingdom

The seed growing secretly, Mark 4: 26-29; Thomas 57

The Mustard Seed, Mark 4: 30-32//Matthew 13: 31-32

Luke 13: 18-19; Thomas 20

The Leaven, Matthew 13: 33//Luke 13: 20-21; Thomas 96

The Treasure in the Field, Matthew 13: 44; Thomas 109

The Pearl of Great Price, Matthew 13: 45-46; Thomas 76

May

ABOUT THE WISDOM PARABLES

Several parables are concerned about wisdom, and usually that is about being a wise disciple of Jesus. That is particularly true of the six parables that are discussed in this chapter. To be sure, there are other parables that express the theme of wisdom in one way or another, such as the Parable of the Children in the Marketplace (Matt 11:16-19//Luke 7:31-35), but in those cases other themes are stronger. The parables discussed here express the need to possess and to practice wisdom as their main thrust.

The wisdom tradition is old, broad, and perennial in biblical literature. It antedates the writing of the Scriptures, for it appears in the ancient literatures of Egypt and Mesopotamia prior to the writing of the biblical books. The tradition arose out of an international movement that was not dependent on revelation to any particular people by means of their election or by historical acts. Within the traditions of Israel its origins go back at least to Solomon, who was famous for his wisdom (1 Kings 4:29-34). The wisdom tradition was carried on primarily by sages, scribes, and officers (both religious and political) through the centuries well after the rise of Christianity.

Within the OT various literary units are classified as wisdom literature. These include the books of Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, and Psalm 37. In addition, Sirach (or Ecclesiasticus) and the Wisdom of Solomon among the OT apocrypha/deuterocanonical books are considered wisdom literature.

According to Gospel traditions, Jesus of Nazareth was known to be a wise man and teacher of wisdom. In Matthew 11:28-30 he is portrayed explicitly as a teacher of wisdom. When the passage is compared with Sirach 51:23-26 concerning the call of wisdom to her pupils, the point is drawn with utmost clarity. At Luke 11:31 Jesus refers to "the wisdom of Solomon" and then declares that, by virtue of his teachings, "something greater than Solomon is here."