

**The Parables of Jesus** (A parable is a brief, succinct story, in prose or verse, that illustrates a moral or religious lesson. Also consider the Parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven. Jesus Seminar coding: **Red** = Jesus undoubtedly said this or something like this, **Pink** = Jesus probably said something like this, **Blue** = Jesus did not say this, but the ideas contained in it are close to his own, and **Black** = Jesus did not say this; it represents the perspective or content of a later or different tradition.)

**The Parable of the Vineyard Laborers** (The Jesus Seminar interpreted this parable as something Jesus undoubtedly said, a **red** designation. Verses from *Net Bible* at <http://www.bible.org/index.php?scid=3>.)

**Matthew 20:1** For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. 20:2 And after agreeing with the workers for the standard wage, he sent them into his vineyard. 20:3 When it was about nine o'clock in the morning, he went out again and saw others standing around in the marketplace without work. 20:4 He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too, and I will give you whatever is right.' 20:5 So they went. When he went out again about noon and three o'clock that afternoon, he did the same thing. 20:6 And about five o'clock that afternoon he went out and found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why are you standing here all day without work?' 20:7 They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You go and work in the vineyard too.' 20:8 When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the workers and give the pay starting with the last hired until the first.' 20:9 When those hired about five o'clock came, each received a full day's pay. 20:10 And when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more. But each one also received the standard wage. 20:11 When they received it, they began to complain against the landowner, 20:12 saying, 'These last fellows worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us who bore the hardship and burning heat of the day.' 20:13 And the landowner replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am not treating you unfairly. Didn't you agree with me to work for the standard wage? 20:14 Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last man the same as I gave to you. 20:15 Am I not permitted to do what I want with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' 20:16 So the last will be first, and the first last.

**The Parable of the Wedding Feast** (The Jesus Seminar interpreted this parable as something Jesus didn't say, but the ideas contained in it are close to his own, a **blue** designation. Verses from *Net Bible* at <http://www.bible.org/index.php?scid=3>.)

**Matthew 22:1** Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: 22:2 "The kingdom of heaven can be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. 22:3 He sent his slaves to summon those who had been invited to the banquet, but they would not come. 22:4 Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited, "Look! The feast I have prepared for you is ready. My oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet."' 22:5 But they were indifferent and went away, one to his farm, another to

his business. 22:6 The rest seized his slaves, insolently mistreated them, and killed them. 22:7 The king was furious! He sent his soldiers, and they put those murderers to death and set their city on fire. 22:8 Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but the ones who had been invited were not worthy. 22:9 So go into the main streets and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ 22:10 And those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all they found, both bad and good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. 22:11 But when the king came in to see the wedding guests, he saw a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 22:12 And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ But he had nothing to say. 22:13 Then the king said to his attendants, ‘Tie him up hand and foot and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!’ 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.”

**The Parable of the Good Samaritan** (The Jesus Seminar interpreted the core of this parable, verses 30-35, as something Jesus undoubtedly said, a **red** designation. Verses from *Net Bible* at <http://www.bible.org/index.php?scid=3>.)

**Luke 10:25** Now an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” 10:26 He said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you understand it?” 10:27 The expert answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.” 10:28 Jesus said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.” 10:29 But the expert, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” 10:30 Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him up, and went off, leaving him half dead. 10:31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road, but when he saw the injured man he passed by on the other side. 10:32 So too a Levite, when he came up to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 10:33 But a Samaritan who was traveling came to where the injured man was, and when he saw him, he felt compassion for him. 10:34 He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 10:35 The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever else you spend, I will repay you when I come back this way.’ 10:36 Which of these three do you think became a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” 10:37 The expert in religious law said, “The one who showed mercy to him.” So Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”

**The Parable of the Prodigal Son** (The Jesus Seminar interpreted this parable as something Jesus probably said, a **pink** designation. Verses from *Net Bible* at <http://www.bible.org/index.php?scid=3>.)

**Luke 15:11** Then Jesus said, “A man had two sons. 15:12 The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate that will belong to me.’ So he divided his assets between

them. 15:13 After a few days, the younger son gathered together all he had and left on a journey to a distant country, and there he squandered his wealth with a wild lifestyle. 15:14 Then after he had spent everything, a severe famine took place in that country, and he began to be in need. 15:15 So he went and worked for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 15:16 He was longing to eat the carob pods the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. 15:17 But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have food enough to spare, but here I am dying from hunger! 15:18 I will get up and go to my father and say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired workers.”’ 15:20 So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way from home his father saw him, and his heart went out to him; he ran and hugged his son and kissed him. 15:21 Then his son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ 15:22 But the father said to his slaves, ‘Hurry! Bring the best robe, and put it on him! Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet! 15:23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it! Let us eat and celebrate, 15:24 because this son of mine was dead, and is alive again – he was lost and is found!’ So they began to celebrate. 15:25 “Now his older son was in the field. As he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 15:26 So he called one of the slaves and asked what was happening. 15:27 The slave replied, ‘Your brother has returned, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he got his son back safe and sound.’ 15:28 But the older son became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and appealed to him, 15:29 but he answered his father, ‘Look! These many years I have worked like a slave for you, and I never disobeyed your commands. Yet you never gave me even a goat so that I could celebrate with my friends! 15:30 But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ 15:31 Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and everything that belongs to me is yours. 15:32 It was appropriate to celebrate and be glad, for your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.’”