

connect360

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

# Jesus Storyteller:

## TIMELESS TRUTHS FROM HIS PARABLES

A STUDY OF LUKE

David O. Dykes



Dallas, Texas

*Jesus Storyteller: Timeless Truths From His Parables—  
Connect 360 Bible Study Guide*

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# How to Make the Best Use of This Issue

Whether you're the teacher or a student—

1. Start early in the week before your class meets.
2. Overview the study. Review the table of contents and read the study introduction. Try to see how each lesson relates to the overall study.
3. Use your Bible to read and consider prayerfully the Scripture passages for the lesson. (You'll see that each writer has chosen a favorite translation for the lessons in this issue. You're free to use the Bible translation you prefer and compare it with the translation chosen for that unit, of course.)
4. After reading all the Scripture passages in your Bible, then read the writer's comments. The comments are intended to be an aid to your study of the Bible.
5. Read the small articles—"sidebars"—in each lesson. They are intended to provide additional, enrichment information and inspiration and to encourage thought and application.
6. Try to answer for yourself the questions included in each lesson. They're intended to encourage further thought and application, and they can also be used in the class session itself.

If you're the teacher—

Do all the things just mentioned, of course. As you begin the study with your class, be sure to find a way to help your class know the date on which each lesson will be studied. Here are some suggestions to guide your lesson preparation:

- A. In the first session of the study, briefly overview the study by identifying for your class the date on which each lesson will be studied. Lead your class to write the date in the table of contents on pages 7 and on the first page of each lesson.
- Make and post a chart that indicates the date each lesson will be studied.
  - If all your class has e-mail, send them an e-mail with the dates the lessons will be studied.
  - Provide a bookmark with the lesson dates. You may want to include information about your church and then use the bookmark as an outreach tool, too. A model for a bookmark can be downloaded from [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org) under the “Teacher Helps” menu.
  - Develop a sticker with the lesson dates and place it on the table of contents or on the back cover.
- B. Get a copy of the *Teaching Guide*, a companion piece to this *Study Guide*. The *Teaching Guide* contains additional Bible comments plus two teaching plans. The teaching plans in the *Teaching Guide* are intended to provide practical, easy-to-use teaching suggestions that will work in your class.
- C. After you’ve studied the Bible passage, the lesson comments, and other material, use the teaching suggestions in the *Teaching Guide* to help you develop your plan for leading your class in studying each lesson.
- D. Teaching resource items for use as handouts are available free at [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org) under the “Teacher Helps” tab.
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- F. Additional teaching plans are also available in electronic format (PDF) by calling 1-866-249-1799. The price of these additional teaching plans for the entire study is \$8 per person. A church or class that participates in our advance order program for free shipping can receive the *Premium Teaching Plans* free. Call 1-866-249-1799 or see [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org) for information on participating in our free shipping program for the next study.
- G. Enjoy leading your class in discovering the meaning of the Scripture passages and in applying these passages to their lives.
- H. You can receive the lesson preview each week by signing up for the Baptist Standard weekly newsletter at no cost. Sign up here. ([www.baptiststandard.com/subscription/email](http://www.baptiststandard.com/subscription/email)).

### Do you use a Kindle?

This Connect 360 *Bible Study Guide*, along with several other studies, is available in a Kindle edition. The easiest way to find these materials is to search for "GC2 Press" or "BaptistWay" on your Kindle or go to [www.amazon.com/kindle](http://www.amazon.com/kindle) and do a search for "GC2 Press" or "Baptistway." The Kindle edition can be studied not only on a Kindle but also on your smartphone or tablet using the Kindle app available free from [amazon.com/kindle](http://amazon.com/kindle).

## Writer for this *Study Guide*

**David Orlo Dykes wrote lessons one through thirteen plus the Christmas lesson.** Dr. Dykes served as the Senior Pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, from 1991-2021. He holds a D.Min. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky and studied Renaissance Art at Cambridge University in Cambridge, England. He was also awarded a D.D. from East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, Texas. David is a prolific author of several books and publications. David and his wife, Cindy, have two daughters and four grandchildren. He has been preaching since 1970 and is committed to the verse-by-verse teaching of God's Word. Even after retiring from Green Acres Baptist Church in August of 2021, Dr. Dykes continues to teach, preach, write, and equip believers to be effective in ministry.

# Jesus Storyteller:

## *Timeless Truths From His Parables*

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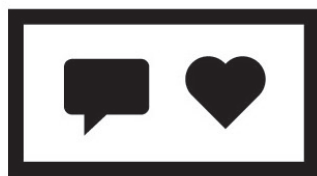
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# Introduction to GC2 Press

*BaptistWay Press* **has now become GC2 Press.** The name change reflects the alignment with our state convention's (BGCT) recently updated mission statement. **GC2** is a movement of God's people to share Christ and show love. Our driving passion is to follow the Lord's call to fulfill the Great Commission "to share Christ" and the Great Commandment "to show love." The Great Commission and the Great Commandment form the two "GCs," or GC2.

**GC2 Press** will continue to publish the undated **CONNECT 360** quarterly Bible study curriculum. **Connect 360** has gained a reputation for solid biblical teaching and will continue to be published as an undated quarterly study available in book form and/or digital downloads. **Connect 360** is currently being distributed in 38 states and 16 countries and has been translated into seven different languages.

For more information, please go to our website at [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org).



**GC2**  
PRESS

# Introducing

## Jesus Storyteller: *Timeless Truths From His Parables*

### A STUDY OF LUKE

#### Background

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A parable is a profound teaching tool that Jesus utilized frequently. Our word “parable” is a transliteration of the actual Greek word, *parabolé*. The word comes from two words: *para*, meaning “alongside” and *bole*, meaning “to throw.” A parable is where someone offers a story or a description and then the listener “throws down alongside” the story a deeper meaning. In other words, parables are stories that contain additional truth below the surface. There is a parable in every miracle, and a miracle in every parable. The “miracle” of a parable is that on the surface it appears to be a simple story—but there are always several levels of truth associated with it.

Whenever you study a parable of Jesus, it’s much like peeling an onion. An onion has several layers of covering. The outer peel is like the natural truth of the story, but when you peel away that layer, there are several other layers of truth to discover.

The beautiful thing about Jesus’ use of parables is that He used some of the most common, simple ideas to communicate deep spiritual truth.

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## The Parables of Jesus in Our Day

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Parables are stories that contain additional truth below the surface. In other words, the parable appears to be a simple story but has several layers of truth associated with it. Jesus used parables to relate to the people living 2000 years ago but these stories are timeless truths and still apply just as powerfully to us today.

When you hear the truth of Jesus in story form, you will not soon forget it. This practical study of the parables recorded in the Gospel According to Luke explains the personal impact of the words of Jesus. Hidden beneath the surface of every parable of Jesus is truth that can change your life. This study examines the world's greatest stories from the world's greatest Storyteller and explains the central teachings of Christianity in a simple way that everyone can understand. If you need to be inspired, challenged, and encouraged, this study, on some of Jesus' most beloved parables, is for you.

David O. Dykes

Author, *Jesus Storyteller* Study Guide

## Jesus Storyteller: *Timeless Truths From His Parables*

### A Study of Luke

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Lesson 2	How to Build a Storm-Proof Life	Luke 6:46-49
Lesson 3	How to Cultivate a Teachable Heart	Luke 8:1-15
Lesson 4	Love—Like a Good Neighbor	Luke 10:25-37
Lesson 5	Prayer That Just Won't Quit	Luke 11:5-13
Lesson 6	A Fool's Formula for Failure	Luke 12:13-21
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Lesson 9	What Makes Heaven Happy?	Luke 15:1-10
Lesson 10	What Is God Really Like?	Luke 15:11-24
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Lesson 13	Use It or Lose It	Luke 19:11-27
Christmas	The Surprising Truth About God	Luke 20:9-19

### Additional Resources for Studying the Book of Luke<sup>1</sup>

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## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Listing a book does not imply full agreement by the writer or GC2 Press with all its comments.

# lesson 1

## Parties, Patches, and Wineskins

### MAIN IDEA

You may not die from hardening of the arteries, but you can suffer from hardening of the attitudes.

### QUESTION TO EXPLORE

How can your attitude be more joyful and how can you grow more like Christ in all areas of your life?

### STUDY AIM

To identify ways we are losing our joy and souring our attitude when we cling to our old ways, instead of looking for and celebrating the new things God is doing in our lives

### QUICK READ

The Christian life is a joyful and constant flow of new ideas, new methods, and new revelations of truth.



## Introduction

Jesus uses a powerful metaphor in this parable in the form of a wedding celebration. Then He offers two short parables about a patch of cloth and wineskins, thus the title of our lesson: “Parties, Patches, and Wineskins.” I want to peel away layers of truth about having our best attitude in the Christian life. You may not die from hardening of the arteries, but you can suffer from hardening of the attitudes.

First, we will peel away the surface truth, which is the natural story of the metaphor or parable. After we remove that layer, we’ll examine the spiritual truth below the surface. This layer applies to the people who were the immediate audience of Jesus 2000 years ago. Those first two layers are fairly painless because they don’t really apply to us. The third layer is the personal truth; it’s the core of His teaching. It examines what God is saying to us. It’s the most uncomfortable level, and many never venture onto that level because personal truth often offends people. Religious people crucified Jesus because His truth offended them. Just remember, God’s truth is like peeling an onion—and you don’t start crying until you get several layers down!

### Luke 5:33-39

<sup>33</sup> They said to him, “John’s disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking.”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, “Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? <sup>35</sup> But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast.”

<sup>36</sup> He told them this parable: “No one tears a piece out of a new garment to patch an old one. Otherwise, they will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. <sup>37</sup> And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. <sup>38</sup> No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. <sup>39</sup> And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for they say, ‘The old is better.’”

## Parable

A parable is a profound teaching tool that Jesus utilized frequently. Our word “parable” is a transliteration of the actual Greek word, *parabolé*. The word comes from two words: para, meaning “alongside” and bole, meaning “to throw.” A parable is where someone offers a story or a description and then the listener “throws down alongside” the story a deeper meaning. In other words, parables are stories that contain additional truth below the surface. There is a parable in every miracle, and a miracle in every parable. The “miracle” of a parable is that on the surface it appears to be a simple story—but there are always several levels of truth associated with it.

Whenever you study a parable of Jesus, it’s much like peeling an onion. An onion has several layers of covering. The outer peel is like the natural truth of the story, but when you peel away that layer, there are several other layers of truth to discover.

## Should I Be Somber or Joyful? (5:33-35)

I’ve been to some great weddings and wedding receptions throughout my many years of ministry. But from what I have discovered from studying Jewish literature, our most elaborate, festive weddings seem dull compared to Jewish weddings. First of all, the wedding was the climax of a year of betrothal. That time of expectation and planning was much more involved than our engagement period. Second, there was a week of eating, dancing, singing, and celebrating at the home of the groom’s father following the wedding. It was the best week of their lives, and the friends of the bridegroom did some serious partying. That’s the surface truth, so let’s peel off a layer and go deeper to the spiritual truth.

Jesus’ critics watched the way His disciples acted at Matthew’s Salvation Party, and they were offended. These religious snobs equated spirituality with suffering. The more pained expression you carried on your face, the more holy you were. Is this what Jesus taught? Is the correct spiritual disposition somberness and suffering or joy and gladness? When these straight-laced, religious party-poopers challenged Jesus and His disciples’ behavior, He made an amazing comparison. He claimed to be like a bridegroom and His disciples

like the guests at a wedding celebration. That's why they acted happy instead of somber. It was time to celebrate! The Christian life is more like a wedding celebration than a funeral procession. The Pharisees were griping, while Jesus' disciples were grinning. The Pharisees were somber, while Jesus' disciples were singing. The Pharisees were languishing, while Jesus' disciples were laughing. The Pharisees were criticizing, while Jesus' boys were celebrating. The Pharisees were jealous; Jesus' group was jubilant. Which group are you?

Where did we get the idea that laughter is not holy? Proverbs 17:22 says, "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones." Laughter is good medicine. Primarily, the Christian life is best characterized by joy. When you are aware of the presence of the Lord with you, you can't help but rejoice. This is the way David described the source of our joy in Psalm 16:11: "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

That doesn't mean that we don't encounter suffering. Sure, there is sadness, pain, and disappointment. If you compare the Christian life to a song, the melody line is always joy and praise. The harmony line is suffering and pain. Together, our lives are a beautiful song, but the melody of joy must prevail. Jesus addressed this when He said in John 16:33, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

And Jesus didn't tell us not to fast. In fact, He was actually predicting His death in verse 35 when He spoke of the time when the bridegroom will be taken from them. He said that in those days they will fast. The word "taken" means to be "ripped away violently." After His brutal death, His followers would fast but never like the Pharisees fasted who whitened their faces, piled ashes on their hair, and moaned and groaned so everyone would know they were "spiritual."

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### **Can I Come to Christ and Stay the Same? (5:36)**

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The beautiful thing about Jesus' use of parables is that He used some of the most common, simple ideas to communicate deep spiritual truth. In this second parable, He talked about sewing a new piece of cloth onto an old garment. Today we have synthetic fabrics that don't shrink when washed. In

Jesus' time, new cloth would always shrink after the first few times it was washed. A person wearing a new garment had to make sure it was a couple of sizes too large so over time; the garment would shrink down to the right size. Garments were often torn or moth-eaten, so they were constantly repaired. If you had an old robe with a hole in it, it would be foolish to sew a new patch of cloth on it. When it was washed, the new patch would shrink and tear the robe.

The spiritual truth is that Jesus didn't come to "patch up" the Old Testament. Jesus' immediate audience knew what He was talking about. The old garment was the Old Testament, or the Old Covenant—what we would call "the Law." Jesus was saying He didn't just come to improve the Old Covenant; He came to replace it with something totally new. There was no way His new covenant could be used to "patch up" the old one. The new Age of Grace had dawned. John said it well when he wrote in John 1:17, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Jesus came to institute an entire new system of faith—and His enemies didn't like it.

What is the personal truth behind this parable? Jesus comes into your life to create something totally new! Some people think they are pretty good and only need Jesus to come and "patch up" their lives. I heard the story of a mother out in the country who had ten children. One of her boys fell on a new blacktop road and was covered in tar. He was a mess. His mother was outside trying to clean the sticky tar off her son when she said, "It would be easier just to have another one than to clean you up!" That's like us. Jesus doesn't just try to clean up our old hearts; He gives us a new heart.

When Jesus comes into your life, His goal is not to reform you. His purpose is to transform you. We are all sinners by nature and by choice. To try to "fix" our sinful character is like sewing a new un-shrunk patch on an old garment. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

### **Do I Have to Accept New Ideas? I Like the Old Ones! (5:37-39)**

Jesus deepens the theme of these three parables about old and new by talking about wine in wineskins in the third parable. We use bottles to hold wine today but in Jesus' time, wine was most often stored in goatskins that were

cleaned and tanned over a fire. Then the skin was stitched back together, with the neck of the goatskin becoming the neck of the wineskin. A fresh wineskin was soft and supple. When new wine was poured into it, gas was released from the process of fermentation. The new wineskin would stretch to accommodate this expansion. New wine in old wineskins would crack and burst them. The wine was expanding, but the old skin was too rigid to change its shape. The old skin couldn't stretch because it had become inflexible and soon the stitches would start to pop.

The spiritual truth of this parable is that the Christian life is a constant flow of new ideas, new methods, and new revelations of truth. The religious snobs of Jesus' day didn't like His teaching because it was so revolutionary. It was new. He said things they never heard before. His new teaching shocked and offended them. He did things they never saw before: He ate and drank with sinners! It's a dangerous condition when a person's mind loses the ability to be stretched. To stop learning or to stop being open to new revelations of truth is a hazardous spiritual condition. We like new cars, new houses, and new toys, but we don't like new ways, new ideas, or new truth. Nobody enjoys change. We all enjoy our normal routines. We like to sit in the same seat at church every Sunday. Routines become habits and habits become ruts—and a rut is nothing but a grave with both ends kicked out.

Human nature rebels against the idea of anything that seems to threaten the “good old days” and the “good old ways.” But the truth of this parable is clear: Jesus came to bring the new. He is the New Patch; He is the New Wine. God loves new things. We enter the Christian life through a new birth, we become a new creation, we walk in newness of life, we read a New Testament and one day God will create a new heaven and a new earth. “He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’ Then he said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true’” (Revelation 21:5).

Jesus was addressing an attitude that resists change, or anything new. We all have a tendency to reject a new idea, or a new revelation of truth because we like the old too much. This was the Pharisees' attitude, and it is an attitude we need to guard against. Like an old, stiff wineskin, our hearts and minds can calcify until we become so inflexible. we can't accept change.

Throughout my ministry, I have encountered hundreds of Christians who are like old wineskins. Whenever any new idea or concept is introduced, they

don't like it. It may be a new building, a new schedule, a new budget, a new program, a new method—you name it. You can almost hear them straining and cracking until “pop!” and they blow a stitch and express their anger and opposition. Why? Because they have become inflexible, like old wineskins.

Rudyard Kipling once accompanied General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army to a foreign country. They were met by a group of Christians who were dancing and playing tambourines. Kipling, a proper young Englishman, was shocked by this activity. He expressed his displeasure to General Booth. Booth replied, “Young man, if I thought I could win one more soul for Christ by standing on my head and beating a tambourine with my feet, I would learn how to do it.”

### **Applying the Parable**

- What is God saying to you?
- Do you need to stop acting like the Christian life is a funeral and start celebrating the return of the bridegroom who is coming back soon?
- How can you stop trying to patch up your old life and allow Jesus to put the new robe of righteousness on you?
- Have you stopped growing and changing spiritually like an old wine-skin?

### **Implications and Actions**

Right before my very eyes I have seen a Christian repent of ungodly attitudes and commit to following Christ anew with joy and enthusiasm. It's like watching an old, hard wineskin soften up and become like a fresh wineskin. That is a beautiful sight. Don't harden your heart. Keep your attitude of joy and your zeal for what God is doing in your life.

## Questions

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1. Are you more like the Pharisees or the disciples of Jesus? Is there real joy in your life? If someone closely observed your life for a month, would they say, “I want what that person has”?
2. How can you rely more on God’s power to change you into the image of His Son—instead of your own efforts?
3. What kind of person are you regarding change? Are you like an old or new wineskin?
4. How can you avoid being molded into a certain mental state or emotional disposition that prevents you from changing and growing?