

# connect360

BIBLE TEACHING GUIDE

## Jesus Storyteller

### TIMELESS TRUTHS FROM HIS PARABLES

A STUDY OF LUKE

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**GC2**  
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*Jesus Storyteller: Timeless Truths From His Parables (A Study of Luke)*  
*Connect 360 Bible Teaching Guide*

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# How to Make the Best Use of This *Teaching Guide*

Leading a class in studying the Bible is a sacred trust. This *Teaching Guide* has been prepared to help you as you give your best to this important task.

In each lesson, you will find first “Bible Comments” for teachers, to aid you in your study and preparation. The three sections of “Bible Comments” are “Understanding the Context,” “Interpreting the Scriptures,” and “Focusing on the Meaning.” “Understanding the Context” provides a summary overview of the entire background passage that also sets the passage in the context of the Bible book being studied. “Interpreting the Scriptures” provides verse-by-verse comments on the focal passage. “Focusing on the Meaning” offers help with the meaning and application of the focal text.

The second main part of each lesson is “Teaching Plans.” You’ll find two complete teaching plans in this section. The first is called the “Discovery Plan,” which emphasizes discovery learning techniques; and the second is called the “Discussion Plan,” which provides questions and suggestions for dialogue about the Scriptures. Choose the plan that best fits your class and your style of teaching. You may also use and adapt ideas from both. Each plan is intended to be practical, helpful, and immediately useful as you prepare to teach.

The major headings in each teaching plan are intended to help you sequence how you teach to follow the flow of how people tend to learn. The first major heading, “Connect With Life,” provides ideas that will help you begin the class session where your class is and draw your class into the study. The second major heading, “Guide Bible Study,” offers suggestions for helping your class engage the Scriptures actively and develop a greater understanding of this portion of the Bible’s message. The third major heading, “Encourage Application,” is meant to help participants focus on how to respond with their lives to this message.

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. You might use one or more of the following methods:

- 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 in their *Study Guides* and on the first page of each lesson.
- Make and post a chart that indicates the date on which each lesson will be studied.
- If all of 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” tab.
- Develop a sticker with the lesson dates, and place it on the table of contents or on the back cover.

Here are some steps you can take to help you prepare well to teach each lesson and save time in doing so:

1. Start early in the week before your class meets.
2. If your church’s adult Bible study teachers meet for lesson overview and preparation, plan to participate. If your church’s adult Bible study teachers don’t have this planning time now, look for ways to begin. You, your fellow teachers, and your church will benefit from this mutual encouragement and preparation.
3. Overview the study in the *Study Guide*. Look at the table of contents and see where this lesson fits in the overall study. Then read or review the study introduction to the book that is being studied.
4. Consider carefully the suggested Main Idea, Question to Explore, and Teaching Aim. These can help you discover the main thrust of this particular lesson.
5. Use your Bible to read and consider prayerfully the Scripture passages for the lesson. Using your Bible in your study and in the class session

can provide a positive model to class members to use their own Bibles and give more attention to Bible study themselves. (Each writer of the Bible comments in both the *Teaching Guide* and the *Study Guide* has chosen a favorite translation. You're free to use the Bible translation you prefer and compare it with the translations chosen, of course.)

6. After reading all the Scripture passages in your Bible, then read the Bible comments in the *Study Guide*. The Bible comments are intended to be an aid to your study of the Bible. Read also the small articles—"sidebars"—in each lesson. They are intended to provide additional, enrichment information and inspiration and to encourage thought and application. Try to answer for yourself the questions included in each lesson. They're intended to encourage further thought and application, and you can also use them in the class session itself. Continue your Bible study with the aid of the Bible comments included in this *Teaching Guide*.
7. Review the "Teaching Plans" in this *Teaching Guide*. Consider how these suggestions would help you teach this Bible passage in your class to accomplish the teaching aim.
8. Consider prayerfully the needs of your class and think about how to teach so you can help your class learn best.
9. Develop and follow a lesson plan based on the suggestions in this *Teaching Guide*, with alterations as needed for your class.
10. Enjoy leading your class in discovering the meaning of the Scripture passages and in applying these passages to their lives.

**Premium Commentary. Plan to get the additional Bible study comments available online.** Visit our website, call 1-866-249-1799, or e-mail [gc2press@texasbaptists.org](mailto:gc2press@texasbaptists.org) to order the *Premium Commentary*. It is available only in electronic format (PDF) from our website. The price of these comments is \$8 per person. A church or class that participates in our advance order program for free shipping can receive the *Premium Commentary* 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.

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***FREE!*** Downloadable teaching resource items for use in your class are available at [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org). Watch for them in the “Teaching Plans” for each lesson. Then go online to [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org) and click on “Teaching Resource Items” under the “Teacher Helps” tab for this study. These items are selected from the “Teaching Plans.” They are provided online to make lesson preparation easier for handouts and similar items. Permission is granted to download these teaching resource items, print them out, copy them as needed, and use them in your class.

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# Jesus Storyteller: Timeless Truths from His Parables

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## We've Changed Our Name!

*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.



Focal Text  
Luke 5:33-39

Background  
2 Corinthians 5:17;  
John 1:17

# 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?

### TEACHING AIM

To lead participants 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



# Bible Comments

## Understanding the Context

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Luke described in chapters five and six of his gospel, some of the controversies Jesus faced because of the Pharisees. The Pharisees accused Jesus and His followers of violating laws regarding fasting and keeping the Sabbath. Jesus upset the Pharisees by eating with sinners and tax collectors, so they were constantly looking for ways to expose Jesus as a fake or cause doubt in His followers as to His identity. The main issues they had with Jesus were over the Law. The Pharisees spent a lot of time and effort accusing Jesus and His followers of breaking the Mosaic Law; a law they were tasked to promote and protect. The Pharisees were upset with Jesus because He spoke with authority and what He taught was different from what they taught.

People followed Jesus' teaching because it was new and authoritative; they were unfamiliar with His way of teaching and His knowledge of the Law. He taught in a way common people could understand. John 1:17 states that the Law came from Moses, but grace and truth came from Jesus. The apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:17 that a person is made new through a relationship with Jesus. The Law made it clear that people need to be transformed and Jesus came to make transformation possible. He did not come to patch things up, He came to make things new.

On this occasion, Jesus used three images to make His point: a wedding, clothing, and wine skins. Jesus used these three images to illustrate He was ushering a new way to relate to God. This new way required an open mind to a new way of thinking about God and how He related to people.

## Interpreting the Scriptures

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### The Question (5:33)

Jesus attended a banquet at the home of Levi the tax collector. Someone at the banquet noticed a difference in fasting practices between the disciples of

John, the Pharisees, and of Jesus. Jews viewed fasting as a virtue of Judaism and Pharisees and their disciples practiced it regularly. Jews normally fasted for one day, however, fasting could last anywhere from one to forty days. Jews often observed it in conjunction with major Jewish festivals. Fasting included going without food and replacing the normal time eating with prayer and reflection on God. Pharisees felt it was so important they regularly fasted twice a week. Although fasting is not commanded in the New Testament, the gospels do record Jesus fasting for forty days just before Satan tempted Him. The Pharisees viewed Jesus and His disciples lack of regular fasting as disrespectful to God, the Law, and to Judaism.

Jews believed that keeping the Law was required to please God. One responsibility of Pharisees, Sadducees, and other religious leaders involved keeping and enforcing the Law. Jewish leadership imposed other laws in addition to the laws God gave to His people the Israelites. These laws were often used to control and oppress the people of God. Religious leaders also used these laws in several attempts to trap Jesus and silence Him. Interestingly, several Jewish laws were broken by the High Priest and others during Jesus' arrest, trials, and crucifixion.

### **The Response (5:34-39)**

**5:34-35.** Jesus answered the question with an illustration of a Jewish wedding. He took the opportunity to reveal something about Himself. It is helpful to know something about Jewish wedding customs to understand Jesus' meaning. In Jewish culture, engagement and betrothal were not the same thing. Engagements could be broken but betrothals were considered as binding as marriage. In fact, betrothal included the families of the bride and groom meeting together, a ring or something of value was given to the bride to be, and the couple even signed an agreement of marriage. After the betrothal, the groom would leave his fiancée to build or prepare a room onto his parent's house where the new couple would eventually live. After one year, when the new edition was complete, the groom to be would arrive at the bride's house to whisk her away and take her to the wedding. The groom dressed like a king and her maidens adorned the bride with jewelry and braid-

ed her hair. She dressed like a queen. The parents of the bride blessed her before she left, and she along with her groom would go back to his house for the wedding and celebration. The families of the bride and groom hosted a weeklong celebration for the newlyweds, their families, and friends after the wedding.

Another marked difference between the disciples of the Pharisees and the disciples of Jesus was joy. The bridegroom in this parable is Jesus. Like the arrival of the bridegroom, the presence of Jesus brought joy to His followers. No one would observe a fast in the presence of the bridegroom at the wedding, and no one should fast in the presence of the long-awaited Messiah. A fast was a somber experience centered around sacrifice and suffering from going without food. Weddings centered around extravagance and celebration. Jesus made His point, the arrival of the groom to get the bride triggered the celebration. The event brought joy, not sorrow. Even the guests were dressed in wedding garments. The joy and celebration lasted for a week and there was also what was known as the days of marriage, which lasted thirty days.

After the celebrations ended, it was appropriate for a Jew to observe fasts again. Jesus is the groom in this story. While He was with them, Jesus' followers experienced joy. He alluded to the fact He would one day be taken away from His disciples by rejection and death, this would cause sorrow. At that point, it would be appropriate to resume the discipline of fasting.

**5:36.** Jesus used a second illustration of sewing a new patch on an old garment to show He did not come to patch up the old Jewish religion; He brought something new. Clothing in the Bible often is used as a metaphor to represent character and conduct.

Most of the people living in Jesus' day were poor, they did not have the luxury of buying new clothes when they ripped a hole or had a tear in their clothes. Instead, they cut out a patch from a piece of material and sewed it on the old garment to cover the hole. This created a problem if the patch was made from new material and sewn on an old garment. When the person washed the old garment containing the new patch, the patch would shrink and tear away from the old material thereby causing a larger hole in the garment. Unfortunately, things like pre-washed jeans did not exist so adjust-

ments had to be made. Patching an old garment with an old patch was a wise way to repair the garment.

Another way to put this is do not combine the old with the new. Jesus brought new ways and new perspectives that could not simply be added on to the old ways. This would prove ineffective. Jesus' new ways needed a new way of thinking and living. Jesus is not just a new patch we can attach to our old life. Jesus makes all things new. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" Jesus does not simply reform people, He transforms people.

**5:37-39.** Jesus used wine and wineskins as a third way to illustrate His point. Wine was common, and wine was stored in something called wineskins. People made wineskins out of sheep or goat hide. The neck of the animal served as a spout to pour wine in or out of the container. Wine fermented in the wineskins created gasses, which caused the hides to expand. If the wineskin was old, dry, or brittle, the container could burst from the expanding gases ruining the wineskin and spilling the wine. New flexible wineskins could expand to accommodate the fermenting wine. New wine could only be stored in new wineskins.

Jesus' illustration revealed that the old Jewish religion could not contain the new life of the Spirit Jesus brought. Jesus came not to destroy the Law but to fulfill the Law. The final sacrifice was Jesus, and He ended the need for sacrifices. Jesus became the final High Priest; there was no need for another one. Jesus brought lasting joy to the world through salvation. John wrote in John 1:17, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

Jesus challenged the thinking of the Jews who thought a certain way for a long time. Receiving Jesus' new teaching, like new wine, required His listeners to have a flexible mind to comprehend. A rigid stubborn mind missed the point of Jesus.



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## Focusing on the Meaning

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The contemporary Christian worship movement in America began many years ago. In addition to a traditional service that included hymns, choir, orchestra, piano, and organ, churches added a service including praise songs, drums, guitars, and a worship band. This change led to what was known as worship wars. Christians debated the right way to worship God. Some Christians got excited about a new way to worship God. Others believed the new way did not belong in the church. Many feared what might happen to the church and to theology if hymns were removed from worship. This struggle over the changes led to church splits, new church starts, and heated discussions.

Today, some churches only conduct traditional worship services, some only contemporary worship, and some have a blend of both hymns and praise songs in one service. Other churches hold different style worship services in the same location. Apparently, although Christians still have differing opinions regarding worship styles, the war seems to be over.

Someone said the eight deadliest words in the church are, “We have never done it that way before.” There is truth to the statement. Perhaps just as deadly is a Christian who says, “I have never seen God do things that way so this must not be God.” Supporters of both traditional worship and contemporary worship were guilty of becoming rigid and brittle in their way of thinking, believing their way of worshipping to be the only true worship. The belief that contemporary worship is not true worship, or traditional worship is outdated are evidence of old wineskin thinking.

Christians battling over preferences is an example of the good wine spilling out and being wasted. Focusing on our preferences rather than where God is at work can cause a Christian to miss out on the movement of God. God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. However, He is constantly doing a new thing by revealing more of Himself to His children. He is working in ways we have not personally seen before. Christians must be diligent to test everything against the Word of God but not be so rigid in our thinking that we miss what God wants to do in our lives.

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# Teaching Plans

## DISCOVERY PLAN

### Connect With Life

1. Use the information in the *Study Guide* Introduction to describe a parable. You may want to take an onion (sealed in a baggie) to class and peel several layers of the onion away as you define surface truth, spiritual truth, and personal truth as presented by the lesson writer. Point out that Jesus was the master storyteller, and we will explore His words that made such a difference in the life of His hearers.
2. To introduce Luke 5:33-39, invite members to discuss clothing styles that were popular when they were in high school. Round up a few old garments to display during the discussion. Encourage conversation by asking:
  - What was your favorite piece of clothing in high school?
  - How have clothing styles changed since you were in high school?
  - How have styles stayed the same?
  - What has come back in style?
  - When is a garment too old to wear?
  - When is a garment too old to patch or repair?
  - What is the last garment you have tried to repair? Someone in the class will probably note that no one patches jeans these days!
3. Comment that in today's study Jesus talked about the difficulty of patching old cloth (and wineskins) with new cloth, but He may have been presenting a much deeper meaning.

## Guide Bible Study

4. Invite a member to read Luke 5:33-35 aloud. Point out that this question from the religious leaders about Jesus' disciples eating and drinking rather than fasting, follows their question about Jesus' eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners. Ask, *What do you think the real question is here? What is the real concern of the Pharisees and their scribes? Why did Jesus respond with an example of a wedding?*
5. Ask class members to brainstorm characteristics of a joyful life, and the source of these characteristics. List responses on a markerboard for later use. Then ask the class to consider times when sorrow, suffering, pain, and disappointment seem to overtake or cloud our joy. Invite the group to consider how these verses speak to those occasions. Share this statement from the study guide: *If you compare the Christian life to a song, the melody is always joy and praise. The harmony line is suffering and pain.*
6. Form two or three discussion groups within the class (as size allows). Ask each group to read verses 36-39, and consider the following:
  - What was Jesus saying about new and old in these verses?
  - What are some traditions in our church that could be considered old?
  - What are some newer practices in our church?
  - What are some old things in a person's life that could cloud the joy of his or her walk with Christ?
  - How does focusing on the "new" allow us to see the work of Christ more clearly?
  - How did Jesus replace the old with the new? Did Jesus come to patch things up, or make all things new?
  - How does this passage speak to the Old and New Covenants?

(A copy of this assignment is available in "Teaching Resource Items" for this study at [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org)).

7. Have a previously enlisted class member read aloud and share a few thoughts from 2 Corinthians 5:17. Then ask the entire group to consider how this passage further speaks to the parable of Jesus in Luke 5:33-39. Allow time for discussion.

## Encourage Application

8. Invite groups (step 6) to identify and prioritize in importance at least five new inventions during their lifetime (microwave oven, mobile phone, home computer, etc.). Ask a representative to explain why his or her group prioritized items as they did. Then ask, *How have these inventions improved our quality of life? Would our lives be better or worse without them?* Then ask, *If we are open to new inventions that improve our quality of life (external things), why do we sometimes find it hard to let go of old ways and celebrate the new things God is doing in our lives (internal things)?*
9. Call attention to the characteristics on the markerboard from Step 5. Invite members to silently ponder how evident these characteristics are in their lives. Lead the class in a prayer of commitment, thanking God for the old things that seem to anchor our lives in Him, and for the ways He makes our lives spiritually new and fresh each day.

## DISCUSSION PLAN

### Connect With Life

1. Invite class members to share a definition of a parable. Ask them to brainstorm, and perhaps list, the parables in Scripture they are most familiar with. Remind them the class will explore one of Jesus' parables each week during this study entitled *Jesus Storyteller: Timeless Truths From His Parables*.

2. To begin today's study, ask a class member to look up these newer words (photobomb, frenemy, helicopter parent, ginormous, bae, selfie, emoji, and bestie) in an old hardback dictionary. The class will soon discover that these new words are not contained in the older dictionary. Now invite a class member to look up the words on his or her phone. The words are readily available on most any search engine (another new word). Comment that in Luke 5 Jesus shared thoughts about old and new, and the importance of being more joyful and growing in Him as a result of celebrating the new things He has done.

## Guide Bible Study

3. Present the following lesson outline from the *Study Guide*.

- Should I Be Somber or Joyful? (5:33-35)
- Can I Come to Christ and Stay the Same? (5:36)
- Do I Have to Accept New Ideas? I Like the Old Ones! (5:37-39)

Comment that these questions will form the basis for today's study.

4. Enlist a volunteer to read verses 33-35 aloud. Ask, *Why would Jesus talk about a wedding when He was asked about fasting?* Then use material in the *Study Guide*, teaching commentary, and additional resources to share a brief explanation of these verses, including the joy of a wedding celebration.
5. Read verse 36 aloud, then call attention to the second question in the lesson outline, *Can I Come to Christ and Stay the Same?* Invite the class to brainstorm changes that should come when someone turns to Christ. Then ask the following questions:
  - What was the problem with putting a new patch on an old garment?
  - Did Jesus come to patch up the Old Testament? Why or why not?
  - How does John 1:17 help us understand Jesus' purpose?

- How does 2 Corinthians 5:17 help us understand the difference between old and new?
6. To further explore biblical concepts of *old* and *new*, invite participants to use their Bible concordances, phones, tablets, or other resources to do a quick word search of *old* and *new*. Ask them to share some ideas from their findings.
  7. Call attention to verses 37-39, and the last question in our lesson outline. Ask members to discuss responses to the following true/false statements:
    - In the Christian life, new ideas are more important than old ideas.
    - As God continues to reveal Himself to us, we should welcome new revelations of His truth.
    - It is our nature to protest, at least inwardly, new ideas.
    - If we reject change, we may miss what God is doing.

## Encourage Application

8. Invite members to consider the sidebar, “Applying the Parable,” in the *Study Guide*. Follow the discussion by presenting a handout illustrating the contrast between Jesus’ disciples and the Pharisees. Invite members to consider the question, *Which group are you?* (A copy of this assignment is available in “Teaching Resource Items” for this study at [www.gc2press.org](http://www.gc2press.org)).
9. Close with prayer, thanking God for the newness He brings us!