

TRAVELING TO THE FEAST OF DEDICATION: TEACHING; CONFLICT

Matthew 12:22 - 25 Luke 10:1 - 17:10; John 10:22-42

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Jesus, the disciples, and the Pharisees

Key-locations: Perea, Galilee and Judea

Key-repetitions:

- Jesus told parables: Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37); Things Lost and Found (Lk 15:1-32).
- Confrontation: Jesus shocked the Pharisees when he did not wash before eating (Lk 11:37-41); Jesus gave 6 woes to Pharisees and teachers of the Law of Moses (Lk 11:42-54); Pharisees and teachers of the Law of Moses accused Jesus of welcoming sinners (Lk 15:1-2); during the Feast of Dedication, Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus (Jn 10:31-39).
- Demons: the 72 said that demons obeyed them (Lk 10:17); Jesus said that control over demons was not reason for rejoicing (Lk 10:18-20); Jesus cured a demon-possessed man (Mt 12:22).

Key-attitudes:

- Jesus' seriousness when he instructed the 72 before sending them out.
- The joy of the 72 when they returned.
- The feigning of sincerity by the scholar of the Law of Moses, when he asked Jesus how to inherit eternal life. Then when he answered his own question, he felt the need to justify himself.
- The hostility of the Pharisees when they made

accusations against Jesus.

- The firmness of Jesus when he answered the Pharisees.
- God's happiness over a repentant sinner.
- The serenity and magnetism of Jesus, the storyteller, when he told parables.

Initial-situation:

The third year of Jesus' ministry is divided into two semesters. During the Semester of Retreats, Jesus took three retreats to be alone with his 12 disciples for times of special instruction. During the Semester of Encounters in Jerusalem, Jesus made three trips to Jerusalem to participate in three religious feasts. The first trip was for the Feast of Tabernacles when there was confrontation between Jesus and the religious leaders. After the Feast, on a Sabbath, he cured a man who had been born blind. That created another conflict with the Pharisees. Jesus then declared himself to be the Good Shepherd.

Initial-problem:

Jesus chose seventy-two men, put them in pairs and sent them ahead to every town and place where he intended to go.

Final-situation:

The Jews tried to stone Jesus because he claimed that God was his Father.

BIBLE STORY

After the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus probably went to the region of Perea.

Jesus Sent out Seventy-two Lk 10:1-24

Jesus chose seventy-two men, put them in pairs and sent them ahead of him to every place where he intended to go. He told them, "The harvest is large, but workers are few. Therefore, ask the Lord in charge of the harvest to send workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves" (Lk 10:1-16).

The seventy-two returned with excitement, exclaiming, "Lord, even the demons obeyed when we spoke in your name."

Jesus replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. However, don't rejoice because evil spirits obey you; rejoice because your names are written in heaven" (Lk 10:17-24).

Parable of the Good Samaritan Lk 10:25-37

A religious scholar stood up and tried to trap Jesus with a question, "Teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?"

Jesus replied, "What is written in the Law of Moses? How do you interpret it?"

The scholar answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind; and, love your neighbor as much as you love yourself."

Jesus replied, "You answered correctly. Do this and you will have eternal life."

The man wanted to justify himself for asking a question when he knew the answer. He asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" (Lk 10:25-29).

Jesus replied with a parable, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Robbers attacked him, stripped him, beat him and left him half-dead. A priest who was traveling the same road saw the man and passed by on the other side. A Levite also came to the same place, saw the injured man, and passed by on the other side. A Samaritan traveling the road came upon the man, saw him, and took pity on him. The Samaritan went to the victim and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine onto his wounds. The Samaritan lifted the injured man onto his own donkey, took him to an inn, and nursed him. The next day the Samaritan gave the innkeeper two silver coins and told him, 'Look after him. When I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

Jesus asked, "Which of these three was a neighbor to the man attacked by robbers?"

The religious scholar replied, "The one who was kind and helped him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do the same" (Lk 10:30-37).

Six Woes Given to Pharisees and Teachers of the Law of Moses Lk 11:37-54

A Pharisee invited Jesus for a meal. Jesus accepted and reclined at the table. The Pharisee was shocked when Jesus did not wash his hands before eating.

Jesus told him, "You Pharisees clean the outside of cups and dishes, but inside you are greedy and wicked. Fools! God make both the outside and the inside! (Lk 11:37-41).

"Woe to you Pharisees; you give God a tenth of your garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God.

"Woe to you Pharisees; you love the most important seats in the synagogues and you love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces.

"Woe to you; you are like unmarked graves, which men walk over without knowing it (Lk 11:42-44).

A teacher of the Law of Moses spoke up, "Teacher, you also insulted us with those words."

Jesus replied, "Woe to you teachers of the Law of Moses; you load people down with heavy burdens, but won't lift a finger to help them.

"Woe to you; you build monuments to honor the prophets your ancestors killed. They killed the prophets; you build their monuments. Therefore, people living today will be punished for all the prophets who have been murdered since the beginning of the world.

"Woe to you scholars in the Law of Moses; you took the key to knowledge and locked the door. You yourselves never entered, and you won't let anyone else enter" (Lk 11:45-52).

Jesus left the table. The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law of Moses criticized him fiercely. They questioned him, trying to trap him in something he might say (Lk 11:53-54).

Parables: Lost and Found Lk 15:1-31

Tax collectors and people with bad reputations gathered to hear Jesus. The Pharisees and religious scholars complained, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them" (Lk 15:1-2).

Jesus told them a parable about a man with a hundred sheep who lost one and who rejoiced when he found it. He told another parable about a woman with ten silver coins; she lost one and rejoiced when she found it (Lk 15:3-10).

Jesus continued, "A man had two sons. The younger son requested, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' The father divided his property between the two sons. A short time later, the younger son gathered his possessions and set off for a distant country. There he squandered his wealth in wild living. He had nothing left when a bad famine spread throughout that country. So he got a job with a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. No one gave him anything to eat. He was so hungry he wanted to eat the bean pods that the pigs were eating.

"Finally he came to his senses and said, 'My father's hired men have food to spare, and I'm starving to death! I'll return to my father and tell him: Father, I've sinned against God in heaven; I've sinned against you. I don't deserve to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired men.' The younger son got up and started back to his father.

"But when he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt sorry for him; he ran to his son, hugged him and kissed him.

"The son said, 'Father, I've sinned against God in heaven; I've sinned against you. I don't deserve to be called your son.'

"But his father called to his servants, 'Hurry! Bring the best clothes and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Get the fattened calf and kill it. Let's celebrate with a feast. My son was dead but has returned to life; he was lost but is now found.' They began to party (Lk 15:11-24).

"Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. He returned to the house and heard music and dancing. He asked one of the servants what was happening. The servant told him, 'Your brother has returned. Your father killed the fattened calf because he is home safe and sound.'

"The older brother became angry and refused to enter the house. His father came out and begged him to come in. The son answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've worked like your slave. I never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But this son of yours, who squandered your property with prostitutes, returned home and you kill the fattened calf for him!'

"The father replied, 'Son, you are always with me. Everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate because your brother was dead but has returned to life; he was lost but is now found'" (Lk 15:25-32).

During the Feast of Dedication Jn 10:22-39

That winter, Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication. Jesus was walking on Solomon's Porch in the Temple. Jews surrounded him, asking, "How long will you keep us guessing? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

Jesus answered, "I told you, but you don't believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

Again the Jews picked up stones to kill him. Jesus asked them, "I have shown you many

great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"

The Jews replied, "We are stoning you for dishonoring God; because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

Jesus answered them, "Why do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son?' Don't believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do my Father's works, at least believe the miracles. Then you will understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp (Jn 10:22-39).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to the Parable of the Good Samaritan, who is your neighbor?
2. How did Jesus answer the accusation that he cast out demons with power from the prince of demons?
3. What were some of the "woes" that Jesus gave the religious leaders of his day?
4. Why did the Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus?
5. What implications does it have for you that Jesus claims to be the Son of God?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. Prayer is the first action for finding workers for the Lord's harvest field. Before praying for the unsaved, pray for Christians to reach out to the unsaved. Jesus suggested that evangelistic activity begins with mobilizing his followers to pray for people to evangelize (Lk 10:2).
2. The parable of the Good Samaritan reveals three attitudes towards possessions (Lk 10:25-37):
 - The robbers: what's yours is mine and I will take it;
 - The priest and Levite: what's mine is mine and I will keep it;
 - The Samaritan: what's mine is yours and I will share it.
3. Jesus is all-powerful: he has power over Satan and demons. While Satan is strong, Jesus is stronger. Jesus has the ability to dominate Satan and expel demons from those who are demon-controlled (Mt 12:28-29; Lk 11:20-22). (See Col 1:13; 2:15; Hb 2:14.)
4. Religious people, who use their religion as a reason for avoiding contact with sinful people, aren't following Jesus' example. Jesus not only received sinners; he sought opportunities to be with them, not to participate in their sin, but to offer them liberation (Lk 15:1-2).
5. God is in a hurry to receive the repentant sinner. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the father represents God-Father (Lk 15:11-32). The only time the Bible shows God in a hurry is when the father ran to meet his repentant son (Lk 15:20).
6. Either Jesus is God and the Scripture is trustworthy, or Jesus was a deceiving con artist and the Bible is a book full of errors. Jesus claimed to be God. The Scripture testifies that Jesus was who he claimed to be. The Jewish leaders attempted to stone Jesus because they did not believe his claims were true (Jn 10:30-33).