

## SCRIPTURES FOR 1/29/06 LIFEGROUP LESSON

### **PARABLE OF THE SOWER: Luke 8:4-8, 11-15**

<sup>4</sup>While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: <sup>5</sup>"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. <sup>6</sup>Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. <sup>7</sup>Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. <sup>8</sup>Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."

<sup>11</sup>"This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. <sup>12</sup>Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. <sup>13</sup>Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. <sup>14</sup>The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. <sup>15</sup>But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

### **PARABLE of the GOOD SAMARITAN: Luke 10:29-37**

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

### **PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON: Luke 15:11-32**

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to

fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

"Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

"'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

### **Philippians 2:5-8**

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

### **1 John 1:5-7**

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

### **Romans 12:2**

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and **perfect will**.

**NOTE TO LEADER:** There is a lot of material here. Familiarize yourself with it so you know which stuff you are most comfortable with and what you will cut if you get short on time. Try to keep the lesson/discussion 20-30 minutes in length. Good luck and let me know if you have any questions. - Ed

**NOTE TO LEADERS:** All items in *italics* are for your information and not designed to be read aloud.

### INTRODUCTION:

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The last question Jeff asked Sunday was, “When was the last time you really practiced the truth?” That is a tough question. Are we sowing the seeds like the man in the parable of the sower? Have we helped someone out of a ditch like the Good Samaritan? Have we forgiven someone who hurt us like the prodigal’s father? When was the last time? (*these questions are all rhetorical – Ed*)

### THREE TRUTH STORIES

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Was there a time in your life when someone planted a seed with you when you were still “rocky soil” or when you were “the path”? How did that affect you later on?

Have you ever received help from someone you wouldn’t normally have associated with? How did that make you feel?

Have you ever been forgiven when you didn’t deserve it? How did that make you feel about any grudges you held?

Have you ever felt like the elder brother, where you worked hard all the time but some slacker gets all the credit or all the attention? If so, how did you handle it? Can you think of a similar instance in Jesus’ life (*there may be others, but I am thinking of Mary and Martha – Ed*)

*Have someone read Mark 10:45.*

This is what Jesus is all about. When His disciples were bickering and arguing about their positions, Jesus showed them that, while He was King, He was also willing to accept the lowest possible station and wash their feet. In fact...

*Have someone read Philippians 2:5-8.*

...He didn’t feel like equality with God was something to cling to, but instead gave all of that up just to learn what it was like to be one of us, to identify with us. Would we be willing to give up our race or position or status to identify with someone less fortunate – maybe someone in a ditch? Would we be willing to die for them?

We will probably never be called to that level of sacrifice, but we *are* expected to follow Christ in order to live by truth.

*Have someone read 1 John 1:5-7*

### THREE TRUTH WARNINGS

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Sunday, Jeff said if we practice truth, we must remember three things: We will be known by our love for one another (John 13:34-35), much will be expected of us (Luke 12:48), and it’s not enough to “talk the talk” (Matthew 7:21). (*have someone read these, IF you have time – Ed*)

What does it mean to love as Jesus loved?

Who cares if people know we are His disciples?

If we look at the second passage and back up one verse (Luke 12:47), we see that if we know what to do and don’t do it, we are in trouble, so...

...since we have been given much, or in other words, since we know what Jesus expects of us, this verse tells us much will be expected of us. Does this make you nervous? What can you do about it?

Do you know anyone, or have you heard of anyone who just runs around saying, “Lord, Lord,” but never does anything to back it up?

If we back up our talk with action, does that make us better than the guy who doesn’t?

When Jesus says, “...only he who does the will of my Father...” will enter the Kingdom of God, what do you think He means? We can’t do everything, so how do we decide what to do?

*Have someone read Romans 12:2.*

### CLOSING

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It all comes full circle. We must discern the truth, proclaim it, and practice it, because that is the will of God. But in order to discern that it is, we must conform to His pattern. In other words, just step out and do what you know is right and He will bless it.

Next week, we will begin looking at WORSHIP.