

## Understand and Study the Bible

### Session 6: Understand & Study Parables

#### Parables

- A figure of speech in which there is brief or extended comparison.
- Fictional stories using everyday situations, people, or objects to teach a spiritual truth or answer a question
- Have a specific point – figure out what that is

#### How does this change our process of Reading Carefully in Context?

1. Pray for God to speak to you through the passage, for His help in understanding, for Him to guard you from careless reading.
2. Read the whole passage through from beginning to end.
3. ***Identify the complete parable, including any related text before or after.***
4. Read the entire chapter(s) containing the parable, plus one chapter before and one after.
5. Identify the genre of the writing – is it prose or poetry, narrative or epistle, etc.? ***It's a parable!***
6. Re-read the parable slowly, going verse by verse and sentence by sentence.
7. Re-read it at least 1 or 2 more times (consider reading different translations).
8. Think about how the parable fits into its immediate biblical context, then move outward.
9. *Think about the characters and the comparison.*
10. *Understand the 1<sup>st</sup> century setting in which Jesus spoke to the best of your ability.*
11. Determine the speaker's main point – if it's in the passage, highlight it or underline it. If it isn't, write it in your own words.
12. *Understand how the parable applies TODAY.*

### **Tips for Finding the Point of a Parable**

- Did Jesus or the inspired author tell us what the parable meant?
- Otherwise, did Jesus or the author tell us the subject of, or reason for, the parable?
- Otherwise, is there a concluding summary that drives the point home?
- Otherwise, what comes at the end or is the last spoken dialog?
- Otherwise, does it reference other Scripture that helps reveal the point?
- Otherwise, who or what gets the most attention in the parable?

### **Notes from Analyzing the Parable of the Prodigal Son**