

Make-up for Session 3: Jesus' Timeless Message

Welcome to the Session 3 make-up!

This project consists of three parts. Please complete all three parts.

Part I

Select one of the following parables.

- The unjust judge (Luke 18:1 to 8)
- the unforgiving servant (Matthew 18:23-25)
- the unjust servant (Luke 16:1 to 13)
- The ten bridesmaids (Matthew 25:1 - 13)
- The wedding banquet (Matthew 22:1 -14)
- The laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1 - 16)
- The sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:31 -46)
- The mustard seed (Luke 13:18-19)
- The thief in the night (Matthew 24:42-51)
- The hidden treasure and the Pearl (Matthew 13:44-46)
- The good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
- The last sheep (Luke 15:1-7)
- The sower (Mark 4:1-20)

Part 2

1. In a few sentences, retell the parable.
2. Do a little research and find out what the message Jesus is trying to convey.
3. Tell me what the symbols or allusions mean. Do this in at least a 5 sentence paragraph.

Part 3

Rewrite this parable using current symbols and images making it relevant for the 14-16 year old in a confirmation class.

Example:

Part 1: I chose the parable of the lost son more popularly known as the prodigal son, Luke 15:11 – 32.

Part 2: Almost everyone knows the story of the prodigal son. A man had two sons and the younger asked for his inheritance. He used all of the money from his inheritance on a wild life. Soon he found himself poor and alone. In desperation he remembered how his father's slaves had more than he did. So he went home and was going to say to his father that he had sinned, no longer deserve to be called his son, and he would like to spend the rest of his life as a slave in his father's household. When the father saw him, the father ran to him, embraced him and welcomed him back into the family. The older son, coming home from a hard day's work, heard a celebration being prepared in the household. He asked one of the slaves what was going on. The older son was told that the younger son had returned and his father was planning a party. Indignant, the older brother refused to go to the party. His father came out and told him to please join the party that everything the father owned was his.

After a little bit of research, I learned that this parable is about the forgiving father. Many of us can identify with the older son, some of us can identify with the younger son and some of us can identify with both the older and the younger son. But the message that Jesus is trying to convey is that we are to be like the forgiving father. The father represents God and the two sons represent us. There is nothing that we can do can separate us from the father's love

Part 3: A young girl grows up in South Pasadena. Her parents, a bit old-fashioned, tend to overreact to her nose ring, the music she listens to, and the length of her skirts. They ground her a few times, and she seethes inside. "I hate you!" she screams at her father when he knocks on the door of her room after an argument, and that night she acts on a plan she has mentally rehearsed scores of times. She runs away.

She has visited San Diego only once before, on a bus trip with her church youth group to visit Sea World. Because her hometown newspapers report in lurid detail the gangs, drugs, and violence in the red light district just outside of San Diego, she concludes that is probably the last place her parents will look for her—in Hollywood, maybe, or San Francisco, but not San Diego.

Her second day there she meets a man who drives the biggest car she's ever seen. He offers her a ride, buys her lunch, and arranges a place for her to stay. He gives her some pills that make her feel better than she's ever felt before. She was right all along, she decides: Her parents were keeping her from all the fun.

The good life continues for a month, two months, a year. The man with the big car—she calls him "Boss"—teaches her a few things that men like. Since she's underage, men pay a premium for her. She lives in a penthouse and orders room service whenever she wants. Occasionally she thinks about the folks back home, but their lives now seem so boring that she can hardly believe she grew up there. She has a brief scare when she sees her picture printed on the back of a milk carton with the headline, "Have you seen this child?" But by now she has blond hair, and with all the makeup and body-piercing jewelry she wears, nobody would mistake her for a child. Besides, most of her friends are runaways, and nobody squeals.

After a year, the first signs of illness appear, and it amazes her how fast the boss turns mean. "These days, we can't mess around," he growls, and before she knows it she's out on the street without a penny to her name. When winter blows in, she finds herself sleeping on metal grates outside the big department stores. "Sleeping" is the wrong word—a teenage girl at night can never relax her guard. Dark bands circle her eyes. Her cough worsens.

One night, as she lies awake listening for footsteps, all of a sudden everything about her life looks different. She no longer feels like a woman of the world. She feels like a little girl, lost in a cold and frightening city. She begins to whimper. Her pockets are empty and she's hungry. She needs a fix. She pulls her legs tight underneath her and shivers under the newspapers she's piled atop her coat. Something jolts her memory and a single image fills her mind: of July in South Pasadena, when everyone in town goes to the parade or is in the parade, with her dog walking in the parade with her, and then eating ice cream at Garfield Park.

God, why did I leave? she says to herself, and pain stabs at her heart. *My dog back home eats better than I do now.* She's sobbing, and she knows in a flash that more than anything else in the world she wants to go home.

Three straight phone calls, three straight connections with the answering machine. She hangs up without leaving a message the first two times, but the third time she says, "Dad, Mom, it's me. I was wondering about maybe coming home. I'm catching a bus up your way, and it'll get there about midnight tomorrow. If you're not there, well, I guess I'll just stay on the bus until it hits Canada."

It takes about three hours for a bus to make all the stops between San Diego and Los Angeles, and during that time she realizes the flaws in her plan. What if her parents are out of town and miss the message? Shouldn't she have waited another day or so until she

could talk to them? Even if they are home, they probably wrote her off as dead long ago. She should have given them some time to overcome the shock.

Her thoughts bounce back and forth between those worries and the speech she is preparing for her father. "Dad, I'm sorry. I know I was wrong. It's not your fault, it's all mine. Dad, can you forgive me?" She says the words over and over, her throat tightening even as she rehearses them. She hasn't apologized to anyone in years.

When the bus finally rolls into the station, its air brakes hissing in protest, the driver announces in a crackly voice over the microphone, "Fifteen minutes, folks. That's all we have here." Fifteen minutes to decide her life. She checks herself in a compact mirror, smooths her hair, and licks the lipstick off her teeth. She looks at the tobacco stains on her fingertips and wonders if her parents will notice--if they're there.

She walks into the terminal not knowing what to expect, and not one of the thousand scenes that have played out in her mind prepare her for what she sees. There, in the concrete-walls-and-plastic-chairs bus terminal in Los Angeles, stands a group of 40 family members—brothers and sisters and great-aunts and uncles and cousins and a grandmother and great-grandmother to boot. They are all wearing ridiculous-looking party hats and blowing noisemakers, and taped across the entire wall of the terminal is a banner that reads "Welcome home!"

Out of the crowd of well-wishers breaks her dad. She looks through tears and begins the memorized speech, "*Dad, I'm sorry. I know...*"

He interrupts her. "*Hush, sweetheart. We've got no time for that. No time for apologies. You'll be late for the party. A banquet's waiting for you at home.*"

Please submit your work to dponnet@holyfamily.org by February 8th.

