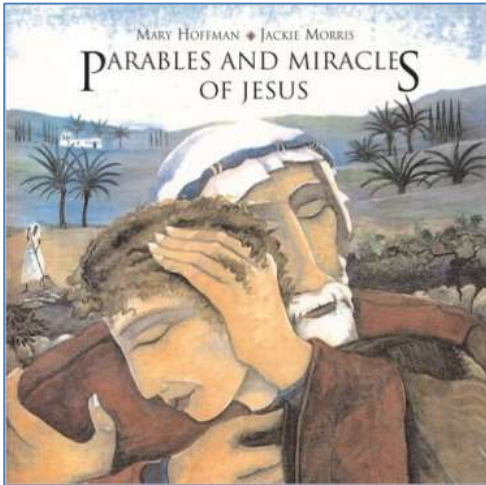


# Sunday Storytellers



## Parables and Miracles of Jesus

By Mary Hoffman and Illustrated by Jackie Morris

**Summary:** This wonderfully illustrated book retells eight of Jesus' parables and describes nine of his miracles, all in a conversational and contemporary way that is accessible to all. Reviewing these stories is a great way to familiarize children with Christ's ministry and teachings, especially in the weeks leading up to Easter.

**Note:** This curriculum just focuses on the parables. Look for the companion curriculum that focuses on miracles.

### ***Sunday morning:***

**Welcome & Introductions** – Go around the room and share your name and one thing that makes you special or unique (maybe it's a talent, hobby, pet, sport, interest, place they've traveled to, or lived, etc!).

**Introduce the Book** – Show the cover and read the title. Note that we'll just be looking at parables this week.

**What's a parable?** [Write the word "parable" on the whiteboard or flip-chart paper]

A parable is a story with two meanings... There is a surface meaning -- what actually happens in the story -- and there is second meaning below the surface. You often have to stop and think a little bit to come up with that second more hidden meaning, which is often a lesson or teaching.

Jesus used parables with characters like farmers, shepherds and fishermen because those were the people he often met when he was out preaching. He knew that he needed to tell stories that were familiar to the people so that they could understand what he was saying. The people really loved the stories but Jesus made sure that there was some teaching tucked into the story too.

Listen to a few parables from the Bible and let's see if you can find the hidden meaning.

### **“Lost and Found” (p. 14) The Parable of the Lost Sheep**

The Parable of the Lost Sheep is about a shepherd who cares for his flock of sheep, but let's look for the deeper meaning. I wonder what else it could be about?

Read the story and share the picture [let them really study it].

After you read the story, let the kids think about other meanings of the story. The author then has some explanation: *“Jesus said that God is happier about one person who comes to believe in him...etc.”*

### **“The Jealous Brother” (p. 19) The Parable of the Prodigal Son**

*The Prodigal Son* is about a father and his two sons but, again, let's look for the deeper meaning. I wonder what else it could be about?

Read the story and share the picture.

When you finish, let them think about other meanings of the story then read the author's explanatory paragraph just below (starting at paragraph 2): *“This is a story about God's love. He is such a loving father, he will welcome back anyone who wanders away from him...etc.”*

### **“Come to the Party” (p. 26) The Parable of the Rich Man's Feast**

Read the story and share the picture.

Again, when you get to the end, ask the children if they can figure out the “other” hidden (deeper) meaning of the story.

- Who could the rich man be?
- What's the hidden lesson of the story?

When they've done some sharing, read the author's explanatory paragraph just below: *“The story is about people who are too busy to listen to God's invitation to join in his kingdom... etc.”*

[And if there's time for another...]

### **“Neighbors” (p.12) The Parable of the Good Samaritan**

Same as above: read the story, share the picture, follow-up discussion.

When they're finished thinking about the deeper meaning, read the author's explanatory paragraph: *“Jesus asked, “Who do you think was this man's neighbor?... etc.”*

### **Wondering Question**

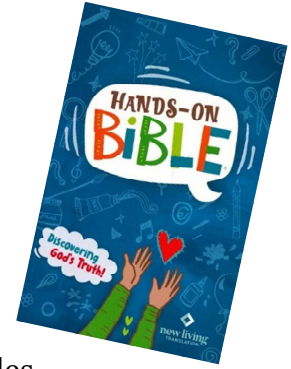
- I wonder which of these stories you liked the best? Why did you like it the best?

## Hands-On Bible

Hand out the Bibles...

### “Find your favorite parable in the Bible...”

The children can form small groups around their favorite parable or search for their favorite parable individually. Give each group/individual the slip of paper with the Bible citation on it and challenge them to find the verse.



Remind them to start in the Table of Contents and that all of the parables – since they are stories that Jesus told – are in the New Testament.

Also notice that some of the parables show up in two different places in the Bible.



### “Lost and Found” ~ The Parable of the Lost Sheep

Matthew 18:12-14 or Luke 15:4-7



### “The Jealous Brother” ~ The Parable of the Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32



### “Come to the Party” ~ The Parable of the Rich Man’s Feast

Matthew 22:1-14 or Luke 14:16-24



### “Neighbors” ~ The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Luke 10:29-37



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**The Episcopal Diocese of Olympia**

The Episcopal Church in Western Washington

FOR MORE CURRICULUM GO TO [SUNDAYSTORYTELLERS.ORG](http://SUNDAYSTORYTELLERS.ORG)

**Art response** – Print out these images in color and on card stock. Spread them out and see if the children can figure out which parable is depicted in each piece of art. If there's time, they can draw/paint a scene from their favorite parable.



To help them study the art closely, ask these three questions:

- What's going on in this picture?
- What makes you say that?
- What else is going on?

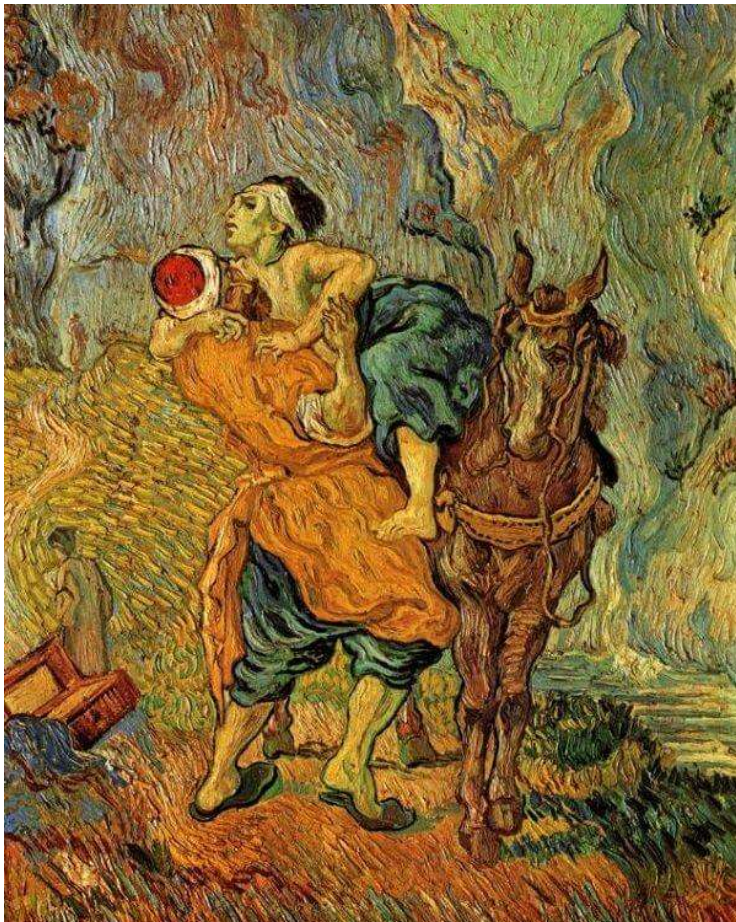
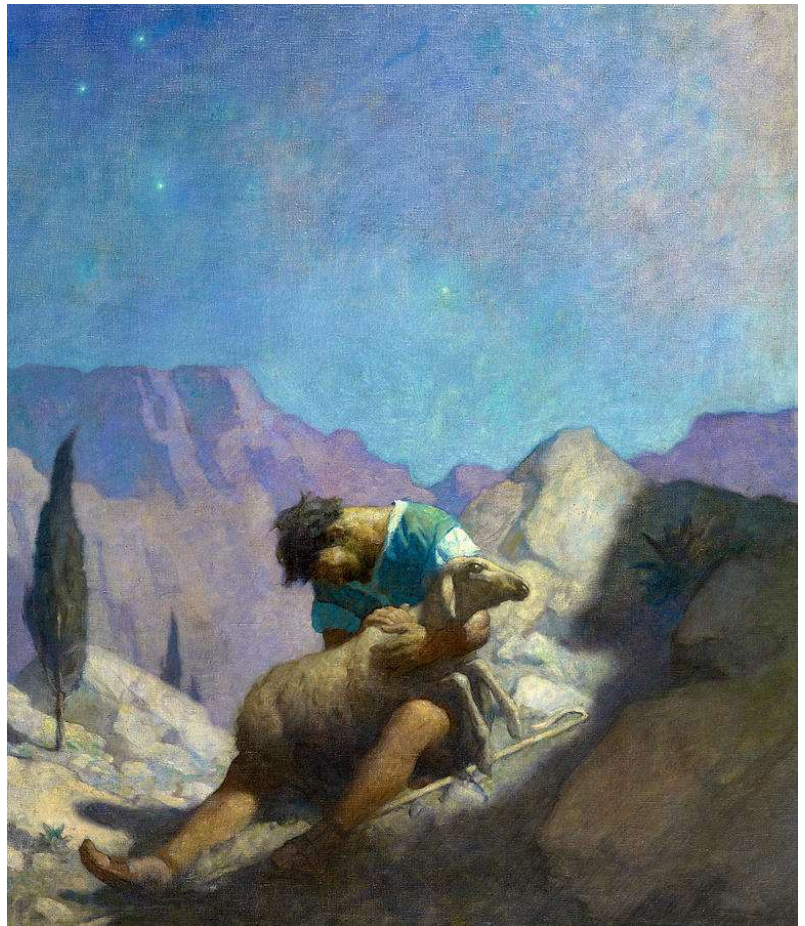
[This method is called Visual Thinking Strategy – Read more about it at: [embracingourdifferences.org/vts](http://embracingourdifferences.org/vts)]

**Rembrandt: The Return of the Prodigal Son**



**Francken: The Parable of the Rich Man's Feast**

N.C. Wyeth: **The Lost Sheep**



Van Gogh: **The Good Samaritan**