

alienate them. It is, as Bruce has suggested, the language of the saddest irony. Jesus adopts the famous words. He knows, as he looks at these eager crowds, that, like his own townsmen, the majority of them will turn his divine mission to them into a caricature of what it was intended to be.

11. Word of God. The preaching of Jesus, as in 5. 1.

12. Those by the way-side. Listeners to the teaching of Jesus who had little receptivity for it. Pilate, asking what truth was, vacillating and self-seeking, was a way-side hearer. **Take him away the word.** By suggesting difficulties, reminding one of the cost of obedience, suggesting procrastination. This was done at Nazareth. 4. 22. **May not believe and be saved.** The devil hates mankind, and studies the problem of their spiritual destruction. Luke speaks here of salvation by faith. He was in Philippi when Paul told the jailer how to be saved. Acts 16, 31.

13. Have no root. The root of a plant reaches moisture lying below the sun-dried surface. The root represents a thorough and deep apprehension of divine truth which cannot be affected by outward and transient changes. The disciples in John 6, 66, had no root. Had Luke talked of this also with Paul, who exhorts the Colossians to be "rooted in Christ?" See Eph. 3. 17. The rich young man, Mark 10, 17, is a sad example.

14. Go on their way. It takes time to decide their ultimate state. **Choked.** Deprived of spiritual life. **Cares.** Anxieties concerning temporal matters. **Riches.** Contrasted with spiritual riches, wealth brings its own absorbing solitudes for increase and protection from loss. **Pleasures.** Contrasted with spiritual joys. Chap. 10, 20; Phil. 3. 1; 4. 8. **Peculiar to Luke.** Luke uses a peculiar word here, somewhat like "earthly career." **Perfection.** Not "fruitless," as Matthew and Mark, but fruit prevented from ripening. For Paul's eagerness to attain the consummation of Christian experience, see 1 Cor. 15. 19; Phil. 3. 10-14. Luke uses a peculiar word here, and one which a professional man would choose.

15. Honest and good. These words indicate that humble, reverent, and receptive attitude toward revealed truth which is the universal condition of man's intellectual and spiritual growth. Etymologically considered, the words mean a heart which is all that a heart ought to be. **Hold it fast.** Accept, treasure, and obey it as truth. Neither Satan, persecution, nor worldly engagements can take it away. See how Paul had expressed this same thought. Rom. 8, 35-39. **With patience.** The twelve (with one exception) finally gave up their notion of a temporal Messiahship, and meekly accepted God's method. James had already used the same figure (Jas. 5, 7), as had Paul. Gal. 6. 9.

The Lesson Council.

Question 4. What is a parable, and why did Jesus use this form of teaching?

A parable is a simple incident, or story, told to illustrate some moral or religious truth. Teaching by parables did not originate with Jesus, but had long been employed by the rabbis. A parable easily attracts attention and fastens the truth firmly in the mind. It gives vividness to what would otherwise be vague and intangible. It presents the truth in a form to be apprehended with growing clearness by all who are spiritually receptive, and to the degree in which they are receptive. The merest child can catch a glimpse of its spiritual significance, while the maturest minds can never hope

to penetrate its profoundest meaning.—Rev. W. M. Brundage, Ph.D.

A parable is a narrative of either historic fact or ordinary occurrences, so presented as, by certain resemblances, to illustrate and enforce spiritual truth. In parable, unlike allegory, things are as named. "Fowls of the air" are real birds, and "seeds" are real grain. In allegory, persons are often personified traits; for example, "Giant Despair" in *Pilgrim's Progress*, "Una" in the *Fairy Queen*. Jesus used parables: (1) To catch the attention of the people. Truth in didactic form attracts less than in a pleasant story. Seeking for a moral quickens interest and helps in its application. (2) To avoid compelling those disinclined to understand against their will.—H. Lummis.

The parable, like the allegory, of which it is a scarcely distinguishable species, is a story which, true, or, at least, apparently true, represents the ideal or spiritual world by means of the natural human life. It differs from the fable, to which it is nearly allied, in that it proceeds upon facts which must be true, while the facts of the fable may not be true. Jesus taught by parable because it was a popular and impressive form, which at the same time protected the truth from the mockery of the scoffer.—John E. Earp, D.D.

A parable is a story. A more scientific definition, perhaps, is that of Lowth, who says, "Parable is that kind of allegory which consists of a continued narration of a fictitious or accommodated event applied to the illustration of some important truth." The parables of our Lord are of surpassing beauty. "Even infidels have acknowledged their literary excellence." By them the great Teacher accomplished the ends: 1) Of awakening interest. 2) Of making deep truths clear to common minds. 3) Of giving direct and powerful application to the truths he thus conveyed.—John Atkinson, D.D.

The parable is something more than an illustration of truth. It is not a fable, whose purpose is only to "point a moral" that appeals to the understanding of the natural man, nor is it a myth or an allegory, in which the truth and the vehicle of the truth are blended in one or transferred the one to the other, but it is a narrative of facts, in which the inward and outward meaning are preserved separate. The Saviour's parables are unlike all others in their perfect naturalness. He never violates natural law, nor stoops to the marvelous or grotesque, in which trees and beasts are made to speak. They are perfect. They serve three purposes at least: 1) To reveal truth; 2) To conceal truth from profane and irreverent minds; and 3) To assist the memory.—O. A. Houghton, D.D.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

A sower of the word came along one day and scattered his seed. He has come again to see what may be the result of the sowing.

Here is a way-side piece of work. "Clean gone!" he says. "Nothing left in this heart where I threw the seed. The thought of heaven, of God, of duty, all picked up by birds of temptation and borne away. Way-side heart, what will become of thee?"

The sower has gone to another heart. He is bending down. He is looking sharp. He says, "O, what bright, green blades! Bright and green, full of promise for a little while. Now they are shriveling. They are prostrate. They are withering and dying. They are dead!" But how quick was their first response to the sower's effort!