

A PILGRIM AT THE FAIR: Teacher's Guide

Staff:

Friar: Director and storyteller **Circus folk:** - Run booths at Activity Fair

Minstrels: A band with instruments and songs for outdoor singing. (Suggested colorful minstrel garb, ribbons on instruments, Tambourines and drums, etc.)

Jesters: A troupe of several players who present the Melodramas, and other entertainment's. They will have to work out and present the dramas, and costume themselves appropriately. They will stay in character through most of the school.

Milords and Miladies: The teachers and their helpers.

Keep order, work with children on materials and crafts, lead in Games, and class work sessions.

(Two helpers for each class group minimum)

Fair Crier: A Go-for helper/ time-keeper/ Scorekeeper and Melodrama Player. May have assistants.

Themes and Lessons

Class time will be one half hour from about 7:30 - 8:00 P.M. During this time you will present the lesson, and the children can work on their **Quest Books**. Also during this time, one of your assistants should circulate among the children and "Score" their Stamps and Stickers Boxes for the contest. There is a box for each day which the children will get stamped during the activity fair and class time. The covers are in team colors. These scores will need to be tabulated before the final assembly. If you are teaching the Readers (Ages 6-11), you will need some Bibles handy. Crayons are needed for the younger children, as well as pencils for the older groups.

The over all Theme is: **Jesus has come to seek and save the lost.** Luke 19:10

DAY ONE: Lost and Found Day.

God in love is seeking after his lost children, and His rejoicing when they are found.

Class Lessons from Luke 15:1-10. You will want to read through this Parable several times and reflect on its relevance to yourself and the children. Ponder especially what it feels like to be lost, and the joy that comes with finding, and being found. You will want to be familiar with John 10 - the Good Shepherd Passage, as well as Psalm 23, 1 Peter 2:25, Isa 53:6, Jere 50:6 and Matt 9:3.

This lesson will be based on the Parables of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin. Sits will have been done already acting out the Woman and the Lost Coin, and Traveler is searching for Pilgrim. The Friar will have just told the story of the lost sheep.

Outline:

1. Introduction: Relate a brief story about a time you were lost, or you had lost a child - such as at a mall, in the woods, etc. Emphasize what it feels like to be lost, or frantically searching for someone who is lost. (You might want to make a reference to the skits done earlier.) Ask "what is the best thing to do when you are lost?" Among the answers suggest "Staying where you are at and waiting to be found" as a good answer.

Read aloud or have a child read aloud the Parable of the Lost Sheep from their **Quest Books**. For the 8-11 year olds, you may want to look up the verses (letting children read them) and fill in the blanks as you go. The answers will form a trail through the word search, you can have the children find them as you go or after you have filled the blanks. The Beginning Readers have a maze, and the youngest a coloring picture. (You may want to "role play" the Parable with the younger children, letting them take turns being the sheep, shepherd, lost sheep.)

2. Talk about Jesus pictured as the Good Shepherd - John 10. He knows his sheep and calls them by name. They know his voice and follow him. He cares for them and they lack nothing - food, water, shelter, etc.

3. Talk about sheep going astray, losing their way, wandering, forgetting their resting place. If they listen to their shepherd and follow his voice they won't go astray (the 99), but if they turn to their own ways they can get lost and find themselves in danger and helpless. Among their feelings may be the fear that no one knows they are lost, or will come to save them. Suggest ways we can be like lost sheep. And how we can be lost without even knowing it.

4. Talk about the Shepherd - who knows a sheep is missing! He lays his life down for the sheep - ready to defend them from predators, and willing to undergo great hardships to search them out when lost. Emphasize his persistence in searching them out. Until he finds them. And that where ever he finds them, he will rescue them, whatever the cost!

5. Then talk about the great joy he has when he finds it, carrying it home on his shoulders, gathering neighbors and friends to celebrate. Suggest that this is the way Jesus rejoices when he "finds" us.

DAY TWO: Rich Man's Burden day.

Theme: *Love not the world or the things of the world - trust in God.*

Class Lessons from Luke 12:15-34 - You will want to study this Parable carefully - especially taking notice of the contrasts between a worldly and heavenly rich man. Notice how the Rich man is so proud and self centered and ambitious (For example, how many times he uses "I, My"). But also how transitory and insecure his "riches" are - needing barns to protect them. The lesson also builds on where our "riches" come from - bumper crops are God's blessing - and what we do with it - seeking enjoyment for ourselves or using it for God's kingdom. You will also want to look over 1 John 2: 15-17, which is one of the memory verses, and 1 Tim 6:9 and James 5:1-6.

Among the skits, a Wealthy Merchant will flaunts his wealth, then lose it to Da Boss gambling. And then DaBoss has piled a burden of things on Pilgrim - Pilgrim staggers under the burden. Friar will tell Pilgrim *the story of the rich man and the barns.*

The children have a two page spread in their **Quest Books** contrasting the two "rich" men. In the center of the Reader's books are some characteristics of these men - one a rich noble, the other a poor monk, Which is generous? Greedy? etc. Note - it is entirely possible that either man could be either - depending on their attitude towards riches and wealth. Does a man need riches? No! Should he worry? No! Ought he to be generous? Yes!... The **Quest books** for the younger readers are similar - but simply spell out the contrasts. (You may want to have them draw some moths around the rich man and a bag of money in his hand; and a bird and flowers by the poor man.)

In presenting this class, use personal illustrations to help the children see how it is relevant to them. Keep the presentation simple and on a child's level. Read or have the children read the Parable of the Rich Man's Barns aloud.

Discuss and describe the two men individually. One is very rich in goods and ambitions and worries. How he lives and loves things - food, clothing, fun. Not that these are wrong, but must never become the center of our lives. Greed, hoarding, and pride result. The other is poor in goods, but rich "spiritually" and in God's care. How he trusts God day by day, and God provides adequately. Which would the children rather be? Which man is truly happier?

Discuss where all wealth ultimately comes from - God's blessings. How he cares for Ravens and makes flowers beautiful. It is not who we are, or what we do that matters. The Woodcut panels on the sides portray a harvest being gathered.

Discuss why God blesses us. How He wants us to use our "riches" to serve him, helping others in need, etc. What does it mean to "Seek first God's Kingdom". How hard it is to share when we have an excess, or be content with a little.

Discuss the matter of "storing treasure" - things can be stolen, eaten by moths, rust - perhaps give a personal anecdote about the transitory nature of things. And the transitory nature of ourselves - life can be short. Pleasures do not really make people happy. And there is the danger that we may love things so much - that we lose Heaven.

Applications: Conclude by talking about the temptations of this world with all its things. And of trusting God.

DAY THREE: Option 1 - Field and Tournament Day - no class sessions.

Theme: *Jesus runs The good Race.*

Instead of class sessions, there will be a games and field sports day - in the midst of which Pilgrim and Traveler, and Da Boss add some fun. Traveler runs a “good race” despite Da Boss’s trickery while bearing Pilgrim’s Burden. Friar may share the Road to the Heavenly city during the final Assembly along with the Prodigal son.

Pilgrim’s Journey to the Heavenly City. In the center of the **Quest Books** is a depiction of coming to Salvation and the Christian’s life. While there has not been set aside a particular time for presenting this “Plan of Salvation”, you may want to present it somewhere in your class times, and in talking with individual children. By all means get the children to look it over, perhaps with their parents at home. Key points: Evangelist pointing heavily burdened Pilgrim to the Heavenly City. Pilgrim’s burden rolling away at the cross. His joining with other Christians for the Journey. The temptations of Vanity fair and its Road to destruction. Overcoming doubts, obstacles and fears. Then at the Gate of Heaven - “Why should I let you in?” The answer - Pilgrim points to the cross - “Jesus died for me!”.

Option 2 -

DAY FOUR: Invitations and Excuses Day

Theme: *God has good news for us - and he welcomes all who are willing to come*

Class Lessons are take from Luke 14:15-24. Study the Parable of the King’s Banquet - pondering its content. Why would people turn down such a good invitation? What kinds of excuses do they make? Are they reasonable? How and why does the King react? Who does he invite instead? What does the King want? His Banquet hall to be filled. Be sure and compare the parable with the King’s Wedding Supper in Matthew 22:1-14. Note in Matthew that the King provides the wedding clothes for the guests - just as God provides our “righteousness” through His son. “Many are called, but few are chosen.” (For the Readers also be familiar with John 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-13; and Luke 9:57-63.)

The Herald will be making a lot of “Good News” announcements. Da Boss and the Woman will do a “good news”/ “Bad news” skit. The Herald announces he has brought invitations to a great feast. Fair goers will be speculating over who will be invited - Friar tells <i>the Parable of the Great Banquet</i> .

The Reader’s **Quest Books** have an acrostic on the word “HERALD”. God has sent heralds announcing the Gospel (“Good News”) of salvation and forgiveness. Then there is a page with Fairgoers and their “excuses”, and some verse references. Finally there is a page on responding RSVP - another acrostic: Receive God’s gift of Grace, Set aside my sin, Venture forth in Faith, and Pray, asking Jesus into my heart. Beginners have the Parable, a page about excuses and an RSVP page. Youngest have the Parable, an excuses page, and a coloring page - for them a telling of the story and discussion of the picture may be sufficient.

Start by talking about how wonderful it would be to be invited to a very special banquet given by somebody very important. Stress how nice it would be.

Then discuss: why would anyone want to make excuses? Read the Parable aloud or have it read. Discuss the excuses. Are they reasonable and valid? Perhaps, but adequate to explain their refusals, probably not.

Talk about how Jesus sends his messengers to announce the Good News. The wonderful things that Jesus invites us to. The discuss the fairgoer’s excuses. Why do people make excuses to Jesus for not accepting His Good News and Gift of Salvation. Were they selfish, afraid of having to spend money to get all dressed up, did they not like the King, whatever, etc.? You

may want to talk about how Jesus was telling this parable to a group of people at a dinner who did not believe in him. Jesus was warning them. The excuses were a rejection of the gift of Salvation that God was offering to them.

Then talk about the invitations to the poor and needy, and how Jesus provides us with everything so we can't use excuses, such as I'm not worthy, I have nothing to wear, I don't deserve it. What can be more important than God's Gift? We are all poor and needy as sinners, but God has provided all we need and wants us there with Him. With the older children, you might want to look up some of the verse references and discuss how they deny various excuses.

Finally talk about the RSVP - God offers a gift and wants an answer. How can we accept God's Invitation?

DAY FIVE: Getting ready for the King's Coming Day

Theme: *Be diligent in serving the Lord, for He is coming back with salvation and Justice.*

Class Lessons from Luke 19:11-27 - The Parable of the Pounds (10 Minas) - it is similar to the Parable of the Talents (Matt 25 & Mark 13), but slightly different. Context was Jesus' coming to Jerusalem and people's expectations of the Kingdom. Jesus is both speaking about his departure to heaven, his entrusting the Gospel to his "servants" and his coming back for an accounting and Judgment. Note that some people did not want the Noble to be their King - Jesus was alluding to the hostility he would soon experience - leading to the rejection of the crucifixion, and how at the end of the parable they would reap the consequences. Note that a Mina is about three months wages - and the they each got the same amount - cf the Parable of the Talents where they got different amounts.

Talk is all over the Fair - the king is coming. Excited talk of everything to do to get ready. A trio of women "go nuts" over what they will wear, tossing gowns around. Da Boss doubts he will show. The Friar tells *the parable of the Pounds*. At the final torchlight ceremony, Traveler will arrive to be welcomed as the King,

The **Quest Books** for the Readers and Beginner Readers have the parable, then a page of discussion centered around the poor Mayor - what should we be doing, followed by a Summary page of how the Parable is about Jesus. For the older Readers are some verses on what we should be doing to get ready. 1 Thess 1:9-10, 5:4-6; 1 Peter 4:7-11; 1 Cor 3:9-15, 4:1-5 and 2 Peter 3:11-14. Beginner's Fill in Blacks: Obey Him, Love each other, Pray and Tell others about Jesus. The Youngest have a coloring Page of the Noble giving the Money to his servants. Then there is a summary page of the Lesson. The Younger class can probably get by with a telling of the story and discussion while coloring the picture.

Begin by talking about how a city prepares for the visit of an important person like the President of the US. How they close roads, make all sort of arrangements, try and make the city look nice for his coming. What if he were to come and surprise them?

You may want to initiate a discussion about the list of town people. Most of them should be doing what they are supposed to be doing - making candles, etc. But some of them are thieves or gossips - they need to change their ways (2 Thess 3:11; Eph 4:28, etc.)

Discuss how Important officials often come to inspect what is being done. And making sure it is being done right! How happy they are when things are being done right and on schedule; and how unhappy when things are not being done right or at all, or there is money being wasted or stolen by dishonest people. They will honor the good and punish the bad.

Talk about how the Parable is about Jesus. His coming, his going to heaven to come back one day as Lord. How he has entrusted his servants with the Gospel (minas) to share and increase his people. And about us. We may have different skills and abilities, but the Good News Jesus has given to us the share is the same for everybody.

Talk about the things Jesus wants us to be doing until he returns. Obeying Him, avoiding sin, loving one another, prayer. The Increase that comes as people are won to Christ, and serve Him as well.

Then talk about the three men. How two were faithful and rewarded. How the third wasn't. What did he do? What was his excuse? What was the King's reaction?

What should we be doing to get ready for Jesus' coming back?