

NSS Ethics and Religious Studies Curriculum Support Materials

2

Parables about the End of Days

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Parables about moral conduct

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Parables of the Talents

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Topic 5

Parables

Teaching Time: 4 Periods (1 hour per period)

Main Points:

1. Parables about the End of Days
2. Parables about moral conduct
3. Other parables

Text Interpretation:

In the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, Jesus taught about the proper attitude towards preparing for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Jesus made use of a Jewish wedding custom in Palestine to explain that the preparation for the coming of God would be similar to that for the arrival of the bridegroom. It would be a joyous and unexpected event. Therefore, the believers have to prepare themselves and be ready at any moment to welcome the Second Coming of God. By telling the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, Jesus warned that certain important things have to be done by ourselves but not by any other people, such as maintaining a close relationship with God and cultivating the good characters God likes, e.g. love, patience, alertness and generosity. Only when a person does the above mentioned wholeheartedly can the person enter the Kingdom of God.

In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, Jesus taught that God is the great Father and the way to delight God is to help His children, i.e. our neighbours. Therefore, on the Last Day, God will judge us according to our reaction to people who need help. God wants us to learn: (1) to offer help even if it is a small kind of help; (2) to offer unconditional help to those who are in need, even if they are the least of all. Those who offer help to people unconditionally will attain the joy of helping Jesus Christ. Those who refuse to help people in need are no difference from refusing to help Jesus Christ. They will be judged by God on the Last Day.

In the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, the king in the parable represented God, who is merciful and willing to forgive people unconditionally. If we behave like the unmerciful servant in the parable and refuse to forgive others for their wrongdoings, we have not appreciated God's forgiveness. In return, God will not forgive us at the end, like what the king did at the end of the parable. By telling the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, Jesus taught that forgiveness is not a matter of calculation. One should not set limits, but to forgive others for their wrongdoings.

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus taught that one should not ask who "my" neighbour is. The teaching of the parable is that one should not always act according to self-interest and ignore those who are really in need. In addition, only by putting words into actions can one show true compassion, so that a person can be the neighbour of the others and an interactive and living relationship can be established.

In the parable of Talents, Jesus taught that God gives His people different gifts according to their abilities. One should not bother too much about the amount of talents one has. Instead, one should be concerned about how to utilise the talents. God never demands us to work on tasks we cannot handle, but God does demand us to work according to our abilities. Talents are not given to us for free. God would like each one of us to actively participate in building God's Kingdom according to one's abilities.

Periods 1-2: Parables about the End of Days

1. Biblical reference: Mt 25: 1-13, 31-46

2. Objectives:

- To learn that the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, and the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats are both parables about the End of Days.
- To understand the teachings of the parables:
 - (1) The Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids: no one knows when Jesus will come back. People should prepare well and be ready at any time so as to welcome Jesus for his return.
 - (2) The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats: on the Judgment Day, God will judge us according to how we treat the others.
- To understand that we should maintain a good personality and get well-prepared at any time.
- To understand that we should not care only about self-interest when helping others. It should be driven by unconditional love.



3. Teaching strategies

Background
Information

- The Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids: no one knows when Jesus will come back. People should prepare well and cultivate good personalities so as to welcome Jesus. The good qualities cultivated belong to no one but to oneself only. It can only be obtained with our own hands.
- The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats: God will judge people according to how they respond to others' needs.
- Only those who are willing to offer help unconditionally can enjoy eternal life. Otherwise, God will punish them.

Issues for
Explorations

- The Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids: what do people need to prepare in advance to get themselves ready for opportunities coming at any time?
- The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats: what attitudes should we have when we help the others?

Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the differences between the wise and the foolish virgins? • What people should get prepared in advance before the second coming of Jesus? • What were the differences between the actions of the goats and the sheep? • How to offer unconditional help to people in our daily life?
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By using the example of Wong Kam-bo, help students understand Jesus' teaching in the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, that people should have early preparations for important matters. • Through the teaching of the Parable of "the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, understand that people should maintain good personalities, so that they will be ready for challenges at any time. • Through comparing the actions of goats and sheep, help students learn that the rule of God's judgment is parallel to how people react to others' needs. We should follow the sheep's (righteous people) actions, helping the least of all unconditionally. • Through analysing the video clip "The Beginning & the End, <Seeking you II>, Volume 4: Angel of the road" to examine what is meant by offering unconditional help.
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil • Alertness • Parables about the End of Days • The least of all
Generic skills, values and attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.
High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What early preparations should we have in our daily life? • Examine the possibility of helping the least of all in our daily life.
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine how a non-governmental organisation in Hong Kong helps the "least of all" in the society.

Activity One

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What were the differences between the wise and the foolish Virgins/Bridesmaids?	Communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills	Perseverance, being responsible

Teaching steps:

Step 1: Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by asking them to think about the importance of having early preparations.

- Teacher asks:
 - i. Do you agree that opportunities only go to those who are prepared?
- Teacher asks:
 - i. Do you think an athletic has to get well-prepared in order to win an Olympic gold medal?
- Teacher uses the information below to let students know how Wong Kam-bo prepared for the Olympic Game:
 - i. “The silent cyclist in Hong Kong, China: Wong Kam-bo”,
http://big5.xinhuanet.com/gate/big5/news.xinhuanet.com/sports/2007-07/31/content_6454958.htm
- Teacher and students discuss:
 - i. Wong Kam-bo was aiming for the gold medal in the Olympic Games. In which areas did he need to have early preparations?
 - ii. Did it make a difference for Wong Kam-bo to have early preparations?
 - iii. What have you learnt from Wong Kam-bo’s experience? Are early preparations important?

Step 2: Teacher points out:

- Most people must have known the importance of early preparations. For instance, we do revision long before the exams approach so that we can do well in the exams, and we pack our schoolbags before we go to bed so that we do not need to rush when we leave home the next day.
- Jesus told a parable in Mt 25: 1-13, teaching people to have early preparations. Let us look at what matters and things Jesus asked people to prepare early?

Step 3: Teacher carries out “Comparison of the wise and the foolish Virgins/Bridesmaids” activity and guides students to analyse the wise and the foolish Virgins/Bridesmaids according to their behaviour, attitudes and their fate.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and read Mt 25: 1-13. Guide students to discuss:
 - i. This is a parable about the End of Days. What was so important concerning the End of Days according to Jesus?
 - ii. Why did Jesus make use of a parable to teach about the End of Days after he finished explaining the signs of the End of Days to his disciples?
- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and distributes “Worksheet 1” (Comparison of the wise and the foolish virgins). Guide students to discuss:
 - i. According to Mt 25: 1-13, when did the bridegroom arrive?
 - ii. What were the differences of the wise and the foolish virgins in their preparation to receive the bridegroom regarding the following three areas: the behaviour, the attitudes and their fate?
 - iii. What do (a) the bridegroom, (b) the arrival of the bridegroom and (c) receiving the bridegroom represent?
 - iv. What did Jesus want to teach us in the “Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids”?
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

Step 4: Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- Why did Jesus use a story of celebrating marriage and receiving the bridegroom to explain his second coming and remind people to get well-prepared to welcome his return?
 - i. Teacher shows “PowerPoint 1” (Marriages in Palestine) to let students understand about (1) the customs of weddings and marriages in Palestine and (2) the meaning of the “Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids”.

Step 5: Teacher summarises:

- The Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids is a parable about the End of Days.
- Jesus taught his disciples to have early preparations for the coming of the Son of God.
- Those who prepare early for the coming of the Son of God will share the joy with the Son of God.
- Those who have not prepared early for the coming of the Son of God will be left outside the door. They are not psychologically prepared and thus, they cannot share the joy with the Son of God.

Step 6: Teacher distributes “Students’ Reference: Material 1” (The teaching of the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids) and briefly explains to sum up the above activity.



Activity Two

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What were the things people should prepare early according to Jesus?	Communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills	Love, endurance, being alert, generosity

Teaching steps:**Step 1: Teacher asks:**

- According to Jesus, “oil” represents something that cannot be borrowed and bought, but can help people prepare for the Lord’s coming. What is it?
- In our daily life, what are the important things that we need to prepare early and cannot be borrowed?

Step 2: Teacher carries out the “Things that cannot be borrowed” activity. Let students understand that there are things we need to prepare early by ourselves and cannot be borrowed.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four, distributes the “job market” section of the daily newspaper and asks them to look for their ideal job.
- Teacher asks students to list the basic requirements of their ideal job, including:
 - i. Academic requirements;
 - ii. Personality requirements;
 - iii. Experience or networking requirements.
- Teacher can ask some students to report their analysis.
- Teacher asks:
 - i. Is early preparation important for one to meet the requirements of his/her ideal job? Can the good qualities be borrowed from others?

Step 3: Teacher carries out the “Meaning of the oil” activity, and guides students to understand what things should be prepared in advance to receive the Son of God as taught by Jesus.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and distributes “Worksheet 2” (Meaning of the oil). Guide students to think (1) the qualities of “oil” described in Mt 25: 1-13, and (2) what oil actually refers to, that can help people prepare to receive the Lord.

- Teacher invites students to present after discussion.
- Teacher points out:
 - i. In the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, Jesus uses “oil” to describe the relationship between God and people, and the personalities that God likes, including love, perseverance, alertness and generosity, etc. These are the important things people have to prepare early.
 - ii. At the same time, Jesus used this parable to tell people that a good relationship with God cannot be borrowed. All of us have to maintain the relationship ourselves. Good personalities cannot be borrowed either. People have to own the good personalities themselves.
 - iii. Many people think that the End of Days has not yet come. They think death is far away and it is pessimistic to talk about it. As we reflect upon ourselves, we are clearer about the importance of “getting prepared at all times” as mentioned in the parable. This parable focuses on the coming of God’s Kingdom during the End of Days. We should get prepared like the wise Virgins/Bridesmaid before we can understand its meaning.
 - iv. Prepare for answers regarding the meaning of life and life after death bring us hopes in life. The parable here emphasises that the lamp keeps burning with oil as fuel. Life should be a continual offering to welcome every moment.

Step 4: Teacher and students further discuss:

- What characteristics of the coming of the Son of God were stated in the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids?
- In the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, Jesus explained that only those who establish relationship with God and have the personalities that God like can receive the coming of the Son of God and share joy with him. What is the impact of this message on the daily life of the believers?
- The two core messages of the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids are: (1) it warns us that there are things we have to prepare in advance, and (2) it warns us that there are things we cannot borrow. Does it remind us anything about our attitude towards our life?

Step 5: Teacher and students carry out “Getting prepared for the future” activity. Guide students to think about the inspirations brought by Jesus’ teaching.

- Teacher and students discuss:
 - i. Do you think people who get prepared early can get hold of opportunities at any moment more easily?
 - ii. Which areas do you think you can get prepared early for opportunities coming at any time?
- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and distributes “Worksheet 3” (Opportunities and preparation). Guide students to think about (1) what opportunities they expect to come across in two years; (2) in which areas they need to get prepared early in order to grab these opportunities, and (3) in what ways they can get prepared for these opportunities.

Step 6: Teacher summarises:

- There are things one cannot leave aside until the last minute. For instance, it would be too late for a person to acquire the proper skills and personality just before the job opportunities arrives.
- The teaching of Jesus helps us understand that we should get ourselves prepared for our relationship with God.

Step 7: Teacher distributes “Students’ Reference: Material 2” (The meaning of the symbols in the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids) and briefly explains to sum up the above activity.

Activity Three

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitude
What were the differences between the actions of the goats and the sheep?	Communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills	Love, kindness, concern

Teaching steps:**Step 1: Teacher points out:**

- Jesus told another parable about the End of Days, the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. In the parable, Jesus explained the rules of God's judgment during the End of Days. Let us find out the rules.

Step 2: Teacher carries out "Differentiating sheep and goats" activity. Let students learn about God's judgment during the End of Days.

- Teacher asks:
 - i. According to your understanding of God in the Old Testament, list the rules with which God judges His people. Who can enter the Kingdom of God?
- Teacher writes down the rules suggested by the students on the blackboard. The class then identifies the three most reasonable rules.
- Teacher asks students to read Mt 25: 31-46 and form groups of four. Teacher distributes "Worksheet 4" (Comparison of the sheep and the goats) and guides students to discuss:
 - i. What will be the scenes when the Son of Man (Son of God) comes again? What actions will he take?
 - ii. How did the Son of Man differentiate between the sheep and the goats? List the differences between the sheep and the goats regarding their behaviour, attitudes and their fate.
 - iii. List what kind of people the sheep and the goats referred to respectively.
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

Step 3: Teacher carries out "A cup of cold water, the least of all" activity and guides students to learn more about what Jesus requires of us when we help others. The requirements are to offer help (1) in small tasks, and (2) to the least of all.

- Teacher asks:
 - i. From the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, what did Jesus want us to do when we help others?
- Teacher asks students to form groups of four, distributes “Appendix 1” (Little help, big help) and asks students to read the two news articles. Teacher then guides students to discuss the questions on “Worksheet 5” (Little help, ordinary man).
 - i. Compare the cases in News 1 and News 2, which case does not involve money?
 - ii. Compare the cases in News 1 and News 2, which one is a small task that everyone can do?
 - iii. Let us then look at what assistance Jesus asked people to offer to the others, e.g. a meal, a glass of water, receiving guests, taking care of the sick and visiting prisoners. Do these acts require us to pay? Can every one of us do these tasks?
 - iv. Why did Jesus say helping ordinary people would let us feel the joy of helping Christ?
 - v. Jesus stated that people only need to offer little help to people they meet everyday, then they can enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Would you consider the rules of God’s judgment difficult to follow?
 - vi. What do you think will be the impact of the rules on the life of Christians?

Step 4: Teacher and students further discuss:

- Jesus explained in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats that God judges people according to how people react to others’ needs. What are the values emphasised and advocated by Christianity? (Teacher can guide students to understand that Christianity advocates that people should treat the others with heartfelt, instinctive and unconditional love, rather than to secure one’s self-interests and dignity.)

Step 5: Teacher summarises:

- Jesus explained through the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats that God will judge us according to how we react to others’ needs.
- Jesus taught us when we help the people in need, we have to: (1) help them in small tasks, and (2) help them unconditionally:

- i. Be someone like the sheep (righteous people): they are those who care about the others regardless of the identity and the status of the people in need. They try their best to help even the least of all.
- ii. Those who help others in the simplest things unconditionally will have the joy of helping Christ.
- iii. Don't be someone like the goats: they offer help just because of the deprived status of the people in need. They help others, wanting to attain good reputation and praises. Such kind of help is not sympathy but selfishness.
- iv. Helping the others is the same as helping Christ. God is the great Father. We should help the children of God, i.e. our neighbours in order to please the Father.

Step 6: Teacher distributes “Students’ Reference: Material 3” (The teaching of the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats), briefly explains it and sum up the above activity.



Activity Four

Enquiry Question	Generic Skills	Values and Attitude
How can we offer help in small tasks in our daily life?	Communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills	Love, kindness, concern

Teaching steps:**Step 1: Teacher asks:**

- Why are people in the modern society willing to help others in “big things” but not in “small things”?
- What are the personalities required for helping others in small tasks?
- Do you think there are people in our daily life who practise helping people unconditionally in small things?

Step 2: Teacher carries out the “Angel of the road” activity and guides students to learn that there really are people willing to help others in small things unconditionally.

- Teacher shows video clip “The Beginning & the End, <Seeking you II>, Volume 4: Angel of the road” (Duration: 20 minutes, or show only from 14:00 to 20:25). Asks students to form groups of six to discuss (http://www.hkdavc.com/seeking2/seeking2_03.html):
 - Did the taxi driver offer help unconditionally? Was he willing to help others in small things?
 - What were the reasons driving him to help others in small things?
 - What would be his passengers’ reaction towards receiving the help?
 - What positive influences could the little help from the taxi driver bring to the establishment of interpersonal relationships?
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.
- Teacher points out:
 - The action of the taxi driver reminds us of Jesus’ teachings, i.e. (1) helping others unconditionally, and (2) offering help in small things. Although driving taxi is only a job, the taxi driver in the video clip treated the passengers very nicely. He was alert while driving to ensure the safety of every passenger. He was very devoted to his duty.

- If we offer little and simple help to people we meet every day, we will not only be able to establish harmonious relationships with others, but can also experience the joy of helping Christ.

Step 3: Teacher carries out “My little help” activity and guides students to think about how they can help others in small things in their daily life.

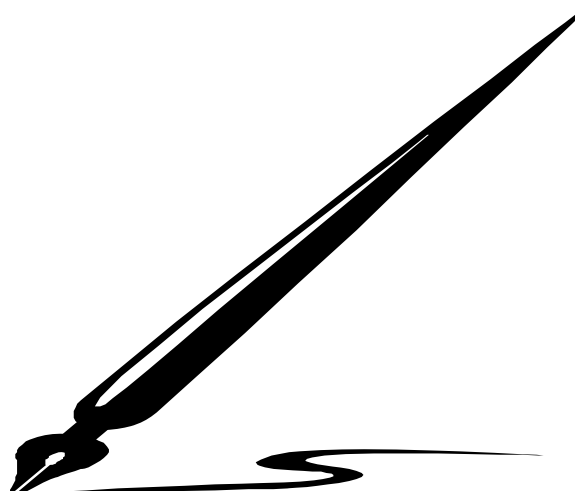
- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and to think of ordinary examples in their school, their community and society, in which they can offer little help to the others.
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- Offering help out of concern for self-interests, reputation, praises and relations is just what the goats do.
- To become the sheep regarded by God, we should offer some small help unconditionally to people we meet every day. There is only a fine line between being a sheep or a goat.

Extended Activities:

1. Teacher asks students to gather information about an NGO (non-governmental organisation) and explore the work of that organisation in the following areas:
 - a. Objectives of establishing the organisation, such as helping people;
 - b. Major target groups, such as the identity and social status of the service-recipients and the requirements for receiving the service;
 - c. Major working areas, such as the forms of assistance;
 - d. Funds allocation.
2. Teacher asks students to think about the following questions according to the information obtained above:
 - a. Can the above target service-recipients be considered the “least of all”? Explain.
 - b. What are the influences of the work of the above organisation on the society as a whole? How do other members of the society comment on the above organisation?
 - c. Do you agree with the concept, the form of assistance and its influences of the above organisation? Why?
3. Teacher can invite students to share the result of their research.



Appendix 1: Little help, big help



News One:

Visit to Cambodia changed BU students' lifestyle

(Mingpao June 22, 2007 Friday)

【From Mingpao】 A trip to visit children and impoverished people affected by HIV/AIDS in Cambodia made the students from the Baptist University decide to help the people there. A student from the Social Work Department of BU, Wong Yuen-mei changed from fearing the HIV/AIDS affected children to treating them like her own children in four days. She even planned to organise a second visit with her classmates to install fans and renovate the exterior wall of the children's quarters. She found the children's smiling faces unforgettable, and hoped Hong Kong people will know more about HIV/AIDS.

More than 60 BU students went for a study trip to Cambodia and helped the underprivileged groups there. They visited a hospice care quarter for children suffering from HIV/AIDS. "When we arrived at the quarters, the children were very enthusiastic. But many classmates were scared because the heads of the children were covered with blue medicine liquid. They also covered their wounds with white powder. Some of their wounds were still bleeding." Out of love and care, Wong Yuen-mei and her classmates identified with the group very soon. They called each other mom/ dad and son/ daughter. Wong was deeply moved by a 1.5-year-old girl, Nuch.

Visit the orphanage and hug the children affected by HIV/AIDS for 3 hours every day

Both parents of Nuch were HIV/AIDS patients. Her father was dead and her mother sent her to an orphanage. Wong went to the orphanage for four days and she held Nuch in her arms for at least three hours a day. Thus, a strong bond pulled them together. Nuch cried heavily once Wong let her classmate hold Nuch because she disliked being abandoned.

This trip also changed the views of Wong's family towards HIV/AIDS patients. She said, "My parents worried a lot about my trip to Cambodia. They often asked me if I had vaccinations for typhoid and other diseases. After they watched the videos we took, they supported me to go back to Cambodia to do voluntary service."

Following a scavenging woman for a documentary

Another BU student, Chan Siu-kei and her classmates followed the impoverished people who lived on garbage mountains. They recorded a story of a scavenging woman as a documentary. He said frankly, “We may not help them. But this trip broadens our horizon, and let us see farther.” After experiencing poverty, his attitude towards life changed. “I will put useless plastic bottles into the recycle bin. One plastic bottle means a lot to the poor.”

News Two:

Donations from Fok Ying-tung making his dream come true

HKUST sets up four research centres in Nansha, new campus will be built next year

(Sing Pao Daily News) September 7, 2007, Friday

By Wong Yin-yee in Nansha

The opening ceremony of “HKUST Fok Ying Tung Graduate School” in Nansha of Guangzhou was held yesterday. The research centres were built with donations from the late Fok Ying-tung, Vice Chairman of The Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) in his hometown Nansha. Both sons of Fok Ying-tung, Fok Tsun-ting and Fok Chun-wan, said in their speeches that their father’s dream of developing Nansha was being realised. The School has been developing rapidly. Other than enrolling students in the mainland, the new campus planning was complete and the construction would commence next year.

HKUST held the opening ceremony for the four new research centers and the Reading & Common Room in Nansha yesterday. Dignitaries officiating at the opening ceremony included the Deputy Director-General of Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the Guangdong Provincial People's Government, Lin Di-fu; Chairman of Fok Ying Tung Foundation, Fok Tsun-ting; Managing Director of Fok Ying Tung Foundation, Fok Chun-wan; President of the HKUST, Chu Ching-Wu and Dean of HKUST Fok Ying Tung Graduate School, Yu Tong-xi.

Fok Tsun-ting said that the new development of the Nansha School witnessed more and more people engaging in the development of Nansha and working together to make his father's dream come true. "My father loved his hometown. He wanted to develop Nansha regardless of all the difficulties. Nothing could move his will. Now that the development is taking shape – it is delightful." He also said, "From setting up to expanding gradually, the HKUST Fok Ying Tung Graduate School has built four new research centres on top of six research centres and two central research facilities in 8 months."

Promoting technological advancement in the Pearl River Delta

Fok Chun-wan also mentioned that the development progress of the Graduate School was encouraging, fulfilling his father's Nansha dream in a short time. He hoped that people from all walks of life would make continuous support to them.

The HKUST Fok Ying Tung Graduate School was opened early this year. Yu Tong-xi pointed out in his speech that together with the four centres opened yesterday, there were a total of 12 research centres operating. The new campus planning was complete and the construction would commence next year.

The newly added research centres include: Applied Genomics Centre, Centre for Bioengineering and Biomedical Devices, Centre for Polymer Processing, and Centre for Green Products and Processing Technologies. They will further strengthen HKUST's research capabilities in advanced materials, biomedical technologies and environmental protection, and promote technological advancement in the Pearl River Delta region.

Fok Ying Tung Foundation donates 500 million dollars

Yu Tong-xi added, approval for the proposed projects of the research centres were being sought from the relevant government departments. Moreover, collaborations with industry in Pearl River Delta were being explored. "The Graduate School has 44 staff and 23 trainees. Since the enrolment of local students needs approval from the state, the staff members are mainly graduates and trainees from HKUST. After our proposal got approved, we can enrol master and doctoral candidates to increase the number of staff and trainees to 100."

Fok Ying Tung Foundation has donated 500 million dollars to sponsor the construction of the Graduate School. Collaborated with Nansha IT Park, the construction of the new dormitory towers, basketball courts and tennis courts will commence later this year.



Material 1: The teaching of the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids

1. Ideological background of the End of Days in Christianity

- According to the Bible, Jesus will return for judgment. However, as the Bible says, no one knows when the End of Days will be. Only God knows the time.
- Since no one knows when the End of Days will be, Jesus used parables to explain the situation of the End of Days and what the believers should prepare before the End of Days.
- When the End of Days come, God will judge people according to what they have done. Those who are guilty cannot enter God's Kingdom.
- Jesus taught people to repent as soon as possible because God is going to judge soon.
- People should be alert and get prepared. Otherwise when God comes and judges the world, those who have not prepared well will have no time to make up and can only regret.

2. Comparison of the wise and the foolish virgins/bridesmaids

A. Differences in behaviour:

Wise virgins/bridesmaids	Foolish virgins/bridesmaids
a. Prepared extra oil	a. Did not prepare oil
b. No need to buy oil	b. Failed to borrow oil, had to go buy oil

B. Differences in attitudes:

Wise virgins/bridesmaids	Foolish virgins/bridesmaids
a. Prepared early for the future in case of emergencies	a. Did not prepare for the future
b. Were alert	b. Were not alert
c. Understood that oil could be borrowed and got themselves prepared	c. Thought that they could borrow the oil they needed from others at the last minute

C. Differences in their fate:

Wise virgins/bridesmaids	Foolish virgins/bridesmaids
a. Entered the house and enjoyed the wedding feast together with the bridegroom	a. Being left behind, could not enter the house and enjoy the wedding feast with the bridegroom

3. The teaching of the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids

- There are things one cannot get done in the last minute. It is always too late to learn certain skills or to cultivate certain personalities just before opportunity arrives. The teaching of Jesus helps us understand our relationship with God and good personalities are just likewise. We should get ourselves prepared early.
- There are things one cannot borrow from other people. One cannot borrow a good relationship with God. He has to establish and maintain the relationship himself. One cannot borrow good personalities either. He has to possess and cultivate the good personalities himself.
- Many people think that the End of Days has not here come. They think death is far away and it is pessimistic to talk about the End of Days. As we reflect upon ourselves, we are clearer about the importance of “getting prepared at all times” in this parable. The parable focuses on the coming of God's Kingdom during the End of Days. We should get prepared like the wise virgins/bridesmaids before we can understand its meaning.
- Prepare for answers regarding the meaning of life and life after death bring hopes in life. The parable here emphasises that the lamp keeps burning with oil as fuel. Life should be a continual offering to welcome every moment.

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Material 2: The meaning of the symbols in the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids

1. Bridegroom

- The bridegroom referred to Jesus Christ.
- In the parable, the bridegroom did not show up for a long time. No one knew the time of his arrival, meaning no one knows when Jesus will return. Therefore, people can only get well prepared while waiting.

2. Virgins/Bridesmaids

- The virgins/bridesmaids referred to the adolescent girlfriends who accompany the bride during the wedding period. They were the un-married bridesmaids today. The number “Ten” is a whole number, representing the whole of human race.
- The virgins/bridesmaids went and met the bridegroom to show how people get prepared to receive the second coming of Jesus.

3. Oil

- In the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, the “oil” had two characteristics: (1) oil could not be lent to others, and (2) those who had the oil can attend the feast with the master.
- Jesus told the parable to explain that only those who have the “oil” can enter God’s kingdom. Oil represented our relationship with God and the personalities that God likes, such as love, perseverance, alertness and generosity etc. People should maintain their relationship with God and cultivate the personalities that God likes. People should not rely on others but to behave well and be faithful.

References:

1. Barclay, William (1957). *The Gospel of Matthew. Vol. II (Chapters 11 to 28)* Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press. pp. 351-354, 358-361.
- 2 思高聖經學會 (2005) :《思高聖經原著譯釋版系列—福音》(頁 223-225) 。香港 : 思高聖經學會



Material 3: The teaching of the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats

1. Comparison of the sheep and the goats

A. Differences in behaviour:

Sheep	Goats
a. Fed the ones who were hungry. b. Gave drinks to those who were thirsty. c. Accommodated strangers at home. d. Clothed the naked ones. e. Took care of sick people. f. Visited the prisoners.	a. Did not care about those who were hungry, thirsty, being a stranger, naked, sick or in prison.

B. Differences in the target for offering help:

Sheep	Goats
a. Took care of the least of all.	a. Did not care about taking care of the least of all.

C. Differences in their fate:

Sheep	Goats
a. Praised by the king.	a. Rebuked by the king.
b. Got eternal life, entered the kingdom which had been prepared for them ever since the creation of the world.	b. Got eternal punishment.

2. The teaching of the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats

- This is a parable about the End of Days. In the parable, the King divided the people of all the nations into two groups. It symbolised that when God judges people during the End of Days, some will be rewarded an eternal life and some will have eternal punishment.
- Jesus taught us that when we help the ones in need, we have to: (1) offer help in small things, and (2) help unconditionally:
 - Be someone like the sheep (righteous people): they are those who care about the others regardless of the identity and status of the people in need. They try their best to help even the least of all. Those who help others in small things unconditionally will have the joy of helping Christ.

- Don't be someone like the goats: they offer help simply because of the deprived status of the ones in need. They help others with the intention to have good reputation and praises. Such kind of help is not sympathy but selfishness. Helping the others is the same as offering help to Christ. God is the great Father, so we should help the children of God in order to please God.

3. The meaning of "the least of all" in the parable

- "Least of all" means anyone who are the poorest and in the lowest social class. Jesus taught us to be sympathetic for the poor people.

Reference:

Barclay, William (1957). *The Gospel of Matthew. Vol. II (Chapters 11 to 28)* Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press. pp. 351-354, 358-361.



Worksheet 1: Comparison of the wise and the foolish virgins/bridesmaids

1. According to Mt 25: 1-13, when would the bridegroom arrive?

2. Compare the behaviour, the attitudes and the fate of the wise and the foolish virgins/bridesmaids and find out the differences between their preparations to receive the bridegroom.

	Wise virgins/bridesmaids	Foolish virgins/bridesmaids
A. Actions to receive the bridegroom		
B. The attitude when doing the above actions (like are they sincere when getting prepared)		
C. How did the bridegroom treat them?		

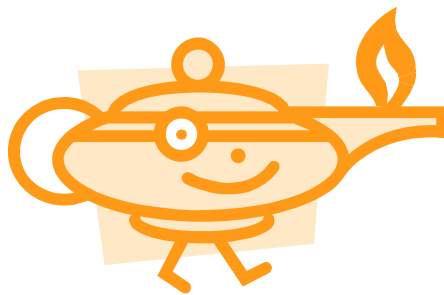
3. What were the meanings of the symbols below?

- a. The bridegroom: _____
- b. The arrival of the bridegroom: _____
- c. Receiving the bridegroom: _____

4. What did Jesus want to explain through the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids?

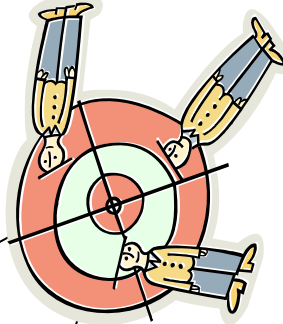
Worksheet 2: Meaning of the oil

1. State the qualities of “oil” described in Mt 25: 1-13.
 - a. You could not get oil at any moment you want it.
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
2. What did oil actually refer to in the parable? (Hint: it referred to something that can help people prepare for the coming of God.)



Worksheet 3: Opportunities and preparation

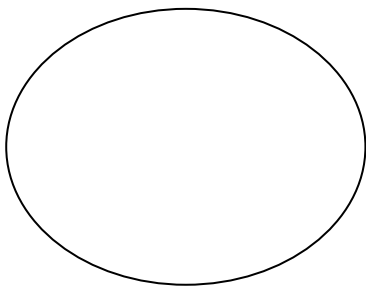
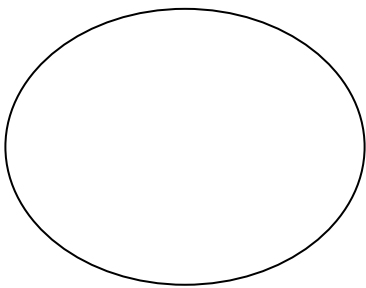
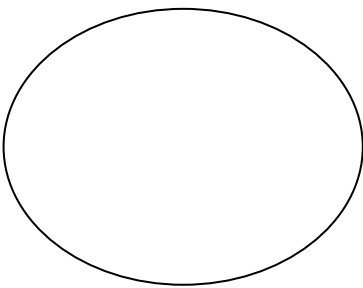
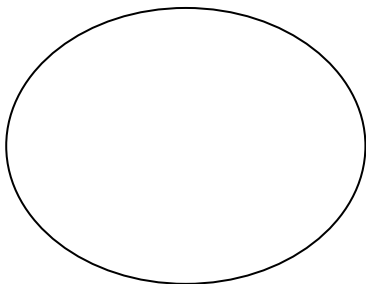
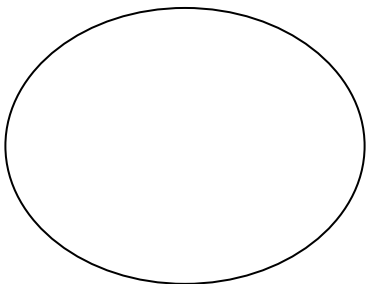
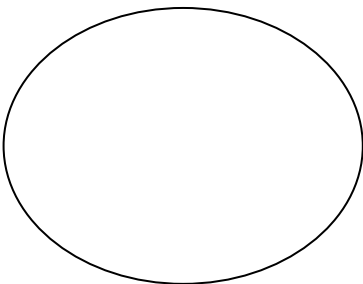
1. Think about the following questions and write down the appropriate answers in the space provided.



What opportunities do you expect to come across in the next two years?

- 2.

In which areas do you need to get prepared early in order to grab these opportunities?

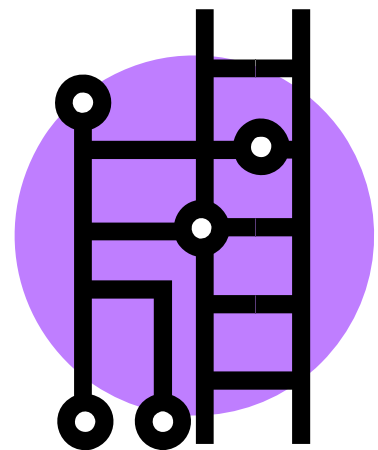
		
		

3. How are you going to get prepared?

Method 1:

Method 2:

Method 3:



Worksheet 4: Comparison of the sheep and the goats

1. What will be the scenes when the Son of Man (Son of God) comes again? What actions will he take?

2. How would the Son of Man differentiate between sheep and goats? Find out the differences between the sheep and the goats according to their behaviour, their attitudes and their fate.

	Sheep	Goats
A. Behaviour		
B. Attitudes		
C. Fate		

3. What kind of people do the following symbols referred to?

a. The sheep: _____

b. The goats: _____



Worksheet 5: Little help, ordinary man

1. Compare the cases in News 1 and News 2, which one does not involve money?

2. Compare the cases in News 1 and News 2, which one is a small task that everyone can do?

3. What kind of assistance did Jesus ask people to offer to the others, for instance, a meal, a glass of water, receiving guests, taking care of the sick and visiting prisoners? Do these giving acts require us to pay? Can each and every one of us accomplish these acts?

4. Why did Jesus say helping ordinary people would let us feel the joy of helping Christ?

5. Jesus stated that people only need to offer a little help to people they meet every day, and they can enter the Kingdom of God. Are the rules of God's judgment hard to follow?

6. What are the impacts of these rules on the life of Christians?



Material 1: The teaching of the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids

1. Ideological background of the End of Days in Christianity

- According to the Bible, Jesus will return for judgment. However, as the Bible says, no one knows when the End of Days will be. Only God knows the time.
- Since no one knows when the End of Days will be, Jesus used parables to explain the situation of the End of Days and what the believers should prepare before the End of Days.
- When the End of Days come, God will judge people according to what they have done. Those who are guilty cannot enter God's Kingdom.
- Jesus taught people to repent as soon as possible because God is going to judge soon.
- People should be alert and get prepared. Otherwise when God comes and judges the world, those who have not prepared well will have no time to make up and can only regret.

2. Comparison of the wise and the foolish virgins/bridesmaids

A. Differences in behaviour:

Wise virgins/bridesmaids	Foolish virgins/bridesmaids
a. Prepared extra oil	a. Did not prepare oil
b. No need to buy oil	b. Failed to borrow oil, had to go buy oil

B. Differences in attitudes:

Wise virgins/bridesmaids	Foolish virgins/bridesmaids
a. Prepared early for the future in case of emergencies	a. Did not prepare for the future
b. Were alert	b. Were not alert
c. Understood that oil could not be borrowed and got themselves prepared	c. Thought that they could borrow the oil they needed from others at the last minute

C. Differences in their fate:

Wise virgins/bridesmaids	Foolish virgins/bridesmaids
a. Entered the house and enjoyed the wedding feast together with the bridegroom	a. Being left behind, could not enter the house and enjoy the wedding feast with the bridegroom

3. The teaching of the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids

- There are things one cannot get done in the last minute. It is always too late to learn certain skills or to cultivate certain personalities just before opportunity arrives. The teaching of Jesus helps us understand our relationship with God and good personalities are just likewise. We should get ourselves prepared early.
- There are things one cannot borrow from other people. One cannot borrow a good relationship with God. He has to establish and maintain the relationship himself. One cannot borrow good personalities either. He has to possess and cultivate the good personalities himself.
- Many people think that the End of Days has not here come. They think death is far away and it is pessimistic to talk about the End of Days. As we reflect upon ourselves, we are clearer about the importance of “getting prepared at all times” in this parable. The parable focuses on the coming of God’s Kingdom during the End of Days. We should get prepared like the wise virgins/bridesmaids before we can understand its meaning.
- Prepare for answers regarding the meaning of life and life after death bring hopes in life. The parable here emphasises that the lamp keeps burning with oil as fuel. Life should be a continual offering to welcome every moment.

References:

1. Barclay, William (1957). *The Gospel of Matthew. Vol. II (Chapters 11 to 28)* Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press. pp. 351-354, 358-361.
2. 楊慶球 (2007):《會遇系統神學：真理與信仰體驗的整理，增訂版》(頁 305-312)。香港：中國神學研究院。
3. 陳日君 (2004)：《朝夕相隨—主日講道，甲年》(頁 188-190)。香港：公教報。





Material 2: The meaning of the symbols in the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids

1. Bridegroom

- The bridegroom referred to Jesus Christ.
- In the parable, the bridegroom did not show up for a long time. No one knew the time of his arrival, meaning no one knows when Jesus will return. Therefore, people can only get well prepared while waiting.

2. Virgins/Bridesmaids

- The virgins/bridesmaids referred to the adolescent girlfriends who accompany the bride during the wedding period. They were the un-married bridesmaids today. The number “Ten” is a whole number, representing the whole of human race.
- The virgins/bridesmaids went and met the bridegroom to show how people get prepared to receive the second coming of Jesus.

3. Oil

- In the Parable of the Ten Virgins/Bridesmaids, the “oil” had two characteristics: (1) oil could not be lent to others, and (2) those who had the oil can attend the feast with the master.
- Jesus told the parable to explain that only those who have the “oil” can enter God’s kingdom. Oil represented our relationship with God and the personalities that God likes, such as love, perseverance, alertness and generosity etc. People should maintain their relationship with God and cultivate the personalities that God likes. People should not rely on others but to behave well and be faithful.

References:

1. Barclay, William (1957). *The Gospel of Matthew. Vol. II (Chapters 11 to 28)* Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press. pp. 351-354, 358-361.
2. 思高聖經學會 (2005):《思高聖經原著譯釋版系列—福音》(頁 223-225) 。香港: 思高聖經學會。



Material 3: The teaching of the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats

1. Comparison of the sheep and the goats

A. Differences in behaviour:

Sheep	Goats
a. Fed the ones who were hungry. b. Gave drinks to those who were thirsty. c. Accommodated strangers at home. d. Clothed the naked ones. e. Took care of sick people. f. Visited the prisoners.	a. Did not care about those who were hungry, thirsty, being a stranger, naked, sick or in prison.

B. Differences in the target for offering help:

Sheep	Goats
a. Took care of the least of all.	a. Did not care about taking care of the least of all.

C. Differences in their fate:

Sheep	Goats
a. Praised by the king.	a. Rebuked by the king.
b. Got eternal life, entered the kingdom which had been prepared for them ever since the creation of the world.	b. Got eternal punishment.

2. The teaching of the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats

- This is a parable about the End of Days. In the parable, the King divided the people of all the nations into two groups. It symbolised that when God judges people during the End of Days, some will be rewarded an eternal life and some will have eternal punishment.
- Jesus taught us that when we help the ones in need, we have to: (1) offer help in small things, and (2) help unconditionally:
 - Be someone like the sheep (righteous people): they are those who care about the others regardless of the identity and status of the people in need. They try their best to help even the least of all. Those who help others in small things unconditionally will have the joy of helping Christ.

- Don't be someone like the goats: they offer help simply because of the deprived status of the ones in need. They help others with the intention to have good reputation and praises. Such kind of help is not sympathy but selfishness. Helping the others is the same as offering help to Christ. God is the great Father, so we should help the children of God in order to please God.

3. The meaning of "the least of all" in the parable

- "Least of all" means anyone who are the poorest and in the lowest social class. Jesus taught us to be sympathetic for the poor people.

Periods 3: Parables about moral conduct

1. Biblical reference: Matthew 18:21-35, Luke 10:25-37

2. Objectives:

- To understand the teachings of the parables:
 1. The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant: Forgiveness should be unconditional. If one has experienced the unlimited and true forgiveness from God, he/she will have a forgiving heart and will always forgive others for their wrongdoings.
 2. The Parable of the Good Samaritan: Do not define 'my' neighbour. We should offer help to the others whenever it is needed.
- To learn to forgive others for their wrongdoings.
- To learn to break through the limits and offer help to the others.



3. Teaching Strategies

Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant: Jesus taught us that forgiveness should be unconditional. If one has experienced the unlimited and true forgiveness from God, he/she will have a forgiving heart and forgive others for their wrongdoings. • The Parable of the Good Samaritan: Jesus taught us not to define 'my' neighbour, but to offer help to the others whenever it is needed.
Issues for Explorations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why can't we forgive others for their wrongdoings? • Why can't we break through the boundaries and offer help to the others?
Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, what did Jesus want to tell us about forgiveness? • Can forgiveness be boundless? Can people forgive anyone? • What limit prevented the priest and the Levite to help those who were in need? What lesson did Jesus teach them through the action of the Good Samaritan? • In Hong Kong, are there any organisations which set no limits in helping those who are in need?

Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the spirit of forgiveness in the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. • Through <Is God Still There?> Episode 4 [First Blood of Lebanon], explore if it is possible to eliminate the boundary among people and to forgive anyone. • Through group discussions, analyse why the priest and the Levite did not help the injured man and why the Samaritan managed to do so. • Through the 'Time Coupon policy' promoted by St. James' Settlement, understand that there are organisations that are willing to offer unconditional help to people in Hong Kong.
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventy times seven • Neighbour
Generic skills, Values and Attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.
High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the methods and the difficulties of implementing the neighbour relationship Jesus mentioned
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does forgiving the others impact on oneself and the society? • How does offering help to those who are in need impact on oneself and the society?

Activity One

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What did Jesus want to teach us in the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant	Communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills	Forgiving, compassion, self-reflection

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by asking them to think about why we can't forgive others for their wrongdoings.

- Teacher visits the following websites:
 - i. Young mother who killed her 5-year-old daughter is subject to a 10-year sentence (Nanfang Daily 21 Feb, 2008):
<http://chinanews.sina.com/news/2008/0221/11182557045.html>
 - ii. Assailant subject to a 6-year sentence, Mrs Chu refused to accept apology (The Sun 12 April 2006):
http://the-sun.on.cc/cgi-bin/hotnews2.cgi?a=news&b=20060412&c=20060412021349_0000.html
- Teacher and students discuss:
 - i. Why did the main characters of the above two pieces of news (a: the father of the girl and b: the mother of Police-officer Chu) hate the murderers?
 - ii. Why did they finally forgive the criminals?
 - iii. How different will the lives of the main characters in the two cases be if they choose not to forgive?
 - iv. What are the conditions for a person to forgive?

Step 2: Teacher points out:

- Jesus told a parable in Matthew 18:21-35 to teach us the spirit of forgiveness

Step 3: Teacher carries out “Unforgiving Servant” activity with students. Help students understand the spirit of forgiveness in Jesus’ teaching.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and read Matthew 18:21-35. Guide them to discuss the questions on ‘Worksheet 1 (Forgive or Not to forgive):’
 - i. Under what circumstance did Jesus tell the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant?

- ii. Compare the reasons behind the actions of the king and the unmerciful servant (Teacher can explain to students that the king forgave the servant because he was compassionate and forgiving, and could accept the servant regardless of his wrongdoings. The servant did not forgive his peers because he was apathetic, iron-hearted, and miserly. He only concerned about his self-interests).
 - iii. Make use of the following character guide and determine how Jesus illustrated (1) the attitude God has when we make mistakes (2) the attitude we have when other people make mistakes.
 - iv. Had Jesus answered Peter's question? If not, why didn't Jesus do so? What did Jesus want to teach us through the parable?
- After discussion, teacher invites students to present their ideas.

Step 4: Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- Based on Jesus' teaching about forgiveness, what is the spirit of forgiveness? Is it conditional? Or is it simply a forgiving attitude towards the others?
- According to Jesus, why didn't the unmerciful servant forgive his peers even though he was the pardoned by the king? Was it because he had not truly experienced the joy brought by the king's forgiveness so that he could not forgive the others joyfully and generously?
- If the compassionate and just king represented God, why didn't God ultimately forgive that unmerciful servant?

Step 5: Teacher's summarises:

- Jesus used the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant to teach us that forgiveness should be unconditional. It is an attitude we should have towards others.
- The kind king represented God who is compassionate and is ready to forgive us without limit. If we behave like the unmerciful servant in the parable and refuse to forgive others for their wrongdoings, we have not appreciated God's forgiveness. And God will be like the king in the parable and not forgive us at the end.

Step 6: Teacher distributes "Students' Reference: Material 1" (Lesson behind the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant Parable), briefly explains it and wraps up the activity.



Activity Two

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
Can forgiveness be boundless? Can people forgive anyone?	Communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills	Forgiving, compassion, self-reflection

Teaching Steps:**Step 1: Teacher asks:**

- Teacher asks:
Can forgiveness be boundless? Can people forgive anyone?

Step 2: Teacher carries out the “Depth of Forgiveness” activity with students and helps them explore if it is possible to eliminate the boundaries among individuals, so that people can forgive anyone for their wrongdoings.

- Teacher hands out “Appendix 1” (Different Areas of Forgiveness) and guides students to discuss:
 - Why did the subjects of Cases 1 and 2 forgive the wrongdoers? Was it love, compassion, or benevolence?
 - Can forgiveness be boundless? Can one forgive the person who killed his/her family members?
- Teacher explains the story background before showing <Is God Still There?> Episode 4 [First Blood of Lebanon] :
 - There are numerous conflicts in the world. Some conflicts arise because of religious differences.
 - The story shown today is about a Lebanese. He was killed because he openly declared his belief in Christianity.
- Teacher shows a segment of the video (suggest 14:00-16:43) and asks students to vote: If you were the family members of Douglas, would you forgive the people who killed Douglas? Why?
- Teacher chooses two to three students and asks them to share their reasons behind forgiving or not forgiving.
- Teacher shows the part where the family of Douglas did the sharing (20:29-21:00). Allow students to appreciate the spirit of forgiveness from the Douglas family.
- Teacher asks students to form groups of four, hands out Worksheet 2 (Essence and Attitude of Forgiveness) and guides students to discuss:

- i. What is the typical reason that one is prevented from forgiving others unconditionally?
- ii. Can forgiveness be boundless? How can people offer help to the others unconditionally?
- From what we have learnt in the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, how can we forgive unconditionally? Shall we recall the vast forgiveness we receive from God so that we will realise others' wrongdoings are actually very minor?
- i. Do you agree that a forgiving mind enables people to live a very different kind of life when compared to an unforgiving mind? Give examples to support your answer.

Step 3: Teacher summarises:

- God wants people to experience the joy resulted from His forgiveness and acceptance. In return, we will be willing to forgive and to accept others with a joyful and forgiving heart.
- We should follow Jesus' teachings and try not to set limits regarding forgiveness. Once we learn to forgive and to accept people for their wrongdoings unconditionally, we can all live a happy and harmonious life.
- It is easy to run into conflicts with the others. Sometimes, we tend to set conditions or boundaries on forgiveness like Peter. This kind of forgiveness is limited and conditional. For instance, we forgive only if other apologises first or if other compromises. These seemingly logical and practical methods have actually deteriorated God's immense compassion to a petty judge. They actually represent men's denial and rejection of God's unconditional love (i.e. His unconditional sacrifice for our salvation).

Activity Three

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What prevented the priest and the Levite from offering help to the injured man? What should we learn from the Good Samaritan?	Communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills	Love, goodness, helpfulness

Teaching Steps :

Step 1: Teacher does warm-up exercise with the students by asking them to think about what ‘boundaries’ impede them from helping people who are in need.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four and hands out today’s newspaper. Ask students to read various articles and think about if they will be willing to help the people mentioned in the newspaper.
- Teacher can put down the following four areas on the board and guide students to analyse the elements that make them want to help the people.
 - i. The danger of the incident
 - ii. The status of the victim
 - iii. The age of the victim
 - iv. Others
- Teacher discusses with students:
 - i. Do you think we can treat all individuals equally and help those who are in need without bias?
 - ii. What prevents us from helping those who are in need?

Step 2: Teacher points out:

- Through the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus helps us realise the boundaries we have that prevent us from offering help to the others.

Step 3: Teacher carries out the ‘Love Your Neighbour’ activity with students, allowing students to analyse the reason why the priest and the Levite did not help the injured man and why the Good Samaritan was able to offer his helping hand.

- Teacher asks students to read Luke 10:25-37, the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

- Teacher asks students to form groups of four, hands out ‘Worksheet 3’ (Love Your Neighbour) and Appendix 2 (Background Information of the Priests, the Levites and the Samaritans), and guides students to complete the questions on the Worksheet.
 - i. What prevented the priest and the Levite to help the injured man?
 - ii. Why was the Samaritan willing to help the injured man? What should we learn from the Samaritan?
 - iii. Compare the question from the Teacher of the Law and that from Jesus in the parable. What did Jesus want to teach us in the parable?
- After discussion, teacher invites the groups to present their ideas.

Step 4: Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- Through the actions of the priest and the Levite in the parable, what prevents us from helping people who are in need?
- Hence, do you agree with Jesus’ teaching?
- Through the parable, Jesus reminded us that if we change our focus (i.e. emphasising on ‘others’ instead of ‘myself’), we will have different perspectives on those who need help. Thus, we will behave differently. Do you agree with Jesus?

Step 5: Teacher summarises:

- Through the parable, Jesus taught us that the question from the Teacher of the Law (i.e. asking who ‘my’ neighbour is) stemmed primarily from self-centered intentions, deciding who is worthy to help. Jesus stressed that we should focus on the ones in need instead of ourselves, so that we will become the neighbours of the others.
- Through the parable, Jesus would like to teach us that we should not always question who ‘my’ neighbour is. Instead we should be ready to help those who are in need at anytime and behave as ‘their’ neighbours.
- Helping the others is not simply being compassionate towards the ones who are suffering. The Priest and the Levite in the parable were compassionate, but they did not offer actual help. True compassion is always shown by actions.

Step 6: Teacher distributes “Students’ Reference: Material 2” (Lessons behind the Parable of the Good Samaritan), briefly explains it and wraps up the activity.

Activity Four

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
Are there any organisations in Hong Kong that are willing to help those who are in need unconditionally?	Communication skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills	Love, goodness, helpfulness

Teaching Steps:**Step 1: Teacher asks:**

- What prevents people in Hong Kong to help those who are in need? (Teacher can briefly categorise students' opinions and write them on the board).
- How can people in Hong Kong break through the boundaries so that they are willing to help those who are in need? Is it easy to do so?

Step 2: Teacher carries out “Care Without Boundary” activity with students, allowing students to understand from the case of St James’ Settlement that some organisations in Hong Kong are willing to break through the boundaries and help those who are in need.

- Teacher shows PowerPoint 1 (Time Coupon Policy by St James’ Settlement) and explains the “Time Coupon” plan.
- Teacher and students discuss:
 - What are the objectives of the ‘Time Coupon’ plan?
 - Evaluate if this plan can demonstrate the spirit of the Good Samaritan (i.e. helping those who are in need unconditionally).
 - If a community can implement the spirit of the Good Samaritan, how would the development of the community be different?
 - What impedes our society to develop the spirit of the Good Samaritan?

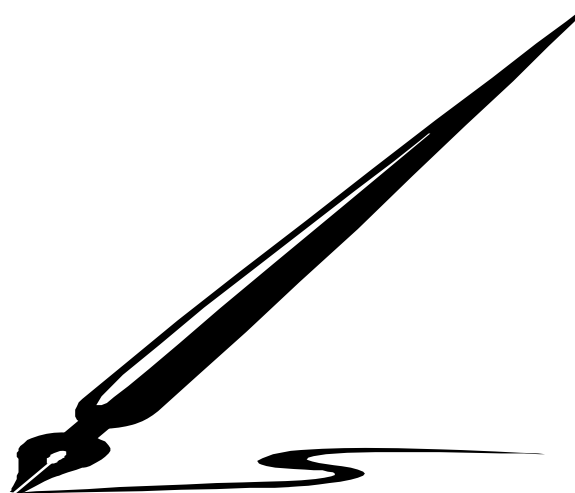
Step 3: Teacher summarises:

- Through the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus encouraged us not to set boundaries and not to ask who deserve our help. Instead, we should take the initiative to offer help to those who are in need.

- There are some religious or charity organisations in our society which are willing to abide to the teaching of the Parable of the Good Samaritan. They do not care about the status of the people in need and their self-interests. They help those who are in need with compassion. As a result, an interactive and loving relationship as neighbours is formed. We should be kind and good to other people. By being compassionate, we can offer our helping hand to the less fortunate ones around us.

Extended Activities:

1. Teacher asks students to find an article of a local or an international case regarding an individual or an organisation which helps or forgives people unconditionally.
2. Using the materials found, teacher asks students to discuss the following questions:
 - What boundaries did he/she (they) breakthrough so that he/she (they) can help others unconditionally?
 - What influence did he/she (they) bring upon others?
 - Do you admire him/her (them)? Do you think it is too difficult to breakthrough the boundaries?
 - How would you support him/her (them)?
 - What can you do in your daily life so that others can experience your forgiveness and generosity?
3. Teacher can invite students to share their ideas in the following period.



Appendix 1: Different Areas of Forgiveness



Case 1:

13-year-old Son Attacked Dad Due to Computer-game Constraint (Excerpt)

SingTao Daily 19 Feb 2008

After over 10 days of Chinese New Year holiday, school resumed yesterday. Three secondary students were suspected to suffer from 'school-phobia'. One of them was a thirteen year old boy, who was indulged in computer games during the holidays and refused to attend his classes when school resumed. His dad attempted to stop him by unplugging the power source of the computer. The boy suddenly lost control and bit his father, and required police's intervention. His father's arm suffered from minor injury and both of them were sent to hospital. The son apologised to his father after calming down, and the father forgave his son for misbehaving. The father-son relationship was restored.

The game-addicted thirteen-year-old boy refused to attend school yesterday morning. He stayed at home in Kwai Chung to log onto online games. He attempted to bite his father when his father unplugged the power source. He calmed down after police intervention and was sent to hospital. The arm of his 51-year-old father was bruised. But the father lovingly claimed that the injury was caused by accidental bumps during the chaos instead of being bitten by his son. Police filed the incident as domestic conflict.

The boy named Tang lives with his family in a flat in Kwai Chung. The police stated that around 7am yesterday morning, the boy sat in front of his computer playing games instead of getting ready for school. He completely ignored his family's pleas. His father got angry and unplugged the computer power source so as to stop his son. The son got agitated and attempted to get the power socket back. During the quarrel between the two, the father's arm was hurt and the son screamed frantically. The family ended up calling the police for help after failing to calm the boy down.

When the police came, Tang was still emotionally unstable. The police subdued the boy by making him lie down on the floor. Since the father's arm was hurt, both the father and the son were sent to hospital. Upon medication, both regretted and realised that they were too impetuous. With the encouragement from the family and police, the son apologised to his father and their relationship was restored.

Reference:

<http://news.sina.com.hk/cgi-bin/nw/show.cgi/5/1/1/642704/1.html>

Case 2:

The Angel with Only One Ear Sings to Comfort Sorrow

Liberty Times, 29 Feb 2008

For the little girl Tse who lived in the Nantou province, the best way to walk out from the grief of the car accident is to genuinely forgive the driver and to bravely join the local children's choir to sing happily on stage.

Among the choir members of the Dongpu Elementary school, one of the delicate young girl sang earnestly. There was a deep scar on her right face and she didn't have her right earlap. She was a Primary Four student whose face and body were severely injured from a serious car accident.

Right Half Body Severely Injured in a Car Accident

In the Mid-Autumn Festival of 1994, the car in which little Tse was sitting was crashed by a car behind. The car flipped and dragged little Tse at the bottom. Her body was so severely injured that her skull was smashed into almost half. Though her life was saved, her body was scarred and her face was deformed.

Forgive the Driver with Mercy

Due to limited financial resources, the guilty driver could only pay \$200,000 Taiwan dollars for compensation. Even the Legal Assistance Foundation failed to secure more compensation for Tse despite the fact that they had proactively proceeded with more legal actions. However, Tse was so merciful that she chose to forgive the guilty driver. She said, "The incident was over. I'm no longer angry with him. Let's just forgive him!" She found the strength to carry on and move forward by forgiving the driver.

Not Afraid of being Stared

Little Tse returned to school six months after the accident. People called her 'bald head' and teased her as 'E.T' & 'weird hand'. But she was not discouraged. Instead, she faced the stares from the others with courage.

A year ago, she took off the cap she used to cover the scar on her head. When people asked her if her hand is alright and if she can hear well, she would courageously answer "Absolutely!"

Nothing could stop Tse from pursuing her ambitions. As a girl who loved singing, little Tse asked Principal Peter Ma if she could join the school choir. Upon becoming a school choir member, she practised diligently. She would even learn singing and voice techniques from Principal Ma during practice breaks. As a girl genuinely loved singing, she found her confidence in melodies. She firmly said “I will be a singer one day!”

Reference:

<http://www.libertytimes.com.tw/2008/new/feb/29/today-love4.htm>

Appendix 2: Background Information of the Priests, the Levites and the Samaritans



In Old Testament times, God chose the Levites to take care of religious matters:

- Execute and teach God's Law
- Handle rituals and ceremonies of the Israelites



Among the Levites, God chose Aaron and his descendants to be the priests. The main responsibilities of the priests are:

- To maintain the rituals in the temple
- To offer sacrifices to God on behalf of the people

The priests and the Levites were highly respected in the Israelite society.

Since the priests and the Levites took care of all religious matters, they had to follow all rules and laws to avoid being defiled and contaminating God's holiness. Below are some examples:

- Since the priests were the head of the tribe, they must not be defiled by any of his people who died. (Leviticus 21: 1-4)
- Whoever touched any dead body would be unclean for seven days (Numbers 19:11)
- Whoever touched any dead body and failed to clean himself defiled himself and the Lord. That person must be exiled from Israel. (Numbers 19:13)



The Samaritans were originally Israelites who moved to Samaria in around 800 B.C. Due to King Asa's assimilation policy, they married non-Israelites and followed the practices of the Gentiles. Later, Samaritans built a temple on Mount Gerizim.

The Israelites had always insisted on purity and could not accept the Samaritans (who had interracial marriages and followed the practices of the Gentiles). Therefore, the Israelites despised the Samaritans ever since their return from exile.

References:

1. 達雷爾·博克 (2005):《路加福音》(頁 323-326)。香港:漢語聖經協會。
2. 羅慶才、黃錫木主編 (2005):《聖經通識手冊》(頁 222-225)。香港:基道。



Material 1: Lesson behind the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Mt: 18:21-35)

1. Background of Parable

- When Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive his brothers, he himself suggested seven times as an acceptable answer to his own question.
- According to Jewish teachings, it was sufficient to forgive others for three times. It was unnecessary to forgive for the fourth time.
- When Peter suggested that he would forgive his brother for seven times, he probably thought that it was sufficient to show his kindness and generosity. Peter wanted Jesus to praise him.

2. Structure of the parable

This parable can be divided into three sections:

- Jesus told the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. In the parable, a servant owed the king a huge amount of debt, yet he was pardoned by the king. Later, a friend of this servant owed him a very small amount of money, yet he refused to spare his friend.
- When the king found that the servant refused to spare his friend receiving a pardon, the king sentenced the servant to jail as a punishment.

3. Lesson of the parable

- Forgiveness should be unconditional. It is meaningless to count how many times one should forgive.
- The king referred to God, who was willing to forgive people unconditionally. If people are like the unmerciful servant of the parable and refuse to forgive others for their wrongdoings, it means that we have not experienced God's forgiveness. At the end, God will be like the king in the parable, unwilling to forgive us.
- Whoever refuses to forgive the others prevents oneself from experiencing the pardon others have upon him/her. The more unwilling one is to forgive others, the less it is for one to experience forgiveness himself/herself. The less one experiences forgiveness himself, the less able one is to forgive the others. It thus creates a vicious circle, a lose-lose situation.

References:

1. Barclay, William (1957). *The Gospel of Matthew. Vol. I (Chapters 11 to 28)* Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press. pp. 212-215.
2. 思高聖經學會 (2005):《思高聖經原著譯釋版系列:福音》(頁 167-168)。香港:思高聖經學會。
3. 吳智勳(2002):《和平綸音》(甲年,頁 155-158)。香港:思維出版社。
4. 蔡惠民(2003):《天國驛站》(甲年主日講道,頁 165-168)。香港:論盡神學出版有限公司。



Material 2: Lesson behind the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

1. Compare the actions of the priest, the Levite and the Samaritan.

	The Priest	The Levite	The Samaritan
Response to the victim	The priest took a look and walked pass the injured man. He ignored the victim.	The Levite took a look and walked pass the injured man. He ignored the victim.	The Samaritan pitied the injured man, helped him and asked the innkeeper to look after him. The Samaritan took care of the victim.
Reasons behind the above response	The priest was afraid of being defiled, affecting his work at the temple.	The Levite was afraid of being defiled, affecting his work at various ceremonies.	The Samaritan was not afraid of anything. He helped the man unconditionally.

2. The question from the Teacher of the Law and Jesus' answer:

- The Teachers of the Law asked Jesus "Who is my neighbour?" At that time, the Jews only considered fellow Jews as their neighbours. If Jesus answered the question using the common Jewish teaching, he would be violating his own teaching (i.e. love everyone). If Jesus did not answer the question according to the Jewish teaching, he would be condemned. Thus, the question from the Teachers of the Law put Jesus in a dilemma.
- Jesus' answer ("Who is the neighbour of the robbed victim?") solved the question from a different angle. He emphasised on the action of 'love' instead of focusing on the definition of 'neighbour'. The Teachers of the law cared about receiving love while Jesus cared about loving the others.
- Jesus taught us that we should not always question who 'my' neighbour is. Instead, we should be ready to help those who are in need at anytime and behave as 'their' neighbours.

3. Lesson behind the Parable of the Good Samaritan

- We should not define who our neighbour is. We are not the subject of benefit and we should not decide whether a person is worth being helped.

- Helping others is not simply being compassionate. The Priest and the Levite in the parable were compassionate too, but they did not offer help to the injured man. Jesus taught us that we should help others unconditionally and our “neighbours” should not be limited to people of the same religion or race. All those who need help are our neighbours. True compassion is only shown by actions but not merely words. In addition, we should initiate to be the neighbours of other people, so as to establish an interactive and loving relationship with them.

References:

1. Barclay, William (1985). *The Gospel of Luke (Pages 170-171)* Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press.
2. 思高聖經學會 (2005) : 《思高聖經原著譯釋版系列：福音》(頁 505-507)。香港：思高聖經學會。
3. 達雷爾·博克 (2005) : 《路加福音》(頁 323-326)。香港：漢語聖經協會。
4. 吳智勳 (2002) : 《和平綸音》(丙年，頁 162-165)。香港：思維出版社。

Worksheet 1: To Forgive or Not to Forgive

According to Mt 18:21-35, answer the following questions:

1. Under what situation did Jesus tell the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant?

2. Compare the reasons behind the actions of the king and the unforgiving servant.

Reasons why the king forgave the servant	Reasons why the servant did not forgive his friend

3. Using the following character guide, examine how Jesus illustrated (1) the attitude God has when we make mistakes (2) the attitude we have when others people make mistakes.

King = God
 Servant = Us
 Friend = People who have
 make mistakes

- a. The attitude God has when we make mistakes?

- b. The attitude we have when others make mistakes?

4. Do you think Jesus had answered Peter's question? If not, why didn't Jesus do so? What did Jesus want to teach through the parable?

Worksheet 2: Spirit and Attitude of Forgiveness

1. What usually prevents people from forgiving others?

2. Can forgiveness be boundless? How can a person break through the limits and boundaries?

3. Through the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, what method did Jesus suggest to make one abandon his/her limit? Is it to recall the vast forgiveness we received from God so that we would be able to realise that the wrongdoings of the others are actually very minor?

4. Do you agree that being forgiving enables us to live a very different life when compared to being unforgiving? Give examples to support your answer.

Worksheet 3: Love Your Neighbour

- Using Luke 10:25-37 and “Appendix 2” (Background Information of the Priest, the Levite and the Samaritan), answer the following questions:



The priest



a. What prevented him from helping the injured man?

b. Why did he have such limits?

The Levite



a. What prevented him from helping the injured man?

b. Why did he have such limits?

The Samaritan



a. Why did the Good Samaritan help the injured man?

b. Jesus directed the Teachers of the Law to follow the example of the Good Samaritan. What can we learn from the Good Samaritan?

2. Compare the questions from the Teacher of the Law and that from Jesus in the parable.
What attitude did Jesus want us to develop when we help others?

	Teacher of the Law	Jesus
Question asked:		
Subject focus:		
Difference in action for different subject focus:		



Material 1: Lesson behind the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Mt: 18:21-35)

1. Background of Parable

- When Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive his brothers, he himself suggested seven times as an acceptable answer to his own question.
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This parable can be divided into three sections:

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3. Lesson of the parable

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- The king referred to God, who was willing to forgive people unconditionally. If people are like the unmerciful servant of the parable and refuse to forgive others for their wrongdoings, it means that we have not experienced God's forgiveness. At the end, God will be like the king in the parable, unwilling to forgive us.
- Whoever refuses to forgive the others prevents oneself from experiencing the pardon others have upon him/her. The more unwilling one is to forgive others, the less it is for one to experience forgiveness himself/herself. The less one experiences forgiveness himself, the less able one is to forgive the others. It thus creates a vicious circle, a lose-lose situation.

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3. 吳智勳(2002)：《和平綸音，甲年》(，頁 155-158)。香港：思維出版社。
4. 蔡惠民(2003)：《天國驛站，甲年主日講道》(頁 165-168)。香港：論盡神學出版有限公司。



Material 2: Lesson behind the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

1. Compare the actions of the priest, the Levite and the Samaritan.

	The priest	The Levite	The Samaritan
Response to the victim	The priest took a look and walked pass the injured man. He ignored the victim.	The Levite took a look and walked pass the injured man. He ignored the victim.	The Samaritan pitied the injured man, helped him and asked the innkeeper to look after him. The Samaritan took care of the victim.
Reasons behind the above response	The priest was afraid of being defiled, affecting his work at the temple.	The Levite was afraid of being defiled, affecting his work at various ceremonies.	The Samaritan was not afraid of anything. He helped the man unconditionally.

2. The question from the Teacher of the Law and Jesus' answer:

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3. 達雷爾·博克 (2005):《路加福音》(頁 323-326)。香港：漢語聖經協會。
4. 吳智勳 (2002):《和平綸音》(丙年，頁 162-165)。香港：思維出版社。

Period 4 : Parable of the Talents

1. Biblical reference: Matthew 25:14-30

2. Objectives:

- To understand the lesson behind the parable: God gives each person different talents. Instead of wasting our talents, God wants us to utilise them and to develop our potentials so that we can make use of our talents to glorify God.
- To understand that the more we are willing to develop our talents given by God, the better and more effective we will be in utilising them.
- To understand that as long as we develop our potentials, God will reward us with more talents.
- To learn developing our potentials so that we can benefit the others and ourselves.



3. Teaching strategies

Background Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the parable, Jesus wanted us to understand that God gives each person different abilities. He wants us to utilise them instead of wasting them. God will reward those who develop their potentials with more talents and work.
Issues for Explorations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we need to develop our abilities?
Enquiry Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the three servants manage their talents/talantons given by God? • How did Jesus want us to utilise our talents? • What constitutes a 'good' steward?
Learning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through group discussions, analyse how different the three servants were in managing the money given by their master. Thus, understand how Jesus wanted us to develop our talents. • Through group discussions, understand that it is not the amount of talents that matters. The most important thing is to utilise our abilities wisely as a response to God's gracious provisions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on case studies, understand that a 'good' steward needs an open mind and the courage to take risks. By trying different methods, we can utilise our talents and benefit others.
Key Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talanton/Talents
Generic skills, Values and Attitudes involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the 'Generic Skills, Values and Attitudes' tables included in the corresponding lesson plans.
High-order Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can we benefit ourselves and the others by developing our abilities?
Extended Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think of a plan or a method to develop one's abilities. Think of a real-life experience which enables one or others to develop the talents.

Activity One

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
How did the three servants manage their talents/talantons given by God?	Self-management skills, problem solving skills	Discipline, sanctification, diligence, interest in learning

Teaching Steps:

Step 1: Teacher does warm-up exercise with students by asking them to think about how one can develop his/her abilities.

- Teacher shows PowerPoint 1 (World-class Pianist) and discusses with students:
 - i. What talent does Lang Lang have?
 - ii. Has he developed his ability? How did he do so?
- Teacher shows PowerPoint 2 (Behind the Piano: Piano Tuner) and discusses with students:
 - i. What ability does a piano tuner have?
 - ii. Has he developed his ability? How did he do so?
- Teacher and students further discuss:
 - i. Pianist Lang Lang and the piano tuner have different type and amount of abilities. If they did not utilise their talents, what will these talents mean to them?
 - ii. How should a person value his/her abilities? (1) Amount (2) Extent of achievement (3) Whether the ability has been utilised or not?

Step 2: Teacher points out:

- In Matthew 25: 14-30, Jesus told the Parable of the Three Servants. How did Jesus want us to value our own abilities?

Step 3: Teacher carries out “The Three Servants” activity, allowing students to examine the differences in how the three servants managed the money given by their master.

- Teacher splits all students into three groups and gives each group different amount of money (e.g. \$10,000, \$5000 and \$1000). Teacher asks students to think:
 - i. How do they feel when they are assigned to have that amount of money?
 - ii. What do they plan to do with the money?

- iii. What are the factors affecting the way they spend their money? (e.g. the amount of the money)
- Teacher points out:
 - i. The activity is similar to the content of the parable in Mt 25:14-30 (the parable of the Talents). Let us look at how the three servants in the parable managed the money given by their master.
- Teacher asks students to read Mt 25:14-30, the Parable of the Talents.
- Teacher divides students into groups of four, hands out Worksheet 1 (Comparing the Three Servants) and guides students to discuss:
 - i. What were the differences in the way these three servants handle their money?
 - ii. How did the master comment on their ways to manage the money?
 - iii. What the criteria the master used to judge whether the servant was good or bad?
- After discussion, teacher invites groups to present their ideas.

Step 4: Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- Why did the three servants handle their money differently? Was it because they cared too much about the amount of money, or was it because they were afraid to take risk?
- Do you think the three servants behaved differently because they value the money differently?
- Among the three servants, which one do you admire the most? Why?
- Which servant one appreciates reflects his/her set of principle of judging others. Is there any difference between your principle and that of the master? Examine the similarities and differences.

Step 5: Teacher summarises:

- In the Parable of the Talents, different amount of money were given to three servants.
- The first and the second servants were praised by the master because they used their money conscientiously. The third servant was punished by the master because he was lazy and not willing to use his money (even though he didn't lose his money).

Activity Two

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
How did Jesus want us to utilise our talents?	Self-management skills, problem solving skills	Interest in learning, sanctification

Teaching Steps:**Step 1: Teacher asks:**

- What did Jesus want us to learn from the Parable of the Talents?

Step 2: Teacher carries out “The Symbolic Meaning of Money” activity and guides students to understand the teaching behind this parable:

- Teacher shows PowerPoint 3 (Password of Money) and guides students to understand (1) in the New International Bible, talanton is interpreted as money; (2) the meaning of talanton in the Old and New Testaments.
- Teacher divides students into groups of four, hands out Worksheet 2 (The Truth behind the Parable of the Talents), and guides students to discuss:
 - What did money represent in the Parable of the Talents?
 - If money represented talents, analyse Jesus’ teaching in regards to our talents:
 - i. The master distributed different amount of money to his servants;
 - ii. The master praised the first and second servants for using the money diligently;
 - iii. The master rewarded the first and second servants with more money;
 - iv. The master punished the third servant for burying his money.
 - Based on the above, how did Jesus determine whether a way to manage one’s talents is good or bad?
 - Based on the analyses above, summarise how Jesus wanted us to treat our abilities.
- After discussion, teacher invites groups to present their ideas.

Step 3: Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- Do you agree with Jesus’ teaching (that we should not value our talents based on the quantity and that we should focus on whether we have utilised them)?

- Do you agree that how one values his/her abilities will affect how he/she utilises those abilities?
- Do you agree that the more one uses his/her talents, the more work will be assigned to him/her? Give some examples to support your answer.

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

- God gives different talents to different people. The amount of abilities is not important. The most important is whether one has utilised his/her talents diligently.
- God will never ask us to work on tasks that we cannot handle. But God wants each of us to make the best use of our abilities.
- God will certainly reward those who complete the assigned tasks and missions according to their abilities and talents.
- Regardless of the amount of talents we have, we ought to use them well.
- God's demands are based upon our abilities and situations. For instance, He will not ask retired people to do charity work in the Third World countries. He will only ask them to enjoy their lives and be happy. God will not ask young people to buy something luxurious for their families. But He wants young people to be diligent and thrifty, and to respect the elderly instead of being idle and lazy.
- Gifts and talents from heaven do not come for free. God wants each person to actively participate in building God's Kingdom according to their abilities.

Step 5: Teacher distributes "Students' References Material 1" (Teaching Behind the Parable of the Talents), briefly explains it and wraps up the above activity.

Activity Three

Enquiry Questions	Generic Skills	Values and Attitudes
What constitutes a 'good' steward?	Self management skills, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills	Interest in learning, sanctification, self-reflection

Teaching Steps:**Step 1: Teacher raises the question:**

- In your opinion, how to determine whether a steward is good and talented?
- Can you list some criteria of 'goodness'?

Step 2: Teacher carries out "Steward of Talents" activity with students, allowing them to understand the elements and requirements of a 'good' steward of talents:

- Teacher divides students into groups of four, hands out 'Appendix 1 (How Should We Treat Our Own Talents?)' to each group and asks students to study the two cases.
- Teacher writes the following questions on the blackboard and hands out 'Appendix 2' (Capital of Good Stewards of Talents). Teacher asks students to think about the following questions and put down their answers underneath each question on the blackboard.
 - How should one utilise his/her talents in order to be a 'good' steward of talents?
 - What characters should one have in order to be a 'good' steward of talents?
- After discussion, teacher asks students to vote for and explain the 'good' capital of a steward.

Step 3: Teacher goes further to discuss with students:

- According to the above cases, how many levels of meaning are there in 'good' stewards of talents?
- If one cannot be a 'good' steward of talents, what destructive effect will one bring to oneself, the others and the society?
- How can one acquire the above 'good' capitals?

- What did Jesus remind us about being a ‘good’ steward of talents (that we should not only use our talents, but also use them to help others)?

Step 4: Teacher summarises:

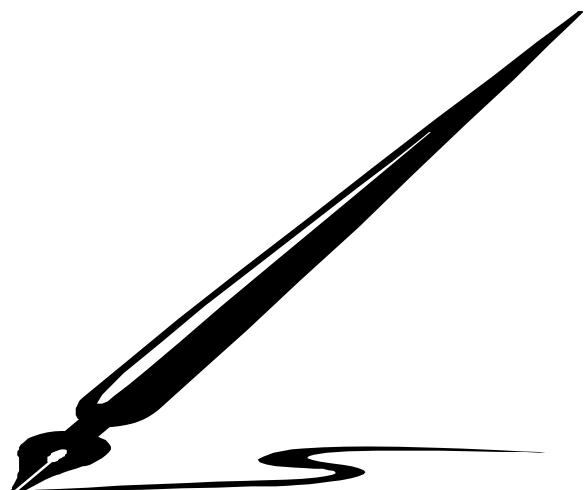
- To be a ‘good’ steward of talents, we should be open-minded and devoted. We should try different methods to fully utilise our abilities.
- To be a ‘good’ steward of talents, we are not supposed to hide our talents. Instead, we should use them and share them among people around us, so that other people can be benefited.
- If we follow Jesus’ teachings (i.e. use our lives to light up the lives of others), we can become good stewards, managing our talents well while sharing joy with God at the same time.

Extended Activities :

1. Teacher asks students to list their talents and abilities. For each talent/ability, write down the following:
 - A plan or a method in which the talent/ability can be developed.
 - The benefits to oneself or to the others once the talent/ability is being developed.

OR

2. Teacher asks students to collect an article from various media sources on how talents/abilities are being utilised to benefit oneself and other people. Using this material to answer the four questions under Teaching Step 3. Ask students to report their findings in the next period.





Appendix 1: How Should We Treat Our Own Talents?

Case 1:

<The 1st Anniversary of the South Asian Tsunami - Memoir of a Hong Kong Volunteer >

“You would hear about many sad stories there. For instance, many patients told you that their families perished during the tsunami, and children died after the tsunami due to infections and aftermath...” ┘ **—Dr. Zi-Wa Tse**



Dr. Zi-Wa Tse completed his AIDS medical plan in the Merauke province in Indonesia during May last year. He was planning to return to Hong Kong and open a private clinic with his partner. Less than half a year later, the South Asian Tsunami struck Indonesia and he decided to put aside his plan and return to Indonesia. He said “No doubt, I earned a lot less money. But there is an urgent need of medical help in Indonesia. It is my duty to

help people as a doctor. The things I gave up worth much less than the things I gained by helping the victims in the tsunami.”

Zi-Wa Tse arrived in Indonesia in January this year. He went to a remote village near Banda Aceh (capital of Aceh province) with an emergency team to begin their rescue work. “I thought the land was abandoned at first sight. Only a few villagers survived because around 90% of them had perished during the tsunami. Trees fallen, houses damaged, oceanfront disappeared. The Hospital became a temporary refuge.



People just slept on the floor. Everywhere was in chaos. The situation was very disastrous.”

The medical team finally found an empty mansion near a fish village as their base and a place for medical storage. Zi-Wa Tse said “Once we found a place to settle, we cleaned up the place and arranged the furniture. We organised the medical tools and medication that we brought in; we refrigerated the vaccination.” Along with the medical team, Zi-Wa Tse went to different villages to take care of the patients. He said “We basically did not have a fixed working location. I’ve been to both the east coast and the west coast. But there’s a slight difference regarding the nature of the rescue work.”

Since the Sumantra West Coast in Indonesia was a region directly affected by the tsunami, most villages there were destroyed. Roads and waterways were blocked. The medical team had to rely on helicopters to assess the site and provide limited medical services. “The method we used was actually quite primitive. The helicopter flew low and stopped when we saw the victims gathered. We set up a temporary medical station to take care of the patients. For those who were more seriously injured, we sent them to a better hospital or a more advanced clinic by a helicopter. Because the victims were scattered and there were damages everywhere, going to mobile clinics was the most suitable.” He explained “But the capacity was limited on a helicopter, we could only bring the basic medical tools and medications such as swab, antibiotics, and simple surgical devices.”



Zi-Wa Tse said “There were psychiatrists in the team to help treat the post-traumatic stress suffered by the victims. You would hear about many sad stories there. For instance, many patients told you that their families perished during the tsunami, and children died after the tsunami due to infections and aftermath. There was a patient who refused to leave home for medical treatment because he knew that he

wouldn’t have money to return home afterwards. We knew that his situation was so serious that he would die if he’s left untreated. But since he didn’t want to receive treatment, we couldn’t force him. It was very sorrowful.”

Zi-Wa Tse said there were only a few volunteer groups conducting rescue work in the area he was responsible for because it was too remote. “Seeing these severely damaged towns and the ruins, you will realise how minimal human beings are. But at the same time, when you see the strong cohesion among different volunteer groups, you’ll feel very encourage.”

Zi-Wa Tse, a private practice doctor, attended the AIDS medical plan in the Merauke province in Indonesia for a year in May 2003. In 7 Jan 2005, he returned to Indonesia to provide medical services to the victims in some remote villages.



Excerpt from Medecins Sans Frontieres <**The 1st Anniversary of the South Asian Tsunami - Memoir of a Hong Kong Volunteer** >
http://www.msf.org.hk/online/Tsunami_1year/tw.htm

Case 2:

Doctor Suspected to commit insurance fraud with 3 Women

(MingPao News) March 7 Friday 05:05AM

A doctor, in his 60s, was accused of submitting fraudulent documents to an insurance company to claim compensation money with three housewives. The case was presented at Kwun Tong Court yesterday. The four defendants could remain silent and received bail. The case was postponed to March 20.

The four defendants were 65-year-old Dr. Tak-Lun Wong and three housewives: Siu-Goon Yeung (35), Suk-Ling Wong (39) and Suk-Fong Chan (37). Dr. Wong was prosecuted for 3 conspiracy-to-defraud charges while the three housewives were each prosecuted for one conspiracy-to-defraud charge.

According to the prosecutor, from Oct 2004 to July 2007, the three housewives and Dr. Wong submitted false documents to Hong-Loon Asia Co. Ltd in Hong Kong (which has merged with Hong Kong Wing-Ming Finance Corporation in March 17 2006). The document stated that the three housewives had visited Dr Wong's clinic for medical treatments. On the document, they demanded the insurance company to release reparation money to the three individuals.

[Case Number: KTCC1488/08]



Appendix 2: Capitals of a Good Steward of Talents

Responsibility	Self-confidence
Earning more money	Making complaints
Bravery	Being Charitable
Caring for others' benefits	Cautiousness
Diligence	Realising that the more capable one possesses, the more work she/he has
Integrity	Willing to bear more responsibility



Material 1: Teaching Behind the Parable of the Talents

1. Background of the parable:

- In the parable, “5000 coins, 2000 coins, 1000 coins” was originally written as “5 talanton, 2 talanton, 1 talanton” in Hebrew. *Talanton* was initially a measurement of weight. Later it was used as a unit of currency.
- At that time, 1 talanton was about 6000 denarius. And 1 denarius was about the daily wage of an average person.
- The English word *talent* was originated from the word *talanton* in the parable.

2. Compare the ways how the three servants manage their money:

	Method used in handling money	Reasons for using this method	Response from master
The servant receiving 5000 coins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanted to earn more money • Did not want to waste the resources master gave him 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praised him as a good and faithful servant • Allowed him to manage more matters • Gave him the 1000 coins from the servant who originally had 1000 coins.
The servant receiving 2000 coins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly investment as well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanted to earn more money • Did not want to waste the resources master gave him 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praised him as a good and faithful servant • Allowed him to manage more matters
The servant receiving 1000 coins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dug a hole in the ground and hid the money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was fear of losing any money • Did not use the resources given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scolded him as a bad, lazy and useless servant • Took away his money • Threw him outside in the darkness

3. Teachings behind the Parable of the Talents:

- God gives different talents to different people. The amount of abilities is not important. The most important is whether one utilises his/her talents.
- God will never ask us to work on tasks that we cannot handle. But God wants each of us to make the best use of our abilities.
- God will certainly reward those who complete the assigned tasks and missions according to their abilities and talents.
- No matter what type or amount of talents we have, we ought to use them well.
- God's demands are based upon our abilities and situations. For instance, He will not ask retired people to do charity work in the Third World countries. He will only ask them to enjoy their lives with their families and be happy. God will not ask young people to buy something luxurious for their families. But He wants young people to be diligent and thrifty, and to respect the elderly instead of being idle and lazy.
- Gifts and talents from heaven do not come for free. God wants each person to actively participate in building God's Kingdom according to their abilities.

References:

1. Barclay, William (1957). *The Gospel of Matthew. Vol. II (Chapters 11 to 28)* Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press. pp. 351-354.
2. Hagner, Donald. (1995). *Matthew 14-28* (pp. 734). Dallas, Texas: Word Books.
3. 吳智勳(2002) :《和平綸音, 甲年》(頁 184-186) 。香港: 思維出版社。
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5. 思高聖經學會(2005) :《思高聖經原著譯釋版系列—福音》(頁 225-228) 。香港: 思高聖經學會。

Worksheet 1: Comparing the Three Servants

According to Mt 25:14-30, answer the following questions:

1. Try to list the differences in the way these three servants handle money



Investment Return of Servant A:

1. Amount given: _____
2. Action: _____
3. Reason behind his action:

4. Return/results: _____



Investment Return of Servant B:

1. Amount given: _____
2. Action: _____
3. Reason behind his action:

4. Return/results: _____



Investment Return of Servant C:

1. Amount given: _____
2. Action: _____
3. Reason behind his action:

4. Return/results: _____

2. How did the master comment on their ways of managing money?

Who is/are the good and faithful servant(s)?

Who is the bad and lazy servant?

3. What are the criteria the master used to judge whether the servant is good or bad?

Worksheet 2: The Truth behind the Parable of the Talents

According to Mt 25:14-30, answer the following questions:

1. What does money represent in the parable of the Talents?

2. If money represents talents, analyse Jesus' teaching in regards to human talents:

- i. The master distributed different amount of money to his servants:

- ii. The master praised the first and the second servants for using the money diligently:

- iii. The master rewarded the first and second servants with more money:

- iv. The master punished the third servant for burying his money:

3. How did Jesus determine whether a way to manage talents is good or bad?

4. Based on the analyses, summarise how Jesus wanted us to handle our abilities.



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