

INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest privileges that God's children have is that of studying and teaching His Word. Therefore preparation for teaching should involve more than just reading the lesson. The teacher needs first to prepare her heart to receive God's truth and apply it to her life. This preparation must begin with prayer. As you approach each lesson, ask the Lord to teach it to you, to give you a sensitivity to His truth and to the needs of those whom you teach. Pray for each person in your circle or Bible study group by name asking the Lord to open her heart and mind to His Word.

Then begin your study by reading the Scripture portion several times. Take note of the context of the parable; what was happening? Who was involved? What prompted Jesus to tell the story? How does the parable speak to you personally? Does it make you think of any special person in your group?

Now read the chapter in the study book. Using this Leader's Guide, work through the questions. If your group has more than ten members, consider dividing into smaller groups to work on the questions. Divide the questions between the small groups and allow time for them to report on anything that had particular significance to them.

Most of these chapters contain more material than it is possible to cover in a usual session. Therefore it is very important that you plan ahead of time what you want to emphasize.

Go through the chapter and mark those portions on which you want to spend time. This will depend upon the background and interests of your group.

Be creative in finding ways to make these familiar stories come alive in your teaching. You will be well rewarded for the extra time that it may take as you see the interest and growth in the members of the group. We must never teach God's Word merely as an intellectual exercise, but we must pray expecting God to use His Word to change our lives and the lives of those we teach.

May God bless you in His glad service.

Georgia Settle
Editor