

ENRICHMENT LESSON

PARABLE OF PARABLES

LESSON NOTES

FOCUS: A PARABLE ABOUT PARABLES

- **PARABLE**
- **ENRICHMENT PRESENTATION**

THE MATERIAL

- **LOCATION: PARABLE SHELVES**
- **PIECES: TRAY OR BASKET HOLDING A SET OF NESTING BOXES IN ASSORTED COLORS**
- **UNDERLAY: NONE (USE RUG)**

BACKGROUND

Sometimes children will ask, "What's really inside a parable?" You have introduced this idea with every parable presentation, so it is exciting when the question is finally raised. This is the moment you have been waiting for. Now you can say, "We have a parable about that!"

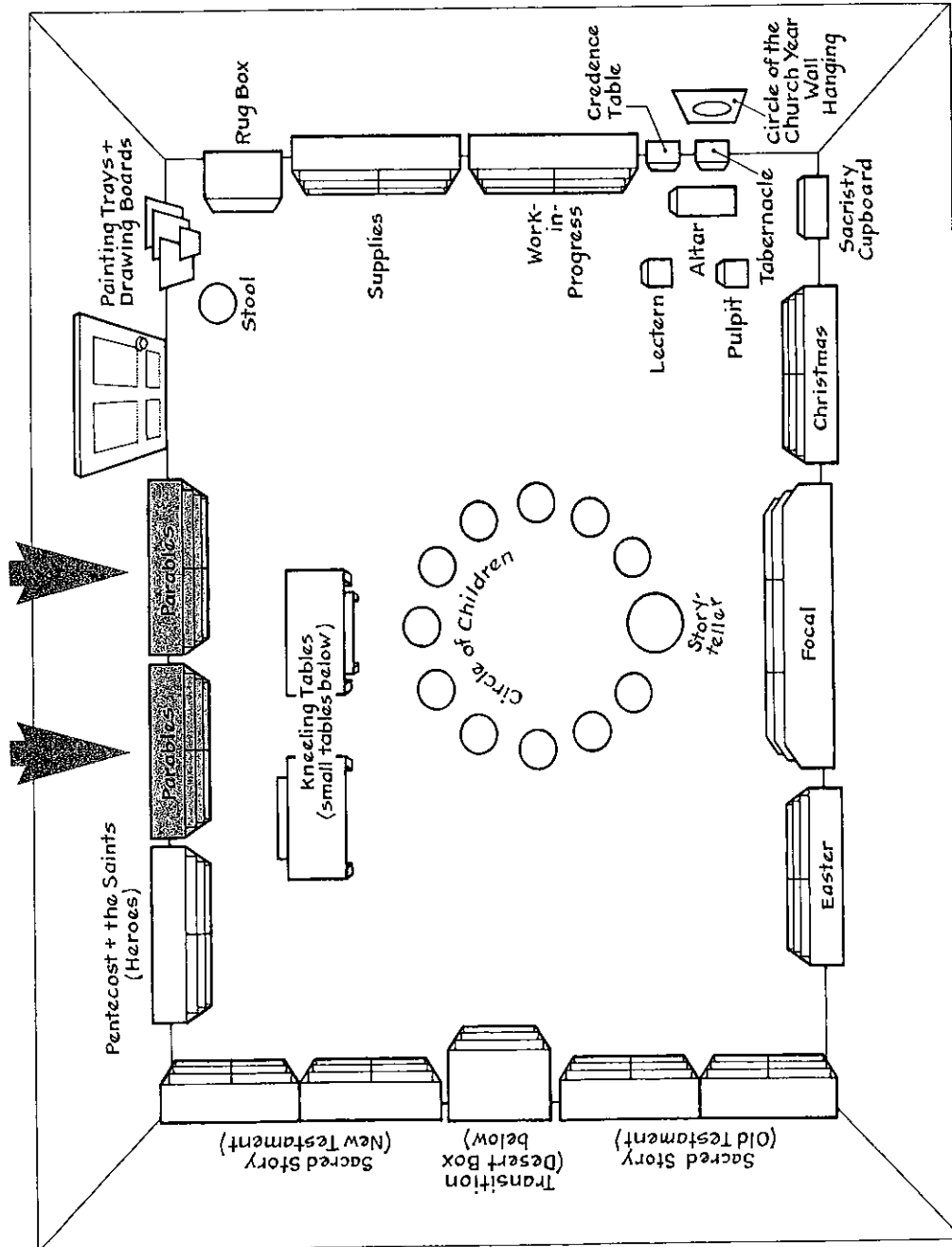
NOTES ON THE MATERIAL

Find the material for this lesson on the second shelf of one of the parable shelves. (The top shelves hold the six guiding parables.) Use a rug, not an underlay, so you don't give away the number of boxes within boxes. The material is not in a gold box, because this is not a parable that Jesus told. Instead, the materials are kept on a tray or in a basket.

The material is a set of what are sometimes called Chinese boxes or nested boxes. They are boxes of assorted colors that fit inside one another. The present set of ten boxes that Jerome uses range from about 5"-square for the largest box to about 1"-square for the smallest box.

SPECIAL NOTES

Tip: Godly Play parables include six guiding parables as well as parables *about* parables. Older children who are thoroughly familiar with the guiding parables are ready for this enrichment lesson, even if they haven't yet asked, "What's really inside a parable?" As with any presentation, this lesson can be given to an individual child, to a small group or to the whole class.



WHERE TO FIND MATERIALS

MOVEMENTS

Go to the rug box and get a rug. Spread it out in the middle of the circle of children. Go to the parable shelves and get the tray or basket with the Parable of Parables in it. Return to the circle and place the basket or tray beside you. Leave the box at your side for a few moments.

Place the box in the center of the rug.

Slowly remove the lid from the outer box of the nested boxes. Look shocked to find another box inside. Place the empty box on the rug at your right. A line of empty boxes will develop from your right to your left.

Slowly remove the next box's lid. Again, look shocked. Place this second box to your left of the first box.

Slowly, remove the next box's lid. Again, look shocked.

Go through several boxes rather quickly and then pause again. Slowly remove the box's lid and again appear to be shocked. Continue.

Open the next box. Respond with surprise. There is another box inside of this one.

WORDS

☛ Watch where I go so you will know where to find this lesson.

☛ Sometimes people wonder what is really inside a parable. Here is a parable that shows you.

See, this is not a parable of Jesus. It is not gold like the other parables. This is a different kind of parable, so it is smaller and a different color.

I wonder what really is inside a parable. All we have to do is take off the lid to find out. Be careful! You need to be really ready to do this.

☛ What is this? Is it a box inside a box? Oh, no! It's a parable inside a parable, like a box is inside a box. That is very interesting, but what we really want to know is what is inside a parable. Let's look in this one to find out.

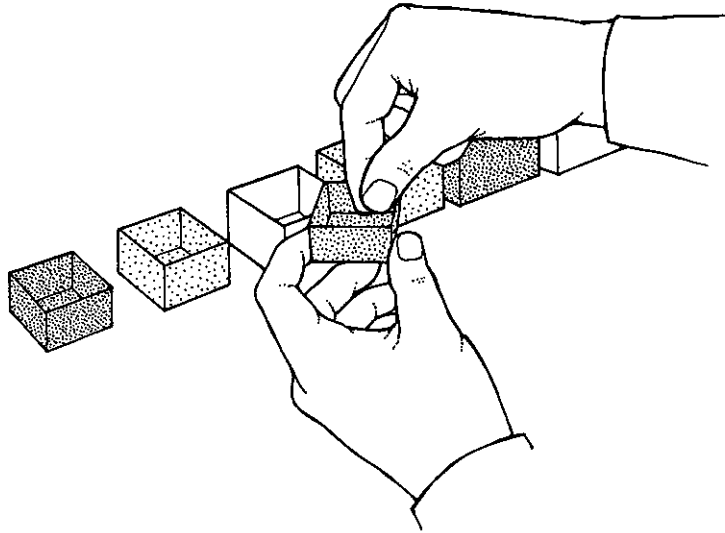
☛ What is this? Another box inside of a box? Okay. I understand. A parable is inside a parable, like a box is inside a box. I get it. We don't need any more boxes inside of boxes. Let's see now what is really inside a parable.

☛ Okay. So there are boxes inside of boxes, like parables are inside of parables. Look here's another one. Here's another one.

☛ Now, this must be the last one. People don't make boxes smaller than this.

MOVEMENTS

Finally, you will come to the last box. Open it carefully. Lean over and look inside. Lean closer. Put your thumb and first or second finger together to take the "inside" of the parable out.



TAKING OUT THE "INSIDE" OF THE PARABLE (STORYTELLER'S PERSPECTIVE)

Hold up the "inside," an imaginary final box or presence. Place it in the air just about two feet in front of your eyes. Let your fingers go as if it is sitting there in the air. (There is nothing to be seen, but you treat it as if it were tangible.) Sit for a moment and continue to look at the unseen "inside." Do not let any movement or sounds from the children disturb you as you continue to gaze at it.

It's hard to see, isn't it. That is why people who loved parables very much put it in a box, so they can find it and even take it with them.

MOVEMENTS

Use your thumb and finger again to take hold of the "inside" of the parable as it sits there in the air. Place it carefully in the smallest box again. Put the lid back on.

If the children challenge this invisible "inside" of a parable, remind them that Jesus spoke the parables. Words that are written down are easy to see, but words that are spoken are not. You might ask, "Can you see the words I am saying right now?"

Place the first box in the second box and place the lid on the second box. Put it back in the line of boxes in the middle of the rug, sit back and reflect on what has happened for a moment before you proceed.

Place the two nested boxes in the next larger box and put the lid on it. Along about this time you will need to speed up the process and do several boxes at once.

You have now placed the nested boxes in the next to last box. The last box will be the parents' box.

WORDS

✪ They didn't want to lose the parable. It was too precious.

✪ The next people who came along also loved parables very much, but the parable box the first people made wasn't quite right for them, so they made their own.

The next people who came along also loved parables very much, but the box the other people made didn't agree with them very well. They wanted one that was just right for them, so they made their own.

✪ People kept doing this. Someone would come along and find the parable box someone else made and like it, but it wasn't just right for the new person, so one that was just right had to be made. When the next people came along and did the same thing. This went on for hundreds of years.

Even after a thousand years this was still going on. Then, about the time America was discovered, it was still happening.

Finally, your grandmothers and grandfathers, who loved parables very much, found the parable box the people who came before them had made. They liked it, but it was not just right for them, so they made their own.

✪ Finally, we come to the time of your mothers and fathers. They love parables very much too, but the box that their mothers and fathers made was not quite right for them. They had to make their very own.

MOVEMENTS

Place the nested boxes in the last (and largest) box and put the lid on it. The whole set of nesting boxes is now sitting in the middle of the rug. Stop a moment and silently reflect on what has happened.

When the wondering about this is drawing to a close, you might begin other wonderings.

When the wondering is finished, put the nest of boxes back in the basket or on the tray. Replace the tray or basket on the parable shelves. Roll up the rug and replace it in the rug box. Return to the circle and begin to help the children decide what work they will get out.

WORDS

I wonder who is going to make the next parable box?

I wonder what the box could really be?

☞ I wonder what the whole line of boxes makes?

I wonder what kind of box is just right for you?

I wonder if you have ever come close to the inside of a parable?