

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Source: the Samaritan and the wounded traveler (Gospel of Luke 10:30-35)

Materials:

brown felt underlay
beige felt road
2 dark blue felt rocks
paper Jerusalem
paper Jericho
2 paper thieves
paper traveler
paper priest
paper Levite
paper Samaritan
paper Samaritan-and-Traveler scene

Story: Parable of the Good Samaritan

Go to the shelf and bring the box containing The Good Samaritan to the circle. Place the box in the middle of the circle. Gently run your hand over the lid.

Lifting the box to admire it like a present...

Look. The box looks like a present, and I wonder if this box has something precious inside? Maybe a story, even a parable... because you were given parables as a present, even before you were born. Even if you don't know what a parable is, it is still yours.

The box looks old. Parables are also old. They are older than you, and they are older than me. They are even older than your grandmother or grandfather. They are almost two thousand years old.

I wonder if there really is a parable inside? I have an idea. Let's look and see.

Move the box to your side and take the lid off. Lean the lid on the side of the box toward the circle so the children cannot see inside the box.

Remove the brown underlay. Drop it in a crumpled shape in the middle of the circle and look at it for a moment.

Hmmm.... I wonder what this could be?

Touch the crumpled fabric, examining it and encouraging children to wonder aloud about what this might be.

I wonder what this could really be? There is so much brown. There is no green at all. Look, there is no blue. There is nothing but brown, and the brown is scratchy. It is hard to know what this could really be if there is only brown.

Give a little time for children to suggest ideas, folding or twisting the fabric depending on children's suggestions. (A giant cookie? Mountain to climb? Blanket to keep you warm?)

Then gently smooth the underlay into a rectangle, in the middle of the circle, with the longer side facing the storyteller.

Let's see if there is anything else in the box that can help us.

Bring out the beige felt "road." Lay the road from one corner to the other, starting at your near left.

Now, I wonder what this could be? What could it really be?

Give a little time for children to suggest ideas, touching the fabric in a way that echoes their suggestions. (fingers jumping over a wall, swimming through a river.)

It could be a crack. Perhaps the whole thing is going to break into two pieces? Is it a fence? River? Road?

Let's see if there is anything else to help us.

Place Jerusalem at the end of the road nearest you, then place Jericho at the other end of the road. Run your fingers from Jerusalem to Jericho.

Oh, look. It is a road. It is going from this place to this place. But there is more.

Take the two pieces of dark blue felt from the box one at a time. Put one on one side of the road and the other on the other side of the road at the midpoint of the road.

I wonder what these could be? There is no light in them at all. They are like shadows.

Let's see what else there is to help us make the parable.

Take out the two thieves and put one behind each of the dark blue felt pieces by the road.

Now I think we have everything we need. We're ready to begin.

Sit back, eyes cast down, and when ready, begin the parable.

There once was someone who did such amazing things and said such wonderful things that people followed him. As they followed him, they heard him speaking of many things. Sometimes people asked him questions.

One day a person asked him what the most important thing in life was. He said, "You already know."

"That is true. I do. It is to love God and to love people just like they are your neighbors." The person paused a while, then asked, "But who is my neighbor?"

He then told him this parable.

Take the traveler out of the box and place him at the Jerusalem end of the road near you. Begin moving him slowly along the road as you speak.

There was once someone who went from Jerusalem down to Jericho. As he went his way, he was attacked by thieves.

Take the thieves out from behind the "rocks" and place them in an "X" over the traveler.

They hurt him, took everything he had, and left him by the side of the road half dead.

When you say "half dead," turn over the traveler, leaving him at the side of the road by one of the "rocks." Then remove the thieves off the underlay, and return them to the box.

There was also a great priest of the temple who went on the road from Jerusalem down to Jericho. As he went along his way, he came to the place where the traveler had been hurt, had everything taken from him, and had been left by the side of the road half dead.

Move the priest from Jerusalem slowly down the middle of the road. Don't hurry.

When the priest came to him, the priest went to the other side of the road and went along his way.

Move the priest slowly to the other side of the road, and past the traveler onto Jericho. Remove the priest from the scene.

There was also someone who worked at the temple who went from Jerusalem down to Jericho. He was one of the people who helped the priests. He took care of the temple and helped with the music. He was called a Levite.

Move the Levite slowly down the road.

When the Levite came to the place where the traveler was who had been hurt, had everything taken from him, and had been left by the side of the road half dead, he went to the other side and he went on his way.

*Move the Levite slowly to the other side of the road, and past the traveler onto Jericho.
Remove the Levite from the scene.*

There was also a person on the road who did not live in Jerusalem. He was visiting from a country called Samaria. The people in Samaria did not like the people of Jerusalem, and the people in Jerusalem did not like the people from Samaria.

Move the Samaritan slowly down the road until he comes to the injured traveler.

When the stranger came to where the traveler was who had been hurt, had everything taken from him, and had been left by the side of the road half dead, the stranger went to him.

Move the Samaritan to the traveler.

The stranger put medicine on the places where the person was hurt. He gave him his coat to wear. He then put him on his donkey and took him to a place to spend the night.

Reach into the box and take out the Samaritan-and-Traveler scene, moving them along the road almost all the way to Jericho.

The stranger even stayed with him all the night, and in the morning he gave the innkeeper enough money for him to stay there until he was well.

Sit back and ponder the whole parable.

When ready, return the Samaritan-and-Traveler scene to the box.

- *Place the thieves by the rocks.*
- *Line up all the other figures on the underlay, placing the traveler close to the children on the very left side.*

Now I wonder. Who was the neighbor to the person who was hurt, had everything taken from him, and was left by the road half dead?

I wonder if the neighbor were these persons?

*Place the **thieves** beside the traveler. Pause in case any child wishes to answer.*

I wonder if the neighbor was this person?

*Place the **priest** beside the traveler. Pause in case any child wishes to answer.*

I wonder if the neighbor was this person?

*Place the **Levite** beside the traveler. Pause in case any child wishes to answer.*

I wonder if the neighbor was this person?

*Place the **Samaritan** beside the traveler. Pause in case any child wishes to answer.*

Place the traveler in line with the other figures and replace his spot with the thieves. Place each character next to the thieves and ask who was a neighbor to the thieves.

Try different combinations of the figures, asking "I wonder who might be the neighbor to this person?"

When the wondering is over, place each of the figures back into the parable box with great care. Name each one as you put it away. Put the road and the dark pieces back in the box, then fold up the underlay and put it in the box.

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder what part of the story you liked the best?
- I wonder what part is most important?
- I wonder where you are in the story?
- I wonder if there is any part of the story that we can leave out and still have all the story we need?