

## COURSE SYLLABUS

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# The Parables of Jesus

Course Lecturer: Craig L. Blomberg, PhD

## Course Description

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Most readers sympathize with the disciples when they asked Jesus, “Explain to us the parable that you spoke.” This course surveys various methods of interpreting Jesus’ parables and offers an eclectic model that draws upon the best insights of each. Dr. Blomberg’s semi-allegorical model is then applied to each of the major narrative parables in the Gospels. The course examines differences among parallel accounts, and suggests plausible reasons for the variations. Learners are encouraged to apply the conclusions about the theology and significance of Jesus’ parables to their life and ministry.

## Course Objectives

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Upon completion of the course, you should be able to do the following:

- Gain a greater understanding of the cryptic but important parables of Jesus.
- Analyze the different schools of thought in the interpretation of the parables of Jesus, and adopt an approach you can defend as the most hermeneutically viable.
- Explore the more controversial points of interpretation surrounding the details of various passages and formulate tentative exegetical conclusions.
- Apply the parables to contemporary Christian living and ministry.

## Course Lecturer

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*Craig L. Blomberg, PhD*

**Education:**

- University of Aberdeen, Scotland, PhD
- Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, MA
- Augustana College, BA

**Teaching Career:**

- Distinguished Professor of New Testament, Denver Seminary
- Professor at Palm Beach Atlantic College
- Senior Research Fellow in Cambridge, England at the Tyndale House

- Visiting professor at St. Petersburg Christian University in Russia, ACTS in Canada, the Seminario Teológico Centroamericano in Guatemala, the Irish Bible Institute in Ireland and at the Wiedene-Bibelschule in Germany
- Special guest lecturer or visiting professor at numerous universities in Australia and New Zealand

### Other Career Highlights:

- Ordained Baptist minister
- Helped train church leaders through conferences across the Pacific Rim
- Campus Crusade for Christ
- Active member and regular contributor to the Evangelical Theological Society

### Publications:

- In addition to writing numerous articles in professional journals, multi-author works, and dictionaries or encyclopedias, he has authored or edited numerous books, including *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*, *Interpreting the Parables*, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*, and *From Pentecost to Patmos: An Introduction to Acts through Revelation*.

## Recommended Reading

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Though not required, you may choose to read the textbooks shown below to supplement your learning.

Blomberg, Craig L. *Interpreting the Parables*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1990.

Kistemaker, Simon. *The Parables: Understanding the Stories Jesus Told*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002.

Wenham, David. *The Parables of Jesus: Pictures of Revolution*. Downers Grove: IVP, 1989.

An **NIV Bible** and any synopsis or harmony of the four Gospels (i.e., that lays out parallel texts in parallel columns for easy comparison). E.g., K. Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels* (New York: UBS, 1982).

Textbooks can be ordered through your local bookstore, various online bookstores, or through your preferred eReader when available.

## Course Methods

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The lecture content for each lesson is provided in two easy-to-use formats: audio and PDF text (if available). Students can choose the medium (or combination of media) that most closely aligns with their individual learning styles.

## Course Assessment and Requirements

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To earn a Certificate of Completion, you must complete the course requirements. Course requirements include:

1. Listening to all 24 audio lectures.
2. Completing a final self-assessment form in which you will reflect on the content in the course and evaluate your life in light of what you have learned. The specifics of this assessment are provided in the course materials.

Course requirements noted in this syllabus will be validated before a Certificate of Completion is awarded to any student.