



CROSSWAYS[®] INTERNATIONAL



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ON OUR KNEES

Every year when the season of Lent rolls around I am reminded of one of my favorite childhood films: *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. You might wonder what this Harrison Ford/Sean Connery classic has to do with a season of the church year. There's one particular scene from the film that always comes to mind as I prepare for Ash Wednesday.

Toward the end of the movie, Indy, played by Harrison Ford, is making his way into an ancient booby-trapped temple that houses the Holy Grail. He has to navigate through several life-threatening obstacles guided only by the notes his father, Sean Connery, has compiled over many years. He approaches the first trap and begins to recite the notes of his father: "Only the penitent man shall pass." He says it again and again. Then he says, "The penitent man is humble before God." Finally he says, "Only the penitent man shall pass. Humble before God. Penitent. Penitent." Then all at once he drops to his knee and a saw blade goes spinning above his head. Had he not knelt, his quest would have been over before it began. Indy realized just in time that a penitent man kneels before God.



Lent is a season of penitence. Ash Wednesday, February 14th this year, kicks off the season of Lent—40 days plus Sundays leading up to Easter. Lent is a season of choosing to kneel before God. We make ourselves low in preparation to receive the ultimate gift of God's salvation. On our knees we are most aware of our desperation for a Savior. We recognize that without the miracle-working Servant Messiah, we will be lost in our own efforts.

There is no better way to be on our knees before God than to posture ourselves as humble students before the master teacher. The course from Crossways International®, *The Parables of Jesus*, is a great way to dive into the teachings of Jesus in this season of humility.

May your Lenten season be filled with fresh reflection and inspiring revelation.

Pastor Jacob Hoyer / Board of Directors Member

MARS HILL AUDIO

For Christian readers interested in keeping up with current thinking, the challenge isn't finding enough good material; it's how to find enough time to read it all. Best-seller lists and book reviews can help, but what we really need is a friendly guide who reads widely and can introduce us personally to the authors, and even let them talk to us in their own words.



Ken Myers of Mars Hill Audio fits that job description perfectly. A veteran of NPR news and several Christian publishers, Mr. Myers produces a bimonthly audio interview program featuring 20- to 30-minute conversations on topics ranging from current events to the Bible, and from the fathers of the church to today's theological trends. The interviewees are pastors and scholars, including such luminaries as N.T. Wright, Mark Noll, Dana Gioia, Christian Smith, Mary Eberstadt, Stanley Hawerwas, and many more. Along with the book conversations, there's generally a segment on church music, and another on literature. If you're like me, you'll listen to the segments more than once.

For example, here's the lineup from a recent edition commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation:

1. Thomas Albert Howard, on the history of commemorating the Reformation;
2. Mark Noll, on how the Reformers would want to be remembered;
3. Andrew Pettegree, on how Martin Luther transformed the printing industry;
4. Peter J. Leithart, on the biblical basis for the unity of the Church;
5. Norman Klassen, on the political theology implicit in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*;
6. James Litton, on the life and work of hymnologist, Erik Routley;
7. Joseph O'Brien, on the neglected literary achievements of J. F. Powers.

I first subscribed to MHA over 20 years ago, when CDs were a new thing and the program was on its 24th edition. The current edition is the 137th and it streams in MP3. The website is www.marshillaudio.org for a free sample and ways to subscribe.

James Baird, DRE / Theological Council Member

Check out our **Winter Specials!**

JOIN A CLASS OR WEBINAR

Looking for a Crossways International® class near you? Visit our **Class Map** for locations and details! Interested in starting your own class? We're happy to help you with planning and promotion. Just call **800-257-7308** or email info@crossways.org.

You can also join us online! Our **webinars** provide an interactive way to promote discussion and answer questions. They're the perfect resource for leaders preparing to teach a class within their own congregation, and a great opportunity for learners who prefer to study on their own. Click on a webinar below to learn more!

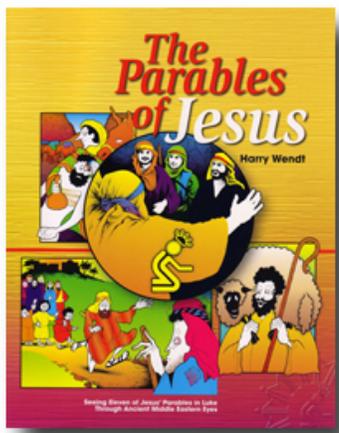
The Parables of Jesus Webinar
February 13: 10 a.m. - noon (CST)

An Apostles' Creed for the New Millennium Webinar
March 15: 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. (CST)

The Bible's Big Story/The Biblical Tell-Tale Time-Line Webinar
April 17: 10 a.m. - noon (CST)

Follow us on **Facebook** to keep up with all of our latest events!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



See Jesus' parables through ancient Middle Eastern eyes with ***The Parables of Jesus***.

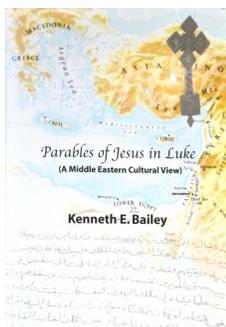
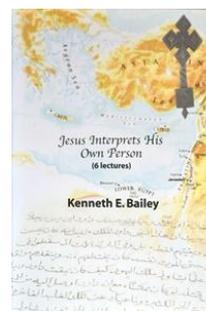
Drawing on remarkable cultural and historical insights from renowned New Testament and Middle East scholar Dr. Kenneth Bailey, this course explores how Jesus' audience would have understood 11 of Jesus' parables as recorded in Luke.

LOOKING FOR VBS CURRICULUM IDEAS?

The Parables of Jesus can be used as the basis for your VBS curriculum. Use one parable each day and add related songs, crafts and activities to bring the parables vividly to life for your VBS children.

Examine what Jesus says about himself with the ***Jesus Interprets His Own Person*** DVD.

In this set of six lectures, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth Bailey covers how Jesus takes Old Testament symbols and applies them to His own person and discusses what the three parables of Luke 15 have to say about who He is.

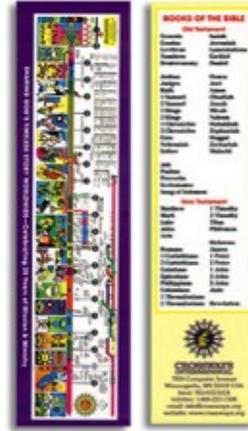


Explore the parables the way the first-century Jews heard them with the ***Parables of Jesus in Luke*** DVD.

Christ spoke in parables to interpret God's timeless truth in a way that could be understood by the people of His day. In this 15-lecture series, Dr. Kenneth Bailey helps Christians discover a context that enriches and challenges traditional interpretations.

Trace the timeline or learn the books of the Bible with **CI's Time-Line Bookmark**.

This colorful laminated bookmark makes an excellent promotional aid for your Bible study classes. A miniature version of the *Biblical Tell-Tale Time-Line* appears on one side; the books of the Bible are listed on the reverse side, grouped to facilitate memorization. The bookmark is a great gift for students who complete any of the CI courses or as an addition to a card or favorite book. (20% discount for quantities over 25; 30% off orders over 100.)



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Request a free catalog in the mail [here](#).

SHARING GOD'S GOOD NEWS

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY NOTES

"Jesus tells His disciples that God is already their Father (ten times in Matthew 6:1-18). God does not become fatherly or motherly, receptive and loving, as some kind of payment only after a disciple has piled up a sufficient heap of deeds well done. Although God likes good deeds better than evil deeds, He is repelled by posturing, disappointed by hypocrisy, and angry when people use other human beings only to display their own religious standing."



An Anglican clergyman serving a parish near Oxford, England, shared the following insight: 'When the day comes that I want people to notice me rather than Jesus, I invalidate my ministry.'"

Read the Rev. Dr. Wendt's [February 2018 Revised Common Lectionary Notes](#).

Sponsor a [CI Workshop](#) in your community.

A PRAYER TO SHARE

Dear Lord Jesus, we thank and praise You for finding us who have been battered by the powers of sin and death. We thank You for healing our wounds, and for assuring us that You will care for us eternally. Empower us to show You to others. Inspire us to care for those who need healing in body and spirit. Sustain us in the sure hope that when we have completed our journey, You have an eternal home waiting for us. Enlighten us to bear witness to You so that many will share that eternal home. In Your loving, caring and forgiving name we pray. Amen. (From *The Parables of Jesus* Leader's Manual)

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