



*“1Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, 2just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. 3With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.” Luke 1:1-4*



# An Introduction to Luke

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Luke is the longest of the 4 gospels. It is also the only gospel with a sequel! The book of Acts is the second part of Luke, written by the doctor Luke, and takes us from the story of Jesus' earthly ministry (Luke) to the story of the early Church and the Acts of the Apostles (Acts).

Luke, together with the book of Acts, highlights for us the plan of God in salvation. The communities of Jews and Gentiles are brought together under the community of the new church of Jesus Christ.

Together, these two books speak to us about how Gentiles can now be included in the salvation plans of God, and deals with the issues of Jewish traditions and the exclusive practices that were in place before Jesus arrived and fulfilled the complete laws and plans of God.

Luke's gospel is a message that seeks to share with us how we are to live as disciples of Christ. What commitment is required from a disciple of Jesus? And how do we live in community together?

God reveals himself to us most clearly in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and Luke wants us to see how God's plans are for everyone in this world.

**(More details are available from The Luke Commentary from the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament by Darrell L. Bock (in 2 volumes), Published by Baker. 1994. The notes above are gleaned from the introduction of the first volume.**

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# Study One

## King of the Workers

**Luke 10:1-12 and Luke 10:13-24**

### Opening discussion

- What does it mean to be a disciple and follower of Jesus? How does it impact our daily life? (You may like to read Luke 9:57-62 after discussing this question, as an introduction to the rest of the study.)

### READ Luke 10:1-12

1. In verses 1-4 has anything changed since then? Are things different today? For example:
  - a. Is the harvest still plentiful?
  - b. Are there still too few workers?
  - c. Should we still “go out” like lambs among wolves?
  
2. In verses 5-12, what are the advantages of approaching mission with this sort of strategy? In particular, consider the following:
  - a. Is it worth moving around quickly, or staying in one place if people respond well to the message?
  
  - b. When is it worth leaving a “town” or home, and shaking the dust of your feet? In other words, when do we “give up” sharing the gospel with someone?

- c. Does the worker deserve their wages? For example:
  - i. What are the wages for someone sharing the gospel in everyday life?
  - ii. How do we pay a “fair wage” to those who make this gospel work their livelihood?

**READ Luke 10:13-24**

- 3. How does verse 16 give you confidence in sharing the gospel? Does it make you feel a little worried or concerned also?
- 4. In verse 17, why do you think the workers were so surprised when they returned from their mission work?
- 5. In verses 23-24, what is the great blessing for those of us who live “post-Jesus”?

**Concluding discussion**

- 6. This year, what can you do to be a part of the Mission at our Church?
- 7. What help do you need to be a gospel worker? What challenges do you particularly face and how can others in your home group help you?

**Prayer:**

Focus on praying for the mission of our Church this year.

## Study Two

# King of Mercy

Luke 10:25-29 and 10:30-37

### Opening discussion

- Have you ever been helped by the kindness of a complete stranger? If so, how did you respond to that?

### READ Luke 10:25-29

1. In verse 25, the expert in the law says to Jesus: “What must I do to inherit eternal life” – What is the inherent problem with this question?
2. Jesus answers the man that he is correct – that all he needs to inherit eternal life is to DO these things. (Love God and love your neighbor). Can he do this? Can any of us do this? And if so, to what standard? Is our “DOING” ever going to be up to God’s standard?
3. In verse 29, the man wants to “justify” himself and so asks another question. Why do you think he wanted to justify himself?

### READ Luke 10:30-37

4. Priests and Levites were the religious leaders of the day – the ones expected to be the most “moral” of all! Yet it was a Samaritan who helped the injured man. The shock comes from the fact that Jews hated Samaritans and would have nothing to do with them (see

John 4:9). It was a bit like the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians today. Samaria was right between Galilee in the north and Jerusalem in Judea in the south.

- a. How do you think the expert in the law (verse 25) would have responded to Jesus' story – in the way he made the Samaritan the hero?
- b. The Samaritan did not only help the injured man. He went above and beyond what people would have expected. Why does Jesus make the story this “over the top”?

5. Verse 37 – what is mercy?

6. Verse 37 – Have you gone and done likewise? Would you go to the extent that the Samaritan did to help someone?
- a. If so, how? Can you share an example?
  - b. If not, why not? What stops you?

### **Concluding Discussion**

7. Who is your neighbour? Can you write down 2 or 3 names of people who you could probably be a better neighbor towards?
8. What does “mercy” look like in the everyday things in life?

### **Prayer:**

Focus on praying for one or two people each who are your “neighbours”

## Study Three

# King of Prayer

Luke 11:1-8 and Luke 11:9-13

### Opening Discussion

- What do you most frequently pray for/about? Why?

### READ Luke 11:1-4

1. What are the main aspects of the Lord's Prayer? What things are "covered" in this prayer Jesus taught his disciples?
2. How often do you pray the Lord's Prayer?

### READ Luke 11:5-13

3. What is the lesson Jesus is teaching in verses 5-8? Is it:
  - a. To annoy God until you get what you want?
  - b. Annoy other people until you get what you want?
  - c. Forget friendship – just have audacity.
  - d. Something else...?



4. Why do you think Jesus wants us to be audacious and persistent in prayer? Is it telling us something about God, or something about us?
  
5. Are verses 9 – 10 a promise of what we can expect? Or are they a general observation? What is the key here – is it about
  - a. Persistence
  - b. Faithfulness
  - c. Asking for the right things
  - d. Trusting God
  - e. All of the above
  - f. Something else?
  
6. What do verse 11-13 tell us about the character of God?

### **Concluding Discussion**

7. How has this passage affected your prayer life? Think in terms of the following:
  - a. How often you pray
  - b. What you pray for
  - c. Your heart in prayer
  - d. The way you trust God

### **Prayer:**

Spend some time writing down some things you would like to commit to God in prayer for this coming week. You might like to break into pairs and share those lists, then have the other person pray for those things for you (it helps to have others pray for our needs – to see how THEY pray and how they bring things to God)

## Study Four

# King of the Rich

Luke 16:19-24 and Luke 16:25-31

### Opening Discussion

Do you have a “good” life? Do you consider yourself fortunate? Rich? Wealthy? Why or why not?

### READ Luke 16:19-31

1. Why is Jesus telling this story? (Have a look at the preceding verses and the passages that follow to gain some context.)

The story of Lazarus and the rich man is not quite a parable. It is often called an “example story”. It contains instructive details about what behaviour NOT to follow. It is not an historical event. It is a graphic portrayal, but not actual descriptions of the afterlife. It is a story that depicts simply the great chasm between paradise and Hades (heaven and hell). (Taken from Baker Commentary on Luke by Bock, volume 2, page 1363).

Let’s take a look at the four main points this example story make:

2. How does this story instruct the rich to use their wealth?

3. What does it teach us about the finality of judgement?
  
4. How does this story relate Jesus to Moses and the prophets? What is the link?
  
5. What does it teach us about people's response to Jesus – do they just need a sign? Do they just need another warning? (See verse 31)
  
6. How do you think the people of Jesus' day would have responded to this story? What warnings or comfort might it have given them? Consider the response of:
  - a. The rich
  
  - b. The poor

### **Concluding Discussion**

7. Does this story carry a warning or an encouragement for you?

### **Prayer:**

Pray for those in need in our community. Pray for good use of our wealth in this world – as individuals and as a church.

## Study Five

# King Ready to Die

Luke 19:28-38 and Luke 19:39-44

### Opening discussion

- If God had plans for your life that you knew would be difficult for you personally, what would you do?

### READ Luke 19:28-38

1. Jesus is approaching Jerusalem, preparing for what he knows is his death. In which ways are we shown in this passage that Jesus is in complete control of the events leading up to his death?
2. The people welcome Jesus as “King”, reflecting the Israelite celebrations of the Feast of Tabernacles, welcoming the King. It is however a charade, as we know what is going to happen to Jesus in Jerusalem. But at this moment, why are the people praising Jesus (verse 37)?
3. READ Zechariah 9:9. (“Zion” is often used to refer to Jerusalem). How does the rest of this chapter in Zechariah give a picture of hope for God’s people? (Perhaps also read Zechariah 9:8-11)

## **READ Luke 19:39-44**

4. The opponents of Jesus watch from the sidelines, not happy with what is occurring. Why do they ask Jesus to rebuke his disciples (verse 39)?
  
5. Jesus enters Jerusalem, the holy city of David – the city of God on earth. Yet he knows this is the very place he will be rejected and handed over to the Romans. Why does he weep over Jerusalem?
  
6. In verses 43-44, Jesus predicts great judgment upon this very generation of Israelites. What will this judgment look like? (It most likely is a prophecy of the attack of Rome that leads to the fall of Jerusalem in 70AD). Who will be affected by this judgement?

## **Concluding Discussion**

7. Think about the work that Jesus has been doing – healing the sick, raising the dead, casting out demons, etc. Discuss what Jesus may have emotionally been facing at this time, upon drawing near to Jerusalem – how would he be feeling in facing rejection after performing all of these miracles?

## **Prayer:**

Give thanks to God for his plan of salvation, and for his love for us in going forward to his death, even though he knew what was coming.

## Study Six

# King Over End Times

Luke 21:5-19 and Luke 21:20-36

### Opening discussion

- What are the most difficult challenges you face (or have faced) in your Christian life?

### READ Luke 25:5-19

1. In verses 5-7, how do you think the disciples would have felt about the destruction of the temple that Jesus was foreshadowing?
2. What future things does Jesus warn his disciples of in verses 8-19? Which of these are relevant and continue to happen today? What encouragement and instruction does Jesus offer them/us about how to deal with these things?

### READ Luke 25:20-36

3. Again in verses 20-24, Luke is most likely giving prophecy of 70AD and the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans. What picture does this give you of what lays ahead?

4. In verses 25-28, it seems Jesus speak of times further ahead. These are Old Testament “apocalyptic” (end times) images of final destruction. What key words does Luke use to describe the response of people to these times? (For example: “anguish”)

5. Verse 32 seems problematic. If Jesus has just described the end times, and implies that the current generation he is speaking to will not die before the end comes, HE WAS WRONG! OR... we are lacking a good translation. The following excerpt from Boch’s commentary on Luke is helpful here (he offers 6 viewpoints, and this one is, in his opinion, the most likely explanation):

*“What Jesus is saying is that the generation that sees the beginning of the end, also sees its end. When the signs come, they will proceed quickly; they will not drag on for many generations. It will happen within a generation... the tradition reflected in Revelation shows that the consummation comes very quickly once it comes... if this view is correct, Jesus says that when the signs of the beginning of the end come, then the end will come relatively quickly, within a generation.”*

(Page 1691-1692)

Boch offers other explanations and quite helpfully says this: It is hard to be dogmatic about the meaning of this difficult text.”

Is it a problem that we sometimes have confusion about the exact meaning and references of the Bible’s teaching? (Especially when it comes to the end times!) Is it OK to have some uncertainty?

### **Concluding Discussion**

6. What can we do when we are not absolutely clear about a certain passage of Scripture?

### **Prayer:**

For trust in God and his Word, and for wisdom and humility as we read it.



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