

Women's Bible Study

A TWO-YEAR JOURNEY THROUGH
THE STORY OF GOD

Week 4 | Jesus is the Savior of the World | The Gospel of Luke

Quick review: we saw in our survey of the Gospel of *Matthew* that the apostle Matthew wrote his account of Jesus' life in order to demonstrate to Jewish Christians that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel of a coming King from the line of David. Jesus is the promised Messiah who will establish the Kingdom of God and who will reign in that Kingdom forever. *Jesus is Israel's promised King.*

The Gospel of *Mark* was written to a primarily Gentile (non-Jewish) audience to affirm that Jesus possessed all of the authority of God, and He was the coming King who would rule over all nations forever; nevertheless, His path to the throne required His death as a ransom for sin. Jesus is the suffering Servant of God—the Servant who would give up His life in order to make fullness of life possible for all mankind. *Jesus is the obedient Servant of God.*

The Gospel of *Luke* was written by Luke, a physician and historian. The Gospel of Luke was written to be a careful, orderly account of the life and teachings of Jesus, demonstrating that Jesus is the fulfillment of the ongoing covenant story of God, Israel, and all peoples. Luke has written this account so that we may be rock-solid certain that salvation has come into the world. (Luke 1:3-4) *Jesus is the God-man who is Savior for the world.*

The Gospel of Luke emphasizes not only who Jesus is, but also what it means to follow Him. Luke challenges us to live a new way of life—a life that rejects the values of this world and embraces the values of God's Kingdom.

A Child is to be born; Messiah is coming!

1. Read Luke 1:26-33 and Isaiah 9:6-7

- a. When the angel Gabriel announced Jesus' birth to Mary, how did he describe Jesus? (1:32-33)
- b. How does Gabriel's announcement correspond to the prophecy in Isaiah 9:6-7?

2. Read Luke 2:25-35 *Messiah has come to His temple—as a babe in arms*

- a. What promise had been given by the Holy Spirit to the prophet Simeon? (2:26)
- b. What did Simeon proclaim about the importance of this child for the world? (2:30,32)
- c. What sort of future did Simeon describe for Jesus (and for Mary)? (2:34-35)

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Jesus brings healing to the human condition

The mission of Jesus is to bring salvation and spiritual life to a world enslaved to sin and death. In His hometown of Nazareth, Jesus came to the synagogue and stood to read aloud a prophecy about the Messiah from the scroll of Isaiah (Isaiah 61:1-2). This prophecy promises that the coming Messiah will bring relief to the oppressed and downtrodden.

3. Read Luke 4:16-21 and Isaiah 61:1-3, 7 *Jesus comes to bring His Kingdom of justice and joy*

- a. What four types of people are the object of Jesus' concern? (4:18)
- b. *For deeper thought:* How would these classifications apply to everyone who has not encountered Christ? How do these descriptions apply to all of fallen humanity apart from the spiritual life Jesus brings?
- c. The prophecy in the scroll of Isaiah (Isaiah 61:1-2) described a time when Messiah would come. What shocking announcement did Jesus make after reading this prophecy aloud? (4:21)

Jesus teaches the rewards (and hardships) of being His disciples

Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, demonstrating His authority and His power by teaching (4:31-32), by casting out demons (4:33-37), by healing (4:40), and by declaring the forgiveness of sins (Luke 5:21-25). Jesus called twelve men to be His disciples—to walk with Him, to learn from Him, and to carry His mission forward.

Large crowds came to hear Jesus' teaching and receive His healing, but these multitudes were not necessarily committed to Him. Jesus challenged His disciples to understand the earthly hardships and the eternal rewards of serving Jesus *wholeheartedly* as Kingdom citizens. Are you willing to follow Jesus wholeheartedly? Are you willing to be His disciple—a committed learner and follower?

4. Read Luke 6:20-26 *The committed followers of Jesus enjoy ultimate fulfillment*

- a. At its core, the notion of being *blessed* refers to the gracious privilege of enjoying the *nearness of God*. What four benefits come to those who live as committed disciples of Jesus? (6:20-23)
- b. What four *difficult* earthly circumstances may be experienced by those who decide to fully follow Jesus? (6:20-23)

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5. **Read Luke 6:27-37.** Jesus teaches us how His committed followers are to treat those who treat us unjustly.
- How would you summarize this teaching?
 - Personal reflection:* In this fallen world, our patience will be tested by prickly people; our plans will be frustrated by irresponsible people. As you take Jesus' teaching to heart, is there someone you need to treat with extra grace? With a greater measure of kindness? We are called to treat others with grace, patience, and mercy—just as God treats us.

Jesus demonstrates His authority as fully God as well as fully man

In chapters 7-9 of Luke, Jesus traveled through Galilee, teaching and proving His authority:

- Jesus healed a Roman centurion's servant, demonstrating that His mission is for all peoples.
- Jesus raised a widow's only son from the dead, demonstrating His authority over death.
- Jesus received the devotion of a disreputable woman, demonstrating His love and forgiveness for all.
- Jesus calmed a violent storm with a word, demonstrating His authority over creation.
- Jesus cast out a legion of demons from a demon-possessed man, demonstrating authority over the spirits
- Jesus produced bread and fish to feed a multitude in a remote place, demonstrating His power as Creator.

We are saved by faith alone; we receive salvation, Kingdom citizenship, and new life in Christ when we *trust* in Him for our salvation. Faith *alone* saves us... but Jesus then calls His people of faith to live out our lives of faith according to *His* values, and in obedience to His teaching. ***We are saved by faith, and then we are called to obedience.***

Jesus calls His followers to a life of committed discipleship

6. **Read Luke 9:23-26.**
- What is required of us if we choose to live a life of discipleship? (9:23-26)
 - Personal reflection:* Is this a way of life you are willing to pursue? Are you willing to take "self" off of the throne of your life and yield your life to Him? What would you change in your life right now that would be a step toward denying yourself and following Jesus?

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The Transfiguration - Jesus displays the radiance of the Glory of God

7. **Read Luke 9:28-36.** Jesus went up onto a mountain, and His disciples Peter, John, and James went with Him. As Jesus prayed, the brilliant radiance of the glory of God became visible. It was not merely *reflecting* from Jesus' face; it was *emanating* from Jesus *Himself*. Jesus is the glory of God—the Presence of God—the fullness of God—in human form.
- a. How does Luke describe Jesus' glory? (9:29)
 - b. Who appeared with Jesus on the mountain? (9:30-31)
 - c. What were they talking about? (9:31)
 - d. What did God proclaim on the mountain? (9:35)

Jesus teaches His disciples as He travels to Jerusalem

8. As Jesus traveled with His disciples to Jerusalem to face His agony on the cross, He used the journey to teach His disciples about His mission and about what it means to be His true follower.

Jesus often taught in *parables*. Parables are stories from everyday life that illustrate (but also disguise) spiritual truths. Parables require deeper thought in order to understand the essence of their message. Many of Jesus' parables from the book of Luke will be familiar to you, such as the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). Try your hand at interpreting this one of Jesus' parables:

- a. **Read Luke 12:13-21, *the parable of the rich fool*.**
 - i. Where does this rich man place his trust and confidence? (18-19)
 - ii. Why is this man a fool?
 - iii. What is your understanding of the central message of this parable? (Or we might say, "what is the moral of this story?") (see verse 15)
- b. **Read Luke 12:22-31.** In this passage, Jesus teaches more directly—not in a parable, but in straightforward language. What does this passage teach you...
 - i. About worry?
 - ii. About God's care and provision?

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- c. *Personal reflection:* Jesus describes those who *worry* as those who have *little faith* (12:28). How can you break a cycle of worry by applying what you know to be true about God? How can growing in faith overcome the power of worry in your life?

Jesus grieves over the wickedness of Israel and the desolation of their future

9. Read Luke 21:5-13 *God returns to His temple—but His people reject Him*

Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a donkey. A crowd of disciples shouted for joy and hailed Him as King. Jesus came to the temple courts and was teaching there daily. (Luke 19:47)

- a. What was the magnificent evidence of centuries of God's faithful care for His people Israel? (21:5)
- b. Jesus was the personal Presence of God who had returned to the temple in Israel. What was the response to Jesus by Israel's leaders? (Look forward to Luke 22:1)
- c. What did Jesus predict about some of the heart-breaking long-term events that Israel and the world will experience after Israel rejects and kills the Messiah that God had sent to them?
 - i. What will happen to the temple? (21:6)
 - ii. What will characterize the world order until Jesus returns? (21:9-11)
 - iii. What will happen to Jesus' disciples? (21:12-13)

10. Read Luke 21:20-28 *Jesus describes the fall of Jerusalem and the time of His return*

- a. What is the future for Jerusalem? (21:20, 23-24)
- b. What will be the signs of the end of the age? (21:25-26)
- c. What will be the glorious climax at the end of the age? (21:27)

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Luke 22-23 describes Jesus' betrayal by Judas, His unjust trials, and ultimately, His crucifixion.

Jesus dies to secure salvation and forgiveness of sins for all who trust in Him

11. Read Luke 23:32-49.

- a. As Jesus was suffering on the cross, what was His prayer for those who had done this? (23:34)
- b. One of the criminals crucified alongside Jesus came to believe in who Jesus was. What did he ask of Jesus, and how did Jesus respond to him? (23:42-43)
- c. What supernatural events occurred as Jesus died? (23:44-46)

Jesus is vindicated by His resurrection and ascends to reign as eternal King

12. Read Luke 24:1-8; 36-53

- a. What evidence of Jesus' resurrection was discovered at the tomb? (Luke 24:1-8)
- b. What evidence of Jesus' resurrection was observed by the disciples? (Luke 24:36-43)
- c. What final event demonstrates Jesus' victory over death, sin, and the devil? (Luke 24:50-52)
- d. *Personal reflection:* What is your response to this account of Jesus' life? How does this account deepen your understanding of Jesus, or your understanding of salvation?

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." Luke 19:10

***Jesus died and rose from the dead
so that we can have forgiveness and fullness of life through faith in Him***

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