

# Living Like Jesus

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## **Birth & Childhood of Jesus**

### **Genealogy and Foretelling** – Luke 3:23-38

The genealogy traces Jesus' human lineage. Jesus' lineage points to the fulfillment of several prophecies and to the fact that Jesus, as a man, is connected to the human race.

Matthew also has a record of Jesus' lineage. Matthew traces Jesus' lineage through Mary back to Abraham. Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience and emphasizes Jesus' connection to Abraham and David. Luke is writing to a general audience. He focuses on connecting Jesus to the human race and traces his 'legal' lineage from Joseph all the way back to Adam. Luke connects Jesus to Adam and following this passage he shows Jesus going into the wilderness to face temptations from the devil. Where Adam failed – Jesus will triumph!

### **Preparations and Foretelling of Christ's Coming**

Luke 1:13-17 – What do you learn about John? What is his role in the coming of the Messiah?

1:26-30 – What do we learn about Jesus' mother Mary?

1:31-33 – What do we learn about Jesus?

1:35 – What is God about to do?

How will this birth be different than any other birth? How then will Jesus be different than anyone else?

1:41-43 – What did Elizabeth already believe about the unborn Jesus?

1:44 – What did the unborn John think about the unborn Jesus?

How does Zechariah describe what Jesus will do in 1:67-69 & 76-77?

1:78 – What does the coming of the Messiah tell us about the character of our Heavenly Father? How have you seen the Lord in this way in your life?

1:72-73 – Can you remember (from Genesis 12:1-3) what the nature of the covenant and promises made to Abraham?

### **Birth and Presentation of Jesus**

2:1-7 – Where was Jesus born?

Into what kind of conditions was Jesus born?

How do the circumstances of Jesus' birth reflect the nature of his coming?

2:8-21 – Why would God use angels to make this announcement? How is Jesus described in verse 11?

God could have sent the angel to a local business meeting, to a team of lawyers, or to a CEO convention in town – why did he choose to bring this amazing news to a group of lowly shepherds?

2:21 – What was going to happen to Jesus on the 8<sup>th</sup> day? Why is the sharing of this sign and symbol of the Jews significant?

2:22-24 – What did Joseph and Mary do? Why?

2:25-35 – How is Simeon described in verse 25?

26 – What was Simeon expecting?

29 – 32 – What do we learn about Jesus from Simeon's testimony given to him by the Holy Spirit?

What do we learn about Jesus and the Gentiles? Is this connected to any themes seen in the Old Testament?

34-35 – What was Simeon preparing Mary to one day endure?

2:36-38 – For how long was Anna widowed? How is Anna described?

What was Anna's passion in life? Do you think she struggled with materialism or a love for the world?

How could your life look more like Anna's?

38 – What did Anna know about Jesus?

How do we see the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of Simeon and Anna? Why would Luke include these stories into his account for Theophilus?

### **The Childhood of Jesus**

2:40 – What do we learn about Jesus?

How can the Son of God "increase in wisdom"? What does this teach us about his nature (being both God and man)?

"That fact that Jesus had a human body just like our human bodies is seen in many passages of Scripture. He was born just as all human babies are born (Luke 2:7). He grew through childhood to adulthood just as other children grow: "And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and favor of God was upon him" (Luke 2:40). Moreover, Luke tells us that "Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52)" (Grudem, 532).

2:42-51 – Where did Joseph and Mary find Jesus? What was he doing?

47 – How did the teachers respond to him?

49 – How did 12-year-old Jesus use this as a teaching moment for his parents?

What was his understanding of who he was?

“The story of Jesus in the temple bears subtle witness to his two natures, the divine and human. The all-too-human separation of a child from his parents in a crowd, and the equally human panic of the parents, attests to the humanity of the characters. Nevertheless, this very human boy is at home in the temple and tatively identifies with the work of God, whom he calls “my Father.” Two fathers are mentioned in the account, one human, one divine, and Jesus is the son of both” (Edwards, 96).

2:52 – How is Jesus described? What kind of wisdom was he gaining?

“Jesus had a human mind. The fact that Jesus “increased in wisdom” (Luke 2:52) says that he went through a learning process just as all other children do – he learned how to eat, how to talk, how to read and write, and how to be obedient to his parents (see Heb. 5:8). This ordinary learning process was part of the genuine humanity of Christ” (Grudem, 533),

# Jesus Prepares and Begins His Ministry

## Preparation, Baptism, & Temptation

3:10-14 – How did John’s message prepare people for Jesus’ message?

3:15-17 – How does’ John the Baptist describe Jesus?

3:21-22 – What is John’s role in the baptism?

What does the Holy Spirit do? The Father?

How does this baptism testify to the nature of Jesus?

4:1 – What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the life and ministry of Christ? How about in our life?

Did the Spirit lead Jesus away from difficult circumstances?

We often equate a comfortable and convenient life to a life blessed and led by God. Often, we see the opposite is actually true in the life of Jesus and his followers. A life on the front lines will often consist of struggle, temptation, and push-back. The Lord leads into places where we often need Him more than ever. I encourage you to pray for your life to be filled and guided by the Spirit into spiritual growth and ministry. Be willing and joyful to live a life that changes the world even if it means discomfort and struggle (for those are the things that truly produce peace and joy).

4:2 – How would Jesus have felt at the end of the forty days (He had a fully human body)? Why would this be such a strategic time to for Satan to try to tempt Jesus?

4:3-4 – What was the devil tempting Jesus to do?

How are we tempted to rely upon ourselves instead of the Lord? Give examples.

4:5-8 – How important is the Word of God to Jesus? How does He use the Word of God when dealing with temptation?

How can you do a better job using God’s Word to fight temptation? What is the last verse you memorized?

4:9 – Does the devil already know that Jesus is the Son of God? What is he trying to tempt Jesus to do?

4:13 – Has the devil given up? What does this look like in our lives?

**Jesus Reveals His True Nature and Purpose 4:14-30 (Sermon #1, January 7)**

4:14-15 – Who empowered Jesus? What should this look like in our lives?

Without phones, internet, and social media, how did the news about Jesus spread?

Where did Jesus teach? Who meets in these locations? Who did Jesus target in his teaching at the beginning of his ministry?

4:16-30 – How was Jesus treated in his hometown, where people actually knew him and watched him grow up?

4:16 – What relationship did Jesus have with Nazareth?

4:16-21 – Describe the nature of Jesus’ ministry according to verses 18-19:

Who are the “poor”, “captives”, “blind”, and “oppressed”?

4:22 – How did they respond to Jesus?



How do they respond in 4:28? What causes this change in their response to Jesus?

4:23 – Jesus knows their thoughts. Jesus literally knows all (omniscience); what has happened, what is happening, what will happen, and even what could or would happen. This knowledge of all possibilities and outcomes allows him to speak with authority about the impending direction of their minds, hearts, and words. How does knowing that Christ has knowledge of all possible outcomes influence our understanding of Christ as our Protector and Shepherd?

How must Jesus respond to their limited perspective of him simply being “Joseph’s son” (4:22)?

4:25-27 – Why does Jesus use these illustrations of prophets of God going to non-Jewish widows (and not to Israel)?

What aspect of Jesus’ ministry does this amplify?

Can you summarize what made them so angry? Do we ever fall into this same pattern of diminishing Christ and his mission?

### **Casting out Demons, Healing, Preaching from town to town**

4:31-32 – How did people view his teaching?

4:33-37 – How does Jesus handle the demon possessed man?

What do people start saying?

4:40 – Why would healings be such an important part of his ministry?

4:42-44 – What did Jesus say about his **purpose**? How does this verse compliment 19:10?

How should Jesus' purpose effect the purpose of his followers? How closely do your present priorities in life reflect the same priorities of Christ?

What are some of your next steps of growth in aligning your life's mission with Jesus'?

### **Developing His Ministry Team - Calling the Disciples**

Luke 5:1-11 – How did Jesus demonstrate his power to Simon? Why would he choose this method of picking his disciples?

How did Simon first respond to Jesus?

10 – What would be their mission?

11 – How did they show their trust and commitment to Jesus?

### **Picking the Disciples**

6:12-16 – How did Jesus spend the night before selecting the disciples?

Why is this selection of men so important for Jesus' ministry?

# Jesus Trains, Teaches, & Prepares His Disciples

## Preparing the Disciples

**8:1-3** – What were Jesus and the twelve doing together?

Who also came with Jesus and the twelve?

2-3 – What role did the women play in Jesus' ministry?

“In addition to the Twelve, a group of women traveled with Jesus and supported his ministry. Many of these women had benefited from his ministry either through exorcism or healing, three of whom Luke singles out for specific mention. An itinerant ministry like Jesus' was common, and support from women was common; but it was unusual for women to travel with a rabbi” (Bock, 713)

**9:1-6** – Up to this point, what ministry have the disciples experienced and seen?

How did Jesus prepare the disciples to go out and minister?

What was their mission?

Why didn't Jesus wait until after the resurrection to send the disciples out to do ministry?

## **Let Jesus Flip Your World Upside Down 9:18-20 / 9:21-27 (Sermon #2, January 14)**

9:18-20 – How does Jesus build the disciples faith and confidence in Him?

9:21-22 – How did Jesus prepare his disciples for what was to come? Was Jesus vague or clear?

9:23-27 – Jesus has just communicated how he will suffer and be killed. Now Jesus lets the disciples know that they will also need to be prepared to suffer.

23 – What is their first step in living for Christ?

Denying ourselves goes against every natural urge in our body and mind. What might be something in your life you need to deny in order to more closely walk with Christ?

Why do you suppose we are told to “daily” take up our cross? What does this tell us about the nature of taking up our cross?

24-25 – Verses 24-25 describe what it looks like to live out verse 23. What must be the most important thing in their lives?

Jim Elliot was a missionary who gave up everything, including his life, to take the Gospel to tribes in Ecuador. He once said, “He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” How can we loosen our grip on the things of this world and more firmly grasp the things of heaven?

What might your life look like if you started living like this? What might your small group begin to look like if they did this together?

26-27 – Is there any shame in your actions, words, or attitude about Jesus?

Are Christ’s expectations for his disciples any different than his expectations for us?

Are you daily living your life to honor Him?

Are you prepared to suffer if necessary for Christ’s sake? What form of suffering gives you the most fear?

### **A Vision of Christ’s Glory for Their Future**

9:28-36 – Who went with Jesus up onto the mountain?

Why would he take just these three men?

28 - Why were they going up on the mountain?

What happened to Christ while he was praying?

Who visited him? Why? What did they discuss?

Who else testified about Jesus?

How does the Father describe Jesus?

Why would Jesus have taken these men to see his transfiguration?

How would this experience have impacted their view of Christ?

How would this vision have motivated them for a life of ministry?

As you read this passage and by faith know it to be true, how does it impact your readiness for ministry?

### **The Disciples Learn Humility**

9:37-43 – How are the disciples humbled and how is Jesus' power shown to be superior?

Why would Jesus have allowed his disciples to fail in trying to cast out this demon?

9:46-48 – How do we know that the disciples were struggling with pride and arrogance?

What does Jesus teach them?

In what ways do we still seek to be first, prominent, or the greatest?

How can you better place yourself in the role of a servant in the church?

9:51-56 – What did the disciples learn by going into the village?

Can we expect to always receive a warm response when introducing others to Christ?

What would the disciples have learned from Jesus' rebuke?

22:24-30 – What was the nature of the dispute?

How did Jesus demonstrate humility and service?

What does it say about us if we want to be served rather than to serve others?

How can you become 'least' among those in the church? How can you improve your serve?

What great blessing will they inherit in the kingdom?

**Love the Future More Than the Past 9:51-62 / 6:46-49 (Sermon #3, January 21)**

9:57-62 – This passage contains three interactions with Jesus. All three interactions are emphasizing a singular point – what is that point?

Have you gotten this point? Are you willing and prepared to lose material gain to pursue Christ?

Will you allow the cares of this world to divert your attention from following Christ?

Is there anything that draws your eyes away from Jesus?

On a scale from 1 to 10 (ten being the highest) how strong is your commitment to Christ?

How does Jesus feel about anything less than a 10? Why is it important to remember the grace of Christ as we pursue the face of Christ?

Are Jesus' expectations of his disciples today (you) any different than to his disciples 2000 years ago?  
What is holding you back?

6:46-49 – In our commitment to Jesus, what is our foundation?

**Jesus Sends out the 72**

**10:1-12**

How has Jesus' ministry grown? Was Jesus only building into the 12?

Where was he going to send the 72? What was the purpose of their mission?

What is the status of the harvest? Has that changed?

How do we get more laborers?

Did Jesus send them out with some Samsonite luggage and a steak dinner? Who must they rely upon during their journey and ministry?

What was the message they were to bring to the towns?

How is the coming of Christ related to the coming of the Kingdom of God?

How will the cities that reject Christ be treated?

**10:17-24**

What seemed to excite the disciples?

What should be their greatest source of joy?

In watching his disciples go out and share the message of the kingdom, Jesus witnessed the first generation of believers doing ministry in His Name. How did this influence Jesus' statement in verse 18?

**Count the Cost of Being (or Not Being) All-in Luke 14:25-35 (Sermon #4, January 28)**

Who was following Jesus?

Was Jesus here to win a popularity contest?

What would be a way that Jesus could test the authenticity of those in the crowds?



25 – How does Jesus feel about another relationship in your life becoming a higher priority in your life than your relationship with Him?

Are you ready to be a disciple of Christ if you consider yourself (your needs and wants) as a higher priority than Jesus (His desires and wants)?

“Bearing your cross” may be an expression that encourages someone to die to themselves. This phrase may also be a way of communicating the sacrifice necessary to follow Christ. In either case, are you ready to leave behind everything to follow Christ? What are you still holding on to?

What things in your life often distract you from your walk with God?

28-32 – What point is Jesus trying to make?

What will happen if someone does not understand and consider the magnitude and significance of their decision to follow Christ?

33 – What happens if we value ‘things’ above Christ?

What happens if we value ourselves above Christ?

“A disciple’s attachments are potentially the most destructive thing for discipleship. This verse expresses positively what is required, in contrast to the negatively formed statements of 14:26. Hating family and self, equals renouncing all possessions, that is, all earthly attachments. The will to renounce all possessions and to ally oneself totally to Jesus is the essence of discipleship. Jesus is first. He is the one object of focus. Preserving with Jesus means being attached to him, not to possessions. The force of this radical call is “all are called to be prepared for it although it will not be a reality for all (Schweizer, 241)” (Bock, 1290).

34-35 – What is the consequence of not being All-in? How can we help one another? What role do our brothers and sisters play in helping preserve our saltiness?

## **Persecution to Come - 21:10-19**

10-12 – What can the disciples expect? Can we expect the same?

“Reference to such signs is frequently made in eschatological/apocalyptic literature. Such descriptions may be used to describe historical events in the future such as destruction of Babylon (Isa), the destruction of Pharaoh’s army (Ezek), the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost (Joel), and the destruction of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Amos). Thus, the description of “these things” given in these verses is best understood as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem. According to Josephus (Wars 6.5.3-4), such signs occurred before Jerusalem’s destruction” (Stein, 514).

13 – When these things happen, how should we view it? What should be our perspective on persecution?

How would you explain to someone else that persecution is a blessing?

14-15 – Why can we have confidence in persecution?

Do think this promise can be lived out in the workplace? In your family?

16-17 – As we look through church history, these verses have been literally fulfilled many times. What must be our perspective to be able to endure such personalized persecution?

How can living out 14:26 prepare us for 21:16-17?

Is Jesus your most important relationship in your life? Are there any people in your life that have a greater influence on you than Jesus?

18-19 – Jesus is not promising a life without physical persecution (in fact he says the opposite in other places), he is referencing your eternal life with Him. Is there anything that anyone can do to you that will affect your eternal relationship with God in Christ?

### **Prepares the Disciples for His Death - 18:31-34**

How is Jesus' impending death made known to the disciples?

Why is it important for Jesus to prepare them?

34 – When will they understand all that Jesus is telling them?

### **You Are my Witnesses! - 24:44-49**

Why is it important for the disciples to understand that Jesus fulfills the Law and the Prophets?

How will the disciples be able to truly understand all that has been written about Jesus and spoken by Jesus?

What will be proclaimed? Who will proclaim it?

How will it impact the disciples to know that Jesus has left his message and ministry into their hands?

Who will clothe them and empower them (Acts 1:8)?

## **Jesus Teaches the Crowds**

### **The Beatitudes – Blessings and Woes 6:20-26**

It is not unusual for Scripture to use a physical condition to describe a spiritual state. Why would the poor, hungry, weepy, and hated be blessed?

Matthew says, “poor in spirit.” The kingdom of God is received by those who repent and believe. How can we relate “poor in spirit” to a repentant heart?

What kind of hunger glorifies God (Psalm 63:1-2)?

What do Christians have to weep about?

23 – Why should we leap for joy (even in persecution)?

24-26 – What does Jesus say of those who seek to find fulfillment in this life?

### **Jesus Teaches about Relationships**

Jesus taught that our primary relationship is with Him. All other relationships pale in comparison to our dedication, love and commitment to Him. Our families, friends, and even our enemies must be placed in the proper priority. Having Jesus as our highest priority, does not mean that we are not to love and take care of others, rather we display our love for Christ by and through our love for others!

### **Love your Enemies - 6:27-36**

What should we love more, our possessions or our enemies? How can we display that love?

35 – How is God described? Can you be described this way?

When was the last time you gave something to someone without an expectation of anything in return?

### **Judging Others - 6:37-45**

When we judge others, what does it say about our perspective of ourselves?

What was the last plank you pulled out of your eye?

43-45 – How do our words reveal the condition of our heart?

If we are not to judge, then why are we taught the difference between good fruit and bad fruit?

What happens if we judge before we see any kind of fruit or judge before we have truly examined the fruit?

What if we judge based upon clearly seen fruit?

We are to use discernment in our judgments. Judgment without knowledge is false judgment and is condemned. Judgment based upon a consistent display of fruit (good or bad), always first looking at the sin in our own lives, is a right and just pattern of judgment (Matthew 18). This right pattern of judgment does not then suggest that we sit back fold our arms stay uninvolved. If you have discerned an area of sin in a brother or sister's life - go to them and ask questions to make sure that you understand the situation. Then express concern and help them identify this area of sin (they may be unaware). If you need help, go to an elder for wisdom and direction. We should avoid talking to others about someone's sin before we have talked to them about their sin.

What will happen if we hastily judge?

What happens if we falsely judge?

What happens if fruit is clearly displayed and we ignore it and choose not to judge?

**Jesus Wants to Shine through Us - 11:33-36**

The light is a reference to Jesus and his teaching. How can we make sure that we are not hiding it this light from others?

Why is it important to Jesus that we let his light shine through us?

**No fear of Persecution 12:4-7**

Why are we to have no fear of man?

Whom should we fear?

What is the absolute worst that someone could do to us? How does that compare to our eternal destination?

**Acknowledge Christ before Men 12:8-12**

What are some ways that we deny Christ in front of others?

How do we deny Christ by our actions and behaviors?

Can we deny Christ by our attitudes? How could our unkindness, impatience, or stinginess deny the work of Christ in our life?

What would it feel like to be standing in heaven and to hear Jesus acknowledging you before the Father and the angels?

What must we do to experience that moment?

10 – This is a tough verse. This act of blaspheming the Holy Spirit is not possible for someone who is a Christian – so please do not worry about committing this sin. Other passages teach us that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit and will never be separated from Christ (Ephesians 1:13, Romans 8:38-39). Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is an action done by a non-Christian possibly attributing all of Jesus' power to Satan (see Matthew 12:22-32) or simply choosing sin over the convicting work of the Spirit. It is definitely a tough verse.

11-12 – What can be a blessing received from persecution?

How can Christ use persecution against Christians to bring more glory to Himself?

What is your next step in having Christ shine through you even more than He is now?

#### **Jesus Calls out Sin 11:37-54**

The social expectations of this meal - "Luke sets the scene with reference to a Pharisee, a meal, and Jesus; failure to observe either the laws of hospitality or the laws of purity. Thus far, Pharisees are known to us largely as persons who scrutinize Jesus' legal observance and who repeatedly find themselves at odds with his legal views and religious practices. The fact that a Pharisee would even invite Jesus to dinner suggests a certain openness to him, though we should also recognize that the extension of hospitality might itself serve as a test. The extension and acceptance of an invitation signaled the abeyance of hospitality, a social contract whereby host and guest were to act with honor toward one another. This would require, for example, that Jesus prepare for the meal in the way prescribed by the Pharisees and that he withhold any negative (insulting) valuations of the host or his treatment in the home of the host; to perform otherwise would signal a breach in the implicit social contract" (Green, 470).

Jesus is our model. The way he treats sin is the way we should treat sin. Jesus never took sin lightly, especially intentional sin and sin that hurt others.

What does Jesus accuse the Pharisees of doing in verse 39?

What did Jesus mean in verse 40?

Explain how Christians today can have a clean outside of the cup and a dirty inside of the cup:

42 – The Pharisees gave their tithes, but what was true of their actions?

How is this a form of hypocrisy?

Describe a church that displays the love and justice of God:

45 – Were people understanding what he was saying?

46-52 - The generation during the time of Jesus was about to shed the blood of the Son of God. The generations before killed the prophets, but this is much worse. Therefore, Jesus tells them that they will be held responsible for all the innocent blood of God's messengers that has been shed. What do you think was going through the minds of the Pharisees when they heard Jesus' words?

53-54 – What did the Pharisees set in their hearts to do?

### **Temptations to Sin 17:1-4**

Who gets the “woe” in these verses?

These verses remind us how careful we need to be around others. When was the last time that your words, actions, or attitudes might have tempted someone else to sin?

You can expect to be sinned against. How are we to handle that situation?

Rebuke = a loving admonition. How can we rebuke a brother in a loving way and how can we rebuke a brother in an unloving way?

Is there ever an occasion where we do not need to forgive a repentant brother? Is there anyone in your life that you have struggled to forgive?



### **Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14**

According to verse 9, who was Jesus' audience?

What was the clear point that Jesus was trying to make? Who was in sin? What was their sin?

### **Cleanses the Temple 19:45-48**

Matthew 21:12-13 and Mark 11:15-18 refer to Jesus overturning tables and not allowing anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. John 2 mentions an earlier time when Jesus cleansed the temple by making a whip and driving people out of the temple. Can you imagine watching Jesus whip people and start throwing chairs and tables? What did this tell us about his view of sin?

What were all the different sins that were being committed in the Temple?

What did this teach us about his love for God's house?

### **A Call to Watch Ourselves 21:34-35**

What can happen to us if we are not paying attention?

Are there any "cares of life" that are weighing you down?

36 – How do we prepare ourselves?

### **The Nature of Jesus' Coming**

The coming of the Messiah signals some important realities. The coming of the Kingdom is near. The ultimate prophet and representative from God has come – Jesus God's only Son. Many expected a political ruler, but Jesus' coming will not produce political peace for the Jews, rather division and an opportunity for the Gentiles.

### **The Sign of Jonah 11:29-32**

29 – Do you think anyone ever considered Jesus a motivational speaker? What would have happened if Jesus only said positive things and never gave people the opportunity to know their real situation?

Read **Jonah 3:1-5** – What was Jonah’s message?

How did the people respond?

How does this relate to Jesus’ message?

### **Division and Not Peace 12:49-53**

How does Jesus describe the nature of his coming?

50 – Here is a foreshadowing of the cross. What do we learn about Jesus’ emotional life from this passage?

It is easy to suppress our emotions or pretend like we don’t have them. Jesus is willing to express both his positive and negative emotions. Throughout Luke we see Him grieve, weep, and feel the emotional weight of the coming cross. Jesus and the Psalms teach us that the Lord can handle every emotion that we bring to his throne. A hidden emotion is still an experienced emotion; it just hasn’t been brought into the light so that it can reveal our need for Jesus, comfort, and growth. We are to live our lives openly before the Lord and authentically with one another. Jesus is our example! What are your next steps to becoming more open and honest with the Lord and others?

Have there been divisions like Jesus expected? Do you have a personal example?

### **Jesus Preaches the Gospel & the Kingdom**

Jesus has come and the nature of his coming has been proclaimed. Jesus also teaches people how they are to respond to their Savior. The preaching of the Gospel of Faith is central to Jesus teachings and the purpose for his coming (Luke 19:10).

### **Repent or Perish 13:1-5**

Is their greatest issue outward behavior or the condition of their heart?

What does Jesus call them to do?

### **The Narrow Door 13:22-30**

What will cause many to not enter?

What will be God's response to those who do not enter through the narrow door?

28 – What will be the destination of those who do not repent?

29 – What will be the destination of those who trust Christ?

### **Proclamation to all Nations 24:44-49**

44-45 – What did Jesus do for the disciples?

What is supposed to be done with the message of Jesus' death and resurrection?

48 – How must Jesus' disciples view themselves?

How are we involved in the continuance of Jesus' ministry and message?

How are you doing at being faithful to his ministry and message?

### **Jesus Teaches in Parables**

Parables have been abused over the centuries. It became popular to turn parables into allegorical puzzles where each aspect of the parable had a meaning that needed to be deciphered. The point of a parable is to communicate a singular main point to the intended audience in a memorable way. Can you remember what you learned in the sermon you heard three weeks ago? Probably not. Jesus was a master communicator (which makes sense, he invented it) and would use every tool possible to help his audience remember his message. People remember stories, especially stories to which they can relate. Parables would often be directed right at the heart of the audience using language and circumstances that would be memorable and impacting.

Knowing the purpose of the parables will help us interpret and understand them correctly. When we read a parable, we must listen to it from the point of view of the audience (the Pharisees, disciples, unbelievers...). There are several important questions we must ask to arrive at the main point:

- Who are the major characters in the parable?

- What happens and why?
- Does anyone speak in the parable?
- What is the 'end emphasis' of the parable? The main point is usually found in the climax and the climax is usually located at the very end of the parable.
- How did the audience respond to the parable (anger, joy...)?

**Applying the parable:** How does the main point of the parable still relate to today?

- What do we have in common with the audience and how then does Jesus' message impact us?

### **The Parable of the Rich Fool – 12:13-21**

Who is Jesus speaking to?

20 – Who has the 'end emphasis' in this parable?

What does God say? 21 – How does Jesus restate this truth?

Is this a message that we need to hear today? What does it say about us if we focus on storing treasures instead of giving to God?

### **Parable of the Barren Fig Tree – 13:6-9**

Some parables are more difficult to interpret and understand. This parable gives us basically no audience or point of reference. We are left to make our best educated guess as to the main point of this parable.

In Isaiah 5 Israel is represented as a tree or plant in a vineyard. Our best guess would be that the fig tree in this parable refers to Jerusalem or to the Jewish people. Israel's leaders have been shown to be self-righteous and have led the nation down an errant spiritual path.

Based upon this likely background, what is the main point of the parable?

It is easy for Israel to think that everything is going OK. Jesus teaches that a period of time for testing fruit will be given, but after that judgment will come.

**The Parable of the Ten Minas – Luke 19:11-27**

11 – What were people expecting about the Kingdom?

When Jesus arrives in Jerusalem, what will happen (Luke 23 & 24)?

How will this parable prepare people for what is really about to happen?

Who are the two types of people that the nobleman deals with in this parable?

The servants are rewarded to do what while the nobleman is gone?

How should the disciples respond to this message?

What kind of servant will you be? What will Jesus say to you when He returns?

What do the citizens do while the nobleman is gone? What will happen when they return?

What is the message that Jesus is sending to the Jews?

This is a tricky parable. The main point seems to be – the kingdom will not appear when you expect and it will not appear in the manner that you expect. Two groups are addressed and challenged, the disciples and the Jews (who will shout 'Crucify Him' thus fulfilling the words in verse 14).