

# ALL IN

Going Deeper  
A Study in Luke & Acts

Jesus Establishes His Ministry  
Jesus Ministers to Hurting People  
Jesus Journeys to Jerusalem and the Cross  
The Church Reaching Jerusalem

# Going Deeper

## *Luke-Acts*

There is nothing quite as powerful as studying the life of Jesus. My hope is that we slow down and take the time to watch, listen, and experience Jesus interacting with hurting people, walking with the Father, and changing the world through his love, compassion, and power.



Everyone who interacts with Jesus is changed! This study is designed for us to engage in that life changing interaction. Jesus establishes his disciples and puts them on mission. We are asking Jesus to do the same in and through us. May we fall more in love with Him, worship Him, and follow His lead.

Please enjoy your time in God's Word with the Savior. Your pastors serve you with excitement and joy. We can't wait to experience how God will continue to use His Word to shape and grow us all.

For the love of the Savior and the fulfillment of His mission,

*Mike Graham*

Mike Graham

*Pastor of Group Life*

# The Design and Intention of this Study

The study guide that has been prepared is not a verse by verse study of Luke. Luke is the largest New Testament book and such a study could be quite overwhelming to develop or use. The intention of this study guide is to help the reader stop, watch, and learn from Jesus in the book of Luke. The study guide will focus on aspects of Jesus' life, ministry, and teaching. Quite a bit of Luke will be addressed, but not every difficult verse and concept will be explained and taught. The focus will continually be Jesus and his purpose as taught in the book of Luke. Time will be spent studying how Jesus established his disciples, ministered to the hurting, set his face to the cross, and the birth of the church.

This study, like every study of Scripture, should be bathed in prayer – asking God to teach and move in your heart. God's Word, at work in our life through the work of the Holy Spirit, is God's primary way of spiritually growing his children. Studying God's Word is not merely academic – it should always be pursued as a spiritual endeavor influencing our hearts, minds, and actions!

## Basic Outline *(Sermon Series Dates)*

### **Living Like Jesus - *Jesus Establishes His Ministry (Jan 7 – 28)***

- Birth & Childhood of Jesus
- Jesus Prepares and Begins His Ministry
- Jesus Trains, Teaches, & Prepares His Disciples
- Jesus Teaches the Crowds

### **Loving Like Jesus - *Jesus Ministers to Hurting People (Feb 4 – Mar 18)***

- Jesus Confronts and Loves the Legalist
- Jesus Ministers to the Hurting and the Outcast
- Jesus Heals the Sick and Broken
- Jesus Works Great Miracles
- Jesus' Prayer Life

### **All-in Like Jesus - *Jesus Journeys to Jerusalem and the Cross (Mar 25 – Apr 8)***

- Jesus Heads to Jerusalem
- Death and Resurrection of Christ

### **An All-in Church - *The Church Reaching Jerusalem (Apr 15 – May 27)***

- The Birth and Growth of the Church 1-2
- The Church Faces Opposition 3-5
- Expansion through Persecution 6-8

# How to Use this Study

**For the Individual:** Simply read the passage listed and answer the questions given about each passage. As you answer the questions, you may want to highlight favorite verse, mark key words, read the sections that were not preached, or keep a journal of your additional thoughts, meditations, and prayers. When a verse really sticks out to you, you may want to write it on a card and put it somewhere you will consistently see the card until you have the verse memorized.

**For Groups:** Groups can use this as a resource. It is designed so that groups can go deeper with the passages preached or pick supporting texts to study. **Group leaders** can use the questions given or add their own along the way. The church will be in Luke-Acts for several months, pick the sections you want to study, let your group know so they can study it ahead of time, and then discuss and enjoy.

**Introduction Material:** It is encouraged that you take the time to look through the introduction material provided in the study guide. The background information is extremely important to correctly understanding Luke's purpose and themes.

**Book Chart:** A book chart is provided. The book chart gives an organized picture of the content of the book of Luke. From this chart, certain observations can be easily made. Most of the parables recorded are recorded on the way to Jerusalem. Jesus' ministry is divided up into three time periods based upon his location. The blue text on the book chart represents which events and teachings of Jesus are original to the Lucan Gospel. Almost the entire middle portion of Luke is original. Take the time to make additional observations.

# **ALL IN**

**Luke - Acts**

*Jesus Establishes and Builds His All-in Church*

*To Glorify God by Producing More Maturing Followers of Christ*

# Living Like Jesus

## *Jesus Establishes His Ministry*

### **Birth & Childhood of Jesus**

- Genealogy and Foretelling 3:23-38
- Preparations and Foretelling of Christ's Coming 1:13-73
- Birth and Presentation of Jesus 2:1-38
- The Childhood of Jesus 2:40-52

### **Jesus Prepares and Begins His Ministry**

- Preparation, Baptism, & Temptation 3:10-22 / 4:1-13
- ***Jesus Reveals His True Nature and Purpose 4:14-30 (Sermon #1, January 7)***
- Casting out Demons, Healing, Preaching from town to town 4:31-44
- Developing His Ministry Team Calling the Disciples – 5:1-11
- Picking the Disciples 6:12-16

### **Jesus Trains, Teaches, & Prepares His Disciples**

- Preparing the Disciples 8:1-3 / 9:1-6
- ***The All-in Nature of Discipleship 9:18-20 / 9:21-27 (Sermon #2, January 14)***
- A vision of Christ's Glory for Their Future 9:28-36
- Humility 9:37-48 / 22:24-30
- ***A Challenge to Commitment 9:51-62 / 6:46-49 (Sermon #3, January 21)***
- Sends out the 72 10:1-12 / 10:17-24
- ***The Cost of Discipleship 14:25-35 (Sermon #4, January 28)***
- Persecution 21:10-19
- Prepares them for His Death 18:31-34
- You Are my Witnesses! 24:44-49

### **Jesus Teaches the Crowds**

- Blessings and Woes 6:20-26
- Relationships
  - Love your Enemies 6:27-36
  - Judging Others 6:37-45
- Jesus Wants to Shine through Us 11:33-36 / 12:4-7 / 12:8-12
- Jesus Calls Out Sin 11:37-54
- Temptations to Sin 17:1-4
- Pharisee and the Tax Collector 18:9-14
- Cleanses the Temple 19:45-48
- Call to Watch Ourselves 21:34-36

- The Nature of Jesus' Coming
- The Sign of Jonah 11:29-32
- Division and Not Peace 12:49-53
- Jesus Preaches the Gospel & the Kingdom (19:10)
  - Repent or Perish 13:1-5
  - The Narrow Door 13:22-30
  - Parable of the Lost Coin 15:8-10
  - Proclamation to all Nations 24:44-49
- Jesus Teaches in Parables / How to Interpret a Parable
  - Rich Fool 12:13-21
  - Barren Fig Tree 13:6-9
  - Ten Minas 19:11-27

# Loving Like Jesus

## *Jesus Ministers to Hurting People*

**19:41-44**

### **Jesus Confronts and Loves the Legalist**

- Demonstrates He is the Son of Man 5:17-26
- Jesus Came for the Sinner 5:30-35
- Jesus, Lord of the Sabbath 6:1-11
- Jesus Confronts the Pharisees 11:37-54
- *The Nature of the Kingdom of God* 17:20-37
- *The Rich Ruler* 18:18-30

### **Jesus Ministers to the Hurting and the Outcast**

- ***Welcomes the Children* 15:15-17 / 18:15-17 (Sermon #1, February 4)**
- *Women Ministering with Jesus* 8:1-3 / 23:27-31
- ***Spends Time with Martha & Mary* 10:38-42 (Sermon #2, February 11)**
- *A Sinful Woman* 7:36-50
- *Offers Peace to the Anxious* 12:22-34
- Frees People from Demonic Possession & Oppression 8:26-39 / 9:37-43
- *The Widow's Offering* 21:1-4
- *Ten Lepers* 17:11-19
- *Jesus' Family* 8:19-21
- ***The Good Samaritan* 10:25-37 (Sermon #4, February 25)**
- ***The Prodigal Son* 15:11-32 (Sermon #5, March 4)**
- *The Lost Sheep* 15:1-7 / *The Lost Coin* 15:8-10
- ***Spends Time with Levi and Tax Collectors* 5:27-29 (Sermon #6, March 11)**
- Spends Time with Zacchaeus 19:1-10
- *Tries to Visit a Samaritan Village* 9:51-56
- ***Jesus Invites All to the Table* 14:12-24 (Sermon #7, March 18)**

### **Jesus the Heals the Sick and Broken**

- Simon's Mother-in-law 4:38-40
- Leper 5:12-16
- A Paralytic 5:17-26
- Centurion's Servant 7:1-10
- A Dead Son 7:11-17

### **Jesus Works Great Miracles**

- Calms a Storm 8:22-25
- Feeds 5000 9:10-17
- *Jesus Heals Many* 6:17-19

### **Jesus' Prayer Life**

- Prayer in Jesus' Ministry 4:42 / 5:16 / 6:12
- The Lord's Prayer 11:1-13
- Persistent Widow 18:18

# All In Like Jesus

## *Jesus Journeys to Jerusalem and the Cross*

### **Jesus Heads to Jerusalem**

- Jesus Laments over Jerusalem 13:31-35
- **Triumphant Entry 19:28-40 (Sermon #1, March 25)**
- Passover 22:1-13
- Lord's Supper 22:14-23
- Jesus Prays on Mt of Olives 22:39-49

### **Death and Resurrection of Christ**

- Arrest 22:47-53
- Mocked 22:63-65
- Jesus before Council, Pilate, Herod, and Pilate
- **Crucifixion & Death 23:26-49 (Sermon #2, March 30)**
- **Resurrection 24:1-12 (Sermon #3, April 1)**
- **Emmaus 24:13-35 (Sermon #4, April 8)**
- Other Appearances 24:36-49
- Ascension 24:50-53

# **An All-In Church**

## ***The Church Reaching Jerusalem***

### **The Birth and Growth of the Church 1-2**

- Jesus Sets the Church on Mission 1:1-11
- **Disciples Gather and Pray 1:12-14 (Sermon #5, May 13)**
- Judas Replaced 1:15-26
- The Holy Spirit Comes and the Gospel Goes Forth 2:1-13
- Peter's Preaches the Gospel 2:14-36
- **The Church Grows Deep and Wide 2:37-47 (Sermon #1, April 15)**

### **The Church Faces Opposition 3-5**

- **Disciples Heal a Lame Beggar 3:1-10 (Sermon #2, April 22)**
- Peter Teaches that Jesus is the Anticipated Messiah 3:11-26
- Peter and John Arrested and Threatened 4:1-22
- Released and Prayer for Boldness 4:23-31
- **The Unified Lifestyle of the Church 4:32-37 (Sermon #4, May 6)**
- **Ananias and Sapphira 5:1-11 (Sermon #7, May 27)**
- Apostles Healing the Masses 5:12-16
- The Unstoppable Nature of the Gospel 5:17-42

### **Expansion through Persecution 6-8**

- Appointing of Deacons 6:1-6
- **The Church Continues to Grow 6:7 (Sermon #3, April 29)**
- Stephen Arrested 6:9-15
- **Stephen Proclaims the Gospel to the Council 7:1-53 (Sermon #7, May 20)**
- Stephen Martyred 7:54-60
- Heavy Persecution and Expansion 8:1-3

**A Gospel for All Peoples!**



# Luke - *“To write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus”*

## Introduction

1-4:13

- † Birth of John the Baptist
- † Mary’s Song
- † Birth of Christ
- † Presentation of Christ
- † Simeon & Anna
- † Ministry of Johnny B.
- † Passover Feast in Jer.
- † Jesus’ Growth
- † Baptism & Temptation
- † Genealogy

## Purpose Statements

*“I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent”*

4:43

*“For the Son of Man came to seek and save what was lost.”*

19:10

BLUE = Unique to Luke

## Jesus in Galilee

4:14-9:50

## On to Jerusalem

9:51-19:27

## In Jerusalem

19:28-24:53

Events & Miracles	Calling of Peter, James, & John Catch of Fish & Calling of Levi Appointing the 12 Jesus Anointed by a Woman Calms a Storm & Feeds 5,000 12 Sent Out Peter’s Confession Transfiguration	The 72 Sent Out At the Home of Mary & Martha Jesus’ Sorrow for Jerusalem The Rich Yung Ruler Blind Beggar Zacchaeus	Triumphal Entry Cleansing the Temple Last Supper Prayer on the Mt of Olives Arrest, Mocking, Crucifixion, & Death Resurrection, Emmaus
Teaching	Lord of the Sabbath Blessings & Woes Love for Enemies Judging Others Tree and its fruit Wise & Foolish Builders Mothers & Brothers Prediction of Death	The Cost of Following Christ Lord’s Prayer & Six Woes Jesus & Beelzebub & Divorce Warnings Against the Phariseeism Do Not Worry & Watchfulness Division & Interpreting the Times Repent or Perish & Narrow Door Cost of Being a Disciple About JB & Sin, Faith, & Duty The Kingdom of God	Resurrection of the Dead Who is the Christ? Against the Pharisees Giving like the Widow Signs- End of the Age The New Covenant
Parables	The Sower A Lamp on a Stand	The Good Samaritan & Sign of Jonah The Lamp of the Body, Ten Minas The Rich Fool & Mustard Seed Yeast & Great Banquet Lost Sheep, Coin, & Son Shrewd Manager & Lazarus Persistent Widow & Pharisee/Tax Col.	The Tenants
Healings	Simon’s Mother & Leper Paralytic & Faith of the Centurion Raises a Widow’s Son Legion & Dead Girl Bleeding Woman Possessed Boy	Crippled Woman 10 Lepers- 1 Thankful Man with Dropsy	High Priest’s Servant
Opposition	Rejected in Hometown 5:21,	Samaritan Village Pharisees House, 11:15, 11:37,	19:39, 20:1-8, Tax to Caesar, 20:27

*“As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.” 9:51*

# Living Like Jesus

## *Jesus Establishes His Disciples and Ministry*

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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).

# Loving Like Christ

## Jesus Ministers to Hurting People

*19:41-44*

### Jesus Confronts and Loves the Legalist

- Demonstrates He is the Son of Man 5:17-26
- Jesus Came for the Sinner 5:30-35
- Jesus, Lord of the Sabbath 6:1-11
- Jesus Confronts the Pharisees 11:37-54
- *The Nature of the Kingdom of God 17:20-37*
- *The Rich Ruler 18:18-30*

### Jesus Ministers to the Hurting and the Outcast

- ***Welcomes the Children 15:15-17 / 18:15-17 (Sermon #1, February 4)***
- *Women Ministering with Jesus 8:1-3 / 23:27-31*
- ***Spends Time with Martha & Mary 10:38-42 (Sermon #2, February 11)***
- *A Sinful Woman 7:36-50*
- *Offers Peace to the Anxious 12:22-34*
- Frees People from Demonic Possession & Oppression 8:26-39 / 9:37-43
- *The Widow's Offering 21:1-4*
- *Ten Lepers 17:11-19*
- *Jesus' Family 8:19-21*
- ***The Good Samaritan 10:25-37 (Sermon #4, February 25)***
- ***The Prodigal Son 15:11-32 (Sermon #5, March 4)***
- *The Lost Sheep 15:1-7 / The Lost Coin 15:8-10*
- ***Spends Time with Levi and Tax Collectors 5:27-29 (Sermon #6, March 11)***
- Spends Time with Zacchaeus 19:1-10
- *Tries to Visit a Samaritan Village 9:51-56*
- ***Jesus Invites All to the Table 14:12-24 (Sermon #7, March 18)***

### Jesus the Heals the Sick and Broken

- Simon's Mother-in-law 4:38-40
- Leper 5:12-16
- A Paralytic 5:17-26
- Centurion's Servant 7:1-10
- A Dead Son 7:11-17

### **Jesus Works Great Miracles**

- Calms a Storm 8:22-25
- Feeds 5000 9:10-17
- *Jesus Heals Many* 6:17-19

### **Jesus' Prayer Life**

- Prayer in Jesus' Ministry 4:42 / 5:16 / 6:12
- The Lord's Prayer 11:1-13
- Persistent Widow 18:18

## **The Heart of Jesus 19:41-44**

Jesus had just received the praise of the crowds welcoming him like a king into Jerusalem. Normally this would be a time of celebration and wonder as the Son of God rides into Zion with power (one who is mighty to save) and humility (on a donkey). As a Pharisee rebuke this show of worship, Jesus acknowledges that creation itself will shout out if the crowds were silenced. This was a moment for the ages!

Yet, shortly after, Jesus' sees the city. He knows that it will reject Him. He can see the devastation both spiritually and physically that will follow. He weeps! Celebration is followed by incredible sorrow. Jesus truly loves these people. In less than a week, the crowds in Jerusalem will shout for his crucifixion, and yet He shows love, compassion, and empathy for them.

We are to reflect the heart of Jesus! As we look over our city and valley, do we weep over the fact that there are so many who are spiritual dead and suffering? Is your heart impacted by this reality? Have you been moved to action?

May God so move in our hearts, as we study His love for others, that we are transformed to look, feel, and act more like Jesus.

***“Jesus, make us to see through your eyes. Let us feel the weight of the spiritual darkness of our city. Bring tears to our eyes and determination to our hearts. Use us to bring your Gospel to these broken people.”***

### **Jesus States His Purpose – 4:18; 5:32; 9:56; 19:10**

How would you summarize these verses?

How does His purpose place him in the homes of tax collectors and into friendships with ‘sinners’?

How does His purpose shape your actions? The actions of the church? Your relationships?

## **Jesus Confronts and Loves the Legalist**

When we interact with others we do so with limited information. All we have to respond to is their words, expressions, body language, and tone. Jesus can interact with others on a completely different level. Jesus sees the heart and knows the true issues in a person's life. He can see a humble heart and he can see a hard heart. As Jesus interacts with religious leaders, he comes into contact with a large number of hard hearts – people who hate Him and his Father (while claiming allegiance to God). Individuals who have lead his people astray and are trying to deny Him as the coming Messiah.

The religious leaders were emphasizing the law and additions they had made to the law (found in a book they put together called the Talmud) as the foundation for their acceptance before God and preeminence over their fellow man. In essence, they cut the mercy and grace out of the equation. In their system, they no longer needed to look up to the Lord for salvation. They simply needed to look in the mirror. Finding salvation and acceptance before God through the law is legalism. Expecting others to live up to these man-made standards for God's favor is a false Gospel and spiritually abusive. Jesus is loving, but He must also clean up this mess of false teaching and abuse of God's people. Salvation is found in the work of Christ, not the accomplishment and works of man.

### **Jesus Demonstrates He is the Son of Man 5:17-26**

What was the Pharisees response to Jesus forgiving sins?

Would this have been the right response if Jesus was not the Son of God?

How did Jesus clearly demonstrate to them that He was the Son of God and therefore did have the authority to forgive sins?

How did Jesus demonstrate patience and mercy with the Pharisees?

### **Jesus Came for the Sinner 5:30-35**

Why did the Pharisees avoid eating with the 'sinners'?

Why did Jesus eat with the tax collectors and 'sinners'? When was the last time you associated yourself with someone that others look down upon?

What did Jesus teach the Pharisees in this interaction?

How did Jesus differentiate himself from John?

What did Jesus intend to teach the Pharisees in this interaction?

In these first interactions with the religious leaders, was Jesus harsh or tough on them?

How can we be a church that opens our arms to everyone in our society? How do we have an open seat for everyone and still pursue holiness as a church?

How can we better extend both grace and truth in our church?

### **Jesus, Lord of the Sabbath 6:1-11**

What did Jesus teach them about the Sabbath?

“Son of Man” is a difficult title to define. It may reference Daniel 7:13-14, a vision that seems to reference the Son of Man as the coming Messiah. Jesus is the primary one to refer to himself as the Son of Man. We are forced to assume that either Jesus’ audience understood the reference or Jesus was using a term that was intentionally vague to keep his identity a partial mystery, so that people would need to observe his works to clearly see his true nature.

The rules of the Sabbath were given by God. If Jesus is the Lord over the Sabbath and its regulations, then what must be true about Jesus?

6-11 – What was the intention of the Pharisees?

Did Jesus fear the rejection of the Pharisees?

In the response of the Pharisees, how do we see their hatred towards Christ and lack of compassion towards their common man?

### **Jesus Confronts the Pharisees 11:37-54**

Jesus has demonstrated his deity in multiple ways. Jesus has given the Pharisees many opportunities to believe. Now Jesus begins to publically rebuke the Pharisees for their sin. Why is this an appropriate next step?

How have the Pharisees cleaned the outside of the cup? What does it mean to clean the inside of the cup?

Are we still tempted today to focus on the outside of the cup? According to 1 John 1:8, what is true of the inside of our cup?

Why is it important that we continually check the motives and intentions of our heart? How do we do this?

45 – Was Jesus accomplishing his goal?

47-51 – What will be charged against this generation? Why?

How had the sins of the Pharisees hindered others?

How has this interaction with the Pharisees changed in tone from the first interactions?

53-54 – What did the Pharisees intend to do?

As we study Jesus' interactions with people, we will see that his response is based upon the hearts of his audience. The Pharisees had rejected Christ on multiple occasions. They had devoted themselves to a life of self-promotion, destroying their faith and the faith of many who followed their lead. Jesus in these later interactions would not focus on working miracles to show his authenticity. He now spoke directly to their hard and sinful hearts. He rebuked and condemned their sin. When sin is exposed it can either create a contrite heart of repentance or it can further harden an already hard heart.

When do we need to hear hard words? Who in your life can speak these to you?

### **The Nature of the Kingdom of God 17:20-37**

“In the Jewish mind, the expression, “Kingdom of Heaven” referred not so much to any particular period, as in general ‘the Rule of God – as acknowledged, manifested, and eventually perfected” (Edersheim).

An Analysis of 119 passages in the New Testament where the expression “**Kingdom**” occurs, show that it means:

- The Rule of God – 34 times
- Manifested in and through Christ – 17 times
- Is apparent in and through Christ – 11 times
- Gradually develops through hindrances and persecution – 24 times
- Triumphant at Second Coming – 12 times
- Perfected in World to Come – 31 times

17:20-21 - The Pharisees saw the Kingdom as a future Kingdom distinct from Christ. Jesus clearly teaches that the Kingdom is defined as His rule and reign over all things.

17:22-37 – There is an ‘already, not yet’ nature to the Kingdom of God. It is already in their midst (21), and yet there is another day yet to come (24) – both are connected to the presence of Jesus. There is a clear change in the nature of Jesus’ first coming (recorded here in Luke) and a time in the future when Jesus returns again.

Describe what we learn about the present work of the Kingdom in Jesus’ earthly ministry:

What do we learn about the day when Jesus returns? What will it be like in that day?

### **The Rich Ruler 18:18-30**

18 - What do we learn about this man from his question?

19 – Why would Jesus ask this question and make this statement?

What does Jesus expose about the ruler’s heart through the conversation?

This man was seeking heaven, but He was not seeking after Jesus. The rich young ruler did not understand the nature of the person standing in front of him. He wanted to be justified through

obedience. Jesus showed him that he lacked the capacity to be fully obedient and earn his way to eternal life. Jesus is more than a teacher, moralist, or religious leader. He is our Savior. We always come to him empty handed. There is nothing we can contribute to our salvation. How should this change our perspective on good works in evangelism? In measuring spiritual growth in the life of a Christian?

What did this young man need to understand? How did Jesus direct his heart?

### **What is Legalism? Do we struggle with Legalism?**

It is important to remember that we are all prone to rely upon our works for security, approval, and acceptance before God and man. Like the rich young ruler, we all realize (on some level) that we fall short and experience the shame of our failed efforts. Shame can lead us to the cross and the plea for forgiveness and a new heart, or shame can lead us to comparison, isolation, or blame.

In comparison, we will add even more laws and rules to the list that God has given to create a way to grade ourselves versus others. Our hearts seek to hide or numb our shame by comparing our own perceived holiness to those who hold to lower standards. Holding ourselves or others to this man-made set of rules, in order to find acceptance and approval instead of the cross alone = LEGALISM. Any attempt to use good works to atone, appease, or find acceptance before God is a movement towards legalism. Legalism minimizes Christ and his work by attempting to emphasize our work.

This process kills churches and individuals. It obscures the Gospel and minimizes Christ. May God continue to heal us from our legalism and ongoing attempts to work around Jesus instead of running to Jesus!

## **Jesus Ministers to the Hurting and the Outcast**

### **Welcomes the Children 18:15-17 (Sermon #1, February 4)**

What did the disciples' response tell us about their view of the value of infants and children?

"Although it is easy to romanticize about children with respect to this periscope, such qualities as "innocence," "openness to the future," and "trusting" are not the first ones that come to mind when reviewing general perception of children in the first century. WE have already noted the high mortality rate about young children; added to this is the simple observation that children were viewed as "not adults." They might be valued for their present or future contribution to the family business, especially in an agricultural context, but otherwise they possessed little if any intrinsic value as human beings" (Green, 650)

What is Jesus teaching us in these verses?

How can wonder, wholehearted trust, and amazement continue to be a part of our Christian life even years after becoming a Christian?

It is important to notice the juxtaposition between the rich ruler and children. One would naturally think that the ruler deserves a seat at the table and the children should be brushed aside, yet, the kingdom of God is changing all of their perceived values. "Jesus is asking his followers to embrace a topsy-turvy system of values and to extend respectful service to that social group most often overlooked. The rationale for such behavior is straightforward. It grows out of a transformed sense of how the world works, one based on the power of the kingdom of God to deconstruct those worldly systems and values that stand in opposition to God's project" (Green, 651).

### **Women Ministering with Jesus 8:1-3**

Who all were included as Jesus' traveling companions?

Who helped support the ministry?

What are some conclusions we can draw about the presence and role of women in Jesus' ministry?

How does Jesus show how much he values women?

## **Spends Time with Martha & Mary 10:38-42 (Sermon #2, February 11)**

What did Martha focus on when Jesus arrived?

Where did Mary focus her attention?

How did Jesus respond to these decisions?

We have this same decision before us everyday – get wrapped up in the details of life or to sit at the feet of Jesus. How are you doing at sitting at the feet of Jesus?

What can we learn about spiritual brother and sister relationships from Jesus' friendship with these women?

## **A Sinful Woman 7:36-50**

Where was Jesus dining? What are some of the things we have learned about the Pharisees up to this point? How did they view themselves?

The Pharisees most likely would not have even invited a woman to sit at the table. What a surprising turn of events to have this woman enter the room and take over the attention of the entire group and Jesus the honored guest. What do you think they were thinking when she entered the room?

Why was she weeping? What was she communicating to Jesus through all of her actions and emotions?

What is your emotional response to your thoughts of Jesus?

Are you willing to let others see those emotions?

Who would you rather be in this account, reclining at the table or anointing Jesus' feet with your tears?

What did the 'religious' folks have to learn from this 'sinner'?

What would happen if our church had an influx of our city's 'sinners'? What could we learn from that experience?

How does this account continue to teach us about Jesus' view, appreciation, and compassion for women?

Women play a major role in Luke's narrative:

- *Elizabeth (1:5-7, 13, 24, 25, 36, 40-45, 56-61)*
- *Mary (1:26-56)*
- *Anna (2:36-38)*
- Peter's mother-in-law (4:38-39)
- *Widow of Nain (7:11-17)*
- *Sinful woman (7:36-50)*
- *Women who minister (8:1-3)*
- Hemorrhaging woman (8:43-48)
- *Martha and Mary (10:38-42)*
- *Crippled woman (13:10-17)*
- *Parable of the woman with lost coin (15:1-8)*
- *Parable of widow and judge (18:1-8)*
- Widow's mite (21:1-4)
- Women at the crucifixion (23:49, 55-56)
- Women at the tomb (24:10-11)
- *Report of women at the tomb (24:22-24)*

Women were at the center of many of Jesus' illustrations, and as we see in the list above, Luke has many unique details on this theme. Italicized are unique to Luke (Bock, 710).

Summarize what we learn about Jesus' view of women and relationships with women?

What are ways that we can better love, honor, and serve the women in our church?

How can men pursue friendships with their sisters in Christ while maintaining purity of heart and intent? Women, what do you feel like your brothers need to hear in their desire and attempt to grow in this area?

### **Offers Peace to the Anxious 12:22-34**

We have never had access to more amenities and comforts than we do here today in America. Yet, “anxiety has become the number one mental health issue in North America. It’s estimated that one third of the North American adult population experiences anxiety unwellness issues” (Anxiety Disorders Association of America).

We often believe things that provide comfort and convenience will lead to peace and joy. How is comfort and convenience different than peace and joy?

22-32 – What perspective does the Lord give to ease anxiety and worry?

How can more ‘stuff’ equal more stress and anxiety?

33-34 – What is a proper view of our possessions? How does this kill anxiety?

How can we go from being tight fisted with a strong grip on our possessions to holding our possessions with an open hand?

What is your next step?

How does this perspective influence our point of view on our children, spouse, and grand children?

What holds you back from truly believing in God’s love, protection, and provision in your life?

### **Frees People from Demonic Possession & Oppression**

8:26-39 – Describe the man who lived in the tombs:

How did the demons respond to Jesus?

What was the end result for this man? What did Jesus ask him to do in verse 39?

Why would the other people have asked Jesus to leave?

From this passage, what do we learn about demons? Do you suppose this could still happen today?

From this passage, what do we learn about Jesus?

9:37-43 – Does Satan have any compassion for children? How would you describe the wickedness of the enemy?

How did Jesus remove the demon?

43 – How did the people respond? How did Jesus' power over the enemy point to the coming of the Kingdom of God?

### **The Widow's Offering 21:1-4**

What is the difference between the rich and the widow?

When was the last time you gave out of your nest egg instead out of your surplus?

What holds you back from being more generous? What does this tell you about your view of God?

### **Ten Lepers 17:11-19**

What does this passage teach us about the Kingdom of God?

What does thankfulness to Jesus look like today?

All of us were spiritual lepers! How much time do we daily or weekly spend at the savior's feet in thanksgiving and prayer?

How can we grow in our praise, thanksgiving, and prayer?

### **Jesus' Family 8:19-21**

This may feel like a diss on Jesus' immediate family, but what is Jesus trying to teach us about family?

Of course, our immediate family is very important (Ephesians 5:22-6:9; Colossians 3:18-25), but our spiritual family is considered just as important. What would it look like to live out this balance between our physical and spiritual families?

At Bible Center, our groups provide environments to connect with your spiritual family. What is your next step in getting more connected?

### **The Parable of the Good Samaritan – 10:25-37**

25-29 – What is the context of the parable?

29 – What was the Lawyer trying to accomplish?

What do you know about Samaritans?

In present day language, this story would be about a Baptist pastor, a missionary, and a member of Isis (the Samaritan). Which of these would you expect to stop and help you?

Who was the true neighbor in this parable? How then are we to show neighborly love? To whom?

How did the lawyer probably feel after hearing the parable? Did he justify himself?

Did Jesus make his point? How?

Everyone who understands this parable will be convicted and realize that they can do a better job and loving the people in their life. Everyone should be loved, not just those who we deem 'lovable'.

What are some other ways that the Kingdom of God turns societal and political norms on their head?

#### **The Prodigal Son 15:11-32 (Sermon #5, March 4)**

15:1-2 – Who is listening to the parable? What is their attitude and perspective on Jesus and His ministry?

Parables are told with a particular audience in mind and with a desired response. How does this parable strike at the heart of the grumbling Pharisees?

Who become angry in the parable? Why?

What does the father teach the older son? What does Jesus teach the Pharisees?

#### **The Lost Sheep 15:1-7**

How does this parable effect the ministries of the church? How do we reflect the heart of Jesus in our priorities as a church?

5 – How does Jesus return the sheep to the fold?

7 – When was the last time you shared the Gospel with someone and helped them climb on the shoulders of Jesus?

**Parable of the Lost Coin 15:8-10**

What is the main point of this parable?

Describe God's joy over a repentant sinner:

The parable of the lost coin is one of three parables in Luke 15 all emphasizing the same main point. Read through the chapter and write down what Jesus' emphasize to the people:

Why would Luke devote an entire chapter to just this one subject?

Why would Jesus give multiple parables to communicate the same main point?

How can we better communicate same point to our Bible Center family?

**Spends Time with Levi and Tax Collectors 5:27-32 (Sermon #6, March 11)**

Tax collectors were public enemy #1. They would over charge and keep the extra. How did Levi respond to Jesus' invitation?

What does Levi do for his friends after he meets Jesus?

Do we have people in our life we still need to introduce to Jesus? When could you invite them into your home?

Why was Jesus never concerned with the perceptions and judgments of others?

### **Zacchaeus 19:1-10**

Describe the difference between Zacchaeus' response to Jesus versus the response of the Pharisees:

How did Zacchaeus respond to his sin?

How did Jesus respond to Z?

It is awesome to see this man of wealth forsake all things for the sake of Christ. If Jesus came over for dinner, what sin in your life would you need to confess to Him?

What was the result of Jesus eating dinner with this 'sinner'?

When was the last time you spent time with a 'sinner'? Do you make it a priority to spend time with non-Christians?

10 – Why did Jesus come? How should his purpose be reflected in your life?

### **Tries to Visit a Samaritan Village 9:51-56**

Jews would go out of their way to avoid contact with Samaritans. Samaritans felt the same way about Jews. Why would Jesus intentionally try to spend time in a Samaritan village?

### **Jesus Invites All to the Table 14:15-24 (Sermon #7, March 18)**

What happened to those who were first invited?

What kind of excuses did they give? Have you heard these before?

How did the master feel about the report of the servant?

What did the master do?

Who is Jesus inviting to the banquet?

## **Jesus Heals the Sick and Broken**

What would it communicate to people who saw Jesus healing others? Why was this such an important part of his ministry?

### **Simon's Mother-in-law 4:38-40**

How did Jesus spend his entire day?

What was the result of Jesus being known as a healer?

### **A Leper 5:12-16**

Did anyone ever touch a leper? Why not?

How did Jesus display his compassion by touching this man who was both contagious and unclean?

Why did Jesus want the man to show himself to the priests? How was this an act of grace and evangelism towards the present-day priests?

Why did Jesus want this man to tell no one except for the priests?

What would happen to Jesus' teaching and preaching ministry if everyone only wanted to be healed?

### **A Paralytic 5:17-26**

Whose power did Jesus use to heal?

What did the paralytic man's friends do to put him in front of Jesus?

How much effort are you putting into placing your friends at the feet of Jesus?

### **The Centurion's Servant 7:1-10**

Would the centurion had been a Jew or Gentile?

How did Jesus respond to the centurion's faith?

Have you ever shown faith that would marvel the Son of God?

Did Jesus even need to touch the servant in order to heal him? What does this tell us about his power?  
What did this tell us about the centurion's faith?

### **A Dead Son 7:11-17**

What made this healing so miraculous?

What did Jesus demonstrate to the onlookers?

How did they respond to what they had seen?

How do we see Jesus' love and compassion in this healing?

## **Jesus Works Great Miracles**

We have already studied how Jesus heals the lame and makes the blind to see. All of these are incredible miracles over God's normal pattern of healing. In addition to healing, Jesus will do other miracles that demonstrate his lordship over the laws of nature.

### **Calms a Storm 8:22-25**

What is the first thing that Jesus did when he got on the boat? Does it surprise you that Jesus was tired?

Did the storm wake up Jesus?

What do you think it would have been like to watch Jesus verbally rebuke the winds and the waves and then to watch them obey? How does this reality affect your perspective on the winds and waves in your life?

What did Jesus say to the disciples? How could they have shown more faith?

How did the disciples respond to what they witnessed?

Why would Luke have recorded this miracle?

How do we see both Jesus' humanity and deity here in this passage?

### **Feeds 5000 9:10-17**

Where was Jesus teaching? What was happening to the crowd?

There were about 5000 men. This does not include women and children. There were easily over 10,000 people there listening to Jesus. What did that crowd learn about Jesus that day?

What should be your heart's attitude when you ask for provision from your Father?

How many baskets were left over? How many disciples were there? What did each disciple get to experience that day?

**Jesus Heals Many 6:17-19**

Why would healing have been such a big part of Jesus' ministry? What does this teach us about the heart of Jesus?

What does this teach us about Jesus' view and engagement into the total human condition?

For centuries, there has been a platonic view of mankind – a separation of body and spirit / material and immaterial. How does Jesus destroy this view?

What if He would have just taught without healing? How would that have informed people about the character and nature of Jesus and His ministry?

The church is the continuation of Jesus' ministry. How must this impact our understanding and design of our ministries?

## Jesus' Prayer Life

### Prayer in Jesus' Ministry 4:42

This text is parallel to Mark 1:35 "And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed." What do we learn about Jesus' prayer life from these verses?

Why do you think Jesus would go to a desolate place to pray?

Why did he value prayer above sleeping in? When was the last time you set your alarm clock earlier in order to get up and pray?

What day this week could you wake up earlier to spend time in prayer?

**Luke 5:16** – His mission was to seek and save the lost (19:10). How would withdrawing to desolate places benefit his mission?

Was popularity ever an excuse to not spend time with the Father? Is busyness a valid excuse for us?

Where is a place where you can get away from everyone to pray? Is there a desolate place in your house?

**Luke 6:12** – How do you think Jesus felt healing the multitudes, teaching, and ministering to crowds all day long?

Why didn't he just get a good night sleep instead of a night of prayer?

What was the huge decision he made in the morning (6:12-16)?

What does Jesus by example teach us about prayer and big decisions?

Have you ever spent a night in prayer? Often times because of physical weakness it is hard to do this alone. However, a group of people praying together can often last the night. Is it possible for you to organize a time like this?

### **The Lord's Prayer 11:1-13**

This version of the Lord's Prayer is a little shorter than the Matthew version. What is the first thing that Jesus does in verse 2?

"Your Kingdom come" – What is Jesus praying to happen? Should we continue to pray for the same?

3 – What does Jesus ask for? Is it an extravagant request?

How is praying for daily bread different than praying for the newest model of a particular car?

4 – Why is confession a part of our prayer life? Why is it important to pray for protection from temptation (James 1:14)?

5-8 – What is the point that Jesus is trying to make in these verses?

9-13 – What kind of gifts can we trust our Father to give us?

Is there a promise of good gifts without asking?

### **The Persistent Widow 18:1-8**

What does Jesus teach us about prayer from this passage?

What are the things in your life that you have been praying for consistently?

How could others help you remain faithful to making these requests?

22:40 – How often do you pray for purity?

What temptations are you facing in life? Are they a central part of your prayer life?

22:44 – In His most emotionally difficult moments on earth – what was He doing?

What does Jesus teach you about Himself from this verse?

What does He teach you about prayer? In times of agony, pain, or distress, what must be our response?

41-44 – Does God always answer a prayer in the manner that you request?

Is God's way always the easy way? What will happen if we think God's goal for us is an easy and tragedy-free life?

Summarize what you have learned about prayer by watching the life of Christ:

# All In Like Jesus

## *Jesus Journeys to Jerusalem and the Cross*

### **Jesus Heads to Jerusalem**

- Jesus Laments over Jerusalem 13:31-35
- **Triumphant Entry 19:28-40 (Sermon #1, March 25)**
- Passover 22:1-13
- Lord's Supper 22:14-23
- Jesus Prays on Mt of Olives 22:39-49

### **Death and Resurrection of Christ**

- Arrest 22:47-53
- Mocked 22:63-65
- Jesus before Council, Pilate, Herod, and Pilate
- **Crucifixion & Death 23:26-49 (Sermon #2, March 30)**
- **Resurrection 24:1-12 (Sermon #3, April 1)**
- **Emmaus 24:13-35 (Sermon #4, April 8)**
- Other Appearances 24:36-49
- Ascension 24:50-53

## **Jesus Heads to Jerusalem**

### **Jesus Laments over Jerusalem 13:31-35**

13:31-35 – What do you learn about Jesus from this passage?

What causes him to lament?

What did Jesus long to do? How did the people treat all the prophets that God had sent to them?

19:41-44 – What causes Jesus to cry?

Throughout the Old Testament Israel would be judged and defeated in war because of their disobedience. How do you think God responded emotionally to these necessary tragic events?

Do you love the people in your city? Do you weep over the reality that they are dying and will be eternally separated from God if they do not receive Christ?

Jesus models for us a heart of love and compassion for people – even people who reject him and hate him. How is your heart and attitude doing in this area? How often do you feel sorrow for those who reject Christ? How often do you pray for them?

### **Because Jesus is a Lover and a Fighter (Sermon #1, March 25)**

#### **Triumphant Entry 19:28-40**

Why did the crowds rejoice and praise God?

How did the Pharisees respond?

What did Jesus mean in verse 40?

What do you suppose that Jesus wanted to communicate by riding into town on a donkey that has never been ridden to the sound of the crowds praising Him?

What would happen a week later in the city of Jerusalem?

### **Lord's Supper 22:14-23**

15 – What did Jesus look forward to doing? What does this say about his relationship with the disciples?

What does this teach us about Jesus' love for us and his desire to spend time with us?

Passover celebrated what Old Testament event?

How did Jesus change the significance of this event? What are they supposed to remember?

20 – What was the Old Covenant?

How does the blood of Jesus unveil a New Covenant?

“‘Covenant’ is fundamentally a relational term, pointing in this case to the bond of fidelity and love between God and humanity. The “you” with whom Jesus thus renews the divine covenant offers to the apostles who have joined him at the table, but it is precisely here that Luke’s rationale for designating them in this co-text as “apostles” (rather than “disciples”) comes into sharp focus. As “apostles,” they are chosen to represent and to lead Israel (6:12-16; 22:29-30); hence, this covenant is extended beyond Jesus’ immediate table partners to all who embrace “good news to the poor” (Green, 764).

### **Jesus Prays on Mt of Olives 22:39-46**

40 – What does Jesus want his disciples to do?

41-42 – What is the difference between a request and a demand? Which is Jesus doing? What does this teach us about prayer?

How do we see Jesus' humanity in these verses?

What does this tell us about the amount of pain that Jesus is about to endure?

Is Jesus fully aware of what is about to happen?

Hebrews 12:1-2 – What do you learn about Jesus from these verses? Where is He?

Hebrews 12:3 – What is it about Jesus that will help us not grow weary or fainthearted?

Hebrews 12:4 – How did Jesus resist sin to the point of bloodshed? How will considering this motivate us in our fight against sin?

How does Jesus model a passion for God's will in the garden? How does he demonstrate a heart committed to obedience no matter what the cost?

44 – Does Jesus' intensely emotional response surprise you? What does this teach us about emotions and our relationship with God?

## **Death and Resurrection of Christ**

### **Arrest 22:47-53**

How does Jesus show his mercy and authority in these verses?

### **Mocked 22:63-65**

How did Jesus respond to the mockery?

Why is Jesus so loving and patient? How can we better reflect this in our life?

When was the last time you had to endure physical pain to remain obedient to God?

Do love anyone besides your family enough to endure physical pain for their sake?

Try to put into words how much does Jesus love you:

How can you grow in your love for him?

### **Because Jesus Forgives (Sermon #2, March 30)**

#### **Crucifixion & Death 23:26-49**

28-31 – How did Jesus respond to the women?

What was on Jesus' heart while he was being beaten and led to his death?

34 – Who was Jesus praying for?

Why would He pray this prayer? What does this teach us about Jesus?

Do you forgive like Christ? Is there **any** bitterness, anger, or resentment in your heart against someone? After watching Christ, do you have any right to not quickly and completely forgive?

Did the mocking stop after Jesus was put on the cross? Why did everyone hate him so much?

40-43 – What do we learn about Christ from this short conversation?

Even on the edge of death, beaten and bloodied, how did Jesus spend the last bit of his energy?

46 – Did anyone take Jesus' life from Him? Was Jesus ever not in control?

44-45 – What was happening as Jesus' life was coming to a close?

How does the torn curtain point to the new covenant found in the death of Christ?

47-49 – How did the people respond to his death?

**Because Jesus Lives 24:1-12 (Sermon #3, April 1)**

6 – How had Jesus prepared his disciples for this moment?

What were the different responses to the news?

Would your response have been like Peter's or one of the others?

Do you still marvel at Christ today? Do you rush out of bed to meet with Him? When was the last time he made your eyes sparkle and your heart skip a beat?

**Emmaus 24:13-35 (Sermon #4, April 8)**

13-15 – What were these disciples doing? How would you have been acting 3 days after the Jesus' death?

17 - What do you suppose they were talking about?

19-20 – How did they describe Jesus? Did they really get it yet?

21 – What had they expected?

Did they already have all the information they needed to believe?

25-27 – What did Jesus do?

What do we learn about the nature of the books of Moses and all the Prophets?

Who does the entire Old Testament point to?

32 – How did the presence of Jesus affect them?

When you open up your Bible and read, how should Jesus be involved?

**Other Appearances 24:36-49**

36-43 – How did Jesus strengthen their faith?

44 – Which books of the Bible point to Jesus?

Can you think of any Psalms that point to Christ?

45 – How do we know that faith and truly understanding Scripture is a spiritual endeavor?

Does Jesus still help us today?

47 – Who should hear this message?

48 – Who should go?

Are you a witness to what Christ has done? Is every Christian a witness?

49 – What are they waiting for in Acts 1:8?

**Ascension 24:50-53**

52-53 – How has their demeanor changed from verse 17?

Where is Jesus now? How should we respond to that reality?

# **An All-In Church**

## ***The Church Reaching Jerusalem***

### **Acts 1-7**

#### **The Birth and Growth of the Church 1-2**

- Jesus Sets the Church on Mission 1:1-11
- **Disciples Gather and Pray 1:12-14 (Sermon #5, May 13)**
- Judas Replaced 1:15-26
- The Holy Spirit Comes and the Gospel Goes Forth 2:1-13
- Peter's Preaches the Gospel 2:14-36
- **The Church Grows Deep and Wide 2:37-47 (Sermon #1, April 15)**

#### **The Church Faces Opposition 3-5**

- **Disciples Heal a Lame Beggar 3:1-10 (Sermon #2, April 22)**
- Peter Teaches that Jesus is the Anticipated Messiah 3:11-26
- Peter and John Arrested and Threatened 4:1-22
- Released and Prayer for Boldness 4:23-31
- **The Unified Lifestyle of the Church 4:32-37 (Sermon #4, May 6)**
- **Ananias and Sapphira 5:1-11 (Sermon #7, May 27)**
- Apostles Healing the Masses 5:12-16
- The Unstoppable Nature of the Gospel 5:17-42

#### **Expansion through Persecution 6-8**

- Appointing of Deacons 6:1-6
- **The Church Continues to Grow 6:7 (Sermon #3, April 29)**
- Stephen Arrested 6:9-15
- **Stephen Proclaims the Gospel to the Council 7:1-53 (Sermon #7, May 20)**
- Stephen Martyred 7:54-60
- Heavy Persecution and Expansion 8:1-3

**A Gospel for All Peoples!**

Jesus clearly teaches his purpose for coming in the Gospel of Luke. He has come to seek and save the lost, to reach out to the sick, and to find the lost sheep (Luke 19:10; 4:18; 5:31-2; 9:56; 15). Acts records the passing of this ministry onto the disciples and a young growing church.

Acts is informative, but not considered normative. In other words, the principles we see in the early church are a model for us, but the specific instances will probably never be repeated. The church was established to continue the mission of Christ. The church of Acts was a particular group of people, in a unique period of time, during the very first stages of the church's establishment and growth. Those particulars cannot be repeated today, but the mission and purpose remain the same – the mission of the church in their day is the same as the mission of the church in our day. If we find that our church has drifted away from living out the mission of Jesus, then we are the ones who need to make the adjustment.

## **The Birth and Growth of the Church 1-2**

### **Jesus Sets the Church on Mission 1:1-11**

1-5 – Luke summarizes the last phase of Jesus' earthly ministry and the birth of the church. What were the last orders of Jesus?

6-8 – Even after the death and resurrection of Christ, the disciples and many of his followers were still expecting Jesus to become a political Messiah for the people of Israel. He tells them that the Father will determine times and dates for the future of Israel and the nations. They will not know when and where, **but** they know exactly what they are to be doing between now and then. What is the mission that Jesus gives his church?

What happens to a church that becomes overly focused on the 'when and where' of future events, but is not living out their mission?

As a church, we think through our outreach as:

- Jerusalem – Charleston
- Judea - The Valley
- Samaria – WV and United States
- Ends of the Earth

The church started by focusing on their city. Over time, through persecution and intentionality, the church began to spread. Bible Center desires to renew its commitment and focus to the mission of reaching our 'Jerusalem'. We desire to love and reach Charleston (and surrounding areas) with the Gospel through our generosity, actions, and words. Our church, and other Gospel-centered churches in this area, will be the only ones who will be truly committed to our area of the world.

But we must remember, 'Jerusalem' is never the end goal! As we see the church grow in Charleston, we hope, pray, and plan for God to use us to take the Gospel forth in ever-expanding circles impacting the remotest parts of the earth.

Presently, our vision is to be:

***A Church Charleston Can't Live Without***

Someday we hope to become:

***A City that the World Can't Live Without***

Can you see the connection between our mission and the mission of Jesus? What are your next steps in becoming more involved in the mission?

9-11 – It is easy, as Christians, to still be looking up at the sky. We are to be ready for his return, but 'ready' means that we are diligently living out the will and work of Jesus. What kind of impact are you having on your 'Jerusalem', on the 'remotest parts of the earth'?

**Disciples Gather and Pray 1:12-26 (Sermon #5, May 13)**

12-14 - Who all composed of the group in the upper room?

14 – Describe what they were like and what they were doing together?

Did the women and men separate themselves from one another?

On every TV show or movie, it seems like whenever men and women are in the same place, something awkward, flirtatious, or inappropriate always happens. This consistent stream of seemingly uncontrollable emotions, desires, and decisions can warp the way we view inter-

gender relationships. Brothers and sisters living on mission can be done in an appropriate God-honoring way that displays both the love and holiness of God to a watching world. How can we live together 'with one mind' as brothers and sisters and uphold God's desire for a holy church living together as family?

1:15-26 – What had happened to Judas?

What did Peter call the church to do? What were the requirements for the man selected?

### **The Holy Spirit Comes and the Gospel Goes Forth 2:1-13**

Pentecost is the day the Holy Spirit descended upon the church signifying the presence and power of God at beginning of the church age. We do not expect this day to be repeated in scope or in nature, it was a one-time event. How can a church develop confused priorities if they view Pentecost as a normative (reoccurring) event?

2-4 – Why did God make this event so miraculous and memorable?

5-13 – Who made up the crowds that witnessed this event?

Why was this a strategic time for the filling of the Holy Spirit? Who was in Jerusalem? Who all heard the Gospel?

When the disciples spoke in tongues, were they unintelligible languages or intentional languages? What was the purpose of them being able to speak in tongues?

13 – What did they assume? Even though this was clearly a miracle, simple men all of a sudden able to speak new languages, many still did not believe and assumed drunkenness. How is this similar to Jesus’ ministry experience?

### **Peter Preaches the Gospel 2:14-36**

14 – What do we learn about Peter in this verse?

15-21 – How does Peter explain what is happening? Why was using Joel an appropriate means of communicating with this crowd?

Prophecy – The best way to learn how to understand prophecy of the Old Testament (and possible interpretations of New Testament prophecy) is to see how it is understood, interpreted, and applied in the New Testament.

17 – According to Peter, when are the “Last Days”?

Commentators disagree on the prophetic reference point for these verses (17-20). Does it describe the first coming of Christ or the second coming (or a little of both)? Some would hold that all of these descriptions were being used to describe the events of the cross and coming of the Spirit. They hold that the intention of the sermon was to bring clarity about the present happenings to the audience, not on a day in the future. They refer to “Day of the Lord” (in this instance) as referring to the death and resurrection of Christ.

Can we know for sure what the Lord’s intention was as He spoke through Joel?

Would your interpretation lean to a description of the present happenings of the audience or future happenings? How would you contextually (the historical and literary occasion for the text) explain your leaning (there is freedom for disagreement and discussion)?

What would be the purpose of using this extreme figurative language?

How might our interpretation of this prophecy effect our interpretations of prophecies found in the New Testament?

22 – How did Jesus prove who He was?

Peter references the fact that these people have seen these miracles. No one was questioning the facts of Peter's statement. Witnesses were abundant, yet faith was not equally as abundant.

23 – Was the crucifixion an accident? What role did the Father play?

How can the Lord work out his predetermined plan and at the same time man is fully responsible for what happened?

24-36 – What are the connections that Peter makes between Jesus and the words of David? Why does he take the time to focus on this during his sermon?

During the ministry of Jesus, we see the Holy Spirit filling Him, empowering Him, and often leading Him from place to place. Describe the relationship and actions between the Son and Spirit in verse 33:

**A Church That's Strong Inwardly (Sermon #1, April 15)  
The Church Grows Deep and Wide 2:37-47**

37 – What was the result of Peter's sermon? How were their hearts effected?

38 – How are they to respond to Peter's message? What does it mean to repent?

39 - Who should be baptized? What does it signify? What also happens in salvation?

41 – Why would Luke view it as important to record this number?

In one day, the early church became larger than 98% of U.S. churches. How could they have managed such explosive growth?

42 – Large churches can have dozens of ministries and events during the year. It is imperative that a church, regardless of size, never drifts too far from the basics. What were the basics of this early church?

How does a focus on the basics give a church the ability to grow and thrive?

How does the church presently live out “devoting ourselves to the apostles’ teachings”?

Fellowship?

The breaking of bread?

Prayer?

43 – Verse 42 tells us what the church was doing, this verse tells us how the people were feeling. What was the emotional response to all that was happening?

Even in the book of Acts, the church went through phases of explosive growth, persecution, scattering, expanding, fear, and miraculous acts. Their hearts and emotions would have gone through huge swings as their circumstances were consistently in flux. How do the actions in verse 42 help stabilize a believer’s heart during phases of change and struggle the without the continuance outward ‘signs and wonders’?

44-45 – How does the early church care for one another?

46 – What did fellowship look like in the church?

They were all together in the temple, a great time to receive teaching. They also spent time together in smaller groups as they broke bread from “house to house”. How do we see the church functioning both gathered together and scattered throughout the city? What would be the benefits to this model of ministry?

How can the church model this same type / style of ministry? Can we receive the same spiritual growth benefits today from this form of ministry as they did in the early church?

47 – What was the internal and external results of their fellowship and ministry?

## **The Church Faces Opposition 3-5**

### **A Church That's Strong Outwardly 3:1-10 (Sermon #2, April 22)**

How was the man healed? How did this healing effect the people who knew of this man?

We may not see miraculous healing today, but how can we demonstrate Christ's love today in a way that draws a crowd?

### **Peter Teaches that Jesus is the Anticipated Messiah 3:11-26**

After a crowd is drawn, what does Peter do?

Peter recognizes that the people "acted in ignorance" (3:17) in crucifying Christ, yet he holds them responsible for disowning Him (3:14). 18 & 24 – What connection does Peter make between Christ and the prophets?

25 - What connection does Peter make between Abraham and Christ?

How are we to better understand the Old Testament based upon Peter's message?

19 – How are they to respond to this message?

### **Peter and John Arrested and Threatened 4:1-22**

Who arrested Peter and John? What was their motivation and reasoning?

How did Peter respond to the possibility of persecution while Jesus was being tortured and killed (Mark 14:66-72)? What has changed in Peter?

Luke 12:11-12 – How did Jesus prepare Peter and John? What is the role of faith in their boldness?

Can we trust Jesus in the same way today? When are times that we need Him to speak in and through us?

8 – What is the work of the Spirit in this moment? How does this reflect the ministry of Jesus?

12 – How does our American culture feel about this verse and its reality?

How will our faith in salvation through Jesus alone become a source of persecution against today's church? What must be our response?

How can we demonstrate both love (Acts 3:1-10) and confidence (Acts 4:5-12) when we are hated for our beliefs today?

4:4 – What was the result of this miracle and message (despite the persecution)?

How effective were their threats? How did the apostles respond?

### **Released and Prayer for Boldness 4:23-31**

What did they say and do when they returned to the others?

29 – In the face of persecution, what did they pray? How can we have this same boldness and desire for our lives and expressed in our prayers?

31 – What was the response to their prayers? What kind of prayer does the Lord loves to answer?

What is the content of your prayers? When was the last time you prayed for boldness?

How much of your prayers are based around our mission of seeing the Gospel go forth (Acts 1:8)? How can you grow in this area of your prayer life? What is a practical way you can remind yourself to pray this way?

**The Unified Lifestyle of the Church 4:32-37 (Sermon #4, May 6)**

Well over 8,000 had come to faith and joined the church in Jerusalem. This expansion does not fit into any church growth model ever designed. There were tons of brand new believers with a limited number of apostles. How does this passage describe the daily life of this young church?

**A Church That's Known for Authenticity (Sermon #7, May 27)**

**Ananias and Sapphira 5:1-11**

What was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira? What was at the heart of this sin?

In what ways do we struggle with this same sin?

**Apostles Healing the Masses 5:12-16**

How would we expect people to respond when they heard the news of what happened? 5:13-14 – How did they actually respond?

15-16 – How was the church starting to increase its influence?

**The Unstoppable Nature of the Gospel 5:17-42**

17 – What do we learn about the hearts of the Sadducees?

20 – We are called to obey our authorities, but here we see leaders going directly against the desire and will of God. How does the Lord clearly display his power over these authorities through the disciples?

28 – How have the disciples impacted the city?

29 – What are examples of how we need to live out this conviction today? How is the Gospel under attack, being distorted, or being persecuted?

33-42 – What was Gamaliel's suggestion?

41 – Why were they rejoicing? Could you rejoice in a similar situation?

## **Expansion through Persecution 6-8**

### **Appointing of Deacons 6:1-6 (Sermon #5, May 13)**

Why does Luke continue to update us on growth?

Persecution was coming from without and growing pains were coming from within. What are some growing pains that we are experiencing or will experience as a church?

2 – What do we learn about their priorities? How do they keep the most important things as the highest priority?

How can we as a church keep prayer and the Word as the highest priorities for our pastors?

3 – Serving meals is delegated out of the apostles' hands, though it is an important duty. What kind of men are selected for this task?

How can we judge if someone is full of the Spirit?

Why would they need to be 'full of wisdom' to serve food to these widows?

4 – How can this verse help us best pick out our teachers and preachers?

What does it look like for someone to be devoted to prayer and the ministry of the Word?

How can we better protect and support our pastors?

5-6 – What was the process of picking and setting apart these men?

We view this as the birth of the office of deacon. The word deacon means ‘servant’. If everyone is called to be a servant why are only some given the office of deacon?

### **The Church Continues to Grow 6:7 (Sermon #3, April 29)**

Record the growth described in each passage:

2:41 –

2:47 –

4:4 –

5:14 –

6:1 –

6:7 – What was the result of restructuring? What was happening with many of the priests?

What is more important, faithfulness or fruitfulness?

How is growth and mission (1:8) connected?

Should we keep track of our growth?

Numbers = people, therefore numbers matter. But if we lose our perspective and numbers = pride, then we are living off mission, even in a season of fruitfulness. Both faithfulness and fruitfulness matter! Both glorify Jesus and are used to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

### **Stephen Arrested 6:9-15**

How is Stephen described?

How did he handle people trying to teach against the person and message of Christ?

What did they need to do in order to drag him into court?

If the world hates Christ and His message, it will do whatever it takes to undermine both the message and those who proclaim it. What are other ways that we see the world today trying to undermine the message of Christ and his church?

What are some ways the Gospel gets twisted or subtly changed?

What are ways that media and our education system try to fight against the person and message of Christ?

### **Stephen Proclaims the Gospel to the Council 7:1-53 (Sermon #7, May 20)**

Who is Stephen's audience?

After reading his message, what point was Stephen trying to make to the Council?

What does he teach about the character of God in the history of Israel?

How does he describe the people of Israel?

What comparison is he making in his sermon regarding the council?

51-53 – He drives the nails in with a final blow. How did they respond?

Why do you suppose the Lord led Stephen to share this message of rebuke and conviction?

### **Stephen Martyred 7:54-60**

How does reading the martyrdom of Stephen make you feel?

What does it motivate you to do? How should we respond to stories of believers who were faithful even unto death?

How did Jesus respond to the words and actions of Stephen? How would Stephen have thought and felt seeing Jesus standing beside the Father ready to receive his spirit?

How can we be preparing ourselves for crucial moments in our life where our faith will be challenged?

58 – Who are we introduced to in this verse? What is his driving passion and intent?

60 – Even though Stephen preached a message of rebuke and conviction, his last words were filled with love and grace. Many of us have a hard time forgiving someone who cuts us off in

traffic, how is Stephen able to ask the Lord to forgive them in the very moment they are literally killing him?

How do we learn to forgive at a deeper level?

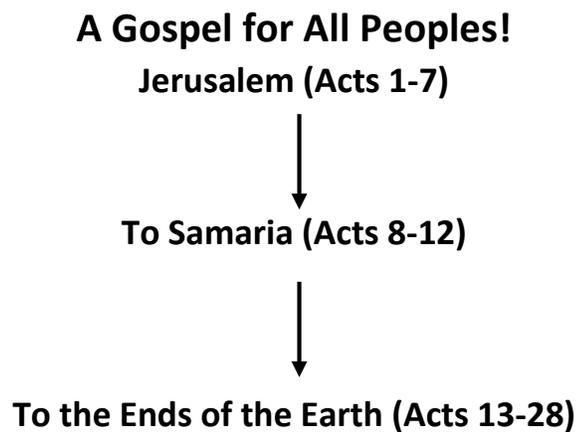
### **Heavy Persecution and Expansion 8:1-3**

Mentally cue the music played when Darth Vader enters the scene, and this is how the church felt whenever they saw Saul approaching. He was vigilant in persecuting the church. Who would fall into this category today?

Is our church ready if it fell under heavy persecution? What would happen?

How did God use this persecution to further the Gospel?

Could the Lord still use persecution in the same way today?



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