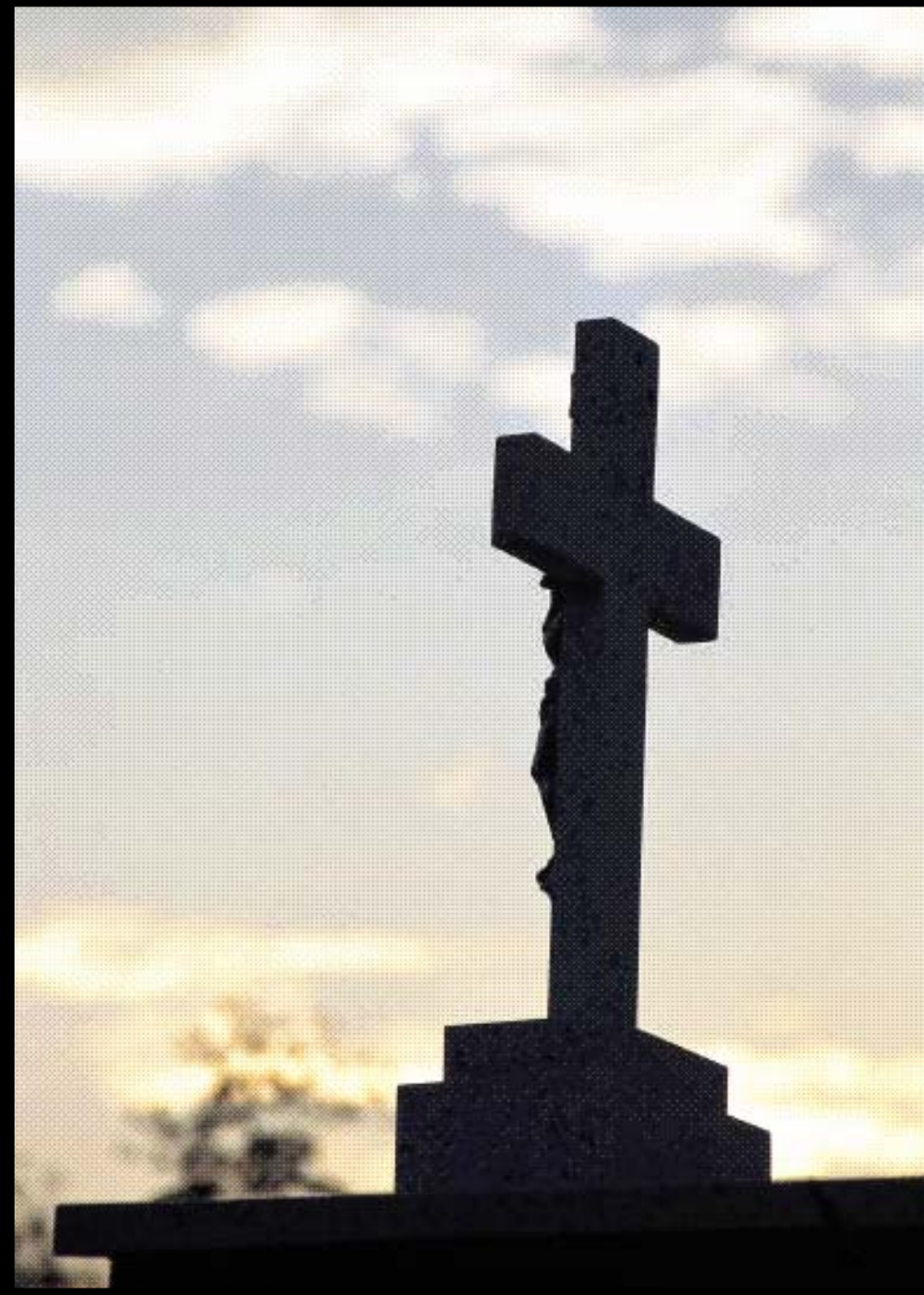


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**Adult
Bible Study
in
Simplified
English**

**Study
Guide**



The Gospel of Luke

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

INCLUDES BONUS CHRISTMAS LESSON

Jack Merritt

ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH **Study Guide**

The Gospel of Luke: Journey to the Cross

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BAPTISTWAY Management Team

Executive Director, Baptist General Convention of Texas

Charles Wade

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Wayne Shuffield

Director, Bible Study/Discipleship Center

Dennis Parrott

Publishing consultant, Positive Difference Communications

Ross West

Language Materials Team

Writer for Luke Study Guide

Jack Merritt, Columbus Avenue Baptist Church, Waco, Texas

Editor for Luke Study Guide

Cindy Dake, First Baptist Church Arlington, Arlington, Texas

Director, Office of Intercultural Initiatives

Patty Lane

Facilitators' Coordinator and Manager, Curriculum Development Office

Nelda P. Williams

Introduction

The Gospel of Luke: Journey to the Cross

We learn things about Jesus in the book of Luke. These things are not found in any other book in the Bible. This study starts with Luke 9:18 and ends at Luke 23:46.

This is the beginning of the “Journey to the Cross.”

Think what you would have done if you had been with Jesus when He said, "If anyone wants to follow Me, he must give up himself and his own desires. He must take up his cross everyday and follow Me." We live in a time 21 centuries after Jesus first said this. Yet we should still listen, learn, and do what Jesus said.

This study reminds us that Jesus still calls us to be His followers. We need to learn how He wants us to live. We also see how Jesus reached out in love to all kinds of people. When we study the book of Luke, we learn how God wants us to love and care for all people.

A Christmas lesson from Luke 2:1-20 is included in these lessons for those who will be studying this during the Christmas season.

Unit 1: What It Means to Be a Follower of Jesus (Luke 9–11)

Lesson 1	How to Become a Follower of Jesus	Luke 9:18-26
Lesson 2	How to Follow Only Jesus	Luke 9:51-62
Lesson 3	How to Do What Jesus Does	Luke 10:1-12, 17-20
Lesson 4	How to Love Everyone	Luke 10:25-37
Lesson 5	Jesus Teaches How to Pray	Luke 11:1-13

Unit 2: Jesus’ Teachings for Followers Today (Luke 12–17)

Lesson 6	Trust and Do Not Be Afraid	Luke 12:1-12
Lesson 7	Stay Ready	Luke 12:35-48
Lesson 8	People Are More Important	Luke 13:10-17
Lesson 9	God’s Grace Is For Everyone	Luke 15:11-32
Lesson 10	Be Thankful	Luke 17:11-19

Unit 3: Choose What Will Last (Luke 18–23)

Lesson 11	The True Treasure	Luke 18:18-30
Lesson 12	How to Show You are Sorry	Luke 19:1-10
Lesson 13	The Journey Is Complete	Luke 23:32-46

Christmas Lesson (optional)

Good News of Great Joy	Luke 2:1-20
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The Gospel of Luke: Journey to the Cross

Word List

Lesson 1

Christ/Messiah: names in Greek and Hebrew for the king whom God would send to rescue His people

disciple: believer, learner, follower

Elijah: a great and powerful preacher of God who lived during the 9th century B.C.; he called down fire from heaven and raised the dead

John the Baptist: the son of Mary's cousin, Elizabeth; the one who came to prepare the way for Jesus

Lesson 2

God's special call: A strong feeling that God wants a believer to be part of a ministry, sometimes as a full-time job.

reservation: land set aside for the use of Native Americans

Samaritans: people who lived in the country between Galilee and Judea; people hated by the Jews

tomb: cave in the side of a hill for a grave

Lesson 3

natural disasters: what weather or the forces of the earth can do to hurt people or land; floods, high winds, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes

picture-story: (parable) a story with a moral meaning; a story which teaches a lesson

kingdom of God: the holy nation of God is not a group of people; it is the rule of God in the hearts of His people

Lesson 4

family group of Levi: men who worked in the temple; important people who led the Jews in worship and taught God's laws to the people

hero: the most important person in a movie or story; the one who does the right thing

religious leader: a priest who served in the temple; person who acted for God

Samaritan: People who lived in Samaria, a country near Israel. About 400 years before Christ was born, a group of Israelites lived in Samaria and married Canaanites. Many generations of Israelites looked down on the Samaritans; they hated Samaritans and would not even speak to them on the street.

Lesson 5

model prayer: an example of how to pray; a pattern

Creator: God Who made the world

Lesson 6

confessing: to tell others that we follow Jesus; to tell that He is Christ

hypocrite: a person whose words and actions are not the same; to say one thing and do another is to be a *hypocrite*

proud, religious law-keepers: strict rule-keepers in Jesus' day; an important religious group known as Pharisees

Lesson 7

robber: someone who takes what belongs to another; a thief

servants: a person who works or helps another person, especially in a home; from the word *serve*; Jesus said He came to *serve* others.

Word List

Lesson 8

Sabbath: Saturday; day to worship God; from Friday's sunset to Saturday's sunset. Since Jesus was raised from the dead on the first day of the week, Christians most often worship on Sunday now.

synagogue: Jewish house of prayer and study
third law: part of the 10 Laws; "Remember the Day of Rest, to keep it holy. Six days you will do all your work. But the seventh day is a Day of Rest to the Lord your God. You, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your cattle, or the traveler who stays with you, must not do any work on this day. For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that is in them. And He rested on the seventh day. So the Lord gave honor to the Day of Rest and made it holy" (Exodus 20:8-11).

Lesson 9

prodigal son: the son who left home and spent all his father's money in a wrong way. Many prefer to call this the story, "The Lost Son."
waste: to spend money without thought of spending wisely; to throw away; to use money in the wrong way

Lesson 10

lepers: people with a bad skin disease in Bible times; different than the disease we know today as Hansen's disease
Passover: the meal the Jews ate to remember when they left Egypt

Lesson 11

respect: to honor; to show you think well of someone
seminary: A school which teaches how to work in churches or as missionaries. A school which

offers Bible classes, music classes, education classes, and more for pastors, missionaries, music leaders, and other ministry leaders. Usually, men and women attend seminary after finishing college.

Lesson 12

intersection: a place where two or more roads cross or come together.

repent: to be sorry for your sins and let God change the way you think and act; to live a new way because of the forgiveness you have from Jesus Christ

Lesson 13

argued: to disagree; to fight with words

criminals: people who break the law, who do wrong things, and who have been or will be judged

Paradise: another word we use for *heaven*; the place we go to be with God after we die, if we believe Jesus is our Savior

skull: head bone; bone that has the brain inside

Optional Christmas Lesson

nativity/nativities: A picture or scene of the time when Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger; includes Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, shepherds, and Wise Men, angels, animals, a bright star; some nativities are carved of wood, made of clay, cloth, or other materials

angels: messengers from God, created by God; people do not become angels after death. The Bible describes angels who protect people, which we call guardian angels: "For He will tell His angels to care for you and keep you in all your ways. They will hold you up in their hands. So your foot will not hit against a stone" (Psalm 91:11-12).

◆ Luke: Journey to the Cross ◆



**Adult Bible Study
in SimplifiedEnglish**

What It Means to be a Follower of Jesus (Luke 9-11)

Lesson 1

How to Become a
Follower of Jesus
(Luke 9:18-26)

Lesson 2

How to Follow
Only Jesus
(Luke 9:51-62)

Lesson 3

How to Do
What Jesus Does
(Luke 10:1-12, 17-20)

Lesson 4

How to Love Everyone
(Luke 10:25-37)

Lesson 5

Jesus Teaches
How to Pray
(Luke 11:1-13)

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A FOLLOWER OF JESUS

The five lessons in this unit teach what Jesus said about being one of His followers.

The first lesson begins with Jesus asking His followers, “Who do people say that I am?” Then He asked them, “Who do you say that I am?” Jesus wanted the believers to know Him and follow Him.

Lesson 2 reminds us that we cannot follow Jesus and do what we want. We must follow only Jesus.

Lesson 3 teaches us that Jesus wants us to be a part of what He is doing in the world.

Lesson 4 is the picture-story of the Good Samaritan. It shows how we are to be a neighbor to anyone in need.

Lesson 5 tells how to be a follower of Jesus by learning how to pray.

*Jack Merritt wrote the Study Guide for “**Luke: Journey to the Cross.**” He is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was a missionary for 32 years in the United States, working in New York City, pastor of the Dulce Baptist Indian Mission on the Jicarilla Apache Indian reservation, and recently worked for three years as Missionary-in-Residence with International Students at Baylor University.*



*Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English*

Bible Text

Luke 9:18-26

Memory Verse

“Then Jesus said to them all, ‘If anyone wants to follow Me, he must give up himself and his own desires. He must take up his cross everyday and follow Me.’ ”
(Luke 9:23)

Word List

Christ/Messiah:

names in Greek and Hebrew for the king whom God would send to rescue His people

disciple: believer, learner, follower

Elijah: a great and powerful preacher of God who lived during the 9th century B.C.; he called down fire from heaven and raised the dead.

John the Baptist: the son of Mary’s cousin, Elizabeth; the one who came to prepare the way for Jesus

How to Become a Follower of Jesus

I will never forget the first missionary job which my wife and I had. We were missionaries living in a high-rise apartment complex of 25,000 people in New York City.

We tried all kinds of ways to reach people who lived there. One way was to open a youth center five nights a week in the apartment which was our church. We had ping pong, table games, and a place to study.

I remember Paul, a 15-year-old with lots of problems. One night we were talking about his problems. I asked him to think about letting Jesus come into his life to help him. His response surprised me.

He said, “Letting Jesus into my life would be like letting a stranger into my life.” This was a young man who had never been to church. He was saying, “Who is this Jesus?”

Jesus asked the same question. He was getting ready to start His last journey to the city of Jerusalem. The cross was waiting for Him. He needed time away from all the people who had seen Him heal and feed the crowds. So Jesus took time to pray. He did this often.

He also needed to talk to His **disciples**, His followers. He told them what would soon happen to Him. Jesus tried to explain what it would cost if His followers did what He wanted. He did not make a speech. Instead, He asked them a question so they would think, learn, and remember.

Things To Think About

1. If you asked your neighbors or co-workers, “Who is Jesus?”, what would they say? Which is the harder question:
 - Who do *you* think Jesus is?
 - Who do *other* people say Jesus is?
2. Why do you think it was hard for Jesus’ followers to understand that He would have to suffer?
3. Has it cost you anything to be a follower of Jesus Christ? Do you know someone who has paid a price to be a follower?
4. Why is it important to decide to follow Jesus every day?

Who is Jesus? (Luke 9:18-20)

“Who do people say that I am?” Jesus asked. This was not a hard question. Many people had been talking about Jesus. His followers gave answers they had heard from others: **John the Baptist**, the prophet **Elijah**, or early preachers from the Old Testament.

Then Jesus asked, “But who do you say that I am?” The followers of Jesus could not give the same answers the others had given. Now they must say what they thought. This was not as easy.

Peter answered for the others, “You are the **Christ** of God.” Matthew 16:16 tells us Peter also said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” *Christ* is the Greek word for **Messiah**, the One God anointed or sent. These followers of Jesus were now beginning to see Jesus was the special One sent by God.

What did Jesus say? (Luke 9:21-22)

Jesus told His followers not to tell everyone that He was the Christ. The people in this age were waiting for a Messiah. They were waiting for someone with military power to give them freedom from the Roman government. They wanted a hero.

Jesus knew He was a different kind of Messiah. Read Isaiah 53 for a picture of a suffering Messiah. Look to Zechariah 9:9 to learn about the gentle King. Jesus knew His followers did not understand this yet. Later, Luke writes in Acts what Peter said. “The whole Jewish nation must know for sure

that God has made this Jesus, Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). But for now, Jesus wanted His followers to remain silent.

Jesus began to teach them what He would have to do to save His people. There would be suffering. This was not a choice—to do it or not to do it. He was very clear. His death was necessary. Jesus would do what was necessary because of His love for His people.

The followers believed Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah. But they were surprised to learn the Messiah would die. Jesus told them about His death at least two more times before they arrived in Jerusalem (Luke 9:44 and 18:31-33).

Jesus also told them He would be raised from the dead three days later. The followers were shocked to hear of Jesus’ death. Perhaps they did not hear the part about living again. It was only after Jesus died and was raised again that they could fully understand what He had told them.

Jesus invites the followers

(Luke 9:23-27)

Jesus told His followers He would suffer and they would also suffer. Jesus told

them three things about being a follower:

- *Give up your own desires.* This means say good-bye to your old self which trusts its own strength. You must give up what you could do by yourself and let God make you into what He wants you to be.
- *Take up your cross every day.* At this time, the cross was not a pretty decoration in a home or something to wear. The cross was a terrible, ugly way to die. You must take all that comes when you are a follower of Jesus. And you must do this every day.
- *Follow Jesus.* You must be willing to go where Jesus calls you to go and do what Jesus calls you to do.

These three commands make us choose. We have to choose to follow Jesus or say no to Him. If we follow Him, we gain our soul. If we say no, we lose our soul. If we are ashamed of Jesus now, He will be ashamed of us at the end of time.

In order to save us, Jesus was willing to die for us. When we decide to follow Jesus, we must be willing to do the same. These are not easy words. But Jesus’ death gives us life that lasts forever.

The question Jesus asked His followers is important for us today. “Who is

Jesus?” How we answer this question will change the way we live now and where we will live after we die. Each person answers the question for himself or herself.

Jesus told His followers many things that would happen to Him in the future (Luke 9:22,26). All of this happened just as Jesus said. He suffered many things, the Jewish leaders had nothing to do with Him, He was killed, and He was raised again on the third day.

In verse 26, Jesus also said He will come again in the shining-greatness of Himself and the Father with the angels. Like the early followers, we are to watch and wait for this to happen. Every day, we are to give up our own desires, take up our cross, and follow Jesus the Christ.

Luke 9:18-26

18 While Jesus was praying alone, His followers were with Him. Jesus asked them, “Who do people say that I am?”

19 They said, “John the Baptist, but some say Elijah. Others say that one of the early preachers has been raised from the dead.”

20 Jesus said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter said, “You are the Christ of God.”

21 Then Jesus spoke to them and told them to tell no one.

22 He said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things. The leaders and the religious leaders and the teachers of the Law will have nothing to do with Him. He must be killed and be raised from the dead three days later.”

23 Then Jesus said to them all, “If anyone wants to follow Me, he must give up himself and his own desires. He must take up his cross everyday and follow Me.

24 If anyone wants to keep his own life safe, he must lose it. If anyone gives up his life because of Me, he will save it.

25 For what does a man have if he gets all the world and loses or gives up his life?

26 Whoever is ashamed of Me and My Words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His own shining-greatness and of the Father’s and of the holy angels.”



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 9:51-62

Memory Verse

“Jesus said to him, ‘Anyone who puts his hand on a plow and looks back at the things behind is of no use in the holy nation of God.’ ” (Luke 9:62)

Word List

God’s special call: A strong feeling that God wants a believer to be part of a ministry, sometimes as a full-time job.

reservation: land set aside for the use of Native Americans

Samaritans: people who lived in the country between Galilee and Judea; people hated by the Jews

tomb: cave in the side of a hill for a grave

How to Follow Only Jesus

Like many seven-year-old boys, I wanted to be a policeman or a fireman when I grew up. When I was 16, I first began to feel **God’s special call** on my life. My understanding of His call at that time was to become a pastor like my father. I thought I might someday pastor a church somewhere in Texas.

I learned in seminary that God’s call is for every Christian to be willing to go wherever He wants us to go. That call has taken my wife and me to New York City, to an Indian **reservation** in New Mexico, to Georgia, and now back to Texas. I learned the most important thing is to follow Jesus.

These verses in Luke teach us what Jesus said about following Him. We see a change in Jesus’ ministry. Instead of healing and speaking to crowds of people, Jesus begins to spend more time teaching His followers. He is leaving Galilee and all the people who came to see Him do mighty works there. He is going to the place where He would die.

Jesus turns toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-56)

Jesus moved from Galilee in the north toward Jerusalem in the south. He went through the country of Samaria. It was only 35 miles in a direct line from Jerusalem to Samaria. But most people of His day would have gone around Samaria. They thought the people who lived there were unclean.

The people of Samaria used the same first five books of the Law as the Jews in Jerusalem. Yet these two groups of people wanted nothing to do with each other. Each group had their own

Things To Think About

1. Jesus asks, “Are you sure you want to follow Me?” How do we prove we mean what we say?

2. Are you willing to follow Christ—no matter where, no matter when, no matter what it takes?

3. How can the following phrases help you be a follower of Jesus? Check the ones you can do:

- Say *yes* to Jesus every day
- Worship Him regularly
- Pray daily
- Meet with other believers
- Serve Christ with your gifts
- Write every day about your life with Christ

4. What is God calling you to do right now?

temple. Faithful Jews distrusted the **Samaritans**. They said, “They aren’t our kind because they don’t have the right views and beliefs!”

Jesus was willing to go through Samaria because He loved everyone. He sent His followers ahead to a town to get ready for Him. When they tried to buy food, they were turned away. The Samaritans did not want to help anyone going to worship in Jerusalem.

James and John became angry. They were sometimes called the “Sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17). They wanted to destroy the town with fire. They wanted to be like Elijah who had called down fire from heaven.

They knew Jesus was the promised Messiah. They saw He had power. They wanted to be able to use that power to destroy. Instead, Jesus led His followers to another town. Jesus told them He came to save, not to destroy.

The three who turn from Jesus (Luke 9:57-62)

On their way to the next town, Jesus met three men who said they wanted to be His followers. Jesus told each one of them what to do to follow Him. He gave them a picture of what it meant to be a follower.

Jesus knew it would not be easy to follow Him. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. The cross was waiting for Him there. He was willing to suffer and die. He was willing to do God’s will. Anyone who followed Jesus must also be willing to go with Him to the cross.

The first man came to Jesus and said, “I will follow You

wherever you go.” Jesus asked if he was willing to follow Him even if he had no place to sleep. Jesus knew the way was not easy. Jesus had been born in a stable that was not His own. Now He had no place to lay His head. Later He would be buried in a **tomb** that was not His own.

To follow Jesus may not be comfortable. Jesus is telling us that *we* do not decide where to go; *He* decides. Someone who is too worried about his own needs would not follow Jesus *wherever* He needed to go.

A second man came to Jesus. Jesus said to him, “Follow me.” The man told Jesus that he had to do something before he could be a follower: “Let me go and bury my father.” We do not know how old the father was. Perhaps he was not very old, and it would be a long time before he died.

Some people think they will do God’s will someday in the future when it will be easier. Jesus says we must follow Him *whenever* He calls. Jesus calls us now. The only day we can serve Jesus is this day. We do not know if there will be a tomorrow to serve God.

The third man wanted to first go back

and say good-bye. In those days, saying goodbye could take a long time. Jesus knew He was headed toward Jerusalem and the cross. He could not take any more side trips. Neither could His followers. We cannot follow Jesus when we are always looking back at another way of life. We must be willing to follow Jesus and do *whatever* He calls us to do.

Many of us want to follow Jesus and do it our way, not His way. If we are honest, we would say we give much of our time doing those things which are not very important. We cannot ask Jesus to follow us. He calls us to follow Him. He wants us to be busy telling about the holy nation of God. We cannot do this and look back at another way of life.

In Lesson 1, Jesus asked, “Who do you say I am?” Our answer should be, “He is the One we will follow.” In this lesson, we learn Jesus said we should follow Him now, follow wherever He leads, whenever He calls, and do whatever He wants us to do. Jesus wants us to give Him as much of ourselves as we can right here and now. We are to take up our cross every day and follow Him alone.

Luke 9:51- 62

51 It was about time for Jesus to be taken up into heaven. He turned toward Jerusalem and was sure that nothing would stop Him from going.

52 He sent men on ahead of Him. They came to a town in Samaria. There they got things ready for Jesus.

53 The people did not want Him there because they knew He was on His way to Jerusalem.

54 James and John, His followers, saw this. They said, “Lord, do You want us to speak so fire will come down from heaven and burn them up as Elijah did?”

55 Jesus turned and spoke sharp words to them. (He said, “You do not know what kind of spirit you have.

56 The Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives. He came to save them from the punishment of sin.” They went on their way to another town.)

57 As they were going on their way, a man said to Jesus, “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.”

58 Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes. Birds of the sky have nests. The Son of Man

has no place to put His head.”

59 He said to another, “Follow Me.” But the man said, “Lord, let me go first and bury my father.”

60 Jesus said to him, “Let the people who are dead bury their own dead. You go and preach about the holy nation of God.”

61 And another one said, “Lord, I will follow You, but first let me go and say good-bye to those at home.”

62 Jesus said to him, “Anyone who puts his hand on a plow and looks back at the things behind is of no use in the holy nation of God.”



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 10:1-12; 17-20

Memory Verse

“Jesus said to them,
‘There is much grain
ready to gather. But
the workmen are few.
Pray then to the Lord
Who is the Owner of
the grain-fields that
He will send workmen
to gather His grain.’ ”
(Luke 10:2)

Word List

natural disasters:

what weather or the
forces of the earth can
do to hurt people or
land; floods, high
winds, tornadoes,
hurricanes,
earthquakes

picture-story:

(parable) a story with
a moral meaning; a
story which teaches a
lesson

kingdom of God: the
holy nation of God is
not a group of people;
it is the rule of God in
the hearts of His
people

How to Do What Jesus Does

Every summer, our church sends adults to help other churches hurt by **natural disasters**. One time they worked in a church damaged by floods in Missouri. Recently, Yoshiko and Hisako, from our International Sunday School Class, went with the mission team to a Florida church damaged by high winds.

They cleaned, mopped, and cooked. They came back tired, but happy and full of joy at what God did through them and to them. They went to help others. They were also helped.

Jesus’ followers learned when they did what Jesus wanted, they would be a blessing and they would be blessed, too.

The fields (Luke 10:1-3)

Jesus was on His way from Galilee to Jerusalem and had just taught what it meant to be a true follower. Some heard Him and wanted to follow Him. In this lesson, we learn what happened when Jesus sent them out to do His work.

Jesus knew there was not much time before His death. He knew many towns needed to hear His message. Earlier, Jesus had told His followers the **picture-story** of the man who planted seed (Luke 8:1-15). The Word of God was the seed to be planted. The world was the field where they would plant the seed.

Jesus sent out 70 men in groups of two to gather the seed. Before they went, Jesus said, “There is much grain ready to gather.” He warned them it would not be easy or safe. He told them they would be like little lambs. Wolves hunt lambs for food, and some people are like wolves. They try to destroy people.

**Things To
Think About**

1. Is it important for you to share the Good News?
2. What keeps most Christians from telling others about Jesus?
3. Who told you about Jesus? Who have you told about Jesus?
4. How often do you pray for others to join God's work?

Jesus warned His followers about these people.

Years later, other missionaries would also go out in teams of two people: Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Silas, Barnabas and Mark.

Jesus asked the 70 men to pray for God to send more workers. Jesus had started by calling 12 followers. Now there were 70 going out to do His work. We are to pray for more people to be willing to do God's work.

The planting (Luke 10:4-12)

Jesus told them what to do on the trip. He told the followers to not take much with them. They were not to take even a bag or shoes. The bag would be for money, and they were not to take money. They were to take only the shoes on their feet, no extras. They must depend on God to care for them.

Jesus told them not to talk with people about things which were not important. They did not have time to waste.

He told them what to do when they came to a home. They were to offer peace to the head of the house. Some would accept this peace, but Jesus warned them that others would not. We cannot force anyone to receive the Good News of Jesus. We can only tell them about it.

Each group of two was to stay in one place. They should eat and drink whatever was given to them and not be concerned with comfort. They should not ask for more than they needed.

The followers were to do the same kind of work Jesus did. They were to heal the sick. They were to tell others about Jesus. They were to preach the Good News that the holy

kingdom of God was near.

Jesus also told them what to do about those people who did not listen.

Jesus told the followers to shake the dust off their feet. In those days, some Jews would shake the dust off their feet whenever they had to go through a town that was not a Jewish town. Jesus told the followers to go on to the next town. The followers were not to be concerned about what people would think of them.

What would happen to those who did not believe? Jesus said it would be worse for them than what happened to Sodom. Genesis 19 tells of Abram's nephew, Lot. He left Sodom, and God sent a rain of fire to destroy that evil city and the city of Gomorrah. Now, whenever anyone says the names of those towns, we think of how wicked they were. God will judge evil.

Gather the grain (Luke 10:17-20)

The followers came back from their trip. They were full of joy at what had happened. They had been able to show power over evil, as Jesus had done.

Jesus spent time talking with them. Jesus had given them power over Satan

because they went in His name. He promised them that nothing would hurt them. His death on the cross would show His power.

Then Jesus gave them a warning. He said the most important thing was not that they could make demons obey, but that their names were written in heaven. Jesus explained this was true happiness.

This is what we can learn from Jesus' talk with the believers:

- The people of the world are ready to hear the Word of God. Today there is much grain ready to gather.
- Jesus calls us to share His Word with the world.
- When we take time to eat with people and share with them, they may listen to the Good News and believe.
- Not everyone will believe.

Telling others about the Good News is the most important thing we can do. We have a part in the war between good and evil, between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. God's kingdom in the hearts of men will win.

Luke 10:1-12

- 1** After this the Lord chose seventy others. He sent them out two together to every city and place where He would be going later.
- 2** Jesus said to them, “There is much grain ready to gather. But the workmen are few. Pray then to the Lord Who is the Owner of the grain-fields that He will send workmen to gather His grain.
- 3** Go on your way. Listen! I send you out like lambs among wolves.
- 4** Take no money. Do not take a bag or shoes. Speak to no one along the way.
- 5** When you go into a house, say that you hope peace will come to them.
- 6** If a man who loves peace lives there, your good wishes will come to him. If your good wishes are not received, they will come back to you.
- 7** Stay in the same house. Eat and drink what they give you. The workman should have his pay. Do not move from house to house.
- 8** Whenever a city receives you, eat the things that are put before you there.
- 9** Heal the sick. Say to them, ‘The holy nation of God is near.’

10 Whatever city does not receive you, go into its streets and say,

11 ‘Even the dust of your city that is on our feet we are cleaning off against you. But understand this, the holy nation of God has come near you!’

12 I tell you, on the day men stand before God, it will be easier for the city of Sodom than for that city.”

Luke 10:17-20

17 The seventy came back full of joy. They said, “Lord, even the demons obeyed us when we used Your name.”

18 Jesus said to them, “I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

19 Listen! I have given you power to walk on snakes. I have given you power over small animals with a sting of poison. I have given you power over all the power of the one who works against you. Nothing will hurt you.

20 Even so, you should not be happy because the demons obey you but be happy because your names are written in heaven.”



*Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English*

Bible Text

Luke 10:25-37

Memory Verse

“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart. You must love Him with all your soul. You must love Him with all your strength. You must love Him with all your mind. You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.” (Luke 10:27b)

Word List

family group of Levi:

men who worked in the temple; important people who led the Jews in worship and taught God’s laws to the people

hero: the most important person in a movie or story; the one who does the right thing

religious leader: a priest who served in the temple; person who acted for God

How to Love Everyone

Many people lost their homes and places to work when Hurricane Katrina brought winds and floods to the Gulf Coast in August 2005. Churches opened their doors to help. Some people invited people without homes to live with them. Others traveled long distances to take food and water to people in need.

When we follow Jesus, He wants us to show His love to everyone, even when it is not easy. Real followers have “no excuses.” There is no good reason why we should not help others and show Christ’s love. Jesus used one of His most famous picture-stories to tell us how we are to treat our neighbors. This story also teaches us that anyone who is in need is our neighbor. We call this the story of the Good **Samaritan**.

Question from a man who knew the law (Luke 10:25-28)

One day a man came to Jesus and asked, “What must I do to have life that lasts forever?” This was a common question in those days. Jesus answered with another question, “What does the Bible say?” This is the man’s answer:

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart.

You must love Him with all your soul.

You must love Him with all your strength.

You must love Him with all your mind.

You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.

Jesus told the man this was the right answer. Jesus told him if he did this, he would have life. Jesus did not tell him he would have life that lasts forever. So the man asked, “But who is my

Samaritan: People who lived in Samaria, a country near Israel. About 400 years before Christ was born, a group of Israelites lived in Samaria and married Canaanites. Many generations of Israelites looked down on the Samaritans; they hated Samaritans and would not even speak to them on the street.

Things to Think About

1. Would you treat your neighbor or friend differently if that person was Jesus?
2. What would happen if we always treated people the way Jesus treated people?
3. Do you think the following is true?
Christian love is not just something we feel or say, but something we do.
4. Why did Jesus teach a story where the hero was hated because he was different?

neighbor?”

This is a question we ask today. An easy answer is to say our neighbors are people who live next door to us, who live across the street from us, or across our backyard from us. But another way is to think of neighbors as the people we like to spend time with. Perhaps our neighbor is the person we know who lives a good life. We may think of other Christians as neighbors. We ask this question because we want to know to whom we must show love. Then we can leave out those we do not want to love.

Jesus said the man was right to say that we should love our neighbor. Then Jesus told him the answer to his question by telling a picture-story.

Jesus' story (Luke 10:30-35)

One day a man who was traveling from a far away city was met by robbers. They took everything he had and beat him badly. They left him lying nearly dead by the side of the road.

Jesus knew what every one of His hearers would know. The road to Jericho was not a safe road. If you traveled, especially late in the day or early evening, you might be robbed.

The beaten man lay there in pain and misery. A **religious leader** came by, but when he saw the man lying beside the road, he went on the other side of the road. He might have been in a hurry and didn't want to be bothered. He also knew if he touched a man who was dead, he could never serve in the temple again. He could have helped the man, but he did not.

The next man who passed by was from the **family group**

of Levi, a well-known teacher in the temple. Surely, he would want to help the hurt man. Could it be that he thought the man was only pretending to be sick and would get up and then rob him? Perhaps the teacher was afraid. Perhaps he also was in a hurry. Jesus does not tell us why he left the man there. When the teacher saw the man lying on the side of the road, he looked down and walked on by.

The first two men had jobs like the man who asked Jesus the questions. He could understand their problems about not stopping or helping. The next part of the story had a surprise for all the listeners.

A third man was traveling down the road. He was from Samaria. Nobody liked people from Samaria. The listeners to Jesus' story never thought a Samaritan would be the one who would stop to help. They never thought the man from Samaria would be the **hero** of the story. Yet, this man saw the need, stopped, and helped.

He got off his donkey. He put oil on the robbed man's sores. The Samaritan put the man on his own donkey and took him to the nearest hotel. He stayed with the man overnight to take care of him.

The next morning he had to leave. He knew he could not take the man with him. When he paid the bill, he gave the owner some extra money, saying, "Take care of this man. If you use more than this, I will give it to you when I come again."

Jesus' question (Luke 10:36-37)

Jesus finished the story and asked the man who knew the law, "Which of these three men do you think was a neighbor to the man who was beaten by the robbers?"

The man answered, "The one who showed loving-pity on him." Then Jesus said, "Go and do the same."

Jesus teaches us to love our enemies and to love all people. We are not just to love those who look and act and think the way we do. All three men may have felt sorry for the robbed man. But only one did anything about his needs.

Jesus did what we need when He died on the cross for all of us. Jesus showed the kind of love that breaks down differences between races and tribes and classes. His love cost Him His life. Love can cost us much, too.

Jesus said we should love each other

the way we want to be loved. If we were lying hurt in the road, what kind of love would we want? If we were dying, would we care what kind of person stopped to help?

When we need to give love to someone in need, we should think, “What if it was me lying on the side of the road? Would I want someone to stop and help?” Then we can stop and help the way God wants. This is the kind of love Jesus wants us to give to the world.

Luke 10:25-37

25 A man stood up who knew the Law and tried to trap Jesus. He said, “Teacher, what must I do to have life that lasts forever?”

26 Jesus said to him, “What is written in the Law? What does the Law say?”

27 The man said, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart. You must love Him with all your soul. You must love Him with all your strength. You must love Him with all your mind. You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.”

28 Jesus said to him, “You have said the right thing. Do this and you will have life.”

29 The man tried to make himself look good. He asked Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?”

30 Jesus said, “A man was going down

from Jerusalem to the city of Jericho.

Robbers came out after him. They took his clothes off and beat him. Then they went away, leaving him almost dead.

31 A religious leader was walking down that road and saw the man. But he went by on the other side.

32 In the same way, a man from the family group of Levi was walking down that road. When he saw the man who was hurt, he came near to him but kept on going on the other side of the road.

33 Then a man from the country of Samaria came by. He went up to the man. As he saw him, he had loving-pity on him.

34 He got down and put oil and wine on the places where he was hurt and put cloth around them. Then the man from Samaria put this man on his own donkey. He took him to a place where people stay for the night and cared for him.

35 The next day the man from Samaria was ready to leave. He gave the owner of that place two pieces of money to care for him. He said to him, “Take care of this man. If you use more than this, I will give it to you when I come again.”

36 Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who was beaten by the robbers?”

37 The man who knew the Law said, “The one who showed loving-pity on him.” Then Jesus said, “Go and do the same.”



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 11:1-13

Memory Verse

“Our Father in heaven, Your name is holy. May Your holy nation come. What You want done, may it be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us the bread we need everyday. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Do not let us be tempted.”

(Luke 11:2b-4)

Word List

model prayer: an example of how to pray; a pattern

Creator: God Who made the world

Jesus Teaches How to Pray

If there was anything I learned during the 32 years I was a missionary, it was that I needed to learn how to pray. We prayed for everything: For the bus engine to start so we could pick up children, for more workers, for safety, for people to open their doors when we knocked. We needed other people to pray for us, too.

The way to pray (Luke 11:1-4)

Jesus’ followers saw Him pray often. They asked Jesus to teach them. He gave them what we call the **model prayer**. Some people also call it, “The Lord’s Prayer.” These are the words Jesus taught all His followers to use as we pray:

Our Father

Jesus started with “Our Father.” This is a family word. The title *father* shows we can talk with God personally. Perhaps those who heard Jesus thought He would have a title like **Creator** or Holy One. Instead, Jesus taught us we are part of God’s family. We pray simply. These are not special or hard words. We can talk to God the way we talk with each other. God understands not only our words, but also our hearts. We can speak to Him in our normal voices and words.

Your name is holy

When we say, “Your name is holy,” we show we understand He is different from us. He is holy, completely without sin. Even though we can call God, “Our Father,” we

**Things to
Think About**

1. What did you learn about prayer from the model prayer in these verses?
2. Why should we pray for our daily bread and then not worry?
3. What are you asking for boldly?
4. Why do we trust God to give us what we need?

know He is not as we are. We want Him to be praised and honored. Yet, sometimes in our lives, we do not treat God's name as holy. We do not honor God when we should. We pray His name will always be holy. We pray for change in our lives.

Your holy nation come

God's holy nation is His rule in our lives. It is not a country or a government. It is not just wishing to be in heaven. His holy nation is now. We pray for God's plan to come in our lives and in the lives of others.

What You want done, may it be done on earth as it is in heaven

God is the ruler of heaven. When we pray this part of the prayer, we must be willing to do our part to bring about God's rule in the hearts of people on earth.

Give us the bread we need everyday

The first part of the prayer uses the word "You" as we talk to God in a personal way. This next part of the prayer is when we ask for what we need. We use "we" and "us." We are taught it is good to ask God for what we need. We ask God for the bread we need every day. We are saying we depend on God for all of our life's needs.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us

We must tell God we know we did wrong. We are not just saying, "Excuse me," thinking we are not really so bad. We are saying we know He sent His Son to die for our sins so He could forgive us. We must also be willing to forgive others who sin against us.

Do not let us be tempted

Even though tests and trials will come, we pray our faith will not weaken. We ask God to not let Satan get hold of our lives. We do not want to fall into sin. When dangers come, we ask God to deliver us from evil.

Keep on praying
(Luke 11:5-8)

Jesus told the followers a picture-story to help them learn more about prayer. Jesus said to be bold when they pray.

A friend came for a visit and but there was no food for him. In Jesus' time, it was very important to treat visitors kindly. Even though this friend came at midnight, it was important to feed him. There were no stores or fast-food restaurants open past midnight. Jesus said if this friend came to you, you would go to your neighbor for help in getting food for your visitor.

Many families lived in a one-room house. Everyone in the family slept in the same room. Sometimes the animals were

Suggestions for Praying

Make time to pray
every day

Read a psalm as
you begin to pray

Use the Lord's
Prayer as a guide

Make a list of
people to pray for

there, too. When asked for food, the father would have to get up from the sleeping area, find some bread, and come to answer the door. The whole family would wake up.

This neighbor did not want to wake up his family to get the bread. In Jesus' story, we see the picture of the man outside knocking and knocking. The neighbor finally gets up because the

knocking will not stop. He tries to get the bread to the door as fast as he can. It is a humorous story.

Jesus teaches us in this story that when we pray, we should never give up. We can tell God what we need again and again. If a sleepy neighbor will give what we need, how much more will our loving God give us?

The reason we pray (Luke 11:9-13)

Jesus said when we pray we should "ask, look, and knock." We are to ask and keep on asking, look and keep on looking,

and knock and keep on knocking. If we pray this way, Jesus promises us answers to our prayers. This is what He said:

Ask—You will be given.

Look—You will find.

Knock—The door will open.

Jesus' picture-story reminds us to keep on praying. We can trust our Father to give us good gifts, even when we ask for something that is wrong. He loves us. Jesus reminded His followers that even earthly fathers want to give good gifts to their children. God is perfect and will give perfect gifts to His children.

Luke 11:1-13

1 Jesus had been praying. One of His followers said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray as John the Baptist taught his followers.”

2 Jesus said to them, “When you pray, say, ‘Our Father in heaven, Your name is holy. May Your holy nation come. What You want done, may it be done on earth as it is in heaven.

3 Give us the bread we need everyday.

4 Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Do not let us be tempted.’ ”

5 Jesus said to them, “If one of you has a friend and goes to him in the night and says, ‘Friend, give me three loaves of bread,

6 for a friend of mine is on a trip and has stopped at my house. I have no food to give him.’

7 The man inside the house will say, ‘Do not trouble me. The door is shut. My children and I are in bed. I cannot get up and give you bread.’

8 I say to you, he may not get up and give him bread because he is a friend. Yet, if he keeps on asking, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

9 I say to you, ask, and what you ask for will be given to you. Look, and what you are looking for you will find. Knock, and the door you are knocking on will be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks, will receive what he asks for. Everyone who looks, will find what he is looking for. Everyone who knocks, will have the door opened to him.

11 Would any of you fathers give your son a stone if he asked for bread? Or would you give a snake if he asked for a fish?

12 Or if he asked for an egg, would you give him a small animal with a sting of poison?

13 You are sinful and you know how to give good things to your children. How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

◊ Luke: Journey to the Cross ◊



*Adult Bible Study
in Simplified English*

Jesus' Teachings for Followers Today

Lesson 6

Trust and
Do Not Be Afraid
(Luke 12:1-12)

Lesson 7

Stay Ready
(Luke 12:35-48)

Lesson 8

People Are
More Important
(Luke 13:10-17)

Lesson 9

God's Grace Is for
Everyone
(Luke 15:11-32)

Lesson 10

Be Thankful
(Luke 17:11-19)

JESUS' TEACHINGS FOR FOLLOWERS TODAY

This unit helps us learn what Jesus wants us to do as we live in our world and show His love to everyone.

Jesus taught His followers to trust in Him and not be afraid when problems came. We will learn about this in Lesson 6.

In Lesson 7, we will read how He reminded the followers to stay watchful.

Lesson 8 explains how Jesus said we should remember people are more important than rules.

The story of a father with two sons teaches us about God's love in Lesson 9.

In Lesson 10, only one person with a skin disease came back to say thank you. This lesson teaches us to show God's love to everyone, even those different from us.



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 12:1-12

Memory Verse

“Also, I tell you,
everyone who makes
Me known to men, the
Son of Man will make
him known to the
angels of God.”
(Luke 12:8)

Word List

confessing: to tell
others that we follow
Jesus; to tell that He is
Christ

hypocrite: a person
whose words and
actions are not the
same; to say one thing
and do another is to be
a *hypocrite*

proud, religious law-keepers: strict rule-keepers in Jesus' day; an important religious group known as Pharisees

Trust and Do Not Be Afraid

When our sons were young, they loved to dress up like Superman or Batman. Sometimes they liked to pretend they were cowboys. Pretending to be something you are not is a fun game for children to play. But it is not good when adults pretend to be better than they are. Adults who pretend to be something they are not are called **hypocrites**.

Jesus knew difficult times would come for His followers. He told them to trust God and not be afraid. Do not pretend to be something you are not. Be honest.

Jesus and the proud, religious law-keepers

As Jesus came nearer to Jerusalem and the cross, His enemies tried to cause Him trouble. When Jesus healed a man, they said it was the devil who had done the mighty work.

Another time, Jesus made the **proud, religious law-keepers** angry at a dinner party when He did not use a clean cup and plate in the way they thought He should. Jesus said their many rules were keeping people away from God, instead of bringing them closer to God.

Jesus said the right way to worship God was to have a right heart and right actions. Just knowing the rules about worshipping God was not enough. His followers must make their words and their actions honor God.

Jesus healed a man's hand on the day of worship. He also said it was all right for His followers to eat grain they had picked on the Day of Rest. Jesus ate meals with “tax collectors and

**Things To
Think About**

1. Do you ever act in a false or untrue way?
2. In what ways are you more interested in what people think of you, instead of being who you really are as a follower of Christ?
3. Have there been times when you knew a Christian should act a certain way, but you chose to act differently?
4. What can you do to act more like Christ in your daily life?
5. What are you afraid of? How can you learn to trust God more?

sinner.” These actions made the proud, religious law-keepers angry. They said Jesus was breaking religious rules. But Jesus knew God wanted His followers to obey His words, to show love to others, and to live honestly before God.

Jesus warns against pretending (Luke 12:1-3)

Thousands of people gathered around Jesus. There were so many people that they were stepping on each other. Jesus spoke especially to His followers. Jesus warned the followers to not be like those who pretended to be what they were not. He said some people who were listening did that.

Some people in the crowd listened carefully to Jesus' words. But it was not because they wanted to learn about eternal life. Instead, they wanted to get Jesus in trouble. Sometimes, He said things that would make the religious leaders angry. Yet, Jesus never changed His message to please people. He always spoke the truth about God.

We all want other people to like us. We might try to act like a different person than who we really are, just so others will like us. But this is living a lie.

What would happen if everything we said or thought was shouted for all to hear? It might be embarrassing because of sinful thoughts or words. On judgment day, God will show the thoughts which people try to hide. Until then, we can live happier lives if we are truthful in thoughts and actions. Then we will not worry about what will be seen and heard on the day of judgment.

Jesus gave this warning to help His followers know they did not need to be afraid of the religious leaders. Jesus wanted

His followers to know the time would come when they would be tested by these religious leaders. They should not back away from the truth because of fear.

Fear the right thing (Luke 12:4-7)

Jesus told His followers He was going to Jerusalem to die on a cross. The followers might be afraid of what would happen to them. Jesus called them “My friends.” He told them not to be afraid of what anyone could do to their bodies. No one could do any more than kill their bodies. God had the power to say a person’s spirit should go to hell. That was what they should truly fear and respect.

This kind of fear is the right kind. It can lead us to want to be forgiven by God and to serve Him as Lord and Savior.

The fear and respect of God is a fear that takes care of all other fears. The person who truly fears God does not need to fear anything else.

The wrong kind of fear can keep us from doing what we should. One thing we often fear is the future, what we do not know. Jesus told us we should not be afraid because God holds the real power. He loves

us and cares for us.

In Jesus’ time, little birds were sold for just a few pennies each. Yet God knows when each little bird falls to the ground. We are much more important to God than birds. He loves us so much He knows the number of hairs on our head. God—Who made everything and knows everything—cares for us.

**Do not speak evil about God’s Spirit
(Luke 12:8-10)**

The wrong kind of fear keeps some people from **confessing** Christ, from telling others what they believe. Confessing Jesus might bring us trouble. But it also means Jesus will give us power to be brave and useful in God’s work on earth.

What great thing would you try for Christ if you knew you could not fail? Remember, we cannot fail when we trust in God. We only fail when we say we do not know Jesus or we are not loyal to Him. Jesus is truthful and cannot say we are His followers if we do not follow Him.

Some speak against Jesus without knowing His goodness. This is not the same as if they knew His goodness and still

denied Him. It is when we speak evil of God's Spirit that we reject God and His salvation, and we close the door to being saved.

Jesus promises help from the Holy Spirit (Luke 12:11-12)

Jesus told His followers that His Holy Spirit would teach them what to say when troubles came. When help was needed, when the right words were needed, they would find help. This is a great promise.

The Holy Spirit can help us, too, when we need help. We are Jesus' followers. The Holy Spirit can help us as we read His Word, pray, and help others.

Luke 12:1-12

1 At that time thousands of people gathered together. There were so many that they walked on each other. Jesus spoke to His twelve followers first, saying, "Look out! Have nothing to do with the yeast of the proud religious law-keepers which is pretending to be something it is not.

2 For there is nothing covered up that will not be seen. There is nothing hidden that will not be known.

3 What you have said in the dark will be heard in the light. What you have said in a

low voice in a closed room will be spoken with a loud voice from the top of houses.

4 I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and then can do no more.

5 I will tell you the one to be afraid of. Be afraid of Him Who has power to put you into hell after He has killed you. Yes, I say to you, be afraid of Him!

6 Are not five small birds sold for two small pieces of money? God does not forget even one of the birds.

7 God knows how many hairs you have on your head. Do not be afraid. You are worth more than many small birds.

8 Also, I tell you, everyone who makes Me known to men, the Son of Man will make him known to the angels of God.

9 But whoever acts as if he does not know Me and does not make Me known to men, he will not be spoken of to the angels of God.

10 Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven. Whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

11 When they take you to the places of worship and to the courts and to the leaders of the country, do not be worried about what you should say or how to say it.

12 The Holy Spirit will tell you what you should say at that time."



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 12:35-48

Memory Verse

“The man who receives much will have to give much. If much is given to a man to take care of, men will expect to get more from him.”
(Luke 12:48b)

Word List

robber: someone who takes what belongs to another; a thief
servants: a person who works or helps another person, especially in a home; from the word *serve*; Jesus said He came to *serve* others.

Stay Ready

None of us likes to wait. We do not like red lights or waiting in the doctor’s office. We want fast food, and we like fast cars. We use the VCR remote control to fast-forward through videos so we can watch them faster.

Jesus told us if we are going to be ready for Him to come again, we have to wait for Him. Jesus wants His followers to live the right way. He wants us to be ready for the time He will return to judge us. There will be no time to get ready for Him then.

Jesus said, “Be ready” (Luke 12:35-40)

Jesus told a picture-story about the time He will return from heaven. He told about **servants** and their owner after a wedding. In those days, a wedding might last for many days. No one knew when the dinner would end each night and the owner would return home.

Jesus said the servants should be dressed and ready for work. When they were working, they pulled their long clothes over their belts. Today we might say, “Roll up your sleeves and get ready to work.”

He also warned they should have their lamps ready. They needed to wait for the owner all night. In those days, motion lights did not exist to warn of someone walking up to a house late at night. The servants would have to listen for the owner’s return so they could light the way for him to go into the house. Their light was a small bowl of oil. The servants had to watch the lamps all the time to make sure they were ready.

**Things To
Think About**

1. What would you do differently if you knew Jesus was coming back tomorrow morning?
2. Is Jesus a “welcome owner” or a “robber” to you?
3. Have you welcomed Christ as your Savior? Have you received His free gift of salvation? If you have, then you will look forward to the coming of His kingdom and to the glories of heaven.

Jesus said the servants who are ready will have their lights burning when the owner came home. These servants would receive a surprise. They will get to sit down and eat. Their owner will get dressed and serve them. This is not the normal way of a servant and owner.

In Luke 22:27, we learn that this was Jesus' way. The servants and the owner had become friends. Jesus came to serve. We are God's servants. Jesus came to show us that God's rewards are always more than we can imagine.

Jesus' story changes here. Jesus gave some strong words of warning to those who are not ready for His return. He tells about a **robber**. A home owner who is watching would stop a robber who tried to break into his house. The robber is not welcome, and he enters by breaking into the house. The owner does not know the robber. He is not a friend.

The servant story was told to help us learn to be ready for Jesus to come again. Followers must always be ready for the Son of Man to return to earth. Jesus said He will return when we are not expecting Him. Those who have said no to God and Jesus do not want to see Him. Those who have trusted in Jesus as the promised Messiah love Him. They wait for Him to return and know it will bring them good.

Jesus teaches about judgment (Luke 12:41-48)

Peter wanted to know whom these stories were for. Jesus answered as He often did. Jesus simply asked another question. He wants us to think. He does not always give us easy answers.

He reminded Peter of the faithful servants who would find

favor with their owner and get a reward. The followers are the Lord's servants. God has given them much to do. They are like servants who take care of the owner's house. The owner is welcomed with a light and let in the door. Food is ready. The servants would be happy to see Jesus come again. The servants await His return because of Who He is.

Jesus asked about the servants who are not ready. He tells about an owner who is away. It might be a long time before he returns. A servant was in charge of other men and women servants. He was to feed the servants. But he decided to use the owner's property for his own pleasure. He used the food and drink for himself. He hurt the other servants. That man, Jesus said, would be cut into pieces and put in a place with unbelievers. Servants who were not faithful would have a terrible punishment.

Nobody has the right to be lazy. Nobody should live just for himself. The unbeliever does not love Jesus and does not wait for Him.

There are many differences between the servants of the first story and the house-owner of the second. But one thing is the

same. In both, no one knew what time the owner would return. In the same way, we do not know when Jesus will come again. But this we do know. Jesus *will* return, to reward some and to judge others. The true follower of Jesus is waiting and ready. We do not know exactly what "day" or "hour" that will be. We can wait and be ready by doing what God has given us to do.

Those who know much are to be more responsible than those who know little. Jesus said greater knowledge meant greater punishment for those who do not obey. Those who have heard the truth and have said no to Jesus will suffer more than those who have little or no knowledge of Christ. Those who do not believe do not look forward to His return as a good thing.

Jesus wants His people to be like servants who stay awake. We will be ready and happy to see Jesus again. We are responsible for all God has given us, whether much or little. If we stay ready, we will:

- Confess our sins and ask for God's forgiveness daily;
- Share our story of Jesus with others;
- Use our time, money, and life for God.

Luke 12:35-48

35 “Be ready and dressed. Have your lights burning.

36 Be like men who are waiting for their owner to come home from a wedding supper. When he comes and knocks on the door, they will open it for him at once.

37 Those servants are happy when their owner finds them watching when he comes. For sure, I tell you, he will be dressed and ready to care for them. He will have them seated at the table.

38 The owner might come late at night or early in the morning. Those servants are happy if their owner finds them watching whenever he comes.

39 But understand this, that if the owner of a house had known when the robber was coming, he would have been watching. He would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

40 You must be ready also. The Son of Man is coming at a time when you do not think He will come.”

41 Peter said, “Lord, are You telling this picture-story to us or to all the people?”

42 The Lord said, “Who is the faithful and wise servant his owner made boss over the

others? He is the one who is to have food ready at the right time.

43 That servant is happy who is doing his work when the owner comes.

44 For sure, I tell you, he will make him boss over all he has.

45 “But what if that servant says to himself, ‘The owner will not be coming soon,’ and then beats the other servants and eats and drinks and gets drunk?

46 The owner of that servant will come on a day and at an hour when he is not looking for him. He will cut him in pieces and will put him with those who do not believe.

47 The servant who knew what the owner wanted done, but did not get ready for him, or did not do what he wanted done, will be beaten many times.

48 But the servant who did not know what his owner wanted done, but did things that would be reason to be beaten, will be beaten only a few times. The man who receives much will have to give much. If much is given to a man to take care of, men will expect to get more from him.”



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 13:10-17

Memory Verse

Jesus saw her and said, “Woman, you are now free from your trouble!”
(Luke 13:12)

Word List

Sabbath: Saturday; day to worship God; from Friday’s sunset to Saturday’s sunset. Since Jesus was raised from the dead on the first day of the week, Christians most often worship on Sunday now.

synagogue: Jewish house of prayer and study

third law: part of the Ten Laws; “Remember the Day of Rest, to keep it holy. Six days you will do all your work. But the seventh day is a Day of Rest to the Lord your God. You, your son, your daughter, your male

People Are More Important

I once had a boss who called me by name. This man had thousands of people who worked for him. Yet he knew me by my first name. He made sure everyone knew how to do their job well. He also showed he cared for each of the people who worked for him. This man showed that people were important to him.

Jesus taught that people are important. He said helping others is more important than keeping rules. It is the best way to keep God’s laws. This may not please people who like to live by rules they have made up.

Jesus breaks rules on the Day of Rest (Luke 13:10-11)

Many centuries before Jesus came to earth, God gave the Ten Laws to Moses. The **third law** teaches us to remember to keep the seventh day holy. Why? Because God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day, He rested. This day was called the **Sabbath** or the Day of Rest.

What does this mean? It means we should not do our own work on this day. We do God’s work.

Proud, religious law-keepers had made many special rules about what you could or could not do on the Sabbath. Jesus’ enemies watched Him closely on the Day of Rest. They wanted to see if Jesus obeyed all their laws about this day.

Jesus was the visiting teacher this day at the **synagogue**. The weekly meetings usually had prayers, readings from the Old Testament books of law (the first five books) and from the prophets. Often, there would be a talk and prayer.

servant, your female servant, your cattle, or the traveler who stays with you, must not do any work on this day. For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that is in them. And He rested on the seventh day. So the Lord gave honor to the Day of Rest and made it holy.” (Exodus 20:8-11)

Things to Think About

1. Do you find it easier to love laws more than you love God and His people?
2. What if you had been there for worship on the day Jesus came to speak and saw Him heal the woman? How would you have felt?
3. Imagine that Jesus Christ showed up in church this next Sunday and asked you what one thing you would like for Him to do for you. What would you ask?

This was the last time Jesus would speak on the Day of Rest. Jesus cared so much for people that He did not worry about the extra laws of these people. Earlier, He had taught large crowds of people. Now, many people were against Jesus. He would no longer be welcome to do His Bible reading and teaching in the synagogues.

Jesus heals a woman (Luke 13:12-14)

While Jesus was speaking, He saw a woman who could not stand straight. She had been this way for 18 years. She was so bent over that she could not look at Jesus. Yet, she still came to worship. In those days, women did not read or say prayers during the services. They sat in a special place where they could hear the teachings and the prayers. Perhaps no one even noticed she was there.

Jesus not only saw her, He did something to help her. Her pain touched His heart, and her need for healing came before His need to finish His talk. Jesus stopped His teaching and healed her on the day when only the worship of God was to be done. For Jesus, *talk* about God and the kingdom of God became *action*.

Jesus told her that she was free from her trouble. Then she did something she could not do for 18 years. She stood straight up. She gave thanks to God. She knew Jesus was sent from God to help her.

We see Jesus as a healer in the early church. But sometimes we do not see the real reason for His healing. It was to bring praise and honor to God. This woman's first response was right. She offered her thanks and praise to God.

One of the religious leaders became angry because he thought Jesus was “working” when He healed the woman. He would not say anything to Jesus. He spoke instead to the people about Jesus and the woman. He told them, “There are six days in which work should be done. Come on those days and get healed. Do not come to be healed on the Day of Rest.”

The religious leader said Jesus broke one of God’s Laws when He healed this woman. This leader thought it was not necessary to heal her. She had been bent like this for many years so he said she could stay bent another day.

Jesus speaks to the religious leader (Luke 13:15-17)

Jesus spoke plainly to the religious leader. He said, “You pretend to be someone you are not!” The religious leader had come to learn about and worship God, but he would not allow Jesus to do God’s work. He and others like him were more interested in keeping rules than in helping people. This was the leader of the house of worship.

Jesus knew these people. He knew

that earlier in the day each one of them had taken his cow or his donkey out and led them to water on the Day of Rest. This was work. It was allowed by their rules. Even animals seemed to get better treatment than people in need. Jesus said the Jewish woman was more important than animals and more important than their rules.

When Jesus said this, the leaders were ashamed because Jesus made them look bad. The common people were glad Jesus healed the woman even if it was the Sabbath. They may have been pleased Jesus had spoken this way to those men who loved their religious laws more than helping those in need.

The healing of this woman was much more than a medical healing. It was the way Jesus showed the power of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of evil. She had been chained by Satan for 18 years in a painful body. Now she was set free. She was healed.

Jesus showed His power over Satan. Those who were saying it was wrong to heal on this day had not been able to see Jesus’ power. They acted as if it would be better for the woman to remain bent over.

Other people at the synagogue joined the woman in joy and praise to God. They knew Jesus had done a great thing. They were happy she was healed.

Jesus reached out His hands to help the woman on the Day of Rest. Later, His hands would be stretched out on the cross because of the enemies He made doing this kind of mighty work. Jesus helped the bent woman. And when He died on the cross, He set us free from sins which bend us down.

Luke 13:10-17

10 Jesus was teaching in one of the Jewish places of worship on the Day of Rest.

11 A woman was there who had suffered for eighteen years because of a demon. She was not able to stand up straight.

12 Jesus saw her and said, “Woman, you are now free from your trouble!”

13 Then He put His hand on her. At once she stood up straight and gave thanks to God.

14 The leader of the Jewish place of worship was angry because Jesus healed on the Day of Rest. The leader said to the

people, “There are six days in which work should be done. Come on those days and get healed. Do not come to be healed on the Day of Rest.”

15 The Lord said to him, “You pretend to be someone you are not! Do not each of you let his cow or his donkey out and lead them to water on the Day of Rest?”

16 Should not this Jewish woman be made free from this trouble on the Day of Rest? She has been chained by Satan for eighteen years.”

17 When He said this, all those who were against Him were ashamed. All the many people were glad for the great things being done by Him.



*Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English*

Bible Text

Luke 15:11-32

Memory Verse

“The son got up and went to his father. While he was yet a long way off, his father saw him. The father was full of loving-pity for him. He ran and threw his arms around him and kissed him.” (Luke 15:20)

Word List

prodigal son: the son who left home and spent all his father’s money in a wrong way. Many prefer to call this the story, “The Lost Son.”
waste: to spend money without thought of spending wisely; to throw away; to use money in the wrong way

God’s Grace Is for Everyone

Jesus continued to teach His followers on His way to Jerusalem. He taught that God welcomes sinners. We learn how much God loves us in three picture-stories about three lost things: The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin, and The Lost Son. The third story is also called the **Prodigal Son**. Jesus taught about the joy of finding what is lost. His followers understood Jesus believed all people are important. God’s love reaches to all people.

The proud, religious law-keepers and the teachers of the Law began to speak against Jesus. They did not like how Jesus was a friend to sinners.

Jesus teaches about a sinful son (Luke 15:11-16)

Jesus began the story in a familiar way. “There was a man” who had two sons. The younger son wanted his father to give him his part of the family riches. The father was a farmer who owned many servants and much land. His sons would have all they needed. Usually, children would receive the money or land after the death of their father. But this son wanted his part “now.”

The father gave his son the money, and then the son left home. It seems he wanted to get away from his father’s rules, his father’s teachings, and his father’s work. But we learn he could not get away from his father’s love.

He went to a far country and **wasted** his money. Where was this country? Jesus does not say. Some say it was Rome. Others say Jericho or perhaps Jerusalem. Wherever he was, the son wasted the gifts his father had given him.

It might have taken several years for the son to spend all

**Things to
Think About**

1. Think about a time you ran away from God. What happened?
2. Could the brothers in the picture-story be happy together again?
3. How can your church help those who are in a “far away country”?
4. How should we treat someone who has returned to the Father?

the money on wild living. But the money did not last forever. He lost all his money. Then he lost his “friends.” He was hungry. Jesus said, “No one gave him anything.”

The son found a job feeding pigs. The son was so hungry he was ready to eat the pigs’ food. The people listening to this story must have been very surprised when they heard this. They were not allowed to eat or touch pigs. Jesus’ listeners probably thought working with pigs was as low as a person could get.

The son began thinking about what he had done. He remembered his father’s servants had plenty to eat. He decided to return home. He would ask his father to forgive him.

He decided what to say to his father when he got home:

- I have sinned against heaven and against you.
- I will not be known as your son any longer.
- I will be a workman for you.

Jesus teaches how God loves sinners (Luke 15:21-32)

Some call this story, “The Lost Son.” Others call it, “The Loving Father.” We learn about God, our heavenly Father, from the earthly father in this story.

We can imagine every morning the father looked down the road to see if his son might be returning. Perhaps he asked everyone who came to his house, “Have you seen my son?” His worst thought was, “My son might be dead.”

Then one day, the father saw someone walking down the road. We do not know if the son was walking fast or slow, but the father knew it was his son. The father could have said, “I will not talk to you ever again.” He could have given him a job as a

servant. Instead, we see a father who loved his son and waited for him to return home.

The son said, "Father, I am not good enough to be called your son." The father showed his love. He ran to greet his son. He threw his arms around his son's neck. He kissed him. The son had no chance to say anything more.

The father said, "Bring the ring, and coat, and shoes. Let us eat and be glad." The coat was for a special guest. The ring showed he was part of the family again. Shoes showed he was no longer poor.

The father had a big party to welcome home his son. He told the servants to prepare a big dinner. The father told the servants to kill and cook the fat calf. Usually, the family ate fruit or vegetables. Meat was only for special times.

The next part of the story is about the older son. The older son had been working hard in the field and heard what was happening at the house. He became angry. He had always obeyed his father. He thought, "My father has never given me a party with my friends."

The older son was like the proud, religious law-keepers. He called his brother

"this son of yours" and would not call him "my brother." Yet the father still called him "son." The father told the older son, "You are with me all the time. All that I have is yours. It is right and good that we should have a good time and be glad. Your brother was dead and now he is alive again. He was lost and now he is found."

God's love is for all

We learn from this picture-story that both sons needed the father's love. The father in the story is like God. Jesus was getting ready to die on the cross to show God's wish to save all people. Jesus reached out to give hope to everyone. All of us have sinned. God is willing to forgive us when we turn from our sins. If we have been bad, we need to be like the younger son and turn from being bad. We need to return to God.

This picture story-teaches us:

- God does not keep us from sinning. We are free to do so.
- We have to be sorry to return to God.
- God waits until we are ready to change.
- God our Father is ready to show us His great love. The younger son deserved

nothing, but the father makes him his son again. We see the father's love and the older son's jealousy.

•God's grace is for everyone.

Luke 15:11-32

11 And Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons.

12 The younger son said to his father, 'Father, let me have the part of the family riches that will be coming to me.' Then the father divided all that he owned between his two sons.

13 Soon after that the younger son took all that had been given to him and went to another country far away. There he spent all he had on wild and foolish living.

14 When all his money was spent, he was hungry. There was no food in the land.

15 He went to work for a man in this far away country. His work was to feed pigs.

16 He was so hungry he was ready to eat the outside part of the ears of the corn the pigs ate because no one gave him anything.

17 He began to think about what he had done. He said to himself, 'My father pays many men who work for him. They have all the food they want and more than enough. I am about dead because I am so hungry.

18 I will get up and go to my father. I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

19 I am not good enough to be called your son. But may I be as one of the workmen you pay to work?"'

20 The son got up and went to his father. While he was yet a long way off, his father saw him. The father was full of loving-pity for him.

He ran and threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21 The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am not good enough to be called your son.'

22 But the father said to the workmen he owned, 'Hurry! Get the best coat and put it on him. Put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet.

23 Bring the calf that is fat and kill it. Let us eat and be glad.

24 For my son was dead and now he is alive again. He was lost and now he is found. Let us eat and have a good time.'

25 The older son was out in the field. As he was coming near the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 He called one of the servants and asked what was happening.

27 The servant answered, 'Your brother has come back and your father has killed the fat calf. Your brother is in the house and is well.'

28 The older brother was angry and would not go into the house. His father went outside and asked him to come in.

29 The older son said to his father, 'All these many years I have served you. I have always obeyed what you said. But you never gave me a young goat so I could have a supper and a good time with my friends.

30 But as soon as this son of yours came back, you killed the fat calf. And yet he wasted your money with bad women.'

31 The father said to him, 'My son, you are with me all the time. All that I have is yours.

32 It is right and good that we should have a good time and be glad. Your brother was dead and now he is alive again. He was lost and now he is found.' "



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 17:11-19

Memory Verse

Then Jesus said to him, “Get up and go on your way. Your trust in God has healed you.”

(Luke 17:19)

Word List

lepers: people with a bad skin disease in Bible times; different than the disease we know today as Hansen’s disease

Passover: the meal the Jews ate to remember when they left Egypt

Be Thankful

Not many people can say they fell from a 60-foot mountain in New Mexico and lived to tell about it. After lying at the bottom of the mountain for over six hours, I was very happy to see the helicopter coming to rescue me. I was thankful God had spared my life. I was also thankful that God still needed me to do His work. As Jesus’ followers, we can show our thanks to God when we help others in need.

Jesus gets ready for Passover (Luke 17:11)

Jesus and His followers were on one of the two main roads going to Jerusalem. They were on the border between Samaria and Galilee. Jesus told two stories as they walked along. One story was about a smart manager (Luke 16:1-8), and the other was about a rich man and a beggar (Luke 16:19-31).

Jesus would soon enter Jerusalem to celebrate **Passover**. He and His followers would remember how God helped Moses free the Jews. Now, the enemies of Jesus were planning to arrest Him. Death on the cross was getting closer.

Jesus meets 10 lepers (Luke 17:12-13)

Many others were with them on the road that led up the mountain to the city. It was a time of joy for the travelers. Jesus and His followers were outside a small town.

Ten men with a terrible skin disease saw Jesus. They were called **lepers**. They could not go near other people. These men had hard lives. The law said these men had to wear torn clothes.

**Things to
Think About**

1. What does it mean that the lepers were healed after they obeyed Jesus' command?
2. What did the man from Samaria do to show he was thankful?
3. Jesus said, "Your faith has saved you." Is He speaking of the leper's physical healing or being made right with God?
4. How many blessings would you have tomorrow if they depended on how much thanks you gave today?
5. Who are the people you know who are like the lepers in Jesus' day?

They could not live in town. Some lived in caves. They had to cover the lower part of their faces.

They were not allowed to live in their own homes or go to worship. No one wanted the disease to be shared with other people. Sometimes a leper's family left food for him outside the town. If anyone came near the lepers, they had to shout, "Unclean, unclean."

The men were obeying the Law of Moses, so they stayed away from Jesus. This is why they called out so Jesus could hear them. These men called Jesus, "Teacher."

They did not ask for healing. They asked Jesus to have pity on them. They needed whatever Jesus might give them: Food, clothing, shelter. Perhaps they had heard He healed men with their illness before. If so, they knew Jesus was their only hope. The only way they could go home to their families was if they were healed.

Jesus sends the men to the religious leaders (Luke 17:14)

When Jesus saw these men, He knew they needed to be free. Jesus told them to go to see the religious leaders who could say that the lepers were cured and allow them to worship again.

The men quickly did what Jesus said. As they began to obey Jesus, their healing took place. Their skin was clean again. They believed Jesus. They had faith, and so they were healed. We talk about someone who "believes." A person who believes shows his faith by what he does.

We do not know if the lepers traveled a long way before they noticed their skin was clean. Perhaps they were so happy

about going home that they forgot to come back and tell Jesus, “Thank you.” Maybe it was too far to come back.

Ten men were made well. But only one man came back to thank Jesus. The others went home healed. Luke is careful to write that this man was from Samaria.

**The man from Samaria says,
“Thank You” (Luke 17:15-16)**

The man from Samaria showed himself to the religious leader. He knew his skin disease was gone. He did not suffer anymore. He was healed. He wanted to thank Jesus so he returned. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet. He touched Jesus. He thanked Jesus.

Jesus did not back away from his touch. The leper gave glory to God and thanked Jesus. The thankful leper may not have known Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. But he knew Jesus was the One Who God sent to make him well. He thanked God with a loud voice. He was excited. He would never forget this day. God gives us many good things, and we should always say, “Thank You.”

**Jesus asks about the other nine
(Luke 17:17-18)**

Jesus asked, “Where are the other nine?” These other nine were Jews who knew about God and His power. It was the stranger from another country who came back to say thank you.

Jesus said in John 1:11-12, “He came to His own, but His own did not receive Him. He gave the right and power to become children of God to those who received Him. He gave this to those who put their trust in His name.”

Jesus talks about trust (Luke 17:19)

Jesus told the man from Samaria to get up and go on his way. His trust in God had made him well. Jesus gave this leper more than the others. They received healing, but the man from Samaria also received salvation. His faith had brought him to return to the feet of Jesus in thanks. The man from Samaria now had a healthy body and a healthy spirit. Many other times, Jesus said because a person believed, he was healed.

What if you had been one of the ten lepers and Jesus healed you? Would you

have been the one who came back to thank Him? Or would you have gone on your way?

When we think about all God has done for us, we should want to say thank you to Him. We should also want to share that good news with others. The best way to show we are thankful for God's grace to us is to share God's grace with others.

Luke 17:11-19

11 Jesus went on His way to Jerusalem. He was passing between the countries of Samaria and Galilee.

12 As He was going into one of the towns, ten men with a bad skin disease came to Him. They stood a little way off.

13 They called to Him, "Jesus! Teacher! Take pity on us!"

14 When Jesus saw them, He said, "Go and show yourselves to the religious leaders." As they went, they were healed.

15 One of them turned back when he saw he was healed. He thanked God with a loud voice.

16 He got down on his face at the feet of Jesus and thanked Him. He was from the

country of Samaria.

17 Jesus asked, "Were there not ten men who were healed? Where are the other nine?"

18 Is this stranger from another country the only one who turned back to give thanks to God?"

19 Then Jesus said to him, "Get up and go on your way. Your trust in God has healed you."

◊ Luke: Journey to the Cross ◊



*Adult Bible Study
in Simplified English*

Choose What Will Last

Lesson 11

The True Treasure
(Luke 18:18-30)

Lesson 12

How to Show
You Are Sorry
(Luke 19:1-10)

Lesson 13

The Journey Is Complete
(Luke 23:32-46)

CHOOSE WHAT WILL LAST

Jesus' journey to the cross is almost complete. He has taught His followers important lessons by His words and His example. These last three lessons call for Jesus' followers to choose what will last forever.

Lesson 11 is about a rich leader who heard Jesus ask him to follow Him. This leader became sad because he did not want to do what Jesus asked.

Lesson 12 is the story of a tax collector who learned what was important. He showed by his actions that his life had changed.

Lesson 13 finds Jesus in Jerusalem and on the cross. Jesus had said He would die and be raised again. He did this to bring salvation to all who will receive it.



*Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English*

Bible Text

Luke 18:18-30

Memory Verse

Jesus said, “God can do things men cannot do.” (Luke 18:27)

Word List

respect: to honor; to show you think well of someone

seminary: A school which teaches how to work in churches or as missionaries. A school which offers Bible classes, music classes, education classes, and more for pastors, missionaries, music leaders, and other ministry leaders. Usually, men and women attend seminary after finishing college.

The True Treasure

When I was a young boy, I met a wonderful couple in the church where my father was a pastor. They did not have children of their own. Both the husband and wife were school teachers. They used their money very carefully. They always gave money to the church and to people who needed it. When they were older, they had saved much money. They decided God needed their money more than they did. The couple gave their money to a **seminary** to build student housing. They knew young married couples needed a place to live while they were studying to be missionaries and work in churches. This couple used their savings to help other believers who were serving God.

Jesus teaches us that the true treasure in life is not money. The true treasure is the holy nation of God.

Living a life that has something missing (Luke 18:18)

Many people came to Jesus with questions. Some wanted to test Him. Others wanted to trap Him. Some wanted answers to hard problems.

Luke tells about one who came with a serious question. Jesus was about to leave town. It was the man’s last chance to ask Jesus his question. He was a leader of people. Matthew wrote that he was young. He was rich. But something was missing. He had heard Jesus’ teaching about God’s holy nation and about life that lasts forever.

He asked Jesus, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have life that lasts forever?” Perhaps he had learned that you can have

Things to Think About

1. How much money would make you happy?
2. Can you think of a time when you wanted something, but after you got it, you were still not happy?
3. What do you think Jesus meant when He said, “Anyone who has left his house or parents or brothers or wife or children because of the holy nation of God will receive much more now”?
4. Does Jesus tell everyone to sell everything?
5. When people give God ten percent of all they earn, does that show they have faith in God? Do some people pay more than that on interest and debt?
6. Would you be willing to sell something you own to go on a mission trip?

much money and many things, but money and things are never enough. People always want more.

Looking in all the wrong places (Luke 18:19-23)

Jesus knew about people before they asked their questions. He knew the woman at the well in Samaria had many husbands. He knew the heart and mind of the leader with this question.

The man had called Jesus, “Teacher.” This word was a word of **respect**. But His followers called Jesus, “Lord.” This is a word with higher respect. Jesus wanted to know why the man called Him “good.” Jesus said only God is good. Many people in the world think of Jesus as “good.” Some people think of Jesus as a good teacher, a good person. But it is most important to know Jesus is more than “good.” Jesus is the Son of the living God.

Jesus told the rich young leader that he must obey the laws. Jesus named five of them. Jesus named those laws which teach how we treat other people. He did not name the laws which teach us how to treat God (Deuteronomy 5:7-21).

The young leader told Jesus he had obeyed all these laws since he was a boy. He had not killed anyone. He had not done sex sins. He did not need to steal. He had not lied in court. He had honored his parents. The young leader thought he had done enough things right to get life that lasts forever. He thought it was possible to have life that lasts forever by doing the right things.

Sometimes we measure ourselves by the Ten Laws and think we have done all right. Jesus said it is what is in our hearts that is important. We have all fallen short.

Then Jesus told the man something that made him sad.

“There is still one thing you need to do. Sell everything you have. Give the money to poor people. Then you will have riches in heaven. Come and follow Me.”

Jesus knew that this man’s money was not making him happy. To find the right way, the man must give God first place in his life. He needed to learn Jesus was Lord, not just a good teacher. For this man to do this, he would have to sell all he had and give it to the poor.

The man could not do it. He would do anything but give up his money. He would not follow Jesus because he loved his money more. He came with a question but went away sad.

Jesus taught us much about money because he knew we make it so important in our lives. He knows we can make money more important than God. Jesus gives each person the right to choose. When the man would not give up his money, he chose not to follow Jesus or to make Jesus first in his life.

Finding the true treasure

(Luke 18:24-31)

Jesus told His followers something

that sounded strange. He said, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go into the holy nation of God.” Jesus wanted His followers to understand when we make money the most important thing in our lives, we lose the true treasure of knowing God.

The followers asked, “Who can be saved?”

Jesus also knew there is hope. He said, “God can do things men cannot do.” God can set us free. He can change our hearts. We cannot do it ourselves. Jesus died to save us so we can be free to serve Him. A rich man can go into the holy nation of God only if he stops trusting his money to get him there.

Peter spoke quickly, “We have left everything and have followed You.” Peter had left his fishing business, his wife, and family to follow Jesus. Jesus told him, “Anyone who has left his house or parents or brothers or wife or children because of the holy nation of God will receive much more now. In the time to come he will have life that lasts forever.”

Jesus used many different words to

talk about the true treasure:

- Life that lasts forever (Luke 18:18,30)
- Riches in heaven (Luke 18:22)
- Go into the holy nation of God (Luke 18:24)
- Be saved from the punishment of sin (Luke 18:26)

We must take Jesus' words seriously.

If we have the right thoughts about the things we own, we will put God first. Jesus invites us to come to Him and then follow Him. Then we will have the true treasure.

Luke 18:18-30

18 A leader of the people asked Jesus, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have life that lasts forever?”

19 Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? There is only One Who is good. That is God.

20 You know the Laws. You must not do any sex sins. You must not kill another person. You must not steal. You must not tell a lie about someone else. Respect your father and your mother.”

21 The leader said, “I have obeyed all these Laws since I was a boy.”

22 When Jesus heard this, He said to the

leader of the people, “There is still one thing you need to do. Sell everything you have. Give the money to poor people. Then you will have riches in heaven. Come and follow Me.”

23 When the leader heard this, he was very sad because he had many riches.

24 When Jesus saw that he was very sad, He said, “It is hard for those with riches to go into the holy nation of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go into the holy nation of God.”

26 Those who heard this, said, “Then who can be saved from the punishment of sin?”

27 Jesus said, “God can do things men cannot do.”

28 Then Peter said, “See, we have left everything and have followed You.”

29 Jesus said to them, “For sure, I tell you, anyone who has left his house or parents or brothers or wife or children because of the holy nation of God

30 will receive much more now. In the time to come he will have life that lasts forever.”



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 19:1-10

Memory Verse

“For the Son of Man came to look for and to save from the punishment of sin those who are lost.” (Luke 19:10)

Word List

intersection: a place where two or more roads cross or come together.

repent: to be sorry for your sins and let God change the way you think and act; to live a new way because of the forgiveness you have from Jesus Christ

How to Show You Are Sorry

Jesus taught when we are sorry for what we have done, we will be saved from the punishment of sin. Our actions will show we are sorry. When we are sorry and change our ways, we say that we **repent**.

In the last lesson, the rich leader left Jesus. He was sad because his riches were more important to him than God. After the rich leader left, Jesus spent time talking to His followers about what would happen soon. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem and to the cross. He explained carefully He would die and would be raised to life again. In Luke 18:34, Luke said the followers did not understand these words.

Climbing above the crowd (Luke 19:1-4)

Crowds of people gathered wherever Jesus went now. Jesus was passing through the city of Jericho. He was on the main road going up the mountain to Jerusalem. Jericho was a large, rich city at a crossing on the Jordan River. This city was more than 10,000 years old. It was the same place where Joshua had marched around the city when the walls fell. This happened as the Jews were entering the Promised Land more than 1,200 years ago.

The crowd around Jesus may have been larger than usual. They were on their way to Jerusalem for Passover. Another reason the crowd was so large was that Jesus was there. People from many towns and villages had heard of Him. Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead in Bethany (John 11:1-46), the next town

Things to Think About

1. Are there people you think could not become a Christian?
2. Have you ever had anyone famous in your home? How do you think Zaccheus felt to have Jesus as a guest?
3. How does your faith in Jesus make a difference in how you spend your money?
4. What are some ways you can help the poor?
5. How has Jesus changed your life?

between Jericho and Jerusalem. They had heard about Jesus' many other mighty works. Thousands wanted to see Him. They also wanted Him to defeat the Romans and set up an earthly kingdom (Luke 19:11).

Zaccheus was one of those who wanted to see Jesus. He was a short man who was very wealthy. He was hated because he was a Jew who collected taxes for the Roman government. His job made him a person who could not go and worship with others. A lot of tax money came from Jericho. The Romans placed tax centers at **intersections**. One such intersection was at Jericho. Zaccheus was the head tax collector. He took more money than he needed and kept it for himself.

As Jesus came near, Zaccheus ran ahead of the crowd. He climbed up in a tree so he would be able to see Jesus. Zaccheus made sure he would have a good view of Jesus when the crowd came. But when he finally saw Jesus, he found Jesus was looking at him.

Jesus goes to the home of Zaccheus (Luke 19:5-7)

Jesus always seemed to make time to talk to people who tried hard to see Him. He stopped to talk to Zaccheus.

Jesus said, "Zaccheus, come down at once. I must stay in your house today." Perhaps Zaccheus was surprised to find Jesus knew his name. The people were also surprised Jesus would go to the home of such a man. They began to complain that Jesus would eat with sinners.

Jesus said He "must" stay in the home of Zaccheus. He would come at once. Zaccheus was very happy. He was a person

no one loved. Now he had one of the most famous men in the country coming to his home. He came down the tree and welcomed Jesus.

Do you sometimes feel you are not important? Many people may do more than you do, may know more than you. Yet Jesus knows your name just as He knew the name of the man in the tree. He sees you as you are. He still loves you. Jesus loved Zaccheus no matter what others thought. He loves you whether or not others think He should.

The change in Zaccheus (Luke 19:8-10)

We do not know what Jesus and Zaccheus talked about. But we know Zaccheus was different afterwards. He was not like the rich leader in Luke 18. That man went away sad. But Zaccheus was sorry for the way he had lived. He showed his sorrow by changing his actions. He promised to give half of what he owned to the poor. He said he would pay back four times more than what he had wrongly taken from the people.

Jesus said Zaccheus was saved. Earlier, He had said how difficult it was for

a rich man to enter the holy nation of God. He also said nothing is impossible for God. God loves every person. This love changes people, even Zaccheus.

Jesus talked about the “house” of Zaccheus. Many times in the Bible all the people who lived in a home became believers when one who lived there did. All who knew that person would talk about the example of Zaccheus. They would see the change in his life.

Jesus said Zaccheus was a Jew. It was through faith he had become a true son of Abraham. Zaccheus did more than just stop doing bad things like taking money that was not his. He made right the wrongs he had done. He was sorry he had done wrong. Now he wanted to do what was right.

Whether you are young, in the middle of your life, or retired, it is never too late to change. We can do what Zaccheus did:

- He received Christ with joy.
- He was truly sorry for his sins.
- He made things right with all whom he had wronged.
- He believed in Jesus Christ as God’s

Son.

The most important part of this story is Jesus, not Zaccheus. We learn that Jesus can come to any person. Jesus will save any person who listens to Him and wants to change. Jesus said He “came to look for and to save from the punishment of sin those who are lost.” We should be looking for people who need to hear this great news.

Luke 19:1-10

1 Jesus went on to the city of Jericho and was passing through it.

2 There was a rich man named Zaccheus. He was a leader of those who gathered taxes.

3 Zaccheus wanted to see Jesus but he could not because so many people were there and he was a short man.

4 He ran ahead and got up into a sycamore tree to see Him. Jesus was going by that way.

5 When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw Zaccheus. He said, “Zaccheus, come down at once. I must stay in your house today.”

6 At once he came down and was glad to have Jesus come to his house.

7 When the people saw it, they began to complain among themselves. They said, “He is going to stay with a man who is known to be a sinner.”

8 Zaccheus stood up and said to the Lord, “Lord, see! Half of what I own I will give to poor people. And if I have taken money from anyone in a wrong way, I will pay him back four times as much.”

9 Jesus said to him, “Today, a person has been saved in this house. This man is a Jew also.

10 For the Son of Man came to look for and to save from the punishment of sin those who are lost.”



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 23:32-46

Memory Verse

Jesus said to him,
“For sure, I tell you,
today you will be with
Me in Paradise.”
(Luke 23:43)

Word List

argued: to disagree;
to fight with words
criminals: people
who break the law,
who do wrong things,
and who have been or
will be judged

Paradise: another
word we use for
heaven; the place we
go to be with God
after we die, if we
believe Jesus is our
Savior

skull: head bone;
bone that has the brain
inside

The Journey Is Complete

Jesus had told His family and followers He was going to die and be raised again. This is what the Old Testament said He would do. Jesus did this to give us life that lasts forever. He did this for every person in the world.

Jesus’ followers learned from Him as He made the journey to the cross. They saw Him as He did mighty works. They heard Him tell picture-stories. They saw Jesus reach out to many kinds of people. Now they see Jesus as He spends His last week in Jerusalem.

Much had happened since Jesus had met Zaccheus at the tree a few days earlier. Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem with singing and praises. He went to the temple many times and spoke with the religious leaders. He ate the last meal with His followers. Then Judas, who was one of Jesus’ followers, led soldiers to a garden where Jesus was praying. Jesus was arrested. He was judged in court. He was beaten. But the worst was still to come. Jesus would die on a cross.

Jesus pays the price (Luke 23:32-42)

Many writings from the Old Testament told about the kind of death Jesus would have. Isaiah said the Messiah would be thought of as “One Who broke the Law...” (Isaiah 53:12b). This happened as it was written. Soldiers took Jesus to the place where He would die on the cross. Two other men were there. They were **criminals**. The religious leaders did not like it when Jesus ate and visited with sinners. Now Jesus was dying with sinners.

**Things to
Think About**

1. Do you know for sure that you will go to heaven when you die?
2. Do you know God because of your faith in Jesus Christ?
3. What would you say if God asked you, “Why should I let you into heaven?”
4. What words have you learned to talk about heaven?

The soldiers took Jesus outside the gates of Jerusalem. There was a rocky place which looked like a **skull**. The word in Jesus’ language for this place was Golgotha. We call it Calvary. Luke wrote in Greek, and the word is like our word *cranium* or *head bone*. Some people think there were head bones at this place where other people had died. It was a sad and terrible place.

All around Jesus were those who had said cruel things about Him. But what did Jesus say? He prayed, “Father, forgive them.” Isaiah had written: “Yet He Himself carried the sin of many, and prayed for the sinners” (Isaiah 53:12c).

When treated unfairly have you ever thought of praying that God would forgive the one who was doing wrong to you? It would be very hard to do. But that’s what Jesus did.

While Jesus suffered on the cross, the soldiers played a game to see who would win Jesus’ clothes. Perhaps they were evil. Maybe they did this so they did not have to think about the men who were dying. This also had been written about long before Jesus was born: “They divide my clothes among them by drawing names to see who would get them” (Psalm 22:18).

Do we ever play games while others suffer? Perhaps you do not like to watch sad news on television. Many times, we only want to think about things which make us happy.

Others came to watch Jesus die and make fun of Him. They said, “He saved others, let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the Chosen One of God!” Jesus could have saved Himself. He had the power. But He did not choose to use His power by helping Himself. Jesus had told them: “For this reason My Father loves Me. It is because I give My life that I might take

it back again. No one takes my life from Me. I give it by Myself. I have the right and the power to take it back again. My Father has given Me this right and power” (John 10:17-18).

Jesus’ death paid the price to make us right with God. We could not have paid the price. The Creator God came in human form, in Jesus Christ, to die for us.

Beside Jesus, two other men **argued** as they hung on their crosses. One showed he had faith in Jesus. He knew he was guilty, but Jesus had no guilt. The other man said bad words to Jesus. One of the men on the cross was like the young leader and the other was like Zaccheus. One believed, and one did not.

The man who believed did what we all must do to be saved. He said he had done wrong and should be punished. He knew Jesus had done no wrong. He asked Jesus to save him. We could say this man was the first Christian. He was the first to be saved by Jesus’ death.

Jesus makes a promise (Luke 23:43)

Jesus made a promise to the man on the cross, “Today you will be with Me in

Paradise.” This promise has given hope to people everywhere. If we trust God, all the suffering we have now will change in the life to come. There is no waiting after we die. We will be with Jesus in heaven.

Everything we need to make us happy will be there. All the beauty of this world will be there, only more so. There will be no more dying, because “we will all be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:51). We can only understand the cross and suffering if we have the hope of life that lasts forever.

The way to heaven (Luke 23:44-46)

When Jesus died, the world became dark. The tall, heavy curtain in the most holy part of the temple was torn from top to bottom. This curtain was a symbol of the separation between man and God. Only one man could go behind the curtain. He made a sacrifice one time a year for the sins of the people.

When Jesus died, He made the final sacrifice to make us right with God. The last words Jesus spoke were as He called to God: “Father.” He made it possible for us to know God as Father. He made it possible for us to be His followers.

Luke 23:32-46

32 Two other men were led away with Jesus to be put to death also. These men had done things making them guilty of death.

33 When they came to the place called Calvary, they nailed Jesus to a cross. The other two men were nailed to crosses also. One was on the right side of Jesus and the other was on His left side.

34 Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them. They do not know what they are doing.” And they divided His clothes by drawing names.

35 The people stood around looking on. The leaders were there with them making fun of Jesus. They said, “He saved others, let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the Chosen One of God!”

36 The soldiers made fun of Him also. They put sour wine before Him.

37 They said, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.”

38 These words were written in the Greek and Latin and Hebrew languages above His head: “THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

39 One of the men who was guilty of death who was on a cross beside Jesus spoke bad

words to Him. He said, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”

40 But the other man on a cross spoke sharp words to the one who made fun of Jesus. He said, “Are you not afraid of God? You are also guilty and will be punished.

41 We are suffering and we should, because of the wrong we have done. But this Man has done nothing wrong.”

42 And he said to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your holy nation.”

43 Jesus said to him, “For sure, I tell you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

44 It was dark over all the earth from noon until three o’clock.

45 The sun did not shine. In the house of God the curtain was torn in two pieces.

46 Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Father, into Your hands I give My spirit.” When He said this, He died.



Adult Bible Study in
Simplified English

Bible Text

Luke 2:1-20

Memory Verse

Today, One Who saves from the punishment of sin has been born in the city of David. He is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:11)

Word List

nativity/nativities: A picture or scene of the place where Jesus was born; usually includes Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus, shepherds, and Wise Men, angels, animals, a bright star; some nativities are carved of wood, made of clay, cloth, or other materials

angels: messengers from God, created by God; people do not become angels after death. The Bible describes angels who protect people, which we call *guardian*

Good News of Great Joy

The Christmas season seems to come earlier every year. Years ago, stores began to decorate for Christmas in the weeks before Thanksgiving. Now stores begin selling Christmas trees and decorations before children start to school. Television commercials warn us early it is time to start buying gifts. Church choirs begin practicing special music in late summer.

All of these make Christmas special. But they are not the real purpose of Christmas. The real purpose is God sent His Son to the world. He came as a baby to grow up, live a sinless life, and make the way for every person to have life that lasts forever. When we really understand the true meaning of Christmas, we have great joy and want to praise God. When we think about the birth of Jesus, we should be full of wonder.

Christmas is many people's favorite holiday. My wife decorates with more than 150 **nativities** from around the world. We play Christmas songs and prepare for our family to come together. We give thanks for God's Son. There is much joy.

A certain time (Luke 2:1-5)

Luke gives more information about Jesus' birth than any of the other books in the Bible. Luke was a doctor. Many people think he spent much time talking with Mary, Jesus' mother. We know Mary was with the followers after Jesus died on the cross. Some people think she lived a long time.

Luke tells about the families of Mary and Joseph in Luke 1. We learn from Luke about Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, and the

angels: “For He will tell His angels to care for you and keep you in all your ways. They will hold you up in their hands. So your foot will not hit against a stone” (Psalm 91:11-12).

Things to Think About

1. Imagine a world without Jesus, a world without the Sermon on the Mount, a world without the hope of heaven. How does this help you thank God for His Son?
2. How does it show God cares for all people when He sent the angels to tell poor shepherds about the birth of His Son?
3. What can you do to show your joy that God sent His Son?
4. What can you do this Christmas to share with others this “good news of great joy which is for all people”?

birth of John the Baptist. We learn how Mary felt when the angel told her she would have this child, God’s Son, even though she had “never had a man” (Luke 1:34). From Luke’s book, we see how God used Mary to change our world through Jesus’ birth.

Luke writes that Jesus was born in a certain time. Luke explains the census, the emperor, and the governor. The birth of Jesus was very real. Joseph and Mary had to travel at least three days from their hometown of Nazareth to Bethlehem to register for the census and pay taxes to the Roman government.

It was part of God’s plan for the promised Messiah to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). The town of Bethlehem was small. But it was important in Jewish history. It means “house of bread.” Hundreds of years before, Ruth came with her mother-in-law, Naomi, to Bethlehem. Ruth met her new husband, Boaz, in Bethlehem. Their great-grandchild was David. He later became a great king. Joseph was from the family of King David.

Jesus is born (Luke 2:6-7)

When Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph had no hospital to go to. No rooms were open anywhere in Bethlehem. They spent the night in a place where animals lived. This is where the Son of God was born. Yet He was the hope of the world.

Imagine how Joseph and Mary felt. No one else was there to help—no doctors, nurse, or family. But Joseph was a good man who cared for Mary and helped when baby Jesus was born.

Something special to see (Luke 2:8-15)

What was happening the night Jesus was born? There were hills around the town of Bethlehem where men took care of

sheep, just like David did before he became king. The night of Jesus' birth was a night like any other. Stars were shining in the sky. Little lambs stayed close to their mothers. Shepherds watched to make sure their sheep were safe. Perhaps shepherds played harps like David had played. But something happened which had never happened before. **Angels** came to tell them the Savior was born.

Angels were important in telling about Jesus coming to earth. Months before, an angel told Mary she would have a baby. In a dream, an angel told Joseph to marry Mary because her baby was from God. And angels came to the shepherds on the night of Jesus' birth.

Shepherds may have known about angels from Old Testament writings. Angels spoke to Abraham, Moses, and many others. But the shepherds saw these angels with their own eyes, and they were very afraid. The first words from the angels told the shepherds, "Do not be afraid." The angels spoke these same words to Moses, Mary, and now to the shepherds.

At first, only one angel spoke to the shepherds. Then they saw a great light in

the sky. Many more angels came to give thanks to God. It was a beautiful sound.

Next, the angel gave them "good news of great joy to all people." This message from God told that the One Who saves from the punishment of sin had been born. The shepherds could find "the Baby with cloth around Him, lying in a place where cattle are fed."

Something special to tell

(Luke 2:16-20)

The shepherds knew God had sent the angels to tell them about the birth of His Son. They went quickly to Bethlehem and found Jesus just as the angels had said. They told Mary and Joseph what they had learned from the angels.

Mary listened carefully to what the shepherds said. She hid the words in her heart and thought about them often.

The shepherds returned to the hills and their sheep. They thanked God and were full of joy. They had seen Jesus, the One Who would save them from the punishment of sin! This was—and still is—the good news of great joy for all people.

Luke 2:1-20

1 In those days Caesar Augustus sent out word that the name of every person in the Roman nation must be written in the books of the nation.

2 This first writing took place while Quirinius was ruler of Syria.

3 So all the people went to their own cities to have their names written in the books of the nation.

4 Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in the country of Galilee to the town of Bethlehem. It was known as the city of David. He went there because he was from the family of David.

5 Joseph went to have his and Mary's names written in the books of the nation. Mary was his promised wife and soon to become a mother.

6 While they were there in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary to give birth to her baby.

7 Her first son was born. She put cloth around Him and laid Him in a place where cattle are fed. There was no room for them in the place where people stay for the night.

8 In the same country there were shepherds in the fields. They were watching their flocks of sheep at night.

9 The angel of the Lord came to them. The shining-greatness of the Lord shone around them. They were very much afraid.

10 The angel said to them, "Do not be

afraid. See! I bring you good news of great joy which is for all people.

11 Today, One Who saves from the punishment of sin has been born in the city of David. He is Christ the Lord.

12 There will be something special for you to see. This is the way you will know Him. You will find the Baby with cloth around Him, lying in a place where cattle are fed."

13 At once many angels from heaven were seen, along with the angel, giving thanks to God. They were saying,

14 "Greatness and honor to our God in the highest heaven and peace on earth among men who please Him."

15 The angels went from the shepherds back to heaven. The shepherds said to each other, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see what has happened. The Lord has told us about this."

16 They went fast and found Mary and Joseph. They found the Baby lying in a place where cattle are fed.

17 When they saw the Child, they told what the angel said about Him.

18 All who heard it were surprised at what the shepherds told them.

19 But Mary hid all these words in her heart. She thought about them much.

20 The shepherds went back full of joy. They thanked God for all they had heard and seen. It happened as the angel had told them.