

An In-Depth Book-by-Book Study of the Bible

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

LUKE: THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS

BIBLE STUDIES
FOR THE DEAF

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

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Accepting Christ?



Donnie Wiltshire

My father became a Christian a few years before I was born. That made all the difference for me. I grew up in church but more importantly, my parents lived for Christ at home. Our family had regular times of praying together and reading the Bible together. I remember those times warmly. I would lie on their bed while Dad read the Bible.

However, in those early years there was a darkness growing in me too. I often fought with my brother. I was a “good boy,” but I found myself easily losing my temper and often not obeying my parents. I was only a young child, but I had already learned how to steal and how to lie to cover-up my stealing.

Through my early years, Mom and Dad both told me about Jesus. They told me about His life and death and resurrection. They also

told me about the forgiveness I could have by asking Jesus for it. One day at home while still a young boy, I asked Jesus to forgive my sin, and I invited Him to come and live in my heart forever. On Easter Sunday night in 1959, I went forward in my church and made public my decision to follow Christ. A few weeks later, I was baptized to openly show the world I was a follower of Christ.

Within a few years I sensed in my heart how God wanted me to serve Him by working as a minister. I did not know exactly what that meant, but I publicly declared that decision in my church. When I was thirteen years old, God helped me understand how I would serve Him. In that year I met a Deaf girl. I was very attracted to her and decided to learn sign language so I could talk to her.

That was the door God used to call me into Deaf church work. I began interpreting in church when I was fifteen years old. After I finished college and seminary I served as pastor in Deaf churches in Texas, Louisiana, and Tennessee. Now I am serving the Lord by working as the missionary with the Deaf in North Carolina.

All along the way, God has blessed me and made my life full. I have seen churches grow. I have been a part of helping Deaf people to become true disciples of Christ.

I have shared the gospel in America and eleven other countries. It has been a great life serving God by using my spiritual gifts in the Deaf world.

God invites you to become His child. You only need to follow these simple steps to have a great life with God:

*Confess your sins. (Romans 3:23)

*Believe that Jesus died for you.
(Romans 10:9-10)

*Ask Jesus to come into your heart.
(Romans 3:20)

*Now you can praise God for your new life and share your experience with other people.

How to Use the Lessons

Use your Bible to read all the verses. In these lessons, we use the New Century Version. It is one of several versions that many Deaf people like because they can understand it easily. These lessons may be used for weekly Bible Study and reading at home.

Read **Accepting Christ?** on pages six and seven to find out how to become a Christian. If you are already a Christian, share this with a friend.

The **Lesson Material** outline gives verses for you to read in your Bible.

The **Bible Truth** will help you to understand the theme of the lesson.

What These Verses Tell Us explains in a few words what the lesson teaches. Read it first to help you understand the content of the lesson.

Before you read each part of the lesson, read the Bible verses for that part. Study the lesson and the verses to find the answers to the Study Questions. Write your answers and bring them to the Bible study.

The **Leader Guide** is for the teacher. The sections on **The Bible in Context** and **Explore** offer additional study related to each lesson.

Pray for your teacher, members of your Bible class, and lost Deaf people. Pray that God may use you to share Christ with other people.

ABOUT THE COVER:

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INTRODUCTION

LUKE

The Truth About Jesus

Luke 1:1-24:49

The Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts (also written by Luke) make up 28 percent of the New Testament. This is more than all the books written by either Paul or John.

Luke was a Greek and the only Gentile Christian writer of the New Testament. The language of Luke shows he was an educated man. Luke was a medical doctor (Colossians 4:14). In his gospel, Luke refers many times to sicknesses and uses medical terms to describe them. Because he was a Greek and a doctor he wrote with a scientific and orderly plan, giving great attention to detail in his writing.

Luke was a faithful friend and travel companion of Paul. The Book of Acts indicates Luke was with Paul during the last part of that book. He wrote the Book of Acts to tell of events after the Gospel of Luke. Luke carefully researched and interviewed the disciples and others who were eyewitnesses to the life of Christ.

The Gospel of Luke was written about A.D. 60. He wrote to Theophilus (Luke 1:3). His name means “a person who loves God.” Historians are not sure who this man was, but he was probably a Roman with a deep interest in the Christian religion. Luke may also have been writing in general to people who loved God. The book is written to the Gentiles and all people everywhere.

Luke is careful to show Jesus’ dealings with Gentiles, lepers and other medical outcasts, despised tax collectors, and many others. We meet Jesus as One who did not pay attention to the walls put up by polite society and religious leaders. Jesus was interested in people from all backgrounds.

Luke shows Jesus reaching out to everyone, but he emphasizes the Jewish roots of both Christ (in the gospel) and the early church (in the Book of Acts). Luke shows the importance of the Jewish temple. His gospel starts with Zechariah in the temple, and he tells of at least two separate incidents in the life of Jesus that happened in the temple. He closes the account of



his gospel with the disciples staying continually at the temple, praising God (Luke 24:53).

We know Luke wrote to Gentiles because he explains many things Jewish people would know. (See Luke 1:26; 4:31; 8:26; 21:37; 22:1; 24:13.) It is easy to understand this since he spent so many years with Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.

The Gospel of Luke details the story of Jesus from the events of His birth to His ascension. Some popular stories, such as the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, are found only in this gospel. This gospel has a special emphasis on prayer, the activity of the Holy Spirit, and joyfulness. Luke's Gospel also gives special emphasis to miracles and angels. Women have an important place in Luke's writings.

Luke is careful to give a detailed and accurate record of his investigation so readers can know with certainty Jesus is God. Luke shows Jesus' deep interest in people and relationships. Jesus was compassionate to the poor, the sick, the hurting, and the sinful. He loved and embraced everyone. Our God became flesh to identify with us and show us His genuine love. Only this perfect love can satisfy our deepest need. The Savior lived a perfect life and gave Himself as a perfect sacrifice for sin.

Unit 1

SON OF GOD: MEET HIM

Luke 1:1–4:30

This week we begin a new study from the Gospel of Luke. The emphasis for these first three lessons is this truth: Jesus is the unique Son of God. They cover verses we usually study at Christmas time. That story is as important in March as it is in December.

The first lesson is about how the angel spoke to Mary and how we must rejoice at the birth of this special baby. The next lesson is the familiar story about the birth of

Jesus in the manger and how we can praise God because Jesus was God's unique Son. The third lesson in this unit tells the story of Jesus speaking in the synagogue at Nazareth. He announced He was the Promised Messiah. Not everyone chose to honor Him.

Meet Our Writer

Donnie Wiltshire is Missionary to the Deaf for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Dr. Wiltshire has served as pastor of Deaf churches in New Orleans, Louisiana, and Memphis, Tennessee. He and his wife, Irma, live in Cary, North Carolina. They have three children. Donnie Wiltshire's testimony is on page 4 of this quarterly.

A Special Baby: Rejoice



Background Study Verses

Luke 1:1-80

Lesson Material

Luke 1:26-38,42-48

Bible Truth

When we know who Jesus is, we have reason to rejoice.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Listen to the Truth (1:26-33)** – The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and announced she would give birth to the Messiah.
2. **Ask Questions (1:34-35)** – The angel told Mary her child would be known as the Son of God.
3. **Decide to Acknowledge (1:36-38)** – Mary accepted the angel's word and announced her obedience to God.
4. **Express Joy (1:42-48)** – Elizabeth, her baby, and Mary responded with joy about Jesus.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who told Mary how Jesus would be born?
2. What does the name *Jesus* mean?
3. How did Mary become pregnant?
4. Who was Elizabeth?
5. How did Mary respond to the greeting of Elizabeth?

Introduction

There is no joy like the joy of having a child. Many of you will agree if you have children and grandchildren. I have three children and one grandchild. I can remember the birth of each one like it was yesterday. I remember holding each child for the first time and wondering what that child would become.

It is hard to imagine how the young girl, Mary, felt when she learned she would have God's child. This is the most unusual event in the Bible. Mary truly had many emotions. She was afraid, excited, and nervous. But she was also filled with faith. That is probably the most amazing part of the whole birth story. Mary believed what the angel told her. Mary believed her baby would become the Promised Jewish Messiah. Mary did what you and I need to do—she trusted in God and obeyed Him willingly.

Today's Lesson

1. Listen to the Truth (1:26-33)

Verse 26. This quarter we will study the Book of Luke. Luke is one of the four Gospels giving us information about the life of Jesus. Each of the four Gospels looks at the life of Jesus slightly different from the other three. One of the things unique about Luke is his emphasis on history. We learn more about the history around the life of Jesus from Luke than in any of the other Gospels.

So, we are not surprised when in Luke 1 we learn the setting for the life of Jesus. We also learn about what happened just before the birth of Jesus. Only Luke tells us about the birth of John the Baptist.

Elizabeth was the mother of John the Baptist. Read more about Elizabeth and Zechariah in Luke 1:5-25. Elizabeth was six months pregnant when the angel appeared to Mary. The angel's name was Gabriel. We know very little about Gabriel. We know he was an angel who stood before God and carried messages from God to people (1:19).

Verse 27. God sent Gabriel to visit Mary. In this verse we learn several things about Mary. First, we learn she was a virgin. Mary was not married, and she was a person of pure sexual morals. She had not given up her sexual purity even though she truly faced the same temptations all normal young people face. We do not know her age but many Bible teachers think she was a young teenager. The typical Jewish woman got married in her teenage years.

Mary was not married, but she was engaged to a man named Joseph. Most Bible teachers think Joseph was older than Mary. Maybe he was a young man with an established business. From other places in the Bible, we learn Joseph was a carpenter. Joseph was in the family of the great king, David. This means Joseph had an important family history. Many Old Testament prophecies predicted the Messiah would be born in the family of David.

Verses 28-29. Suddenly the angel, Gabriel, appeared to Mary. The angel probably did not look like most pictures we see of angels. Mary was afraid because of what the angel said, not by how the angel looked. If any of us saw a white angel with wings and a halo we would be surprised. The angel probably looked like a normal person.

Gabriel appeared and in his greeting, he told Mary God had blessed her and God was with her. This greeting surprised and puzzled Mary. She did not know what the angel meant. Mary tried to understand the meaning of the angel's words.

Verse 30. Mary was afraid. That is not surprising! The whole situation was strange and frightening. Mary had no way to know what Gabriel might do to her. The message from Gabriel was completely different from any of her other life experiences. You and I would have been afraid, too. The angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Mary.” So many times when people have a deep spiritual experience, they feel fear. Many times Jesus told His disciples not to fear.

Verses 31-33. First, the angel said Mary would become pregnant. The angel did not explain how this would happen. The angel predicted the baby Mary would have would be a boy. The angel told Mary the name she was to give the baby. His name will be Jesus.

The name *Jesus* has a meaning. Most names today do not have meaning. We just like names for how they look or because they are family names. But when Jesus lived, people gave their children names because of the meaning of the name. *Jesus* means “God saves.” (See Matthew 1:21.)

The angel told Mary the kind of person Jesus would be. All the words used by the angel were words used in the Old Testament to describe the Jewish Messiah. They are predictions about the Jewish

Messiah. 1. He will be called the Son of the Most High; 2. He will have the throne of King David; 3. He will rule over the house of Jacob; and 4. His Kingdom will never end. All these words from the prophets are about the Jewish Messiah.

ALL THE WORDS USED
BY THE ANGEL WERE
WORDS USED IN THE OLD
TESTAMENT TO DESCRIBE
THE JEWISH MESSIAH.

2. Ask Questions (1:34-35)

Verse 34. Mary did not try to run away from the angel or argue with him. She immediately accepted what he said. She did not say, “Go away and leave me alone.” She said, “How will this happen?” Mary knew she was a virgin. She had not spoiled her sexual purity. She planned to be married, but the angel said the baby she would have would not be Joseph’s baby.

Verse 35. The angel explained to Mary part of what would happen to her. The angel did not describe a sexual encounter between Mary and God. In ancient mythology, many times gods and humans had sexual relationships. This is not what happened in the story of Jesus. Through the presence of the Holy Spirit, Mary would know the power of God. As a result of this powerful presence, Mary would become pregnant. The baby within her would be “the Son of God.” This is one of the great mysteries of the Christian faith. We cannot

explain everything about this event. However, this is what we know—the child Mary carried was God become human.

3. Decide to Acknowledge (1:36-38)

Verses 36-37. The angel told Mary something about Elizabeth, her relative. Luke 1:5-25 tells about Elizabeth's pregnancy. When the angel said Elizabeth, who was very old, was six months pregnant, Mary accepted the message from the angel. If God could cause Elizabeth to get pregnant in her old age, then Mary understood how God could cause her, as a virgin, to be pregnant too. The angel reminded Mary, "God can do anything!"

In 1904, young Myrtle Morris, a Deaf woman from Atlanta, Georgia, was appointed a missionary to Deaf people in Cuba. She was probably frightened. How could this young Deaf woman go to Cuba and start a Deaf school? Myrtle knew in her heart she could not do this great missionary task alone, but God can do anything.

THE ONLY CORRECT
RESPONSE TO GOD'S
CALL IS WHAT MARY
SAID: "I AM THE
SERVANT OF THE LORD."

Verse 38. This is one of the greatest statements of faith in the whole Bible. In your mind, picture the young woman, Mary, sitting and listening to the angel. Picture her surprise as she began to

understand the meaning of the angel's message. Now see the faith in this answer: "I am the servant of the Lord. Let this happen to me as you say!"

Mary did not try to escape from God's call. She surrendered to God's call. This is what all of us need to do. God will not call any of us to do what Mary did. God became a human only once. But God calls all of us to follow Him and to obey Him. Sometimes the call of God seems impossible for us. The only correct response to God's call is what Mary said: "I am the servant of the Lord."

4. Express Joy (1:42-48)

Verse 42. Immediately after the angel left, Mary went to visit her relative, Elizabeth. Elizabeth did not live nearby. It was about a three day trip from Nazareth, Mary's home, to Judea, where Elizabeth lived. When Mary entered Elizabeth's house, the Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth, and she began to give praise to God. The Spirit of God helped Elizabeth to know Mary was pregnant, too. Elizabeth knew Mary was the most blessed woman in all the world because of the baby she was going to have.

Verses 43-44. Elizabeth experienced a great joy because of these things. She said: "Why has this good thing happened to me?" She also said, "The

baby inside me jumped with joy.” Elizabeth did not understand all the things Mary told her, but Elizabeth knew enough to realize God was doing a great thing and it was something to celebrate.

Verse 45. Elizabeth also knew the meaning of faith. Elizabeth prayed in faith, believing God would give her a child even though she was old. God blessed the faith of Elizabeth. Now Elizabeth saw how Mary, too, was living by faith. Elizabeth knew Mary believed God’s word to her. Elizabeth knew God would bless people who believe God, even when the message is hard. Do you believe God’s messages to you? What is God saying to you? Will you believe in faith just like Mary and Elizabeth did?

Verses 46-47. This is a beautiful song. It is Mary’s praise to God for all He was doing. Not only did Mary believe and accept God’s plan for her life, Mary celebrated God’s plan with joy. Mary sang, “My heart rejoices in God my Savior.”

Verse 48. Mary knew how carrying the baby Jesus would make her the most exceptional woman of all time. She was not a perfect person. She was a sinner needing a Savior just like you and I need a Savior. Even though she was a humble servant, the people of the world would share her joy by recognizing how great her blessing was.

WHEN WE FULLY
ACCEPT GOD’S CALL WE
CAN HAVE TRUE JOY.

You and I will not be called to do what Mary did. But God still calls us to do His will. His first desire for you is for you to trust in Jesus and believe in Him as the Savior of the world and as your Savior. Jesus calls you to follow Him and to live your life the way Jesus wants you to live. That means not living your way but His way. It is not an easy call to accept. Do you think Mary’s call was easy to accept? Of course it was not. When we fully accept His call we can have true joy.

What About You?

What do you think when you read about the birth of Jesus? Do you remember Christmases when you were a child? Perhaps you remember a special time visiting with friends and family.

If you know Jesus, Christmas has the greatest importance. We Christians believe when Jesus was born, God came into our world to live with us. Because God became man in Christ Jesus, we are able to know God by faith. All of life is different and all of history is different because Jesus was born. No wonder a right response to the birth of Jesus is joy. Do you feel joy when you think about the birth of Jesus?

Applying the Lesson

Here are some questions for you to think about.

1. What would you do if you saw an angel?
2. Could you have the kind of faith Mary had?
3. Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God?
4. Are you ready to obey God?
5. Does it give you joy to know Jesus is the Savior?

A Verse to Remember: "I am the servant of the Lord. Let this happen to me as you say!" Luke 1:38.

A Unique Person: Praise God



Background Study Verses

Luke 2:1-52

Lesson Material

Luke 2:3-20

Bible Truth

We can announce how Jesus is fully divine and fully human through our praise to God.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Praise God in Faithfulness (2:3-7)** – Mary was pregnant by the Holy Spirit before she and Joseph were married. Joseph took her to Bethlehem where she gave birth to Jesus.
2. **Praise God in Word and Song (2:8-14)** – The angels announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds.
3. **Praise God in Individual Ways (2:15-20)** – In response to the angels' visit, the shepherds went to Bethlehem, saw the baby, and praised God by telling others what they heard and saw.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who appeared to the shepherds?
2. What was the message for the shepherds?
3. What did the shepherds tell Mary and Joseph?
4. What did Mary do after hearing the shepherds' story?
5. What do you need to do with your story about Jesus?

Introduction

Some things are hard to believe. I will never forget when Apollo 11 landed on the moon. On that Sunday night in July, 1969, I sat at church with my youth group watching as Neil Armstrong climbed down the ladder and stepped onto the surface of the moon. It was hard to believe men were on the moon and we watched it live on television.

As hard as it is to believe men walked on the moon, it may be harder to believe Jesus is both God and human. Many ideas in the Christian faith are hard to believe. Perhaps the truth about Jesus as God and man is the hardest. But the Bible shows perfectly clear it is true. Some people do not believe Neil Armstrong walked on the moon. Some people do not believe Jesus is both God and man. Both groups of non-believers are wrong.

Today's Lesson

1. Praise God in Faithfulness (2:3-7)

Verse 3. Only Luke and Matthew have information about the birth of Jesus. Matthew tells the story from the viewpoint of Joseph. Luke tells it from the viewpoint of Mary. Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth but because of an order by Augustus Caesar (the Roman king) they went down to Bethlehem. That is why they were in Bethlehem when Jesus was born.

Verse 4. The order from Caesar required everyone to register for a census at their ancestor's home town. Joseph was a descendant of King David, and Bethlehem was called the city of David. Therefore, Bethlehem was the place Joseph and Mary must go. Luke was very interested in historical details. That is why Luke tells us how Nazareth was in the region of Galilee, and Bethlehem was in Judea. The trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem was about 120 miles. This took 3-5 days, walking or riding on a donkey.

Verse 5. Joseph did as the order required. He registered in Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph were engaged. An engagement at that time was a legal arrangement equal to marriage today. By this time it was easy to see Mary was pregnant. They were probably surrounded by scandal. People would have known Mary became pregnant before she was married. But Mary and Joseph knew the truth about her pregnancy. Mary was carrying the Son of God. Mary was not pregnant because of sin but because of God's gift.

Verses 6-7. We do not know how long Mary and Joseph waited in Bethlehem. Perhaps it was a short time. While they were in Bethlehem, Jesus was born. The events about His birth are amazing. Jesus was not born in a hospital. There were no hospitals back then. Jesus was not even born in a clean house. Jesus was born in a stable, a place for animals. When Jesus was born, Mary laid Him in box full of hay.

Imagine how Mary felt about all these things. She faced a scandal. She faced the hardship of travel during late pregnancy. She faced the humility of poverty and the birth of her son in a stable. Mary and Joseph faced these events faithfully. There is no evidence in the Scripture they ever thought about anything except to obey their divine calling. This is clear evidence they knew the truth of Jesus' identity. Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus was also the son of Mary.

2. Praise God in Word and Song (2:8-14)

Verse 8. We know from history there were many sheep in the area of Bethlehem. Some Bible teachers say the sheep in that area were the sheep used in the daily sacrifice in the temple in Jerusalem. The shepherds were nearby when Jesus was born. They were watching their flocks, and it was night.

Verse 9. Then a very odd thing happened. Suddenly an angel appeared. When an angel appeared to Mary in chapter 1, the angel's words were more surprising than his appearance. But when this angel appeared to the shepherds his appearance was surprising as well as his words. He appeared suddenly. And when he appeared, his presence was like a bright light. The light from the angel shone all around the shepherds.

THE MESSAGE THE ANGEL
BROUGHT WAS A MESSAGE
OF GREAT JOY TO ALL THE
PEOPLE OF THE WORLD.

There was only one angel at first, but that one angel was enough to terrify this group of shepherds.

Verse 10. The first words the angel said were the words the shepherds needed to hear. "Do not be afraid." Of course the shepherds were afraid. You and I would have been afraid, too!

But there was no reason to fear. The angel was not going to hurt them. In fact, the angel came to bless them. The blessing was in the words he spoke. The message the angel brought was a message of great joy both for the shepherds and to all the people of the world. The message of the angel still gives people great joy.

Verse 11. The angels announced the birth of Jesus. They did not say the name "Jesus," but they did announce the birth of our Savior and the birth of the Christ. Israel had been waiting for this news. In the first century A.D., the Jewish people prayed and waited for a Savior. They knew from the prophets how God promised to send a great leader or Savior to His people. They called that Savior (our English word) the *Messiah* (the Hebrew word) or the *Christ* (the Greek word).

Verse 12. The angel gave a sign to the shepherds to help them identify the right baby. There may have been many babies in Bethlehem, but only one baby would fit the unique circumstances of Jesus. The Savior of the world would be wrapped in pieces of cloth like the babies of the very poor, and He would be lying in a box used to feed animals. This was an odd place for such an important baby. His humble birth made it clear how this baby, who was the Son of God, came into the world for all people. He did not come to the world of the rich and powerful. He came to the world of the poor and outcast. He is the Savior for all people and especially for those who are weak.

Verses 13-14. Suddenly the sky and the land were full of angels. It was as if heaven could no longer hold back the exciting news. The God of the universe came to live among His people. The whole body of angels was giving praise to God. They announced the message and sang the message as loud as they could. They said, “Give glory to God in heaven, and on earth let there be peace among the people who please God.”

An event like the one that night has never been repeated. It was right for the angels to sing out the news with great excitement. It is equally good for you and me to proclaim this great story to the people around us. We know when Jesus came into our world, God was among us. There is no news more exciting or important. We need to proclaim the story to everyone.

3. Praise God in Individual Ways (2:15-20)

Verse 15. After the angels delivered their message, they disappeared. The shepherds were very excited. I think I would have been excited, wouldn't you? Then they did the right thing. They hurried to Bethlehem to see the things the angels announced. They knew the message was from God.

Verse 16. The shepherds hurried

to Bethlehem. Soon they found Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus. I wonder what they did to find them. Did they knock on every door until they found

the family? Perhaps the news of a birth was already all over town, and they found the family easily. When they found Mary, Joseph, and Jesus everything was exactly like the angels said it would be.

THE SHEPHERDS KNEW THE
MESSAGE WAS FROM GOD.

Verses 17-18. An important lesson we need to learn from these verses is to tell the story of Jesus. That is exactly what the shepherds did with their story. They told Mary and Joseph what they saw and heard from the angels. And then they told everyone what they had experienced. There are two interesting parts to this lesson. First, the shepherds told Mary and Joseph about the angels, and then they told everyone else they met what they had seen and heard. We learn from this how we are to tell the story of Jesus too. We must tell what we know from our experiences.

The second interesting part is how the shepherds told the unique thing they experienced. Their experience was a one-of-a-kind experience. No one but the shepherds saw the angels. Yet, they were not afraid to tell people they saw angels. I wonder how many people believed their story. They were not bashful about telling their story. That is how you and I need to be. What is your story? How did you meet Christ? Share your unique story with the people you know and the people you meet. You can read my story about accepting Jesus on page 4. This is my unique story.

Verse 19. All these things truly filled Mary's mind and heart. We do not know all the things she thought, but we know she thought about them. This verse tells us Mary treasured all the things she saw happen and all the things she heard. She thought about her first meeting with the angel. She thought about her marriage to Joseph. She thought about the birth of Jesus. She thought about the message from the shepherds. She thought

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR
CHRISTIANS TO SHARE
THE JESUS STORY
WITH EVERYONE.

about how she would raise the Son of God. Telling what you have experienced is a right thing to do. Thinking deeply about your experiences with God is also right.

Verse 20. The shepherds went back to their fields and their sheep. They praised God for what they saw and heard. It is important for Christians to share the Jesus story with everyone.

Della Mae was a member of the Deaf Baptist church in New Orleans. Her family did not go to a Baptist church. After Della Mae watched the movie, *The Ten Commandments*, she opened a Bible and started reading it. Soon she learned the truth about faith in Christ and she trusted in Jesus as her Savior. The only way I know this story is because Della Mae told me. She was excited about her faith in Christ and she often thought about it and shared it with others.

What About You?

Do you have a story about your experience with Christ? I hope you do. I have one. I learned of Christ through my parents. At home as a young boy I asked Jesus to be my Savior. I have grown in my faith in Christ ever since. My story is uniquely mine, and I like to tell it to other people. I hope you are thinking about your story. What has God done in your life? Do you tell other people about what God has done for you? Please do that now!

Applying the Lesson

Here is a good thing you can do to help you be prepared to tell your story to other people. Think about how you became a believer in Christ Jesus. If you like to write, write it down on paper. If you do not like to write, perhaps you can video tape your story. That will give you practice telling your story. Post your videotaped message on YouTube™. Tell your story to your friends, especially your Deaf friends. I challenge you to do that today!

A Verse to Remember: "Today your Savior was born in the town of David. He is Christ, the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

An Unexpected Messiah: Honor Him



Background Study Verses

Luke 3:1–4:30

Lesson Material

Luke 4:16–30

Bible Truth

We make a big mistake if we do not understand the nature of Jesus as the Messiah.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Recognize Christ's Mission (4:16-21)** – Jesus announced He was the Messiah and defined His mission as told in Old Testament prophecy.
2. **React with Acceptance (4:22-24)** – Jesus saw some of the people in the synagogue had questions about His being the Messiah and about what His mission would be.
3. **Recognize Christ's Concern (4:25-27)** – Jesus used stories from the lives of Elijah and Elisha to show His concern had no limits.
4. **Respond Positively (4:28-30)** – The people in the synagogue responded to Jesus' stories with anger and wanted to kill Him.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Where was Jesus on the Sabbath day?
2. What book of the Bible did Jesus read from?
3. Who did Jesus claim to be?
4. What two stories did Jesus tell from the Old Testament?
5. How did the people respond to Jesus?

Introduction

If you have been a Christian for a long time you have probably seen the word Messiah. It is an important Christian word, but it is not a word used every day in the Deaf world. Messiah is a Hebrew word meaning "Savior." The basic meaning is "anointed one." The word Christ is the Greek word for "Savior." When Jesus lived, all the Jewish people knew the word Messiah and used it often. The Jews looked forward to a person who would be the one told about in many prophecies in the Old Testament. God promised a person would be born to the Jews and have God's power. He would care deeply for God's people. He would be a Savior for all mankind.

The Jews used the word Messiah as a name for that promised person. When we understand the meaning of the Messiah, we will want to honor Jesus more.

Today's Lesson

1. Recognize Christ's Mission (4:16-21)

Verses 16-17. Our lesson today takes place at the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus. At the beginning of chapter 4 Jesus was tempted by Satan. He started His ministry of teaching and preaching. His reputation was already spreading in Galilee. In verse 16, Jesus traveled to Nazareth from Capernaum. The trip is about 25 miles. Jesus walked everywhere He went.

Jesus went to Nazareth because it was an important town for Him. Jesus grew up in Nazareth. All the people in Nazareth knew Him. They saw Him from the time He was a small boy. On the Sabbath day Jesus went to the Nazareth synagogue.

Every town with ten or more Jewish men was required by Jewish tradition to have a synagogue. Nazareth had a synagogue where the people worshiped and learned. Worship included several things but one of the most important parts of Jewish worship was reading the Scripture. Jesus often helped with the worship by reading the Scripture. On this day, the synagogue leader handed Jesus the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Jesus opened Isaiah to chapter 61 and started to read

Verses 18-19. These verses come from Isaiah 61:1-2. The Jewish people understood this chapter from Isaiah was about the Messiah. These two verses explained some of the things the Messiah would do. God's Spirit would be in the Messiah so the Messiah would not be a typical person. The Messiah would tell God's good news to the poor people of the land. The Messiah would proclaim freedom to those who were captive. The Messiah would give sight to people who were blind. And He would improve the lives of people who were not treated right. The Messiah would announce a time of God's kindness.

In these verses we can see how the Messiah would make spiritual changes. People would be freed from the captivity of sin. But the verses also show the Messiah would change the physical lives of people. The Messiah would give sight to the blind and would help those who were mistreated in society. The Messiah would be a person who would bring great change into the world.

Verse 20. Jesus finished reading the text and handed the scroll back to the synagogue helper and then He sat down. Every person in the room was looking intently at Jesus.

Verse 21. Then Jesus dropped a "bomb" in the room. Jesus said, "While

you heard these words just now, they were coming true!” Everyone knew exactly what Jesus meant. Jesus meant He was the person described in this prophecy in Isaiah. Jesus meant He was filled with God’s Spirit. Jesus meant He was appointed to tell the good news to the poor. Jesus meant He would free the captive and heal the blind. Jesus meant He was bringing God’s kindness and favor to the people. Jesus meant He was the long awaited Messiah.

JESUS CLAIMED HE
WAS THE MESSIAH
FOR THE JEWS AND
FOR THE WORLD.

This was an amazing claim. Jesus claimed He was the Messiah for the Jews and for the world. When Isaiah wrote his words 700 years earlier, Isaiah wrote about Jesus. This was the most important news the Jewish people had ever heard. In this short message, Jesus proclaimed Himself as the Messiah and He defined His life’s work. As the Messiah, Jesus would proclaim the good news from God, and He would do the kind works of God. He would relieve the suffering of the people and change the world.

Do you understand why Jesus Christ came to earth? Tell others about Jesus’ mission.

2. React with Acceptance (4:22-24)

Verse 22. The first reaction of the people was to speak well of Jesus. The people knew the words Jesus spoke were kind and gracious. But the next reaction from the people showed they were puzzled. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah. But these people knew Jesus. Jesus grew up in their town. They knew His family. They were not sure about Jesus. The way they showed their skepticism was by asking, “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” Behind that question is their thought, “Jesus cannot really be the Messiah because we know Jesus.”

Verse 23. Jesus knew the people were struggling with what they heard. The people thought His words were not enough proof for them. They wanted to see some action. They heard about the amazing works Jesus did in Galilee. Jesus taught in Capernaum and His reputation spread. The people of Nazareth who knew the background of Jesus wanted Him to prove His words in their town as well.

Verse 24. This is a sad verse. Jesus told the people of Nazareth how a prophet was never accepted in his own town. Jesus recognized the people saw Him grow up and would not have hearts ready to accept Him and His message. They were in the presence of the Messiah, but they were not prepared to accept Him as the Messiah. This is what makes the verse so sad. They were close to the truth but they could not see it.

Here is an important idea in today’s lesson. Any person can only make

two decisions about Jesus. A person can learn about Jesus, the Messiah, and then accept Him and His message or reject Him and His message. You honor Jesus when you accept Jesus and live like Jesus by sharing the good news and by sharing the love of Christ with those around you.

3. Recognize Christ's Concern (4:25-27)

Verses 25-26. Jesus knew His hometown of Nazareth was not going to accept Him as the Messiah. But He knew there were other people in other places who would accept Him. Jesus showed this was His thinking by telling two short stories. Read the first story from 1 Kings 17:1-16.

In that story God stopped the rain from falling on Israel for three and one-half years. During that time a great famine came on the land. Elijah, the prophet of God, went to Sidon which was outside of Israel. There he helped a widow in the town of Zarephath. Just as Elijah went away from home to do the miraculous work of God, Jesus must go elsewhere to do

God's work. He would not be able to do it in Nazareth.

JESUS IS FOR THE
WHOLE WORLD, AND
WE HONOR HIM WHEN
WE SEE HIS CONCERN
IS FOR ALL PEOPLE.

Verse 27. The second story shows the same point. This story is from 2 Kings 5:1-14. In this story Elisha, the next prophet after Elijah, healed a man from Syria who had leprosy. Many Israelites had leprosy but only Naaman from the enemy country of Syria was healed.

Again, the prophet of God had to do the work of God with someone who was not from Israel. Jesus said He would not be able to do the work of the Messiah in His own home town. He would need to do it elsewhere.

By using these stories Jesus showed His concern for people was broader than just a concern for His own people. The focus of the work of Jesus would not be limited to a small area or a small group of people. Jesus came as the Jewish Messiah, but He also came as our Messiah, the Savior of all people everywhere who trust in Him. We need to learn this lesson and join Jesus in the work of sharing His story everywhere. Jesus is not just for my friends and my family. Jesus is not just for Deaf people or just for hearing people. Jesus is for the whole world, and we honor Him when we see His concern is for all people.

4. Respond Positively (4:28-30)

Verses 28-29. Suddenly things turned bad. When Jesus gave these two examples from the Old Testament about God's concern for people who

were not Jews, the people in the synagogue became angry. These people who watched Jesus grow up were quick to turn against Him. The reason for their reaction is the connection between their understanding of the Messiah and Jesus' stories about non-Jews. The Jewish people thought the Messiah was just for them. Jesus showed how the Messiah was for all mankind.

They were so angry at what Jesus said they immediately decided to try to kill Jesus. They pushed Jesus out of the synagogue and out to the edge of town. There was a cliff at the edge of the town, and the people intended to push Jesus off the cliff and kill Him that way. The people of Nazareth not only missed their Messiah but they determined to kill Him. How sad!

I wonder how many times in our lives we have been close to something great from God and missed because of our sin.

Verse 30. The plan of God for Jesus to die on the cross could not be broken by an angry mob. The Bible does not explain how this miracle happened but Jesus just walked through the crowd and left. In my imagination, I can see the crowd push Jesus to the edge of the cliff, and then Jesus turned and looked the people square in the eyes. Suddenly they stopped. They could do no more to harm the Messiah. They dropped their hands and Jesus, with deep sadness in His heart, walked out of His hometown.

WHEN PEOPLE SHARE
THE MESSAGE OF
CHRIST, THEY SHOW
THEY UNDERSTAND THE
PURPOSE AND WORK OF
JESUS THE MESSIAH.

How do people show they understand the person and purpose of Jesus? The answer is simple. When people join Christ in His work and when they share the message of Christ, they show they understand the purpose and work of Jesus the Messiah. When we have prejudices against other people, we show we do not understand the purpose and work of Christ. When we share the gospel story with everyone and especially with the poor, we show we have understood who Jesus is and what Jesus is all about.

What About You?

As you studied this lesson you learned a great deal about the Messiah. Do you understand what Jesus did as Messiah? As Messiah, Jesus announced the good news, and He did the kind works of God. You will show you understand this when you join Jesus in doing these things. You will honor Christ Jesus when you proclaim the good news and when you do kind works because of God's love.

Applying the Lesson

Circle the statements below that are right actions for you to do to show you honor Jesus the Messiah.

Steal things at work.

Tell your friend about Jesus.

Help someone who is blind.

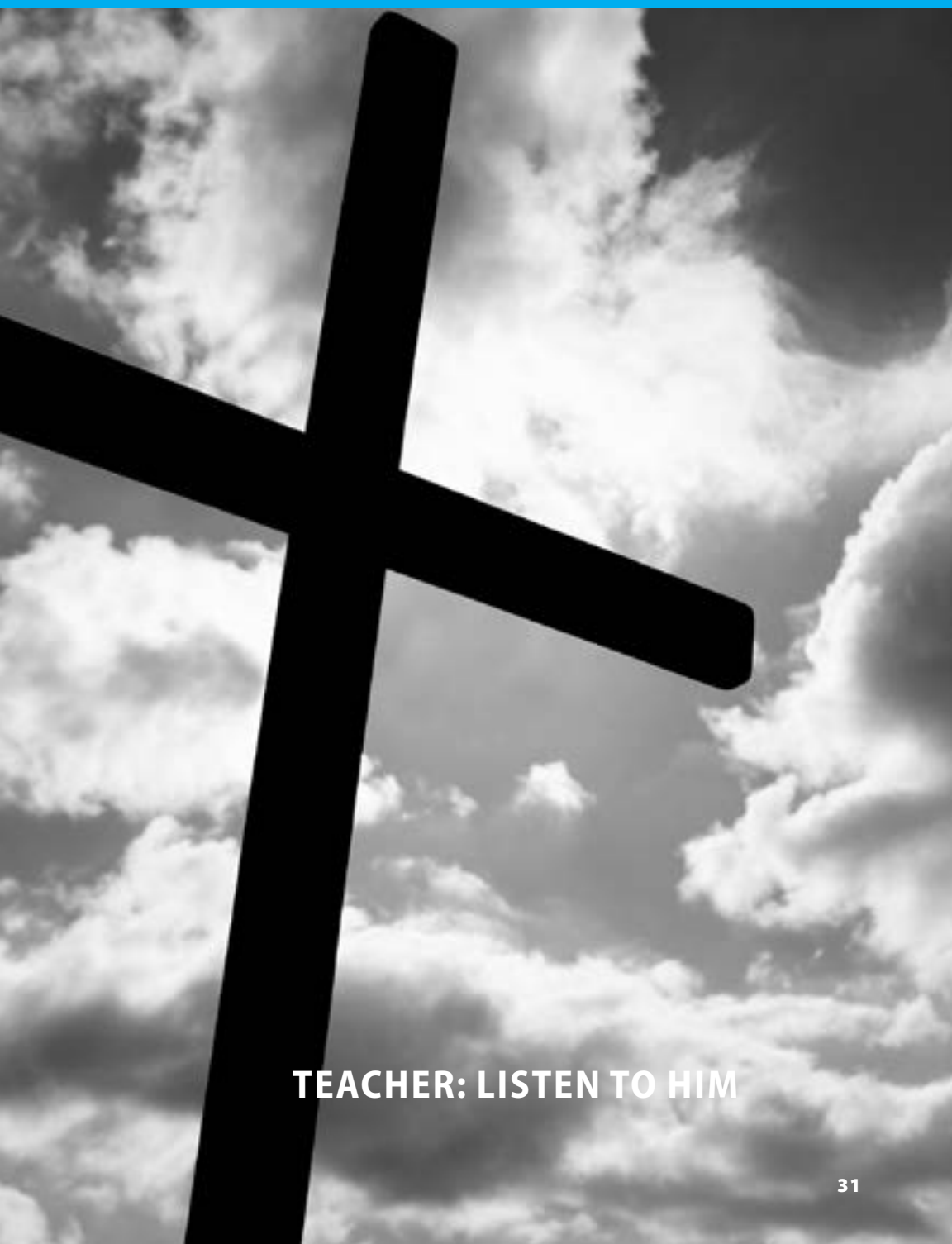
Have a Bible study in your home.

Witness to your Deaf friend.

Be mean to your coworker because she is hearing.

A Verse to Remember: "All the people spoke well of Jesus and were amazed at the words of grace He spoke" (Luke 4:22).

Unit 2



TEACHER: LISTEN TO HIM

Luke 4:31-19:27; 24:13-35

This unit includes seven lessons. Six of them begin with the word Christianity with a number after it. People who have been to college will recognize this as the way college courses are numbered. The 101 means it is the first course in that area. A course with a number like 210 is an advanced course. A student must take courses in the right order. So, these are the beginning subjects for Christians. The six lessons include accepting

others, living to benefit others, meeting needs, being a good neighbor, managing money, and learning to pray. Of course, these are not all we need to know as Christians, but these are good places to start learning and obeying.

The middle lesson is the Easter lesson. It is also the evangelistic lesson for this quarter.

Christianity 101: Accept Others



Background Study Verses

Luke 4:31–6:11

Lesson Material

Luke 4:31-37; 5:12-16

Bible Truth

When we are willing to accept all people, we will reach out to them even people who bother us or who are not attractive.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **If People Seem Annoying ... (4:31-34)** – While Jesus was teaching in a synagogue, a man with a demonic spirit cried out loudly, confronting and challenging Jesus.
2. **They Deserve Acceptance (4:35-37)** – Jesus did not ignore the man with a demonic spirit but instead healed him, showing He accepted the man.
3. **If People Seem Unattractive ... (5:12)** – A man whose body was covered with a skin disease boldly bowed down in front of Jesus and asked to be healed.
4. **They Deserve Acceptance (5:13-16)** – Jesus showed the man with the skin disease He accepted him by touching and healing him and by not avoiding him.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What was wrong with the noisy man in the synagogue?
2. How did Jesus heal the man in the synagogue?
3. What did the people think about Jesus?
4. Why was it unusual for Jesus to touch the man with the skin disease?
5. What did Jesus go away to do?

Introduction

If you went to college you will recognize the 101 in the title of this lesson. The first course in any subject is number 101. Christianity 101 means this is one of the basic ideas in our Christian faith. Accepting other people is one of the basic ideas for all Christians.

When I first starting learning sign language as a teenaged hearing boy, I went to a Deaf Christian retreat. I met many Deaf people I had never seen before. When the Deaf group asked me my name, I was nervous. I had a hard time spelling it right. The Deaf Christians were kind to me. They welcomed me warmly. They talked with me and encouraged me, and they gave me a sign name (DW on the left shoulder). I will never forget the way those Deaf Christians accepted me kindly. That is a basic Christian action—accepting others.

Today's Lesson

1. If People Seem Annoying ... (4:31-34)

Verse 31. Our lesson begins today with Jesus going to Capernaum. Capernaum was a small town on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Peter, Andrew, James, and John lived in Capernaum. Jesus probably stayed in Peter's home while He was in that area. Capernaum became the town where Jesus lived and worked while He was in the area of Galilee. The town was not very large but it was large enough to have a synagogue. The old town of Capernaum has been dug up in recent years. If you visit Israel and go to the ancient town of Capernaum, you can see the streets where Jesus walked. The first century synagogue has been dug up and can be seen today.

On the Sabbath day Jesus went to the synagogue and taught the people. It was His custom to go to the synagogue every Sabbath like we go to church on Sunday to worship the Lord. By this time, Jesus already had a reputation as an amazing teacher. The synagogue in Capernaum was small. The synagogue was probably full of people who wanted to hear Jesus teach.

Verse 32. The people were amazed at how Jesus taught. He was not like the other rabbis. The word *rabbi* means "teacher." Every synagogue had a rabbi. Rabbis were all trained in the same way. They learned the Hebrew Scripture, and then they learned what all the famous rabbis of the past said about those Scriptures. When they taught the Scripture they did not teach their own thinking about the Scripture. They taught what the famous rabbis taught in the past. Jesus did not teach like that. Jesus explained the Scripture in a new and fresh way. Since Jesus Himself was truly God He knew the truth about all Scripture. Jesus did not quote the rabbis but told the people what the Scriptures meant. That is what this verse means by the words, "He spoke with authority."

Verses 33-34. One of the men in the crowd in the synagogue had an evil spirit or an unclean spirit. This does not mean this man was just a bad person or a person with psychological problems. This man had a demonic spirit in him. We do not think much about demon possession these days, but the Bible teaches it can happen. Some people give their lives to the devil and are possessed by him. When someone allows the devil to live in them then they are demon possessed.

This man apparently lived in Capernaum or nearby. He came to hear Jesus. But when others were amazed and listened intently, this man did

not. This man started to shout loudly in the middle of Jesus' teaching. He shouted: "Jesus of Nazareth! What do you want with us? Did you come to destroy us?" What would you do if you were teaching the Sunday School class and suddenly a Deaf man jumps up in the middle of your lesson and starts signing furiously at you? What would you do? Would you be kind? Would you be angry? Would you be embarrassed? In the next verses you will learn what Jesus did.

2. They Deserve Acceptance (4:35-37)

Verse 35. Jesus responded to the man with the evil spirit in the very best way. Jesus healed him. Jesus did not give the evil spirit a choice. He commanded the spirit to come out of the man. Jesus could have asked some of the other men to throw the man out. He could have tried to argue with the man. Jesus did the kindest thing of all. He changed the man's life.

You and I could not handle the situation exactly like Jesus. I have never had the power to heal someone. But there have been many times when

I have been with someone who made me uncomfortable or embarrassed me.

JESUS DID THE
KINDEST THING OF
ALL. HE CHANGED
THE MAN'S LIFE.

We learn from Christ to respond in a different way to people who bother us. We can respond with kindness. We can respond with patience. We can respond with a smile. We can respond by doing the best thing we can.

The next time you are around someone who bothers you, ask the Lord to show you how to be kind and loving to that person. You may be surprised what God leads you to do.

Verse 36. When the people in the synagogue saw this they were amazed again. They had never seen anything like this before. Perhaps this man had interrupted the Capernaum synagogue many times before. The people did not know what to do with this man.

But the people were not only amazed how Jesus could do something like this; they were struggling to understand what this meant. How should they think about Jesus? How could Jesus heal someone with an evil spirit? Jesus did not heal the person with some kind of religious ritual. Jesus healed the man simply by commanding the spirit to go out. The spirit obeyed Jesus so what did this mean about the person and power of Jesus? They did not understand yet, and some of them never would understand. However, there were a few, like Peter, who finally understood how Jesus Himself was God.

Verse 37. The news about Jesus spread every where in Galilee and beyond. This happened before the age of newspaper and television, but the news about Jesus spread faster than we can spread news by text messages

in the Deaf community. Everyone knew about Jesus. Don't you wish everyone knew about Jesus today?

3. If People Seem Unattractive ... (5:12)

Verse 12. It was only a short time later when this next thing happened. Jesus was in a town near Capernaum. He had a reputation for healing people who were sick. Suddenly a man with a skin disease bowed before Jesus and begged Jesus to heal him. We can only understand this story when we understand how people in Jesus' day felt about skin disease. Some English Bibles describe the man's skin disease as leprosy. People in the time of Jesus often had that disease. But any discoloration of the skin in Jesus' day was also called leprosy.

JESUS SHOWED HIS
LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE
OF THE MAN BY
TOUCHING HIM.

When Jesus lived, a man who only had the type of skin disease with a change of skin color would have been rejected by the people of his town. His disease would have made him unclean for temple worship. Anyone who came near him or touched him would also be unclean. He was considered to be untouchable. This man may not have been touched by another person in many years.

4. They Deserve Acceptance (5:13-16)

Verse 13. The man made a bold request for healing. Jesus immediately healed him. It does not matter if his skin disease was leprosy or just the disease of discolored skin, Jesus healed him. The way Jesus healed the man has great meaning for our lesson today. Jesus healed the man when Jesus touched the man. Because of his skin disease people would not normally touch the man. But Jesus touched him. Jesus showed His love and acceptance of the man by touching him.

Our lesson today helps us learn how to respond to people who are different. The man with the skin disease was different and was excluded from society. How do you respond to people who are different? If someone looks different or has a different color of skin from you, how do you respond to him? You can think about many situations like this. Jesus taught us to treat all people with kindness and respect.

Verse 14. Jesus told the man to do a strange thing. Jesus told him not to tell people what happened but to go to the temple priest and to make the sacrifices required by the Old Testament law. The law required anyone healed of skin disease to make offerings to God. It was not odd for the

man to show himself to the priest. Jesus told him not to tell anyone else. It is not easy to explain why Jesus wanted this news to be a secret. Many Bible teachers think the reason for the secret was so people would not see Jesus only as a healer and worker of miracles. Jesus was the Savior of sinners not just the healer of sick people.

Verse 15. There was really no way to keep this kind of news quiet. Most people who had even just the skin disease of discolored skin eventually got leprosy because they were forced to live around people with leprosy. Eventually they would catch it. Being healed of any skin disease brought great hope to many people. There was no one like Jesus anywhere. The news of His work spread everywhere.

**JESUS TAUGHT US TO
TREAT ALL PEOPLE WITH
KINDNESS AND RESPECT.**

Verse 16. The pressures on Jesus were great. People surrounded Him and asked Him for help. Jesus worked hard to share the gospel of God's grace with people, and He worked hard to heal people too. He needed time alone with His Heavenly Father, and so He found time to pray. Jesus often slipped away to be alone so He could pray. You and I are very wise when we follow this example of Jesus. We desperately need to find time to pray. Spending time with God in prayer will always help to make us more like Jesus. You will treat people like Jesus treated people when you spend time alone with God in prayer.

What About You?

You have learned how Jesus treated people. How do you treat people? It is time for you and me to start living like Jesus lived. How will you treat those who are different? How do you treat those who bother you in various ways? How do you treat those who might communicate differently from you (such as oral Deaf or hearing people)? We can learn from today's lesson how we need to accept everyone and share the love of Christ with everyone.

Applying the Lesson

Read the following short sentences. If the sentence shows true acceptance, put an "x" beside it.

____ I can warmly welcome to church someone who is a different color from me.

____ I can patiently teach a hearing person how to sign.

____ I can become a friend to a person with Down syndrome.

____ I can ask a noisy person not to come back to church.

____ I can sign kindly to someone who is angry.

A Verse to Remember: "Jesus often slipped away to be alone so He could pray" (Luke 5:16).

Christianity 102: Live to Benefit Others



Background Study Verses

Luke 6:12–8:56

Lesson Material

Luke 6:27-38,41-42,46-48

Bible Truth

When we obey Jesus' Golden Rule, we will live in ways to benefit others.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **With Love (6:27-29,35-36)** – Jesus taught His disciples to love their enemies.
2. **With Unselfishness (6:30-34)** – Jesus taught His disciples to live unselfishly.
3. **With Concern (6:37-38,41-42)** – Jesus taught His disciples how criticizing other people is really a way of ignoring our own faults.
4. **With Obedience (6:46-48)** – Jesus taught His disciples the wisdom of obeying Him and His teachings.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who did Jesus say we need to love in verse 27?
2. If someone slaps your cheek what did Jesus say to do?
3. What does verse 31 tell you to do to other people?
4. If we forgive other people what will happen?
5. If we call Jesus "Lord" what do we need to do?

Introduction

The second step of basic Christian behavior (Christianity 102) is to live in ways to benefit others not in selfish ways for ourselves.

Recently I made a new friend in Florida. I was leading a Bible conference in a church. The Bible study was about what it means to be a real follower of Jesus. During a break, this new Deaf friend told me a sad story of how she helped her friend when her friend was in bad times. Instead of being thankful, the friend broke into her house and stole many things from her.

My new Deaf friend asked me what she needed to do. The Christian answer does not make sense to the world. However, in today's lesson you will see the Christian way is to bless the one who caused the hurt. The world does not think this way but this is basic Christian behavior.

Today's Lesson

1. With Love (6:27-29,35-36)

Verse 27. In chapter 6 we find a long teaching from Jesus. You can compare this teaching to Matthew 5-7, called the Sermon on the Mount. These two sections of teaching are very similar. The Luke section is called the Sermon on the Plain because verse 17 says Jesus stood on level ground. This sermon from Jesus gives us some of the most difficult teachings from Jesus.

This verse tells us how Christians must love their enemies. The world cannot easily understand why this is the right thing to do. In fact, the world can hardly do this. The natural response to an enemy is hate and revenge. Do you think it is easy to love an enemy? Why do we need to love an enemy? We need to do this because Jesus our Lord told us to do it. Later in the lesson we will add another reason.

If you live in Knoxville, Tennessee, you may remember Laura Formwalt. She taught at the Tennessee School for the Deaf and led the Deaf ministry at First Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tennessee, for many years. Her niece, Fay Lanham told me about a Deaf man in Knoxville who hated Laura. One time he even tried to kill her by causing her to wreck her car. But Laura was kind to him and even visited him in jail. One time she helped him to get out of jail. Finally one day the Deaf man accepted Christ and became an active member of First Baptist Church. Laura loved her enemy so he could know Jesus.

Verse 28. The last part of verse 27 says, “Do good to those who hate you.” Verse 28 adds two more hard statements: “Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who are cruel to you.” There is nothing easy about these commands from Jesus. Immediately you can see the way Jesus wants us to live is different. Here is the way the world would live—if people curse you, curse them back; if people are mean and cruel to you, be mean and cruel to them. When someone gives a bad sign to you what do you feel like doing? When someone causes problems for you at work, what do you want to do to that person? Jesus told us to bless them. That means to be kind to them and to help them—yes, even to love them. There is no easy way around this command from Jesus. Christians must live truly different from the world.

Verse 29. What would you do if someone slapped your face? What would you do if someone stole your coat? Be sure to read this verse carefully. Jesus said if someone slaps you on one side of the face, turn your face so they

may slap the other side. Jesus said if someone steals your coat, then let him take your shirt, too. Was Jesus crazy? Who would do something like this? When the people crucified Jesus and when the soldiers nailed Him to the cross, Jesus said, “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34).

Verses 35-36. These two verses add a new part to the kind acts, and they give us a new reason to help us understand why Christians live this way. The new part of the kindness is to give mercy to others even to the point of giving loans. When you show mercy to another person, you give kindness to those who do not necessarily deserve kindness. An enemy has not earned kindness, but God requires kindness from us. Someone who wants to borrow from you may not deserve kindness, but Jesus told us to loan to him and not to expect to get the loan back. This is not a worldly wise thing to do. When we live this way we are acting like God our Father.

2. With Unselfishness (6:30-34)

Verse 30. You know the sign for selfish. It is both hands in front, palms down, using the “V” hand shape, pulled back toward your body. We all know what this sign means. The idea is to pull things toward ourselves. That is the idea of being selfish. A selfish person thinks about himself first. A selfish person always wants to pull more things back to himself.

Rather than the idea of pulling more things to me, Jesus said His followers must give to everyone who asks. We must give away and not ask for it back. This may not seem right to you, but you need to remember Jesus was not concerned about the “things” of this world. He was concerned about people knowing God and relating to Him. Nothing else is important.

Verse 31. This verse is the heart of today’s lesson. Jesus taught this basic rule to guide our relations with other people. You can apply this rule to every decision of life related to your actions with others. The guiding principle for you is what you want other people to do to you. Do you want people to be kind to you? Then you need to be kind to them. Do you want people to be patient with you when you do wrong? Then you need to be patient with them when they do wrong. Do you want people to loan you something you need? Then you need to loan to them. Watch carefully! This principle is NOT if someone is kind to you, be kind to them. If someone is patient with you, be patient with him. This principle is no matter what others do to you, Jesus calls you to act kindly toward them.

WHEN YOU SHOW MERCY
TO ANOTHER PERSON, YOU
GIVE KINDNESS TO THOSE
WHO DO NOT NECESSARILY
DESERVE KINDNESS.

Verses 32-34. People who do not know God love people who love them, do good to people who do good to them, and loan to those who will pay them back. If we are the children of God, we must be different from the people of the world. Of course we need to live in a different way from those who live in sin. If we follow the way of Christ we will truly live differently from those who do not know God. Ask yourself this question, “Am I living like the people of the world, or am I living in the way of the Lord?”

3. With Concern (6:37-38,41-42)

Verses 37-38. What we do to other people comes back to us in various ways. If you spend your time judging other people, you too will be judged. If you are finding where people are guilty, you will be found guilty. If you forgive, you will receive forgiveness. If you give away to others, you will be given much. Isn't it interesting this spiritual principle of what we give to others is what we get?

ASK YOURSELF THIS
QUESTION, “AM I LIVING
LIKE THE PEOPLE OF THE
WORLD, OR AM I LIVING IN
THE WAY OF THE LORD?”

Jesus did not mean we cannot identify the wrong behavior other people do. If you see the wrong in other people, then you cannot plead innocent when that same wrong is in you. This is exactly what we usually want to do. We want to point our fingers at others who are guilty, but we want to excuse ourselves when we are guilty of the same thing.

A good verse to remember is verse 38. Look at the words Jesus used to show how God is generous to us: pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

Verses 41-42. Jesus told a funny story about someone who had a large splinter of wood in his eye. The splinter was so large the man could not see at all. But the man with the splinter tried to get a speck of dust out of his friend's eye. What a funny picture! Yet that is exactly what we try to do when we are guilty of sin and we try to judge another person's sinful behavior. These verses do not teach us to stop seeing evil behavior in others. These verses teach us to not overlook our own wrong actions by focusing on the wrong actions of others.

4. With Obedience (6:46-48)

Verse 46. These verses mark the end of the Sermon on the Plain. Jesus asked, “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ but do not do what I say?” That is a good question. We know the word *Lord* means “master or boss.” We

Christians know Jesus is our Lord. He is our master and boss. He has the right to tell us what to do. Why don't we do what He tells us?

Verses 47-48. Jesus gave us a short story to help us understand the person who calls Jesus Lord and obeys His words. The person who sees the words of Jesus and does them is like a person building a house. If a person builds a house on a strong foundation, when a flood of water comes against the house it will stand because it is well built. A person who builds his or her life on the words of Jesus is like that kind of house. Life can often be very hard. Life is like a flood of water beating against us. If we build our lives on the words of Jesus and do what He taught us, then when the floods of life beat against us we will not fall. We will stand strong supported by Jesus Christ.

The teachings of Jesus in these passages are not easy teachings. They teach us how to be concerned about other people and how to treat them.

It will not be easy for you or for me to obey what we have learned from Jesus in these verses. However, if you build your life around these hard sayings of Jesus you will not crumble under the pressures of life.

THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS
TEACH US HOW TO BE
CONCERNED ABOUT
OTHER PEOPLE AND HOW
TO TREAT THEM.

What About You?

Whom do you live for? Do you live for your own selfish desires, or do you live so your life can bless other people? Our lesson today helps us to see the different kind of life Jesus wants His followers to live.

Are you a follower of Christ? Then He calls you to live this different kind of life. He calls you to love your enemy. He calls you to be kind to those people who are mean to you. He calls you to live as He did—totally surrendered to God.

Applying the Lesson

Rate yourself on a 1 to 5 scale. 1 = a failing grade. 5 = the best grade.

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. What is your grade on loving your enemy? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. What is your grade on praying for mean people? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Do you do to others what you want them to do to you? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Do you do what Jesus taught? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

A Verse to Remember: "Give, and you will receive. You will be given much. Pressed down, shaken together, and running over, it will spill into your lap. The way you give to others is the way God will give to you" (Luke 6:38).

Be Confident of the Resurrection



Background Study Verses

Luke 24:13-35

Lesson Material

Luke 24:15,18-27,30-35

Bible Truth

God's people can be fully confident about the truth of Jesus' resurrection.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Consider the Possibility (24:15,18-24)** – The two disciples on the road to Emmaus thought about the truth of Jesus' resurrection. They talked together about what they knew and what others told them.
2. **Examine the Scriptures (24:25-27)** – Jesus showed the truth of His resurrection. He explained some Old Testament prophecies to the two disciples.
3. **Acknowledge the Lord (24:30-32)** – The two disciples finally recognized Jesus. They had full faith in the truth of His resurrection.
4. **Reflect with Others (24:33-35)** – The two disciples met with other disciples in Jerusalem. All of them knew Jesus had indeed been resurrected.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who was walking to Emmaus?
2. Whose body was missing from the grave?
3. What caused the two men to recognize Jesus?
4. How did the men feel when Jesus talked with them?
5. What did the men do after Jesus disappeared?

Introduction

When I was the pastor of the Deaf church in New Orleans, I preached many funerals. One of the funerals was for Mary Feux. Mary was a kind and generous member of the Deaf church. She was a faithful Christian, and her death was a great loss for all of us. The funeral was a simple graveside service and only a few people came. I signed verses from the Bible and spoke about the resurrection. We all cried because we lost our friend, Mary.

Death is real. But we Christians believe something else is real too. We believe in the resurrection. Jesus died, but Jesus is alive today. Because He is alive, we know death is not the end. Someday, God, by His power will raise Mary Feux, and He will raise me too. He will raise you too when you believe in Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

Today's Lesson

1. Consider the Possibility (24:15,18-24)

Verse 15. Last week our lesson was from Luke 6. Today we jump to Luke 24. The reason we are making this jump is because this Sunday is Easter. It is the time when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Our lesson starts with verse 15, but you can get a more complete understanding of this story if you read all of chapter 24. Read about the resurrection in the other gospels, also.

Jesus died on Friday and was buried quickly. Saturday was the Sabbath day of rest. Early the next morning, a small group of women went to Jesus' grave to anoint His body as was customary for Jewish burial. They were truly surprised when they arrived at the grave and found it empty.

Later that day, two men who were not part of the twelve apostles but were followers of Jesus, made a trip from Jerusalem to the town of Emmaus, about seven miles away. They were very sad as they walked along. They talked about the death of Jesus and the mystery of His missing body.

Suddenly, while they were walking along, a third person joined with them walking down the road. They did not know it at the time but this person was Jesus. Verse 16 lets us know God prevented them from knowing who Jesus was. Jesus joined the two men in their conversation about the recent events in Jerusalem.

Verse 18. In verse 17, Jesus asked the two men what they were talking about. One of the two men was named Cleopas. We do not know the other man's name. Cleopas said he was amazed because this third man did not know what happened in Jerusalem. The execution of Jesus was a very public event. It would have been very hard for anyone in Jerusalem not to know what happened.

Verse 19. Jesus pretended not to know what the two men were talking about. Jesus gave the two men an opportunity to talk until they recognized Him.

Cleopas and the second man started telling Jesus all the events. They started with the beginning of Jesus' story. He was Jesus of Nazareth. The two men described how Jesus was a prophet and how Jesus had done great miracles. These two men knew Jesus well. They were His followers. They were not part of the twelve apostles but two of the many followers who spent much time with Jesus.

Verse 20. In spite of the wonderful work of Jesus, the religious and

political leaders of the Jews had Him killed. The Jews did not have authority from the Roman rulers to execute people, but they persuaded the Romans to do it. Jesus was accepted by many of the people but was rejected by the religious and political leaders of Israel.

Verses 21-24. Cleopas and his friend told Jesus they thought the Messiah would give them freedom. The Bible does not explain what they meant

by freedom. They probably were thinking about both political freedom from Roman control and spiritual freedom because that was the work the Messiah was expected to do. These men seemed to know Jesus was the Messiah. Suddenly the story took a strange turn. The two men told Jesus it was the third day since His death. That morning

some of the women followers of Jesus went to the grave and found it empty. The body of Jesus was gone. The women told a strange story about angels and a message from the angels saying Jesus was alive. Some of the disciples checked out the women's story and found the grave truly was empty. These two men did not know what to think of all these things. They were not yet convinced of the resurrection but they were certainly thinking about its possibility.

What do you think? Could someone really die, be dead for three days, and then come back to life? I have never seen anything like that with my own eyes. Have you? These two men were thinking about if it was possible or not.

2. Examine the Scriptures (24:25-27)

Verses 25-26. Suddenly Jesus took over the conversation and started to teach them. He said they did not understand the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament). Many verses told about the death and resurrection of the Messiah. Keep in mind that the word *Messiah* is the Hebrew word and *Christ* is the Greek word for our English word "Savior." All three words mean the same thing. Jesus said the Hebrew Scriptures explained the Messiah would suffer and die. The Old Testament also showed how He would not stay dead, but after three days He would be raised from the dead by God's power.

Verse 27. Jesus started teaching the Scriptures beginning with Moses. Moses wrote about the future Messiah and so did the prophets. Jesus carefully began to take the verses from the writings of the prophets and explain how those writings predicted what had happened to Jesus. Can you imagine how wonderful that teaching was? It would be great to

have Jesus for a teacher. The two men listened very carefully while Jesus explained what all the prophets said about Him.

3. Acknowledge the Lord (24:30-32)

Verses 30-31. In verses 28 and 29 we learn how the two men asked Jesus to stay the night with them. This was a common practice when Jesus lived. The two men showed their hospitality when they invited Jesus to stay with them.

But then an amazing thing happened. Jesus sat down at the table to eat with the two men. Jesus took some of the bread they were about to eat, and He prayed over the bread. When Jesus broke the bread and gave it to the two men, they suddenly recognized Him. For all this time God had prevented them from knowing who Jesus was. But when He prayed and broke the bread, their minds were filled with the memories of Jesus doing that many times. God allowed their minds to be opened, and they saw Jesus and knew Him.

They were truly surprised and maybe frightened a little, but mostly they felt great joy. Here was Jesus, their master and teacher. Here was Jesus, the one in whom they trusted for freedom. They knew immediately the story the women told was true—Jesus really was alive.

THEY KNEW IMMEDIATELY
THE STORY WAS TRUE—
JESUS REALLY WAS ALIVE.

Verse 32. Then suddenly, Jesus was gone. The Bible does not tell us how that happened. The two followers felt deep emotion when this happened. They were not upset when Jesus disappeared. Their thoughts were not about His disappearance but about their feelings while Jesus spoke to them. They described their feelings this way: “It felt like a fire burning in us when Jesus talked to us.”

I can understand this feeling. I clearly remember the night I made a public decision in church to follow Christ. I remember holding onto the pew in front of me. I remember how my heart beat fast, and I remember the freedom I felt when I stepped into the aisle of the church and walked to the front to share my decision with the pastor.

A feeling like this is wonderful, but there is something far more important than a feeling. The two men demonstrated the thing of greatest value. They believed in the resurrection of Jesus. Believing in the resurrection of Jesus is necessary for salvation. This is what a person must believe in order to be saved: Jesus, who was God in flesh, lived on earth and died on the cross for our sins. But He did not stay dead. God raised Him to life. Now, because of His death and resurrection anyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved from sin and given a new life. Does that make your heart burn within you?

4. Reflect with Others (24:33-35)

Verses 33-34. Quickly the two men left the house and hurried back to Jerusalem. I can imagine they traveled that seven miles back to Jerusalem quickly. They found the apostles and others together. No doubt, all of them were trying to figure out what was happening.

When the two men arrived, the people in the room were discussing the appearance of Jesus to Simon Peter. The people in the room were talking about the reality of the resurrection. They said, “The Lord really has risen from the dead!” Most of the people in the room had not yet seen Jesus, but they were already believers in the resurrection. They would see Him soon.

Verse 35. Cleopas and his friend could not be quiet about what happened to them. They quickly shared their story. They saw Jesus and talked with Him for a long time. What amazed them most was how they did not recognize Him until He broke the bread. That simple act of sharing a meal opened the eyes of the two men to the person of Jesus.

Here is an additional lesson to learn from today’s story. The two men and the believers gathered in that room openly talked about the truth of the resurrection. We need to do this, too. Most people in the world do not believe Jesus rose from the dead. We believe without the resurrection there is no salvation. It is truly important for us to tell others about the resurrection of Jesus.

I am telling you now what I believe. Some day in the future, Mary Feux and I will stand alive before our living God and worship our Lord who raised us, like Jesus, from the dead.

WITHOUT THE
RESURRECTION THERE
IS NO SALVATION.

What About You?

Do you believe the resurrection of Jesus really happened? The truth of Christianity depends on that truth and our hope for the future rests in its truth. There are so many reasons to believe in the resurrection. The most important is this: I believe because I have met the living Jesus myself. He lives in me. He will live in you, too, when you trust Him as your Savior and Lord.

If you are not sure about the resurrection, talk with your pastor or a mature Christian and renew your faith.

Applying the Lesson

If you believe in the resurrection, here are some activities you can do to show you believe:

1. Pray everyday to the risen Lord.
2. Tell your friends and family the exciting news, "Jesus is alive!"
3. Worship the living Lord regularly with your church family on Sunday.
4. Look forward to the day when you will be living in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Verse to Remember: "Starting with what Moses and all the prophets had said about Him, Jesus began to explain everything that had been written about himself in the Scriptures" (Luke 24:27).

Christianity 103: Meet Needs



Background Study Verses

Luke 9:1-50

Lesson Material

Luke 9:10-17, 37-43a

Bible Truth

We need to do what we can to meet the needs of people who are hungry and sick.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Notice Needs (9:10-12)** – Jesus’ disciples saw the needs of the crowd and told Jesus. They did not know what to do so they wanted to send them away.
2. **Take Action (9:13-17)** – Jesus answered His disciples in two ways. First, He told them to provide food, and then He asked them to join Him in action.
3. **Trust God (9:37-43a)** – The disciples tried to do what the father asked, but they could not help his son. The man begged Jesus to help. Jesus scolded the disciples and the crowd for their lack of faith and then commanded the unclean spirit to leave the boy.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why did Jesus take His disciples to Bethsaida?
2. How much food did the disciples have?
3. How many baskets of leftovers did the disciples collect?
4. Why did Jesus fuss at the people in verse 41?
5. What did Jesus do for the boy?

Introduction

Some weeks ago we started this study of basic Christian ideas. These ideas have been compared to basic college courses. We are now ready for Christianity 103. Our third basic Christian lesson is about meeting the needs of the people around us. If we live like Jesus we will care about other people and their needs, and we will feed the hungry and comfort the hurting.

A few years ago a team of Deaf people from North Carolina went to Honduras on a partnership mission trip. The team helped lead a retreat and also did some small construction projects. One of the favorite activities for the team was visiting some very poor Deaf families in and around the capital city. The team took food, clothes, and building materials to each of the families. At every home there was great joy. Every team member felt God was working through them.

Today's Lesson

1. Notice Needs (9:10-12)

Last week we jumped ahead to chapter 24 to discuss the resurrection. This week we return to our study of the Gospel of Luke beginning in chapter 9.

Verse 10. At the beginning of chapter 9, Jesus sent out His twelve apostles with power to tell about the kingdom of God and to heal people who were sick. Our lesson today starts with verse 10 when the apostles returned from their mission. You can imagine how excited the apostles were. They were in cities all over Israel. They preached the good news with great power, and they saw the power of God to heal the sick.

After Jesus heard the report from the apostles' mission trip, He took them to the town of Bethsaida so He could spend some time with them alone. Bethsaida is a fishing village on the Sea of Galilee. The disciples were probably tired and they needed some time with Jesus to learn from Him and to understand the things they experienced on their mission trip.

Verse 11. Jesus and the disciples did not have much private time. Luke wrote how the people learned where Jesus went, and they followed Him to Bethsaida.

I can remember in my own ministry times when I was physically and spiritually exhausted after a Deaf youth camp or a long, hard mission trip. All I wanted to do was rest. I didn't want to see anyone or do any ministry. You can see in verse 11 how much Jesus loved the people. When the people found Jesus and His disciples, He welcomed them and began to tell them about the kingdom of God. He also healed people who were sick.

Verse 12. We do not know how long Jesus taught. It was probably most of the day. Bethsaida was not a large city. Many people were there—too many for the disciples to be able to buy food in the town. The disciples were learning from Jesus to care deeply about people. The disciples began to notice the needs of the people.

They came to Jesus and suggested Jesus send the people away. They knew the people needed to eat and to sleep. In the area of Bethsaida, there would not be enough places for them to eat or to sleep. I want you to see how the disciples were growing spiritually. They were starting to think a little bit like Jesus. They were starting to think of the needs of people.

Thinking about the needs of people around us and responding to those needs are basic Christian things to do. Why? This is because Jesus loves people and cares about their needs. When Jesus lives in us, we will love people and care about their needs. Jesus taught us to feed hungry people,

to care for sick people, and to love poor people. You and I will do these things when we live like Jesus.

2. Take Action (9:13-17)

Verse 13. Jesus often did things that surprised the disciples. This story is no exception. In verse 13 Jesus told the disciples to give them something to eat. Jesus knew the disciples did not have enough food to feed the large number of people who were gathered to hear Him, but He told the disciples to feed the people. Jesus tested the disciples to see what they would do. He was getting them ready to learn from what He was going to do.

The disciples had five loaves of bread and two fish. The disciples knew that was not enough food. They suggested to Jesus they might go into nearby towns to buy food, but they knew they could not buy enough food for all the people.

Verses 14-15. Luke tells us there were 5,000 men. In Matthew 14:21, we learn from this same story the 5,000 count does not include women and children. Jesus told the disciples to divide the people into small groups of about fifty each. All the people sat and waited to see what Jesus planned to do.

Verse 16. Jesus took the five loaves of bread and the two fish and He said a prayer of thanks to God. Then Jesus began to divide the food and give it to His disciples. Jesus broke the bread and the fish into pieces. As Jesus broke the food, the bread and

fish did not get smaller. When Jesus broke a piece of bread from the loaf the loaf was just as big as it was before He broke it! The same happened with the fish. There is no way to explain this but to say God did a miracle in multiplying the bread and the fish.

Verse 17. In my imagination I can picture the disciples walking among the groups of people passing out the bread and the fish. The disciples broke the food even more and passed it out to the people. I can imagine the people breaking the bread and fish and giving it to the people sitting beside them. Everyone was truly amazed. The five loaves of bread and two fish made enough food for 10 to 15 thousand people! Everyone ate all they wanted. Many of them did not often have that much to eat. The people were completely full, and then the disciples gathered the left-over food. They had 12 baskets full of food.

This was a most wonderful miracle. When we read these verses we are amazed at what Jesus could do. I am sure Luke wanted us to read this

THERE IS NO WAY TO
EXPLAIN THIS BUT TO SAY
GOD DID A MIRACLE IN
MULTIPLYING THE BREAD
AND THE FISH.

story and know Jesus had the power of God because He was God. But there is something else we can learn from this story. If we want to follow Christ, we need to do something about the needs of people. Jesus does not expect us to do the same miracle He did. Jesus expects us to have the same heart of compassion, and He expects us to take care of needs.

One Deaf church in North Carolina is obeying this teaching of Jesus. Several churches in their city take turns cooking food and serving it to homeless people. The Deaf church takes their turn each month, cooking and feeding needy people. It is not enough if we only know about the needs of people. We Christians need to find ways to meet the needs of people like this Deaf church does in their city.

IF WE WANT TO FOLLOW
CHRIST, WE NEED TO DO
SOMETHING ABOUT THE
NEEDS OF PEOPLE.

3. Trust God (9:37-43a)

Verse 37. Our lesson takes a jump from verse 17 to verse 37. The reason for this jump is to carry out the lesson theme of helping people in need. In verses 28-36, Jesus and a few of His disciples experienced what Bible teachers call the transfiguration. This experience was amazing for Peter, John, and James. When they came down from the mountain a large crowd of people met Jesus and those three disciples. This was several days after Jesus fed the 5,000.

Verses 38-39. A man in the crowd shouted at Jesus. He begged Jesus to help his son who had an evil spirit. He had already asked the disciples of Jesus to heal the boy but they were not able to do it. The man was frustrated because they could not help his son. His son had a demonic spirit. This caused the boy to have symptoms like epilepsy.

As far as I know I have never seen a person who was demon possessed. In the New Testament we see many examples of people who had a demon. Perhaps the people at that time were more aware of demon possession and more open to that possibility. The devil typically attacks us in ways we understand in our culture. The devil comes at us today in more subtle ways.

Verses 40-41. The father explained how he asked the disciples to heal his son, but they were not able to do it. Jesus was frustrated because the people did not have faith, and they lived sinful lives. But He was willing to help the man's son.

Verses 42-43a. Jesus called for the boy, and the boy started walking toward Jesus. Just as he started going toward Jesus the demon threw the boy on the ground and took control of his body. Immediately Jesus commanded the evil spirit to come out of the boy, and it did. The people were amazed to see Jesus had the power to do this thing.

This is a remarkable story. We clearly see the power of God to heal people and to control evil wherever it shows up. But there is another lesson here for us to learn. There are a great many people who are sick and hurting around us. We can learn from Jesus how we need to respond to the needs of people who are hurt and sick. You may not have the skill of a doctor or a nurse but there are many more parts to healing. Sick people need prayer. We can pray for them. Sick people need support. We can support them by cooking food, by running errands, and by visiting with them. Sometimes just being present and showing love brings healing.

SOMETIMES JUST BEING
PRESENT AND SHOWING
LOVE BRINGS HEALING.

My Deaf pastor friend, Daniel, went to Houston, Texas, to be treated for cancer. Bill and Ann Hornbeak took Daniel into their home and cared for him for several months. Bill and Ann did what every Christian needs to do. They gave love and care to Daniel because of their faith in Christ Jesus. This kind of action shows we trust in God and obey Him when we love others. They did exactly what our lesson today calls us to do.

What About You?

Our lesson describes two kinds of people who need our help—sick people and hungry people. It is easy to list many more. Homeless people need help. People in prison need love. People with developmental disabilities need friends and understanding. People who are poor need support. How can you give help to them? Ask God to help you see the needs of the people who are around you everyday.

Applying the Lesson

Put an X beside each of the following kind acts you will try to do this week.

- _____ Take food to a hungry person or family.
- _____ Visit someone in the hospital and pray for them.
- _____ Help an older person fix something in his or her house.
- _____ Visit someone in prison.
- _____ Give a blind person a ride to church.
- _____ Take your neighbor to the doctor.

A Verse to Remember: "All the people were amazed at the great power of God" (Luke 9:43a).

Christianity 104: Be Good Neighbors



Background Study Verses

Luke 9:51–13:21

Lesson Material

Luke 10:25-37

Bible Truth

We can be good neighbors by helping other people.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Follow the Scripture (10:25-28)** – Jesus asked a lawyer to answer a question about eternal life from the Scripture. Jesus praised him for what he said about loving God and his neighbor.
2. **Listen to Jesus (10:29-35)** – In response to the lawyer's follow-up question, Jesus told a parable about a traveler who was attacked. In the story a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan all saw him, but only the Samaritan helped the man.
3. **Show Compassion (10:36-37)** – In answering the question the lawyer was forced to explain how to be a good neighbor. Jesus told the lawyer he needed to be a good neighbor.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who asked Jesus how to get eternal life?
2. How did Jesus answer the expert in the law?
3. What two Old Testament verses did the lawyer use in his answer?
4. Who was the hero of Jesus' story?
5. What was the last thing Jesus told the lawyer?

Introduction

This lesson comes from the story of the good Samaritan. The lesson teaches us to be good neighbors. In this lesson, this basic Christian idea is called “Christianity 104.”

My friend Barb is an interpreter in Colorado. Colorado is a beautiful state but it is cold and it has lots of snow. Barb told about a project some Deaf people in her church have each winter. When it snows, several of the Deaf members in the church and some of the interpreters get their snow shovels and clear sidewalks and driveways for needy people. They do not charge any money for this service. They just want to help people who have a need.

Many times, shoveling snow for free gives the shoveling team an opportunity to share Christ with people. The Deaf shovel team does hot, sweaty work just because it is right for Christians to be good neighbors.

Today's Lesson

1. Follow the Scripture (10:25-28)

Verse 25. Jesus sent 72 of His followers out to do mission work. When they came back they reported to Jesus what happened during their mission work. Jesus rejoiced in what happened and praised God. Immediately following this, an expert in the Old Testament law tried to test Jesus. He hoped Jesus would say something that would get Jesus in trouble with the people. The lawyer did not really want to learn from Jesus. His question was just an opportunity for a trap.

The question the lawyer asked is a very important question. He asked: “What must I do to get life forever?” A person can go to almost any country in the world and find people there thinking about such eternal matters. If someone asked you that question how would you answer it? Would you say a person can get eternal life by doing good things? Would you say a person needs to obey the Bible to receive eternal life? Maybe you would say a person needs to join the church and be baptized to live forever. All these answers are wrong. It is easy to have a wrong answer. It is more difficult to know the right answer.

Verses 26-27. When people tested Jesus by asking difficult questions, Jesus often responded with His own question. That is what Jesus did in verse 26. Jesus asked the lawyer to look at the Law of Moses. Jesus asked, “What is written in the Law?” The lawyer had a quick answer. This shows he was not really seeking wisdom from Jesus, but trying to trick Him.

The job of a lawyer was to know the Old Testament law. This expert in the law certainly knew it. He answered Jesus by quoting two Old Testament passages. The first was from Deuteronomy 6:5. The second was from Leviticus 19:18. Jesus Himself quoted these passages in Matthew 22:37-39 when someone asked Him about the greatest commandments. In this story the lawyer quoted these verses as the way to eternal life.

The law from Deuteronomy reads, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart.” Jesus said in Matthew 22:38 this is the most important of all the Old Testament laws. The Leviticus law reads, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” Again, in Matthew 22:39 Jesus said this was the second most important of all the laws. These two laws from the Old Testament are important. But the question is this, “Can a person obtain eternal life by obeying them?”

Verse 28. Jesus told the lawyer he was right. Then Jesus said, “Do this and you will live.” Did Jesus mean to tell the lawyer a person receives

eternal life by obeying these two laws? Jesus did not say eternal life and salvation is obtained by doing good things or by obeying these two important laws. We know from many verses in the New Testament, a person is saved only one way—by trusting in Jesus as personal Savior. That is the only way to eternal life. What did Jesus mean by His answer?

First, we need to see how Jesus put a huge value on loving God and loving our neighbor. That is the first lesson from what Jesus said. In

JESUS PUT A HUGE VALUE ON LOVING GOD AND LOVING OUR NEIGHBOR.

addition to this, many Bible teachers believe Jesus meant to challenge the lawyer into right thinking about eternal life. If someone did obey the two important commandments perfectly then that person could have eternal life. But only Jesus could obey

God perfectly. No one else is able to obey those two laws perfectly. Our failure to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength is part of what proves to us we truly need a Savior. Eternal life comes only to those people who trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

2. Listen to Jesus (10:29-35)

Verse 29. The lawyer heard Jesus' answer but he was not quite satisfied. The lawyer felt Jesus was coming out on top of their discussion so he came back with another question, "Who is my neighbor?" Many of the rabbis discussed this question. Some defined a neighbor as any Jewish person. Some said a neighbor could only be a Jew who strictly followed the law. All rabbis defined neighbor in such a way as to eliminate certain classes of people by the definition. Jesus approached this question completely different.

Verses 30-32. Jesus did not quote the rabbis of old. Instead, Jesus told a story. Jesus often told stories to teach important spiritual lessons. This story is usually called the good Samaritan.

Here is how the story goes. A man was walking from Jerusalem down to Jericho. The trip between these two cities was only about a dozen miles but it was steep and dangerous. When Jesus lived, the path between the cities went down a dry creek bed called the Wadi Qelt. Google "Wadi Qelt," and you will see pictures of this dangerous place. While the man walked robbers surprised him, robbed and beat him, and left him almost dead.

Soon, other people came down the path. The first person was a Jewish priest; the second was a Jewish Levite. Both of these men had positions of importance in Jewish temple worship. Both men did the same thing—they looked at the hurt man, walked to the other side of the trail, and passed by without helping the hurt man. We do not know why they did not help.

Perhaps both were in a hurry and did not want to take the time to help. That is probably why many people do not help others. You and I tend to get too busy to stop and help people in need. It is especially sad to know these two men were religious leaders but did not act with love.

Verses 33-35. Soon, a third man came walking down the path to Jericho. Jesus said this man was a Samaritan. Samaritans were the people who lived in an area between Jerusalem and Galilee. The Jewish people and the Samaritan people did not like each other. Racial and religious differences separated the two people. It was very hard for the lawyer to hear Jesus make the Samaritan the hero of the story.

The Samaritan saw the hurt man just like the priest and Levite did. The Samaritan felt sorry for the man and immediately helped him. The Samaritan treated the man's injuries with oil and wine. He did not have medicine for the man so oil and wine were used to soothe and clean the injuries. The Samaritan put the man on his donkey and took him to an inn to treat him. There were no hospitals back then. The Samaritan himself treated the wounded man.

THE SAMARITAN FELT
SORRY FOR THE MAN AND
IMMEDIATELY HELPED HIM.

Finally, the Samaritan needed to continue on his journey. He left money with the innkeeper to take care of the hurt man and promised to pay for any additional costs for the hurt man's care.

Would you have done the same thing? One Deaf pastor in South Carolina learned about a Deaf child in Central America who needed to be adopted. The Deaf pastor and his wife paid their own money to go to Central America for the boy. It took several months and lots of money but finally the adoption was successful. The Deaf boy needed help. The Deaf pastor and his wife worked very hard and spent a lot of money to give the boy the help he needed. In many ways, this pastor and his wife acted like the good Samaritan.

3. Show Compassion (10:36-37)

Verse 36. When Jesus finished the story He asked the lawyer, "Which one of these three men do you think was a neighbor to the man?" Jesus turned the lawyer's question in a different direction. The lawyer asked "Who is my neighbor?" He tried to set limits around the people he needed to love. The lawyer wanted to know the people he must love and those he did not need to love to fulfill the Old Testament command. Instead, Jesus asked, "Which man was a neighbor?" Do you see how this is a different and far more important question? Jesus wants us to be a neighbor to anyone who needs a neighbor.

It would be wrong to see a person in need and think, “I will not help this person because he is hearing.” Or, “I will not help this person because he is not my friend.” The story Jesus told teaches us how God wants us to care for anyone who has a need for our care.

Verse 37. The lawyer did not like the answer, but he spoke it anyway. He responded, “The one who showed him mercy.” The lawyer could not bring himself to say the hated *Samaritan* word. The Samaritan showed mercy. He was the one who acted like a neighbor.

Finally, Jesus told the lawyer to “go and do what he did.” The lawyer

IF WE WANT TO PLEASE
GOD WE NEED TO BE READY
TO BE GOOD NEIGHBORS.

needed to understand it is not enough to learn something. A person who learns needs to do something. God wants you and me to do acts of kindness. We cannot tell God we are too busy to help.

We cannot tell God the person with need does not fit my definition of neighbor. If we want to please God we need to be ready to be good neighbors. Who needs you? Go and be a good neighbor by loving and caring for that person.

What About You?

The story of the good Samaritan was not only directed to the lawyer. You need to put aside the busy pace of your life and look around at the people you know. Think about those people. Ask God to give you understanding about the needs of people. Then follow God's leading and find ways to be helpful and kind to those people who need your help and kindness. It would be a wonderful world if all of us would work hard to find ways to be kind. This is a basic Christian truth. Help those who need your help.

Applying the Lesson

As you look around at the people in your life, ask these questions:

1. "Who is hurting?" God wants to send me to hurting people.
2. "Who is sick?" God wants to send me to help those who are sick.
3. "Who is lost without Christ?" God wants to send me to help those who are lost without Christ.
4. "Who needs a friend?" God wants to send me to those who need a friend.

A Verse to Remember: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind." (and) "Love your neighbor as you love yourself" (Luke 10:27).

Christianity 105: Manage Money Well



Background Study Verses

Luke 13:22–17:10

Lesson Material

Luke 16:13-15, 19-31

Bible Truth

God holds us responsible for having the right attitude about money and for using money in right ways.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **What Do You Think of Money? (16:13-15)** – Jesus said a person could have only one master. Jesus scolded the Pharisees because they loved money more than they loved God.
2. **How Do You Use Your Money? (16:19-21)** – Jesus began to tell a story by comparing a rich man and a poor man. The rich man did nothing to help the poor man.
3. **Do You Know the Consequences? (16:22-26)** – Jesus compared what happened to both men. The rich man was in hell and the poor man was in heaven.
4. **Do You Need to Repent? (16:27-31)** – In hell the rich man learned he could not change his circumstances. He tried to get help for his brothers who needed to repent but he learned they had the Scriptures to lead them to faith.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How many masters can one person serve?
2. What did the Pharisees love?
3. What was wrong with the rich man?
4. When Lazarus died, what happened to him?
5. What witness did the rich man's brothers need to lead them to heaven?

Introduction

Two Deaf men thought about money in different ways. One Deaf man knew his money was a gift from God. The other Deaf man thought his money was his to use any way he wished because he inherited a lot of money from his family.

The first Deaf man was my friend. He helped people with his money and always gave more than a tithe to his church. Everyone in the Deaf community loved him.

The second man bought nice cars and showed off with his money but never did a kind thing for anyone. No one in the town cared about the second man and he died without a friend.

The first man honored God with his life and his money. The second man did not believe in God and died rich but sad and lonely. Which of these two Deaf men do you think handled money correctly?

Today's Lesson

1. What Do You Think of Money? (16:13-15)

Verse 13. In the first twelve verses of chapter 16 Jesus taught His disciples. One of the common themes in these verses is money. The last verse in this section seems to end the teaching with His disciples and introduce the next section. This verse states, “No servant can serve two masters.” In this verse the two masters Jesus had in mind are God and worldly riches. God and worldly riches take us in different directions.

Trying to follow the directions of two masters will not work. Jesus said a person will hate one and love the other. Or a person will follow one and refuse to follow the other. When we explain this idea in ASL we show a person trying to hold something up high with the left hand and at the same time hold something down low with the right hand. The left hand pulls one direction. The right hand pulls the other direction. When we sign this idea we say, “You cannot hold both. You must let one or the other go.” That is exactly what Jesus taught. Which master do you serve? God or money? You cannot hold both at the same time.

Verse 14. The Pharisees heard what Jesus said. The Pharisees loved money. This is the reason the Pharisees made fun of Jesus. The Pharisees knew Jesus was talking about them. The Pharisees said they loved God but showed they loved money. Guilty people often try to make themselves feel better by making fun of the preacher.

Verse 15. Jesus exposed the false hearts of the Pharisees. The Pharisees knew how to make themselves look good to other people, but God knew their hearts. In their hearts they loved money. But when people were looking they put on an act like they cared about God and people.

The last part of this verse makes Jesus' point in a very powerful way. The Pharisees did things people thought were important. God hated the actions of the Pharisees. I can think of nothing more dreadful than to be living in a way God hates. When we love money like the Pharisees did, we live in a way God hates. Only God is worthy of our total love.

2. How Do You Use Your Money? (16:19-21)

Verse 19. Jesus came back to the theme of money. Jesus used a story to make His point. Stories like this are called parables.

Jesus described the rich man. He was very rich. We know this because of the kind of clothes he wore. He dressed in the finest clothes. The New

International Version states he was “dressed in purple and fine linen.” When Jesus lived purple cloth was very expensive. A rich person might put a small stripe of purple cloth around the bottom of his robe. Only a king could afford clothes made of solid purple cloth. This rich man was so wealthy his clothes were purple, and he wore those expensive clothes all the time.

Verse 20. The other man in Jesus’ story was terribly poor. He was so poor he could not afford medical care for his body. The sores on the poor man probably came from his lack of food. This poor man lay at the rich man’s gate.

We can learn an interesting thing from this story. God thinks about people very differently from the way we do. Do you know the names of some very rich people? Sure you do. Bill Gates and Oprah Winfrey are very wealthy. Almost everyone in the world knows their names. Do you know the names of the poorest people in the world? No you don’t, and neither do I. But God does. Look at this story. We know the name of the poor man. It is Lazarus. The name *Lazarus* means “God is my help.” We do not know the name of the rich man. God thinks about people differently from the way we do. We are impressed by wealth. God is not. God looks only at a person’s heart.

GOD THINKS ABOUT
PEOPLE DIFFERENTLY
FROM THE WAY WE DO.
GOD LOOKS ONLY AT A
PERSON’S HEART.

Verse 21. The poor man lay at the rich man’s gate in the hope he might get something to eat. Lazarus would have been satisfied just to get the pieces of food when they fell from the rich man’s table. Lazarus received nothing from the rich man. His condition became worse until he could not even chase away the dogs licking the sores on his body. The rich man did absolutely nothing to help Lazarus. How could anyone see another human in such terrible need and do nothing to help?

When you see others in need, do you try to see how you may be able to help them?

3. Do You Know the Consequences? (16:22-26)

Verse 22. It was not long until Lazarus died. Jesus did not tell us details about his death. We can imagine he starved to death. The rich man also died. However, the two men had greatly different experiences after death. Lazarus was taken to heaven. The rich man was buried. The Hebrew people thought about heaven as being in the presence of Abraham – in the arms of Abraham. Hell was the place of the dead.

Verse 23. This story from Jesus gives us an insight into hell. We know hell is a terrible place of pain. Jesus said the rich man was in the place of the dead—a place of pain. Part of the pain for the rich man was because he could see heaven far away. The rich man could see Lazarus with Abraham. In Hebrew thought, the most blessed persons were those who sat close to Abraham. Lazarus was in the most blessed place.

Verse 24. The rich man saw Abraham and called out to him. He knew the poor man's name, Lazarus, but he still thought about Lazarus as a poor servant. The rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus with water to cool him off. The rich man described hell as a place of flames.

Verses 25-26. Abraham could not send Lazarus. Abraham said there is a pit or a gulf separating heaven and hell. Abraham explained no one can pass between the two places. But Abraham could speak to the rich man.

THOSE WHO TRUST GOD
ARE PROMISED HEAVEN.
PEOPLE WHO REJECT
CHRIST WILL MISS HEAVEN.

Abraham reminded the rich man how he had the good things of life, everything money could buy. Lazarus had none of those good things. In heaven Lazarus had the best.

It is important for us to think about why Lazarus was in heaven and the rich man was in hell. Lazarus was not in heaven because he was poor and

treated badly on earth. The rich man was not in hell because he was rich and comfortable on earth. Heaven and hell are related only to a person's response to Christ. Those who trust God are promised heaven. People who reject Christ will miss heaven. People who trust Jesus will love people. The rich man showed he had no relationship with God by the way he treated Lazarus. The rich man loved money but let a sick man die at his door. A believer could never love money and despise people.

4. Do You Need to Repent? (16:27-31)

Verses 27-28. When the rich man learned he could not escape the pain of hell, he tried to get help for his brothers. The rich man had five brothers who were still alive. He was concerned for his brothers and did not want them to go to hell too. The rich man asked Abraham if Lazarus could go back to earth and warn his brothers. The only way Lazarus could go back to earth would be for him to be raised from the dead.

Verse 29. Abraham told the rich man about the witness his brothers had on earth. The witness the brothers had was “the Law and the prophets.” When Jesus lived, the Jewish people thought about the Old Testament Scriptures in three parts. The “Law of Moses” was the first five books of the Old Testament. The “prophets” were the books written by the prophets

and 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles. The “writings” were all the other books of the Old Testament. When Abraham told the rich man his brothers had “the Law and the prophets” Abraham told the rich man the Scriptures were the witness his brothers needed to warn them about heaven and hell and to lead them to faith.

Verse 30. The rich man argued with Abraham. Even in hell the rich man had a hard time learning spiritual truths. He insisted his brothers would not believe simply from reading the Scriptures. His brothers needed to see Lazarus raised from the dead. Then they would believe. Only a miracle like a resurrection would lead them to turn from sin and believe.

Verse 31. Abraham knew miracles seldom convince people to believe. The Pharisees often saw Jesus do miracles but they did not believe. Even the resurrection will not convince those who turn away from Christ. The Scriptures will lead people to Christ and they are sufficient proof. Jesus did rise from the dead and billions of people still do not believe. Many people today need to repent. We must carry the Word of God to the world so they will repent and believe.

WE MUST CARRY THE
WORD OF GOD TO THE
WORLD SO THEY WILL
REPENT AND BELIEVE.

What About You?

The rich man had a sinful attitude toward money. He cared about money but not people. This showed he did not have a relationship with God.

How is your relationship with God? Look at your attitude toward money. That will help you evaluate your relationship with God. If you love money more than you love the people around you, then you need to think about how well you know the Lord.

Applying the Lesson

Here are some questions to help you understand who your true master is:

1. Which do you read more—the Bible or advertisements for bargains in stores?
2. Which would you rather do—feed a hungry person or buy yourself a new pair of shoes?
3. Who do you feel sympathy for—Lazarus or the rich man?
4. What do you do with your money—honor Christ or spoil yourself?

Think about these things and decide if you are using your money for God or selfishly for yourself.

A Verse to Remember: “No servant can serve two masters. The servant will hate one master and love the other, or will follow one master and refuse to follow the other. You cannot serve both God and worldly riches” Luke 16:13.

Christianity 106: Learn to Pray



Background Study Verses

Luke 17:11–19:27

Lesson Material

Luke 18:1-14

Bible Truth

We need to pray in ways to show we understand God's love and mercy.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **We Can Pray with Persistence (18:1-5)** – Jesus told a parable about a widow who went to an unjust judge many times until he finally gave her justice.
2. **We Can Pray with Faith (18:6-8)** – The judge was slow to give justice. He was different from God who wants to give justice.
3. **We Cannot Pray with Arrogance (18:9-12)** – Jesus told a parable to show the prayer of a self-righteous Pharisee.
4. **We Can Pray with Humility (18:13-14)** – Jesus finished the parable by describing a tax collector's prayer. He humbly admitted his sins and this man, not the Pharisee, was right with God.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. The unfair judge is exactly like God.
T F
2. We need to pray and never give up.
T F
3. God is always slow to answer prayer.
T F
4. The Pharisee said a beautiful prayer.
T F
5. The tax collector left the temple right with God.
T F

Introduction

This lesson is the last of six lessons teaching some basic Christian truths. These lessons help us to know how to live. They are basic ideas and that is why they have numbers like basic college courses. This one is “Christianity 106.”

One of the most important parts of Christian life is prayer. My parents felt prayer was important. My parents led the family in prayer at every meal. Almost every night the whole family gathered for Bible reading and family prayer. On many Sundays at church I saw my father lead the church in prayer. My brother and I learned from our parents about the importance of prayer. Now my wife and I are passing on to our children our value for prayer. From the time our children were very young we prayed with them. We pray now for our grandchildren to learn how every believer needs prayer.

Today's Lesson

1. We Can Pray with Persistence (18:1-5)

The word *persistence* means “to continue and not give up.”

Verse 1. Jesus often used parables to teach lessons. A *parable* is “a story with an important lesson.” The story today teaches several lessons about prayer, and it also helps us to understand some important things about God.

Jesus had a main point He wanted to teach with this story about the bad judge. The point is in verse 1. Jesus wanted His followers to learn they need to pray and never lose hope. This is really an important lesson for Christians to learn. Life is often hard and prayer is sometimes hard to do. Do you think if we pray we will get what we think we need? This lesson will answer that question.

Verse 2. When Jesus lived there were judges much like judges we have today. Judges were often elders in a village. They handled legal problems and disagreements between neighbors. Jesus told us the character of this judge. He was not good. This judge did not think much about God, and he did not care about people. If a judge does not respect God, he will be less likely to judge fairly because he will not care if God is also judging him. If the judge does not care about people, he will not have mercy.

Verse 3. There are only two people in this story—a bad judge and a needy widow. We do not know anything about the woman except she went to the judge many times, asking for justice. Someone did wrong against the widow. The judge had the power to make the situation right.

Verses 4-5. For a while the judge refused to help the widow, but she did not give up. She went back again and again and pleaded her case. The judge thought about his own character. He did not respect God, and he did not care for people. But he knew if he did not give the woman justice she would continue to bother him. Therefore, he decided to do the right thing and give her justice.

We must not give up when we pray. Several years ago Yvette Arons applied to be a missionary to the Deaf in another country, but she was turned down because she was Deaf. Many Deaf Christians were deeply hurt by this and started to pray for God to open the door for Deaf people and especially for Yvette. It took several years for this situation to change, but the people did not quit praying. Today Yvette is a foreign missionary and so are many other Deaf men and women who share Christ with Deaf people all over the world.

2. We Can Pray with Faith (18:6-8)

Verse 6. What kind of lesson can we learn from this unfair judge? Do you think the example of this judge teaches us the character of God? It would be easy to think this story teaches how God might be like the unfair judge. We might think the secret to getting what you want when you pray is to wear God out by your demands. Jesus said the first thing to learn is how God is not like this judge. God is not unfair. God does not ignore His people. The judge decided, even though he was unfair, to give the woman justice. God is fair, and God does love us. You need to learn how God is the opposite of the unfair judge

Verse 7. If God is the opposite of the unfair judge, then what can we expect about God and our prayers? We can expect what Jesus said,

GOD WILL ONLY GIVE US
WHAT IS RIGHT IN RESPONSE
TO OUR PRAYERS.

“God will always give what is right.” That is an important idea in prayer. God will only give us what is right in response to our prayers. God will not be slow when He answers our prayers. So, the judge teaches us about

God by contrasting God and the judge. Whatever the judge was, God is the opposite.

Verse 8. God is quick to answer our prayers but people are still weak in faith. Through all the years since Jesus was on earth He has continued to answer our prayers. Jesus was concerned because some time in the future He will return to earth as Lord and King. He asked a question, “Will He find those on earth who believe in Him?” He will continue for all time to do His part in responding to our prayers. Will we do our part and continue to have faith?

3. We Cannot Pray with Arrogance (18:9-12)

The word *arrogance* means “to feel self-important.”

Verse 9. Jesus immediately told a second story about prayer. Why? Some of the people listening to Jesus thought they were very good and looked down on everyone else. With this story Jesus will help us to understand how God thinks about people.

Verse 10. Jesus introduced the two people in this story. One was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. (Some translations use the word publican.) Both of these men went to the temple to pray. The Pharisee was a respected religious leader. Pharisees closely followed the Old Testament law and they hated the Roman government. Tax collectors were Jews who worked with the Roman government to collect the taxes owed to Rome.

Often the tax collectors cheated people by saying they owed more taxes than they really did. The Jews did not like the tax collectors.

You can imagine how the people listening to Jesus felt about these two men in the story. The average person listening to Jesus would like the Pharisee but hate the tax collector.

Verses 11-12. The Pharisee prayed. He stood where many people could hear him. Think about when you pray. Your prayers probably include things like thanking God for His goodness, confessing your own sins, and asking God for His help. The Pharisee's prayer had none of these things. The Pharisee did not give praise to God for anything. He was thankful for only one thing—he was not like other people. His prayer to God was not in submission to God but was a boast to God. The Pharisee was proud. Why? He said he did not sin like other people. He was not like the tax collector. He was so proud he told God all the good things he did. He fasted twice a week and he gave a tithe of everything he owned. The Pharisee could not even boast of doing a kindness to someone. This man did not have a heart like God's. He really was not even praying to God. He was talking to the people around him. This Pharisee had no relationship with God.

THE TAX COLLECTOR'S
PRAYER WAS SIMPLE,
BUT HIS APPROACH
TO GOD WAS RIGHT.

4. We Can Pray with Humility (18:13-14)

Verse 13. The tax collector had a truly different prayer. He was not proud. The tax collector was in the temple, but he did not stand in a place of honor or even where others would hear his prayer. He stood far off. The usual attitude of prayer for Jewish men was to stand and look up toward God. The tax collector felt too much shame to look up. His feeling of grief and sadness over sin was so great he beat on his chest. He was not trying to show his grief. His action of beating his chest was because he felt the weight of his own sin.

The tax collector said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." His prayer was simple, but his approach to God was right. God knows we are sinners. He knows every wrong thought and action we do. Our first step toward God is to repent and turn away from sin. That is exactly what the tax collector did in his prayer. He confessed his sin to God. He asked for mercy from God. God is merciful and will forgive people who ask for forgiveness. The Pharisee did not ask for forgiveness because he thought he was better than other people and did not need forgiveness. The tax collector approached God with humility, and he was right.

Verse 14. Jesus explained the results of the two prayers. Only one of the

two men went home from the temple right with God. Jesus said it was the tax collector and not the Pharisee who stood right with God after prayer. This shocked the people listening to Jesus. They thought because the Pharisee obeyed the law he was perfect in God's sight. But God does not honor people who are self-righteous. God honors the one who stands before Him with a broken heart over sin. The tax collector pleased God and the Pharisee did not.

IT IS MUCH BETTER TO
BE GREAT IN GOD'S
EYES THAN GREAT BY
THE STANDARDS OF
THE WORLD.

Jesus said people who are proud will be made humble by God. Those who humbly approach God will be made great. It is much better to be great in God's eyes than great by the standards of the world.

Clifford Bruffey was not famous nor was he powerful in the eyes of the world. He was a Deaf preacher who served as chaplain at Gallaudet University for many years. One time, I met with him in the Gallaudet cafeteria to eat. Before we ate Bruffey prayed. He prayed for the food, for the Deaf students of Gallaudet, and for me. As he prayed I knew this humble man had been made great by God.

What About You?

How is your prayer life? Only you can answer this question so I encourage you to answer it honestly. Do you pray daily? Do you talk with God and watch for His answers? Do you pray before meals? Do you pray at night before you go to bed? Do you pray with your family? Do you meet together with your Deaf Christian friends to pray?

Do you spend five minutes a day in prayer? Thirty minutes? One hour? After you think about those questions, think again about the question, "How is your prayer life?"

Applying the Lesson

Take this test and see how you score your own prayer life?

1. Do you pray at each meal? _____ Yes / No
2. Do you pray early each day? _____ Yes / No
3. Do you pray every night? _____ Yes / No
4. Do you pray when you see needy people? _____ Yes / No
5. Do you pray and confess your sin? _____ Yes / No
6. Do you pray and never give up? _____ Yes / No

How did you do on the prayer test?

A Verse to Remember: "When the Son of Man comes again, will He find those on earth who believe in Him?" (Luke 18:8).

Unit 3

LORD: TRUST HIM

Luke 19:28–24:12,36-53

The three lessons in this unit emphasize the truth, “Jesus is Lord.” The lessons discuss how Jesus accepted His suffering, and then report on His crucifixion, death, resurrection, and final appearances.

The first lesson tells how we can show our trust in Jesus as Lord by our gratitude for His suffering. The next lesson tells how we can show our trust in Jesus as Lord by our faith in Him as our Savior. The third lesson tells how we can show our

trust in Jesus as Lord by obeying what He said after His resurrection.

Use your Bible to read the final chapters in the other three gospels. Perhaps you can find a “Harmony of the Gospels” in your church library. This will help you add more details to these last weeks in the life of Christ.

He Voluntarily Suffered: Be Grateful



Background Study Verses

Luke 19:28–22:65

Lesson Material

Luke 22:14-22,39-46,63-65

Bible Truth

We need to respond with thanksgiving because Jesus suffered voluntarily for us.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Suffering in Anticipation (22:14-20)** – Jesus knew He would suffer on the cross.
2. **Suffering Disappointment (22:21-22,39-40,45-46)** – Jesus suffered disappointment because He knew one of His disciples would betray Him and because He saw three of His disciples sleeping rather than praying for Him.
3. **Suffering Great Stress (22:41-44)** – Jesus suffered great stress while He prayed about dying on the cross.
4. **Suffering Humiliation (22:63-65)** – Jesus suffered humiliation as well as physical pain when the men mocked and beat Him.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What meal did Jesus eat with His disciples?
2. What did the bread and the cup symbolize?
3. Who betrayed Jesus?
4. To whose will did Jesus surrender?
5. Who beat on Jesus?

Introduction

During the Christmas season in 2005 a group of Deaf students and teachers from the TriState Deaf School of Theology went to Israel. My wife and I were part of the group. We wanted to see the places where Jesus walked and lived. The city of Jerusalem touched us the most. We walked from the Garden of Gethsemane through the Kidron Valley into the city of Jerusalem. We walked through the narrow, crowded streets of Jerusalem ending at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. On our whole walk from the garden to the church we thought about what Jesus suffered in those places.

Many Christians believe this church building is on the site where Jesus was crucified and buried. It is deeply moving to pray in that building knowing millions of Christians for hundreds of years have entered that church and thought about the suffering and death of Jesus.

Today's Lesson

1. Suffering in Anticipation (22:14-20)

Verse 14. Our lesson today takes place on the day of the Passover on Thursday before Jesus died on Friday. The Passover is an annual Jewish feast remembering the day the death angel passed over Egypt freeing the people of Israel from slavery. It is the most important Jewish celebration. Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples and then He started a new symbol, the Lord's Supper, to help us remember His death and resurrection.

A few of Jesus' disciples made preparation for the Passover meal. Read about that in Luke 22:7-13. In verse 14 the preparations were done, and it was time for the celebration. Jesus gathered with His disciples to eat this meal. They were all reclining around a table. This was the Jewish custom for eating.

Verses 15-16. Jesus explained to the disciples how much He wanted to have this Passover time with them. He wanted to share this meal before His suffering. Usually when Christians think about the suffering of Jesus they think about His death on the cross. We can see from these verses how Jesus suffered much before He was put on the cross.

The Gospels tell us a little bit about Jesus and the Passover before the time of His crucifixion. Jesus went with His family to Jerusalem every year for the Passover (Luke 2:41). John 2:13-23 and 6:1-4 tell of two other times Jesus observed the Passover. We can be sure Jesus did this every year.

Jesus said this was the last Passover He would have with them. That was truly a surprise to them because they probably did not yet realize Jesus would die soon. Jesus gave the disciples, and us, a glimpse of the future. When the kingdom of God is fully realized we will all share this fellowship with Jesus.

Verses 17-18. Read about this last Passover in Matthew 26:1-30, Mark 14:22-26, and John 13:3-15 so you have more details than what is in Luke. In Matthew and Mark, Jesus takes the bread first.

The cup was a cup of grape juice or wine. Jesus shared the drink with His disciples. He then predicted He would not drink the "fruit of the vine" again until God's kingdom was fully present. Jesus looked forward to a time when He would share a meal of celebration with the people who follow Him in His kingdom. Someday in heaven we will share that celebration with Jesus.

Verse 19. Jesus began to serve the new meal we call the Lord's Supper.

Jesus took the bread, prayed over the bread, broke it, and then gave some of the bread to His disciples. This was something like the Passover celebration meal, but Jesus gave it a completely new meaning. Jesus said in the bread the disciples could see His body. Jesus would soon be giving His body to be broken for sin. The disciples were supposed to use this new remembrance meal in the future to remember the broken body of Jesus. In the future, they would not eat and remember the Passover. From now on they would eat and remember the cross.

Verse 20. Next Jesus took the cup again. He used this cup to give new meaning to the remembrance meal.

In the Passover meal the Jewish people drank wine and remembered God's deliverance from Egypt.

This new cup in the Lord's Supper represents a new agreement God would have with His people. Jesus' death on the cross would happen as His life and blood poured out from His body. The cup we drink in the

Lord's Supper represents the blood and life of Jesus given for our sin.

The Lord's Supper is a powerful symbol. We do not believe the wine is His blood and the bread is His body. The bread and drink are pictures of His body and blood. But these are powerful pictures of how Jesus suffered and died for us. Every time we share in the Lord's Supper we need to be reminded of the price Jesus paid for our forgiveness.

EVERY TIME WE SHARE IN
THE LORD'S SUPPER WE
NEED TO BE REMINDED OF
THE PRICE JESUS PAID FOR
OUR FORGIVENESS.

2. Suffering Disappointment (22:21-22,39-40,45-46)

Verse 21. While Jesus was eating the meal with His disciples He told them how one of the disciples was about to turn against Him and betray Him. Of course, we know that person was Judas, but at that moment no one but Jesus and Judas knew who it would be. When you read this verse you can feel the huge sorrow in Jesus. One of the men who had lived with Him for three and one half years and who ate the last supper with Him was about to turn against Him. How sad this was for Jesus.

Verse 22. It was sad for Jesus but tragic for Judas. Jesus knew what was coming for Him. Jesus knew what would happen to Judas too. He said, "What God has planned for the Son of Man will happen." Jesus seems to suggest Judas had a choice in the matter. Judas was turning against Jesus. It was his decision to do so. The outcome for Judas was going to be terrible. Read Matthew 27:3-10 to see more of Judas' terrible end.

Verses 39-40. Read the verses between 22 and 39. You will see a more complete picture of the story. Jesus and His disciples finished the Passover

meal and the Lord's Supper. They left the room in Jerusalem where they ate together and walked east out of the city. They probably walked past the great temple Herod built. They walked through the Kidron Valley and up the east side to the Mount of Olives. There were many olive trees there. Jesus often went to this place to pray. Jesus asked His disciples to pray for strength so they would not be tempted. Jesus also needed the disciples to pray for Him.

Verses 45-46. Jesus left the disciples and went into the garden. Jesus poured His heart out in prayer to God. He was in great pain as He thought

JESUS WAS IN TERRIBLE
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TO THE WILL OF GOD.

about the upcoming events. When He finished praying, He went back to the disciples and found them asleep. Maybe the strain of the moment filled the disciples with sadness and fatigue. Jesus awakened them and encouraged them again to pray. I can imagine how difficult this must have been for Jesus. He was in such sorrow and needed His disciples to

join Him in prayer. But they did not pray. They slept. When we read how disappointed Jesus was in the disciples, maybe we will decide we will never do anything to disappoint Jesus like His disciples did.

3. Suffering Great Stress (22:41-44)

Verse 41. The previous section ended with verse 46. This section backs up to verse 41. The whole section deals with a different topic—suffering great stress. Jesus experienced this stress during His time of prayer.

Verse 42. This verse really shows us the depth of the suffering of Jesus. Jesus knew the kind of suffering He was about to go through. Jesus called the suffering “this cup of suffering.” Using the word “cup” was Jesus’ way of talking about going through the experience like drinking from a cup. Because He knew what was coming He asked God to take the cup away. Only deep agony of soul could lead Jesus to feel like that. Jesus was in terrible stress over the cross experience, but He still was willing to submit to the will of God. You will notice Jesus said, “Do what you want, not what I want.”

Verses 43-44. After Jesus prayed, an angel from God appeared to Him and encouraged Him. Jesus was in such stress He needed a special touch from heaven. The pressure on Jesus poured out in His prayer and poured out of His body as well. Luke describes how sweat fell from Jesus like drops of blood. It is not clear from this verse if Jesus sweat blood or if His sweat flowed as heavily as blood flows from a wound. The heavy spiritual pressure on Jesus produced His physical responses.

4. Suffering Humiliation (22:63-65)

Verse 63. Read verses 47-62 to see what bad things happened to Jesus. He was arrested and carried away for trial. Even His disciples turned their backs on Jesus and Peter denied knowing Him. If this is what the friends of Jesus did it is easy to see how the enemies of Jesus could treat Him terribly. The men watching Jesus began to humiliate Jesus by making fun of Him and beating Him.

Verses 64-65. The guards put a blindfold on Jesus and then beat Him. To mock Him they asked Him to name the beater if Jesus was a prophet. Jesus was a prophet. But the work of a prophet is not to do tricks like that for others to enjoy. The work of a prophet is to tell God's message. Another part of a prophet's task is to suffer if that is needed to tell God's message and do God's will. The guards did many more cruel things to Jesus but Jesus suffered through them for us. He did not go through these things for His sake but for ours.

JESUS DID NOT WANT
TO SUFFER. HOWEVER,
HE WAS WILLING TO
SUFFER FOR US.

Most of you reading this lesson today will not need to suffer or be punished for following Jesus. Maybe some of you will. In some parts of the world today Christians suffer and die just because they are Christians. No person wants to suffer. Jesus did not want to suffer either. However, He was willing to suffer for us. If it is necessary, we need to be ready to suffer for Him. We need to be grateful to Him because He was willing to suffer for us.

What About You?

When you think about this lesson how do you feel? Think again about Jesus with His disciples at the Passover meal. Think about how the disciples failed to pray with Jesus, how He suffered in prayer, and how the guards humiliated Jesus. Thinking about these things may lead you to be willing to serve Him and possibly to suffer for Him. Thinking about these things will cause you to be thankful for what Jesus was willing to do for you.

Applying the Lesson

Here is a way you can show your thankfulness to God for what Jesus suffered for you. Pray a prayer like this, "Thank you God because Jesus was willing to suffer for me. I remember His body broken and His blood. I am grateful He accepted your will and faced the cross. My heart overflows with thanks because He did not quit even when it was hard. I appreciate Jesus so much because He took my abuse. Thank you God because Jesus was willing to suffer for me."

A Verse to Remember: "Jesus took some bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the apostles, saying, 'This is my body, which I am giving for you. Do this to remember me.' In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup and said, 'This cup is the new agreement that God makes with His people. This new agreement begins with my blood which is poured out for you'" (Luke 22:19).

He Offers Salvation: Believe



Background Study Verses

Luke 22:66–23:49

Lesson Material

Luke 23:32–49

Bible Truth

We can receive salvation because Jesus died to save people who believe in Him.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Believe: He Forgave (23:32-34)** – While on the cross, Jesus asked God to forgive those crucifying Him.
2. **Believe: He Obeyed (23:35-39)** – Jesus suffered through ridicule and mocking and rejected the suggestion to save Himself. He chose to obey His Father's will.
3. **Believe: He Saved (23:40-43)** – One man who was crucified beside Jesus confessed his guilt and expressed faith in Jesus as the Messiah and became saved.
4. **Believe: He Was Vindicated (23:44-49)** – Jesus declared His trust in God and then He died.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. After the soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross, what prayer did Jesus say?
2. Who mocked Jesus and told Him to save Himself?
3. What did one of the criminals do shortly before Jesus died?
4. What happened to the curtain in the temple?
5. What did Jesus say before He died?

Introduction

I watched a Deaf pastor tell the cross story. His hands flew through the air painting pictures in sign and gesture. All of us saw him describe how Jesus carried His cross to Golgotha and the soldiers nailed Him to the cross. Our eyes followed the action as the hammer drove the nails. Jesus hung on the cross and with a final cry, He died.

Several of us wept because the power of the story and the beauty of the signs touched us deeply. Some of the Deaf people in the group did more than weep. When the invitation was given they decided to follow Christ. Because I was near the front I saw one woman pray in ASL, "God forgive my sin. I believe in Jesus. Come into my heart and give me a new life." We all rejoiced because another Deaf person became a believer.

Today's Lesson

1. Believe: He Forgave (23:32-34)

Verse 32. Chapter 23 gives us the story of the trial, crucifixion, death, and burial of Jesus. Read the whole chapter so you can understand better about the verses in our lesson today. Our lesson begins just before Jesus was crucified.

Jesus was condemned to die and was led outside the city to a place of execution. At this point in the story we learn there were two other men condemned to die and to be executed on crosses at the same time as Jesus. The cross was a common way to execute criminals. Death came slowly and usually by exposure and by no longer being able to breathe.

Verse 33. The Roman government did not usually execute people inside the city. Therefore, Jesus and the two criminals were taken outside the city. In verse 26, a man named Simon was forced to help Jesus carry His cross. The place of execution was called *Golgotha*, a word meaning “skull.” When the group arrived at this location, the soldiers crucified Jesus and the other two men. In other Gospels we learn Jesus was nailed to the wooden cross. Jesus’ cross was raised with a criminal on each side of Him.

Verse 34. Then Jesus said a most amazing thing. He said, “Father, forgive them.” An angry mob killed this innocent man in a most horrible way, and yet He asked God to forgive them. That reminds us how Jesus has forgiven us too. No matter what you have done, Jesus offers forgiveness. If Jesus was willing to forgive the people who killed Him, He will surely forgive the sins you and I have done. Trust Him. He will forgive you!

2. Believe: He Obeyed (23:35-39)

Verse 35. Why did Jesus die on the cross? The answer is hard, and it is simple. It is hard because there is so much to understand. It is easy because He died to fulfill the will of God. God’s plan for Jesus was for Him to die so you and I could become saved. Notice in verses 35-39 how people challenged Him three times to save Himself. Yes, Jesus could have saved Himself, but He obeyed God and died for us instead.

The first challenge came from the Jewish leaders who were standing near the cross of Jesus. It was not enough for them to kill Him. They also wanted to mock Him. They said if Jesus could save others He must save Himself. If He was the Christ He must get down off the cross. Even in this horrible place of pain and death, Jesus did not think of Himself. He thought of us. He did not save Himself.

Verses 36-37. The soldiers near Jesus mocked Him too. They gave Him vinegar to drink. Jesus must have had a terrible thirst but vinegar is not a thirst quencher. They tempted Jesus saying if He was the King of the Jews He must save Himself. Jesus was not a political king but He was their spiritual King. When their King came they did not see Him. As their King, Jesus was willing to sacrifice Himself for them.

Verse 38. A sign was nailed to the cross of Jesus. The sign said Jesus was “THE KING OF THE JEWS.” Read John 19:19-22 to see what the Jewish leaders said to Pilate about the sign. The sign meant to say something about the charge against Jesus and why He was on the cross. The sign announced the truth about who Jesus really was. The people were killing their true King.

Verse 39. One of the criminals on a cross beside Jesus mocked Him in almost the same way as the Jewish leaders and the soldiers did. He said, “Aren’t you the Christ? Then save yourself and us.” This criminal knew who Jesus was supposed to be. Yes, Jesus was the Christ. He was the one whom

all Israel had longed for. And when He came, Israel did not know Him. Jesus could have saved Himself, but if He did then He could not save us. The salvation the world needs is salvation from sin and salvation to eternal life in Christ. Only as a result of

ONLY IN JESUS’ DEATH

DO WE RECEIVE LIFE.

Jesus’ death can we have our sins forgiven. Only in His death do we receive life. Jesus did not follow the mocking of the leaders, the soldiers, or the criminal. He followed the will of God and obediently died for us.

3. Believe: He Saved (23:40-43)

Verse 40. From Matthew and Mark we learn how both criminals mocked Jesus. Only Luke shows us how one of the criminals had a change of heart while hanging on his cross. The first criminal in verse 39 asked to be saved from his cross. The second criminal asked Jesus to save him spiritually (see verse 43). The second criminal rebuked the first criminal saying he must fear God. Perhaps this criminal was beginning to understand Jesus Himself was God.

Verse 41. Whether the criminal had a full understanding of Jesus is not clear. The criminal knew he was dying because of the wrong things he had done. We do not know all he had done, but robbers and murderers were often punished by cross execution. The criminal knew Jesus had done nothing wrong. Everyone in the crowd knew this fact. Jesus was killed for political reasons not for criminal behavior. Jesus was a problem to the Jewish leaders. They feared Him, so they murdered Him. Even the criminal knew this.

Verses 42-43. The next words from the criminal were words of faith. They do not look like the words we normally think about as a prayer of salvation. This is all the criminal said, “Remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He did not ask for forgiveness or ask to be saved. Turning to Christ looks different for each person. These words showed the heart of the criminal. Jesus knew his heart. His request to be remembered was his way of showing his faith in Jesus. Salvation is based upon faith in Jesus. The criminal had faith and found salvation in the last hours of his life. His life was wasted but in his death he found God.

4. Believe: He Was Vindicated (23:44-49)

The word **vindicated** means “proved to be right.”

Verse 44. Jesus was crucified in the morning on Friday. Slowly the minutes dragged by and at last it was noon. The pain, heat, and thirst were terrible. At noon an amazing thing happened. Quite suddenly it became dark. This darkness lasted for three hours. The first part of verse 45 tells us it was dark because the sun did not shine. Perhaps this was like an eclipse of the sun. Perhaps heavy dark clouds rolled in. All of creation was responding to the events happening on the cross. The darkness of sin was defeated on the cross.

Verse 45. Suddenly the curtain in the temple ripped apart. This was an important symbol. In the temple, the holy place of sacrifice was separated from the Most Holy place by a thick curtain. Daily sacrifices were done in the Holy place. Once a year on the Day of Atonement a priest entered the Most Holy place and sprinkled blood on the Ark of the Covenant. The Most Holy place (also called the Holy of Holies) represented the dwelling place of God. The tearing of the temple curtain sent a message. From that moment on, people would not think about God as separated from them. The death of Jesus was the final sacrifice for our sins and now, when we trust Jesus, we live in the presence of God. There is no more separation between us and God.

**THE DEATH OF JESUS
WAS THE FINAL
SACRIFICE FOR OUR SINS.**

Verse 46. These are the last words of Jesus: “Father, I give you my life.” Other translations have the words, “Father, into your hands, I commit my Spirit.” Jesus died placing His life in God’s hands. He gave up His life. His act of death was an act of trust.

Verse 47. Immediately the army officer standing near Jesus was deeply moved. This man had truly seen hundreds of people die. No one else died like Jesus died. Even this hard-hearted soldier gave praise to God and confessed Jesus was a good man. This soldier was probably not confessing

faith in Jesus as his Savior but he did see Jesus had done nothing to deserve death. He was not a criminal being punished. The soldier did not understand it, but he knew something remarkable had just happened.

Verses 48-49. The final verses in our lesson help show the sadness of what happened. There were several people standing close to Jesus. They left the scene heavy hearted. Beating their chest was how they showed their grief. Perhaps some stood near Jesus and were sympathetic to Him. Others may have witnessed the event and experienced a change of heart.

IN GOD'S PLAN JESUS'
DEATH OPENED THE WAY
FOR US TO BE FORGIVEN
AND TO FIND A RIGHT
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

The friends of Jesus stood at some distance from the cross. The women were there. Most of the disciples ran away in fear. But there were some who loved Jesus and watched Him die. This must have been the saddest

moment of their lives. They believed Jesus would change the world. And now He was dead.

You and I know the rest of the story. When Jesus died He changed the world. This was God's plan. He died as a result of our sin and for our sin. In God's plan Jesus' death opened the way for us to be forgiven and to find a right relationship with God. Don't just stand at a distance and watch this story. Trust Jesus and become part of the story!

What About You?

What have you done to respond to what Jesus did for you when He died on the cross? Have you trusted in Jesus for your personal Savior? Are you telling your Deaf friends and your hearing neighbors how they can know Christ? Anna is a Deaf Christian in the Czech Republic. After Anna trusted in Jesus she immediately told her friends and family about Jesus. I encourage you to be like Anna.

Applying the Lesson

Here are three ideas you can use to apply today's lesson.

1. Read the story in the Bible several times, and then practice signing the story about the death of Jesus on the cross. Read about this in all four Gospels.
2. Pray and thank God for Jesus who died on the cross for your sin.
3. Visit one of your Deaf friends and tell them the story of Jesus and His death on the cross.

A Verse to Remember: "Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they are doing'" (Luke 23:34).

He Lives Eternally: Carry On



Background Study Verses

Luke 23:50–24:12,36–53

Lesson Material

Luke 24:1-8,36-40,44-53

Bible Truth

God raised Jesus from the dead and He lives forever
and calls for us to carry on His work.

What These Verses Tell Us

1. **Do You Remember? (24:1-8)** – An angel met some women outside the tomb of Jesus, announced His resurrection, and asked if they remembered what He told them in Galilee.
2. **Do You Believe? (24:36-40)** – When Jesus appeared to the disciples in Jerusalem He asked why they had doubts about His resurrection and then showed them His hands and feet as proof.
3. **Do You Understand? (24:44-46)** – Jesus helped the disciples understand what He told them in the past and what the Scriptures said about His death and resurrection as the Messiah.
4. **Do You Follow Through? (24:47-53)** – Jesus promised His disciples they would have the spiritual power needed to carry on His work. And then Jesus ascended into heaven.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why were the women going to the tomb on the first day of the week?
2. Why was the body of Jesus not in the tomb?
3. How did Jesus prove He was not a ghost?
4. What did the disciples witness?
5. What did the disciples do after Jesus ascended?

Introduction

In a previous lesson you read about the group of Deaf students and leaders from the TriState Deaf School of Theology who went to Israel in 2005. Near the end of the tour, the group visited the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem. The Garden Tomb is near Golgotha, the place where many scholars believe Jesus was crucified and buried.

At the Garden Tomb there is an empty tomb that was made during the time when Jesus was on earth. All the Deaf students and leaders on the tour bent low to enter the small opening to the grave. We all looked at the small burial space. Most of us cried because the tomb was empty. There was no body there. We all felt this empty tomb was a powerful reminder that Jesus is not dead. He is fully alive. Because He is alive we will live and work for Him.

Today's Lesson

1. Do You Remember? (24:1-8)

Verse 1. Jesus died on Friday afternoon. The Jewish Sabbath began at sundown on Friday. The friends of Jesus quickly took His body and buried Him in a borrowed grave. The Jewish law required faithful Jews to do no work on the Sabbath, so from Friday evening when the sun went down until Saturday evening when the sun went down the friends of Jesus waited and grieved. They could do nothing in the dark Saturday night so they waited for sunrise on Sunday.

Early on Sunday, as the sun was rising, a group of women went to the tomb where Jesus was buried. They took spices to anoint Jesus' body.

Verses 2-3. Read the resurrection story in Matthew and Mark and you will see the women were concerned about getting into Jesus' tomb. The tomb entrance had a large round stone blocking it. The women did not know how they could move the large stone. When they arrived at the tomb, they had their first surprise. The stone was already rolled back, and the entrance was open.

Then they had an even bigger surprise. They entered the tomb expecting to see the body of Jesus. But when they looked into the place where they left His body they did not find a body. They did not yet know Jesus was alive. At this point they only knew His body was gone. The tomb was empty.

Verse 4. Suddenly the women were not alone. Two men in shining clothes stood with them. The other Gospel writers tell us these men were angels. They looked like men in many ways but they were angels sent from God.

Verses 5-6. The women were afraid. The women bowed to the ground because they knew these were heavenly beings. The angels spoke to the women. "Why are you looking for a living person in this place of the dead?" This is the first announcement of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The angels said Jesus was not there. Jesus was alive. He was raised from the dead. Then the angels reminded the women how Jesus tried to prepare them for this event. While they were with Jesus in Galilee, He taught them about the resurrection.

Verse 7. The angels reminded the women how Jesus predicted all the things that happened. When the women and the disciples saw the crucifixion happen they should have anticipated the resurrection, but they did not understand.

Verse 8. As soon as the women heard what the angels said, they remembered what Jesus said to them about His death and His resurrection. Maybe they did not yet fully understand or believe in the resurrection. But maybe they were starting to get a sense that something wonderful happened.

2. Do You Believe? (24:36-40)

Verse 36. Things happened quickly after the women found the empty tomb. The women reported their experience to the apostles. Some of the apostles went to see for themselves. Jesus appeared to two of the disciples while they were walking to their homes in the town of Emmaus. They returned to Jerusalem and reported what happened to them. They were just beginning to tell their story when Jesus suddenly appeared.

Verse 37. Jesus was in the room with them. The disciples were terrified. Luke said they thought they were looking at a ghost. This does not mean they believed in ghosts. They just had no other way to explain what they were seeing. They knew Jesus died. Now they saw Him alive. What would you think?

Verses 38-40. Jesus tried to calm the disciples' fears. He did this by speaking to them. "Why are you troubled?" Jesus asked. He encouraged them not to doubt what they were seeing. They really were seeing the living Jesus. Jesus showed them His hands and His feet. He asked them to touch His body. This was clear proof they were not seeing a ghost, but they were seeing the living Lord Jesus.

IT IS NECESSARY FOR
SALVATION TO BELIEVE
GOD RAISED JESUS FROM
THE DEAD.

You may wonder if it is important to believe in the resurrection of Jesus. Read Romans 10:9. Paul said it is necessary for salvation to believe God raised Jesus from the dead. If Jesus is not alive, then all Jesus said is a lie. The resurrection is God's proof to us. I believe it! Do you?

3. Do You Understand? (24:44-46)

Verse 44. Jesus reminded them what He taught them before His crucifixion. What Jesus taught them previously were the words of the Old Testament Scriptures. The Hebrew people grouped their Scriptures in three divisions: the Books of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Law was the five books of Moses (Genesis to Deuteronomy). The Prophets were all the books of prophecy we have in our Bible plus the history books of 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, and 1-2 Chronicles. The Writings were

all the other books of our Old Testament. All of these books in the Old Testament prophesied Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah. Everything written about Jesus was fulfilled with His birth, life, death, and resurrection.

Verses 45-46. At first, the disciples did not understand all Jesus talked about. Jesus opened their minds so they could understand. The ideas of the prophets and the ideas of the resurrection are not easy to understand. Without God's help we would not really understand it. That is why it is so encouraging how Jesus opened their minds. Don't you want Jesus to open your mind so you can understand these things too? Ask Him, and He will help you to understand how Jesus could "suffer and rise from the dead on the third day."

4. Do You Follow Through? (24:47-53)

Verse 47. The death and resurrection of Jesus is not the end of "the Jesus story." In one way it is the beginning of the story. Jesus reminded the disciples of His suffering and death in verse 46. Then He told them what

was supposed to happen next.

Even the events following the resurrection were predicted in the Old Testament.

The story of the death and resurrection of Jesus must not stop with the time of the apostles. It must be told to every generation of people. We must tell the

message of repentance and forgiveness of sins. The New Century Version uses the words "change of hearts and lives," for the word *repentance*. This message must be declared to the whole world. The work of sharing the story began on this first Easter in Jerusalem.

Verse 48. This is an important verse even though it is short. Jesus told the disciples they were witnesses of these things. This means at least two things. They were witnesses because they saw all the events Jesus talked about. Second, to be a witness is to tell about what you have seen. In this sense, you and I are witnesses too. We did not see the actions of Jesus when He lived on earth. But we have experienced the living Christ by trusting in Him as our Savior. We have experienced Jesus in our own lives. We are witnesses of this. To witness what we have experienced means we share it with others. You too are a witness to the truth of the resurrection.

Verse 49. This verse has the last spoken words of Jesus before His ascension. Read the words carefully. Jesus was leaving, that is true. However, Jesus was not leaving the disciples alone. Jesus declared He would send what God had promised. The promise that Jesus referred to

was the Holy Spirit. When the disciples received this promise from God they would have the power they needed to be His witnesses. This is very encouraging for us, also. We know from this promise that when we share Christ with others we are not working alone. We are working in the power of God. The last words of Jesus tell us to carry on with the work of the gospel.

Verses 50-51. When you read these verses in Luke it looks like Jesus ascended on the same day as His resurrection. We learn from the other Gospel stories that He appeared several times over a number of days.

His time with the disciples after the resurrection was quite limited. Luke shortened the appearances into a very few words. Jesus commanded them to be witnesses. Then He walked with them for a short while. At the end of the walk He blessed them. His blessing must have been a few words of kindness, love, and encouragement. And then Jesus was separated from them and carried into heaven.

HOW SHOULD WE FOLLOW
THROUGH IN OBEDIENCE
TO WHAT JESUS HAS TOLD
US TO DO?

Verses 52-53. The title of this section is called “Do You Follow Through?” To *follow through* means “to do something to the finish.” For example: my mother used to tell me to clean my room. When I followed through on what she said I actually did clean my room. How should we follow through in obedience to what Jesus has told us to do? I want to give you three ways to follow through with Jesus.

First, they worshiped Jesus. Second, they obeyed Jesus. Third, they praised God. It is always right for us to give praise to God for all He has done for us. There are many more ways the disciples followed through. You can read them in the Book of Acts. But the follow-through is not finished. When you worship Him, obey Him, and praise Him you are following through as a believer too.

What About You?

Do you believe Jesus is alive today? The proof of your faith is really not your words. The proof of your faith in the living Christ is how you carry on the ministry of Christ.

Here is a list of ways you can carry on His life and work. Pray. Tithe. Worship. Witness. Live for Christ. Encourage other Christians. Help the needy. Obey the Holy Spirit. Follow the Bible. Love God.

Are you carrying on the work of the Resurrected Christ?

Applying the Lesson

You show you believe Jesus is alive by how you live for Him. Circle all the words below to show how you can live for Jesus.

Serve others

Witness for Christ

Pray often

Help the needy

Give a tithe

Attend church

Be baptized

Do missions

Read the Bible

Worship God

Be kind

Bless others

Visit the sick

Love your spouse

Praise the Lord

A Verse to Remember: "It is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that a change of hearts and lives and forgiveness of sins would be preached in His name to all nations, starting at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47).

Answers to Study Questions

Unit 1

Session 1

1. The angel, Gabriel.
2. God saves.
3. By the power of God.
4. Mary's relative.
5. She sang a song of praise.

Session 2

1. Some angels.
2. Jesus, the Messiah, was born.
3. Everything they heard and saw from the angels.
4. She treasured these things and thought about them.
5. Tell other people.

Session 3

1. In the Synagogue in Nazareth.
2. Isaiah.
3. The Messiah.
4. The story of the widow from Sidon and Naaman from Syria.
5. They wanted to kill Him.

Unit 2

Session 1

1. He had an evil spirit (demon possessed).
2. He commanded the evil spirit to come out.
3. They were amazed.
4. People did not touch people who had skin disease because they were "unclean."
5. Pray.

Session 2

1. Our enemy.
2. Offer the other cheek to be slapped.
3. Do what you want others to do to you.
4. We will experience forgiveness too.
5. We need to do what He tells us to do.

Session 3

1. Cleopas and one other follower of Jesus.
2. Jesus' body was not in the grave.
3. Jesus prayed and broke bread with them.
4. They felt like a fire was burning inside them.
5. They hurried back to Jerusalem and told the other disciples they had seen Jesus.

Session 4

1. So He could be alone with them.
2. Five loaves of bread and two fish.
3. Twelve.
4. Because they did not have faith and their lives were wrong.
5. He healed him.

Session 5

1. A lawyer, also called an expert in the law.
2. Jesus asked the lawyer a question instead of answering the lawyer's question.
3. Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.
4. The Samaritan.
5. "Go and do what he did."

Session 6

1. Only one.
2. Money.
3. He loved money but he did not love God or people.
4. He was taken to heaven.
5. The Law and the Prophets—the Scriptures.

Session 7

1. False.
2. True.
3. False.
4. False.
5. True.

Unit 3

Session 1

1. The Passover meal.
2. The body and the blood of Jesus.
3. One of His disciples—Judas.
4. To God's will.
5. The men guarding Him.

Session 2

1. "Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they are doing."
2. The leaders, the soldiers, and one of the criminals.
3. Trusted in Jesus.
4. It ripped in two.
5. "Father, I give you my life."

Session 3

1. To anoint the body of Jesus for burial.
2. God had raised Jesus from the dead.
3. He showed himself to the disciples and let them touch Him.
4. They were witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus.
5. They worshiped Jesus, returned to Jerusalem, stayed in the temple, and praised God.

Vocabulary Guide

A

Acceptance – Receiving with a positive attitude.

Acknowledge – Admit or recognize.

Annoying – Bothering.

Anticipate, anticipation – Hope, expect.

Archaeology – The science of digging up old places and studying them.

Arrogance – To feel self-important and care nothing about other people.

Authority – Power to act, to do, or to tell others what to do.

C

Census – To count the people who live in a country.

Compassion – Love, caring.

Concern – Care, strong interest.

Confident – Sure, know it is true.

Consequences – What happens because of something else.

Consider – Think about.

Customary – The way people do things; habit or tradition.

D

Demonic – From the devil.

Deserve – Earn, have a right to.

Down Syndrome – A form of mental limitation.

E

Engagement – A legal arrangement equal to marriage during Jesus' lifetime.

Epilepsy – A disease that causes a person to have seizures.

Examine – Study.

Execution – To kill a criminal.

Express – Tell or show.

F

Fatigue – Being tired.

G

Google – Search on the internet.

H

Humiliation – Making fun of, mocking.
Humility – Not proud.

L

Leprosy – A very bad skin disease.

M

Magnificat – A special song Mary sang.
Manage – Take care of.
Messiah – Hebrew word for Christ or Savior.

N

Notice – Look at, identify.

P

Parable – A story with an important lesson.
Persistence – Continuing to try.
Pharisee – A respected religious leader.
Positive, positively – In favor of, not against.
Possibility – Something that may happen, or be true.
Predicted – Tells what will happen in the future.
Principle – Truth to live by.
Publican – A tax collector.

R

Rabbi – Teacher.
Radical – Very different from what is normal.
React – Take action because of something said or done.
Recognize – Understand, or know.
Reflect – Look at, study (in this lesson).
Retreat – Going away to a quiet place to study and pray.
Respond – Answer.
Ridicule – Make fun of a person.

S

Scandal - Gossip
Scriptures – The Old Testament, the Bible.
Self-righteous – A person who thinks he is good enough and better than others.
Skepticism – Doubt or unbelief.

T

Transfiguration – Jesus and three disciples went up on a mountain and met with Moses and Elijah.

U

Unattractive – Not pleasant, or not easy to look at.

Unclean person – Not able to go into the temple or be near other people because of skin disease.

Unexpected – Surprised.

Untouchable person – People must not touch because of skin disease.

Unique – Only one of its kind.

V

Vindicated – Proved to be right.

Voluntarily – Without someone telling us to do it.

Daily Bible Readings

MONTH 1

1. Exodus 20:12-17
2. Proverbs 15:13-15
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15
4. Romans 15:1-7
5. 2 Kings 5:9-14
6. Matthew 21:18-22
7. Ephesians 3:8-12
8. Revelation 5:11-14
9. 1 Timothy 6:6-10
10. Joshua 1:1-5
11. Colossians 3:12-14
12. Hebrews 13:15-17
13. Jeremiah 17:5-8
14. Luke 5:4-11
15. Psalm 16:7-11
16. 1 Corinthians 10:31-33
17. John 4:10-14
18. Genesis 4:1-5
19. Titus 3:4-8
20. Psalm 29:1-4
21. Colossians 2:4-7
22. 2 Peter 1:19-21
23. Deuteronomy 8:1-4
24. Acts 9:17-22
25. Psalm 33:1-5
26. Mark 7:5-8
27. Philippians 4:1-3
28. James 1:13-15
29. Galatians 2:15-19
30. 1 John 3:1-3
31. Isaiah 55:6-9

MONTH 2

1. Proverbs 9:9-12
2. 2 Corinthians 1:18-22
3. 2 Kings 22:8-13
4. Luke 22:7-13
5. Luke 22:24-30
6. Luke 23:33-38
7. Isaiah 53:7-12
8. Matthew 28:1-6
9. John 6:47-51
10. John 3:31-36
11. Numbers 11:10-17
12. Ephesians 4:4-7
13. Psalm 136:1-9
14. Mark 13:32-37
15. 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5
16. Judges 2:6-11
17. Revelation 22:8-13
18. Job 13:13-18
19. Acts 20:22-27
20. 2 Timothy 2:22-26
21. 1 Samuel 17: 32-37
22. Colossians 2:13-15
23. James 5:7-11
24. Hebrews 3:1-6
25. Psalm 8:1-9
26. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
27. Jeremiah 32:16-19
28. Romans 8:31-34
29. Psalm 18:30-32
30. Acts 19:13-20

MONTH 3

1. Joshua 23:8-11
2. Mark 11:15-19
3. Psalm 62:5-8
4. Romans 8:35-39
5. 2 Chronicles 32:1-8
6. Galatians 1:15-24
7. Jude 24-25
8. 2 Thessalonians 3:13-18
9. Proverbs 1:7-9
10. Genesis 39:1-4
11. Matthew 13:53-58
12. 1 Corinthians 8:9-13
13. Philippians 2:14-16
14. Titus 2:1-8
15. Leviticus 19:35-37
16. John 2:23-25
17. Romans 5:18-21
18. Psalm 46:8-11
19. 1 Timothy 4:6-11
20. Nehemiah 2:1-6
21. Colossians 1:1-4
22. 1 John 4:7-10
23. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
24. Luke 5:18-25
25. Acts 5:40-42
26. Psalm 145:1-5
27. Jonah 2:7-10
28. Matthew 8:5-10
29. Proverbs 6:20-23
30. John 10:1-6
31. Ephesians 4:23-27

BIBLE STUDIES FOR THE DEAF LEADER

Luke

An In-Depth Book-by-Book Study of the Bible

EXPLORE THE BIBLE



BIBLE STUDIES FOR THE DEAF

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* Evangelistic Lesson

Introduction

Luke: The Truth About Jesus

Luke 1:1–24:49

Luke was not one of the 12 disciples. He may not have been one who followed Jesus during His ministry. He wrote the gospel story from facts told to him by eyewitnesses to Jesus' life. He wrote with these themes:

1. Jesus is the Messiah and He is divine. 2. Salvation is available to everyone, regardless of race, sex, social status, or health. 3. Jesus lived a life of humility and compassion that ended with His suffering in our place. 4. Christ triumphed over death in order that all can live eternally with God if they accept Him as Savior.

The Gospel of Luke does not include the name of the author. Most Bible scholars accept it was written by Luke the physician and companion of Paul. He was probably a Gentile (Col. 4:11-14). He may have been a Roman "freed-man." He was well acquainted with Jewish customs and fluent in both Hebrew and Greek. He may have been an early convert to the Jewish faith.

The time when Luke joined Paul's company is clearly indicated in the Book of Acts because in Acts 16:10 he changed to "we" for the rest of the Book of Acts. He travelled with Paul from that time until near Paul's death (2 Tim. 4:11). Jewish tradition says he was a native of Antioch. If so, he would have many advantages to learn the literature of Greece and medical knowledge. He may have been active in the church at Antioch.

The Gospel of Luke was written to give an accurate record of the history of Jesus Christ's life. Luke explained his purpose for writing in the first four verses of chapter one. Not only as a historian, but also as a medical doctor, Luke paid great attention to detail including dates and events that happened throughout the life of Christ. The humanity of Jesus Christ is emphasized in the Gospel of Luke. Jesus was the perfect man who gave the perfect sacrifice for sin, therefore, providing the perfect Savior for all people.

Luke probably wrote his gospel in Rome or Caesarea. Settings in the book include Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Judea, and Galilee. The date of the Gospel of Luke is based on the dates of Mark and Acts because he quoted from Mark and he wrote the introduction to the Book of Acts and

indicated this was his second book. Acts was not published for two years after Paul went as a prisoner to Rome, because it ends with a reference to this period. Acts was probably published early in the year A.D. 63. The Gospel of Luke, then, was written between A.D. 50 and 60.

Luke has much information not included in the other three Gospels. In addition to Paul, it is possible Luke had conversations with other people who were with Jesus.

The Gospel of Luke provides a personal account of the events of Christ's life from the apostles and other witnesses. Luke clearly presents Jesus as the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament. Luke proves Jesus is the Son of God, as Jesus claimed. Also, Luke shows how Jesus has complete authority over everything in the world, including evil spirits (4:12,35; 9:42; 11:14), nature (5:4-11; 8:22-25; 9:12-17), death (7:11-15; 8:41-42), and illness and disease (4:38-41; 5:12-13; 5:18-25, 6:6-10, 7:1-10; 18:35-43). Jesus has the power to forgive sins (5:24; 7:48), to bless people (6:20-22), and to give people eternal life in heaven (23:43). Jesus showed His power to overcome death through His own resurrection after being crucified on a Roman cross.

Unit 1

Son of God: Meet Him

Luke 1:1–4:30

- As you start this new unit, help your class get an overview of the quarter. Use the material in the Introduction to the quarter, above, and from the pupil's material. Write on the board the theme for the quarter, "Luke: The Truth About Jesus."
- You may want to help the class to understand the emphasis in the Gospel of Luke and compare this with the emphasis in the other three Gospels.
- Use a Bible map to show the areas to be studied this quarter – Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Capernaum, and the area around the Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, Bethsaida, Jericho, and Bethany. Note that Jesus walked between these towns. It is about 120 miles from Nazareth to Jerusalem. Jesus made that trip several times.
- Point out the three units for this quarter. Then focus on the title for this first unit, "Son of God: Meet Him." The lessons are from Luke 1–4. Encourage your class members to read all these chapters to get the full story as told by Luke.
- As you prepare to teach, read through the text several times. Look for special verses to apply to your Bible class. Look for opportunities to make assignments for class members to prepare and present to the class. Select material from "The Bible in Context" and "Explore . . .," along with the Introduction to the lesson or other topics in the pupil material.
- At the beginning of each lesson, give a brief summary of the lesson to be studied that week and how it fits with the previous lesson and the next lesson. Help class members keep in mind the chronology of the life of Jesus.
- Use a variety of teaching methods. Any one method becomes ineffective if it is used every week.

A Special Baby: Rejoice

Background Study Outline

1. Doubts (Luke 1:1-25)
2. Submission (1:26-38)
3. Rejoicing (1:39-56)
4. Amazement (1:57-66)
5. Confession (1:67-80)

Lesson Material

1. Listen to the Truth (Luke 1:26-33)
2. Ask Questions (1:34-35)
3. Decide to Acknowledge (1:36-38)
4. Express Joy (1:42-48)

Bible Truth

When we know who Jesus is, we have reason to rejoice.

The Bible in Context (Luke 1:26)

God sent His message to men in many ways. God used angels to tell several people about Jesus. First, the angel spoke to Mary (Luke 1:26-38), then to Joseph (Matt. 1:20). Angels also spoke to the shepherds (Luke 2:8-15). Later, an angel spoke to the women at the tomb when Jesus was resurrected (John 20:11-13). In the angel's message to Mary, he gave her assurance (don't be afraid), a promise (you will give birth to a son), a command (you will name Him Jesus), and a prophecy, (His kingdom will never end).

Explore ... Great, Son of the Most High God (Luke 1:32)

This title is a reference to Isaiah 9:6-7. The word *great* means "He will be unique, powerful, wise, and in control of earth and heaven." In the Hebrew language, the phrase *will be called* meant "will become" (see Matt. 21:13). God is identified as the Most High because He has power over all His creatures on earth and in heaven (Mark 5:7). Jesus was the Son of the Most High because He entered Mary's womb without human involvement. Wars may destroy the kingdoms of the earth, but the powers and gates of hell and death shall never be able to destroy or injure the kingdom of Christ. His kingdom shall never end. (See Isa. 16:5, Jer. 23:5, and Dan. 2:44; 7:14.)

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- The title and theme of today's lesson is "A Special Baby: Rejoice." Note how this fits into the theme for the quarter and for the first unit.
- Ask someone ahead of time to give a summary of the Gospel of Luke from the Introductions to the quarter in this Leader Guide and in the pupil material. Encourage all class members to read these introductions.
- Make the lesson come alive!** In the church library, find and present a summary of the four Gospels and the differences in their focus—who they wrote for, what they emphasized. This will help the class relate Luke to the other three Gospels.
- Use a Bible map to locate Galilee (the area and the sea) and Nazareth in relation to Jerusalem. Nazareth is about 25 miles from the Sea of Galilee and about 120 miles from Jerusalem.
- Summarize 1:1-25 to give a background for this lesson. Use a harmony of the Gospels to refer to related information in the other Gospels.

STEP TWO – LISTEN TO THE TRUTH (LUKE 1:26-33)

- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss angels from "The Bible in Context," above, and resources in the church library.
- Ask someone else ahead of time to review the discussion of "Explore . . . Great, Son of the Most High," above, and other resources.
- Note how Mary reacted to the angel: first with fear, then with obedience. The fear is natural, but her obedience showed her faith in God.

STEP THREE – ASK QUESTIONS (1:34-35)

- Discuss the importance of asking questions. This is not the kind of doubt indicating disbelief. Mary was trying to understand what the angel meant.
- Emphasize the importance of seeking God's will in all things.

STEP FOUR – DECIDE TO ACKNOWLEDGE (1:36-38)

- Ask someone to sign verse 38. This can be a verse to remember. It is how we need to respond to God's will.

STEP FIVE - EXPRESS JOY (1:42-48)

- Summarize verses 39-41 to give the background for this section.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using the Study Questions. Encourage class members to prepare these each week.
- Close with prayer that class members will respond willingly to God's call in their lives.

A Unique Person: Praise God

Background Study Outline

- 1. Celebrating Jesus' Birth (Luke 2:1-20)**
- 2. Recognizing Jesus Is Unique (2:21-40)**
- 3. Reflecting on Jesus' Uniqueness (2:41-52)**

Lesson Material

- 1. Praise God in Faithfulness (Luke 2:3-7)**
- 2. Praise God in Word and Song (2:8-14)**
- 3. Praise God in Individual Ways (2:15-20)**

Bible Truth

We can announce how Jesus is fully divine and fully human through our praise to God.

The Bible in Context (Luke 2:4)

Nazareth was the boyhood home of Jesus and where Mary continued to live. After Jesus started His ministry, He spent most of His time in Capernaum, 20 miles away. Many from the family of David moved into Nazareth after the exile in Babylon. This explains why Joseph and Mary, of the tribe of Judah, were so far from Judea. Jesus described Nazareth as His hometown, and His own people, and His own home (Mark 6:4). Nazareth was a very small, remote village. At the time of Jesus, the population was about 150. Probably most of these people were related to Joseph or Mary. This suggests everyone knew about Mary becoming pregnant before her marriage. Jesus' extended family reacted to His teaching in 4:16-30.

Explore . . . Bethlehem (Luke 2:4)

Bethlehem was a small town six miles from Jerusalem. David was anointed in Bethlehem (1 Sam. 16:1-13) and the town is often referred to as the "City of David." Rachel was buried at Bethlehem (Gen. 35:19; 48:7). The story of Ruth and Boaz took place in Bethlehem (Ruth 1:22-4:11). The trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem was about 120 miles and required about five days walking or riding on a donkey.

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- The title and theme of today's lesson is "A Unique Person: Praise God."The text includes some verses we usually read at Christmas time.
- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss Nazareth from "The Bible in Context," above, and resources in the church library.
- Ask someone else ahead of time to review the discussion of "Explore ... Bethlehem," above, and other resources.
- Make the lesson come alive!** Use a map to show the distance Mary and Joseph traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Emphasize how difficult it must have been for Mary in her final months of pregnancy. It was no doubt very slow walking or riding the donkey. Why did they go? See verses 1-2. The king did not allow exceptions to his orders!

STEP TWO – PRAISE GOD IN FAITHFULNESS (LUKE 2:3-7)

- Note that Mary and Joseph were not yet married, but their engagement was equal to marriage. We do not have details of their wedding.
- Mary spent three months with Elizabeth (Luke 1:56), and they may have been in Bethlehem for a few days before Jesus was born. There was no room in the inn because so many others went to that small town to register.
- The emphasis in this section is to their faithfulness to obey the Roman law, and their faithfulness to obey God's will.

STEP THREE – PRAISE GOD IN WORD AND SONG (2:8-14)

- Note this was the third time angels told about Jesus—to Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds.
- Discuss the reaction of the shepherds. Much like Mary, they were first afraid, and then believed the message of the angels (verse 15).
- We should rejoice and praise God when we think about the birth of Jesus.

STEP FOUR – PRAISE GOD IN INDIVIDUAL WAYS (2:15-20)

- Ask someone to sign verse 19. What if Mary wrote down her insights about the birth and childhood of Jesus? Encourage discussion of what Mary might have written.
- Encourage discussion of the people identified in these verses: angels, shepherds, Mary, and Joseph. Ask the class to think of what each one of these persons did to praise God with words or actions. Note that all of them were typical people who obeyed God and honored Him.

STEP FIVE - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using the Study Questions.
- Close with prayer that class members will always find reasons to praise God.

An Unexpected Messiah: Honor Him

Background Study Outline

1. **Hear God's Word (Luke 3:1-20)**
2. **Recognize God's Son (3:21-38)**
3. **Resist the Devil's Temptations (4:1-13)**
4. **Understand Christ's Message (4:14-30)**

Lesson Material

1. **Recognize Christ's Mission (Luke 4:16-21)**
2. **React with Acceptance (4:22-24)**
3. **Recognize Christ's Concern (4:25-27)**
4. **Respond Positively (4:28-30)**

Bible Truth

We make a big mistake if we do not understand the nature of Jesus as the Messiah.

The Bible in Context (Luke 4:16)

The word *synagogue* is made up of two Greek words meaning "meeting together." It is like our words *meeting house*. In the time of Jesus, synagogues were established all over Palestine and in other nations where the Jews lived. In the synagogues the people met together on the Sabbath to pray, to listen to the reading of the portions of the Old Testament, and to listen to teachers. Jesus often went to the synagogue in Nazareth. He taught in other synagogues (Luke 4:44). He healed a man in Capernaum in the synagogue (Luke 4:31-37).

Explore . . . Scrolls (Luke 4:17)

A *scroll* (sometimes called a *book*, as in this verse) is "a roll of papyrus (made from plant fibers) or parchment (made from skin)." A scroll is divided into pages, glued together at the edges. The scroll is unrolled so one page is exposed at a time, for writing or reading, with the remaining pages rolled up to the left and right. It is unrolled from side to side, and the text is written in lines from the top to the bottom of the page. Some scrolls are simply rolled up pages; others may have wooden rollers on each end. The process of hand-copying a scroll takes about 2,000 hours. That would be almost a year at 40 hours per week.

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- The title and theme of today's lesson is "An Unexpected Messiah: Honor Him." This was the first time Jesus told His family and friends in Nazareth that He was the Messiah.
- Use a Bible map to locate Galilee, Nazareth, Capernaum, Zarapath, Sidon, and Syria. Identify each of these as they are named in the lesson.

STEP TWO – RECOGNIZE CHRIST'S MISSION (LUKE 4:16-21)

- Ask someone to discuss the synagogue from "The Bible in Context," above, and other resources from the church library.
- Ask someone else to review the discussion of "Explore ... Scrolls," above, and other resources.
- Make the lesson come alive!** Find a good picture of a scroll or make one from paper. Hebrew was written from right to left in lines like we use. From the church library, find a Hebrew Bible and locate Isaiah 61:1. That is the verse Jesus read.
- Ask someone to sign verses 18-19, then the related verses in Isaiah 58:6 and 61:1-2.
- Use the material in the pupil's lesson to show how these verses in Isaiah applied to Jesus.

STEP THREE – REACT WITH ACCEPTANCE (4:22-24)

- Emphasize how Jesus was speaking to His home town and relatives of Mary or Joseph. When He first stood up, the people said, "Isn't He nice!"
- Note how Jesus knew their hearts, and He knew how they would react.

STEP FOUR – RECOGNIZE CHRIST'S CONCERN (4:25-27)

- Emphasize that the widow and Naaman were not Jews. They were Gentiles. Encourage discussion of how this applied to Jesus (because the Gentiles accepted Him when the Jews rejected Him).

STEP FIVE - RESPOND POSITIVELY (4:28-30)

- Note the contrast between the reaction in these verses and verses 22-24. Encourage discussion of what made the people change their attitude toward Jesus (their prejudice against Gentiles).
- Encourage discussion of the only two ways to respond to Jesus—accept Him or reject Him.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- *Review the lesson using the Study Questions.
- *Close with prayer that class members will be quick to honor Jesus with their behavior and conversation

Unit 2

Teacher: Listen to Him

Luke 4:31–19:27; 24:13–35

- The seven lessons in this unit focus on some basic truths of Christianity. These are the principles Jesus taught during His ministry. Two lessons tell about miracles Jesus did. Three lessons are from parables Jesus told to help the people to understand. Another lesson is from a long “teaching” Luke recorded. It is called Jesus’ Sermon on the Plain, like the Sermon on the Mount recorded in Matthew 5–7. One lesson is the Easter lesson, taken from Luke 24.
- Explain the terms “Christianity 101,” etc. College courses begin with the number 101 as the introduction to the subject. Each number builds upon the previous number. Students are encouraged to take the classes in order so they get a good foundation as they go through the courses. These are fundamental topics to help us understand how to live the Christian life.
- Create a poster with the lesson topics and keep it before the class during these six weeks. Make the heading of your poster, “Listen to Jesus” or “Jesus, the Teacher.”
- As you prepare for these lessons, seek to lead class members to show they understand fully what Jesus taught.
- The Easter lesson is the evangelistic lesson for the quarter. Ask class members to give their testimony. Call attention to the testimony of the lesson writer, Donnie Wiltshire, from page 4. Encourage any lost class members to receive Christ as their Savior.
- Look for opportunities to ask class members to sign a verse from the lesson, or to discuss one of the topics under “The Bible in Context” or “Explore” Class members will feel they have learned more if they have an opportunity to participate.
- Consider how to use various teaching methods with these lessons—Bible search, discussion, drama/skits, etc.

Christianity 101: Accept Others

Background Study Outline

1. **People Need Christ's Ministry (Luke 4:31-44)**
2. **Believers Need to Serve Jesus (5:1-11)**
3. **Sinners Need Forgiveness (5:12-32)**
4. **Believers Need the Highest Values (5:33-6:11)**

Lesson Material

1. **If People Seem Annoying ... (Luke 4:31-34)**
2. **They Deserve Acceptance (4:35-37)**
3. **If People Seem Unattractive ... (5:12)**
4. **They Deserve Acceptance (5:13-16)**

Bible Truth

When we are willing to accept all people, we will reach out to them, even people who bother us or who are not attractive.

The Bible in Context (Luke 4:31)

Capernaum was a small town on the coast of the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 4:13). It was the home of Peter and Andrew and also James and John. It may have also been the home of Matthew (Matt. 9:1-12). This town served as a "home base" for Jesus' ministry (Matt. 8:5; 9:1). Capernaum was about twenty miles northeast of Nazareth. It was a center of agriculture and business. Jesus returned often to Capernaum as He traveled throughout Galilee. No doubt He worshiped and taught at the synagogue in Capernaum whenever He was in that area.

Explore . . . Evil Spirits (Luke 4:33)

In Jesus' time, illness and disability were often thought to come from evil spirits (Mark 1:23; 7:25). The terms *unclean spirit* and *demon* are also used in this way. When it refers to illness it seems to mean "harmful more than sinful." The thinking at that time was that sickness and disability were caused by some unknown power and often because of the person's sin (John 9:1-2). There are other uses, as in our text today, of the term *evil spirit* that seem to refer more to satanic power than what we would consider normal illness. See also Matthew 12:43-45.

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Summarize the story between last week's lesson and this lesson to help the class keep up with the sequence of events in Luke's Gospel.
- The title and theme of today's lesson is "Christianity 101: Accept Others." Use the information in the unit introductions and the pupil material to explain the meaning of the college term implied by Christianity 101.
- Use a Bible map to locate Capernaum, Galilee, Sea of Galilee, and Nazareth.
- Note how step two is joined with step three and step four with step five. These are if/then statements.

STEP TWO – IF PEOPLE SEEM ANNOYING ... (LUKE 4:31-34)

- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss Capernaum from "The Bible in Context," above, and other resources from the church library.
- Ask someone else to review the discussion "Explore ... Evil Spirits," above, and other resources. Also, note the discussion of evil spirits in the pupil material.
- Encourage discussion of how we view severe mental illness today. Do any class members feel some could be demon possession?
- Emphasize the point of the lesson is in the next section.

STEP THREE – THEY DESERVE ACCEPTANCE (4:35-37)

- **Make the lesson come alive!** Encourage discussion of how many years ago, deafness and other disabilities or diseases were considered punishment for the sin of the parents. Have any class members experienced a lack of acceptance by others because of their deafness? Discuss how Jesus handled this situation (healed the man) and how we should handle it (understanding, kindness).

STEP FOUR – IF PEOPLE SEEM UNATTRACTIVE ... (5:12)

- Summarize the story between 4:37 and 5:12 to show the sequence of events.
- Review the status of lepers and others with contagious skin diseases. Recall times when someone was quarantined because they had a contagious disease.

STEP FIVE - THEY DESERVE ACCEPTANCE (5:13-16)

- Encourage discussion of how we can show acceptance to people whose disabilities make them physically unattractive.
- Ask someone to sign verse 16. This is where Jesus renewed His spiritual and physical strength.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- *Review the lesson using "What These Verses Tell Us."
- *Close with prayer that class members will have the heart of Jesus to accept others.

Christianity 102: Live to Benefit Others

Background Study Outline

1. Teaching That Guides (Luke 6:12-49)
2. Help That Is Timely (7:1-17)
3. Faith That Saves (7:18-8:3)
4. Stories That Enlighten (8:4-21)
5. Deeds That Amaze (8:22-56)

Lesson Material

1. With Love (Luke 6:27-29, 35-36)
2. With Unselfishness (6:30-34)
3. With Concern (6:37-38, 41-42)
4. With Obedience (6:46-48)

Bible Truth

When we obey Jesus' Golden Rule, we will live in ways to benefit others.

The Bible in Context (Luke 6:31)

This verse is often called the Golden Rule. It is also given in Matthew 7:12. The Golden Rule is first found in the Old Testament in Leviticus 19:18. "Forget about the wrong things people do to you and do not try to get even. Love your neighbor as you love yourself." The prophet Micah wrote how God wants people to be kind to others (Mic. 6:8). Jesus quoted Leviticus 19:18 in Luke 10:27-28. Jesus interpreted this rule to His followers. He told them not to judge others or condemn others but to forgive others and give to others, and God will give to you (Luke 6:37).

Explore . . . Lord (Luke 6:46)

The Bible uses many names for God. Each one helps us understand more about who He is. The word Lord was a common word used to show respect for a father, a king, or an important person. When it is used for God it shows His power (Ex. 34:23-24, Josh. 3:13). David said, "LORD GOD All Powerful, who is like you?" (Ps. 89:8). It shows He is superior to all other gods (Deut. 10:17, Ps. 135:5). The Hebrew word for Lord is *Adoni*. It was often used in place of *Yahweh*.

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Briefly summarize the material in Luke between last week's lesson and today's lesson: Luke 5:15–6:26. Encourage class members to read the Background Study verses each week.
- The title and theme of today's lesson is "Christianity 102: Live to Benefit Others." Discuss the meaning and appropriate sign(s) for *benefit*, as used in this lesson (Bless, help, do good for).

STEP TWO – WITH LOVE (LUKE 6:27-29,35-36)

- Call attention to the words in these verses with a meaning similar to *love* (Do good, bless, pray for, kind, mercy).
- Encourage discussion of how difficult it is to live up to this teaching from Jesus. It goes against our "natural self." Ask someone to sign Paul's statement of this in Romans 7:14-25.

STEP THREE – WITH UNSELFISHNESS (6:30-34)

- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss the Golden Rule from "The Bible in Context," above, and other resources from the church library.
- **Make the lesson come alive!** From the Internet, find a listing of statements of the Golden Rule by other religions. Make a copy and share it with the class.
- Emphasize the Golden Rule does not tell us how to become saved but how to live as a Christian.

STEP FOUR – WITH CONCERN (6:37-38,41-42)

- Encourage discussion of the meaning and appropriate sign(s) for *concern* (To care about, to want the best for someone).
- Emphasize how concern does not mean we approve of their behavior.
- Ask someone to sign verses 37-38. This is the heart of today's lesson.

STEP FIVE - WITH OBEDIENCE (6:46-48)

- Ask someone ahead of time to review the discussion of "Explore ... Lord," above, and other resources.
- Ask someone to sign the parable in verses 47-49.
- Encourage discussion of the need to put our religion into practice and do what Jesus teaches us to do. What can the class do to show love for other Deaf people in the community? Try to draw out some practical ideas.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using the outline in "What These Verses Tell Us."
- Close with prayer that class members will seek to live in ways that help other people see Jesus in them

Be Confident of the Resurrection

Background Study Outline

- 1. What is the Possibility? (Luke 24:13-17)**
- 2. What Do Others Say? (24:18-24)**
- 3. What Do the Scriptures Teach? (24:25-29)**
- 4. What Is the Truth? (24:30-35)**

Lesson Material

- 1. Consider the Possibility (Luke 24:15,18-24)**
- 2. Examine the Scriptures (24:25-27)**
- 3. Acknowledge the Lord (24:30-32)**
- 4. Reflect with Others (24:33-35)**

Bible Truth

God's people can be fully confident about the truth of Jesus' resurrection.

The Bible in Context (Luke 24)

Each of the four Gospels tells the story of the resurrection, but each one tells it in a different way. It helps to read all of the stories at one time in order to get the full picture. Begin with the stories about the burial of Jesus in Mark 15:42-47, Matthew 27:57-66, Luke 23:50-54, and John 19:31-42. Then read about the empty tomb in Mark 16:1-8, Matthew 28:1-15, Luke 24:1-12, and John 20:1-9. Finally, read how Jesus appeared to many people Mark 16:19-20, Matthew 28:16-20, Luke 24:13-53, and John 20:10-21:25.

Explore . . . Resurrection Appearances (Luke 24:15-32)

In Acts 1:3, Luke said Jesus showed Himself to His followers. The first to see Jesus was Mary Magdalene (John 20:14-18, Mark 16:9), then other women (Matt. 28:9). Then Peter saw Jesus (Luke 24:34). Next were the two men in today's lesson (Luke 24:15). Jesus next appeared to the 11 disciples (John 20:26-29, Matt. 28:10-17). Jesus talked with several disciples at the seaside (John 21:1-14). Five hundred saw Him at the same time before His ascension (1 Cor. 15:6).

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Note the jump to the end of Luke because of Easter. Encourage class members to read the material and look up the verses in “The Bible in Context” and “Explore...” above. This will help them get a more complete picture of the Easter story.
- Use a Bible map to identify the town of Emmaus and its relationship to Jerusalem, seven miles away.
- The title and theme of today’s lesson is “Be Confident of the Resurrection.” This is the evangelistic lesson for this quarter. Ask class members to tell their experience of salvation. Refer to Donnie Wiltshire’s testimony on page 4.
- Make the lesson come alive!** This is a good lesson to have three class members do a skit to present the story from verses 13-35. You may be able to secure costumes from your church or another church in your community. Ask them to tell the story related to each section of the lesson. Then pause to discuss the meaning of that section.

STEP TWO – CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY (LUKE 24:15,18-24)

- Have the class members present the skit through verse 24, then ask how class members may have felt if this happened to them. Would they recognize Jesus if He walked along with them?
- Note what the two men were discussing when Jesus appeared (vv. 14-15). They were talking about Jesus.

STEP THREE – EXAMINE THE SCRIPTURES (24:25-27)

- Present the skit through verse 29.
- Emphasize how important it was for the two men to know and understand the Scriptures Jesus spoke about. Jesus can speak to us more easily when we are familiar with His Word.

STEP FOUR – ACKNOWLEDGE THE LORD (24:30-32)

- Present the skit through verse 32.
- Encourage discussion of what it was that made them recognize Jesus (He let them know Him—v. 31). What is necessary for us to recognize when Jesus speaks to us through the Holy Spirit or through His Word?

STEP FIVE - REFLECT WITH OTHERS (24:33-35)

- Complete the skit through verse 35.
- Note how these two men were quick to tell others what they learned from Jesus.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using the Study Questions.
- Close with prayer that class members will be confident of the truth of the resurrection and quick to tell others.

Christianity 103: Meet Needs

Background Study Outline

1. **Going on a Mission Trip (Luke 9:1-9)**
2. **Feeding Hungry People (9:10-17)**
3. **Making a Meaningful Confession (9:18-36)**
4. **Helping a Sick Person (9:37-43a)**
5. **Understanding the Truth (9:43b-50)**

Lesson Material

1. **Notice Needs (Luke 9:10-12)**
2. **Take Action (9:13-17)**
3. **Trust God (9:37-43a)**

Bible Truth

We need to do what we can to meet the needs of people who are hungry and sick.

The Bible in Context (Luke 9:10)

No one knows the exact location of the town of Bethsaida. The name suggests it was a fishing village. John identifies the town of Bethsaida, as “Bethsaida of Galilee” (John 1:44; 12:21). It was the home of Phillip (John 12:21), and Andrew, and Peter (John 1:44). It was apparently near the north end of the Sea of Galilee and possibly a suburb of Capernaum. James and John lived there, also. Jesus did many of His miracles in Bethsaida and Capernaum. Capernaum is the city where Jesus stayed during much of His ministry.

Explore . . . (Luke 9:15-17) Feeding 5,000

The story of feeding 5,000 men (plus women and children, maybe 15,000 in all) is reported in all four Gospels (Matt. 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, and John 6:5-15). John identifies a boy with his lunch of five small barley loaves and two dried fish. The baskets used by the disciples were probably standard equipment on a fishing boat. These were large baskets for carrying things, including fish. It is interesting how they gathered up 12 baskets full, one for each of the disciples!

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Summarize the material between the lesson two weeks ago that ended with Luke 6:48 and the lesson for today. Note the significant events in those verses.
- Use a Bible map to locate Bethsaida on the northeast corner of Lake Galilee near Capernaum.
- The title and theme of today's lesson is about meeting needs of people.
- **Make the lesson come alive!** Put a small loaf of bread or dinner roll in a plastic bag and give one to each class member. Paste a label on the bag, "If Jesus can use bread like this to help thousands of people, what can He do with me?" Ask them to keep it with them all week and to think about the message on it.

STEP TWO – NOTICE NEEDS (LUKE 9:10-12)

- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss Bethsaida from "The Bible in Context," above, and other resources from the church library.
- Note the people needed rest and also food. They would be able to sleep on the ground using their cloaks to cover them, but even if they went into that small town there would not be enough food there for all of them. Capernaum and the adjacent villages probably did not have more than a few hundred people, and there may have been 15,000 on the hillside with Jesus!

STEP THREE – TAKE ACTION (9:13-17)

- Ask someone ahead of time to review the discussion of "Explore ... Feeding 5,000," above, and other resources.
- Discuss the additional information given in the other three accounts of this miracle. You may want to find a compilation of all four accounts into one story. Use resources in your church library or the Internet.

STEP FOUR – TRUST GOD (9:37-43A)

- Emphasize the importance of the man's faith in the healing of his son. Review Mark 9:14-29 and note how the disciples failed to heal this boy.
- Ask someone to sign verse 43a. Close with this as an emphasis on the lesson today: the many needs around us, our own weakness, and God's great power.

STEP FIVE - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using "What These Verses Tell Us."
- Close with prayer that class members will be aware of the needs of others, and try to help meet those needs.

Christianity 104: Be Good Neighbors

Background Study Outline

1. **Determine to Serve (Luke 9:51–10:42)**
2. **Pray as Jesus Taught (11:1-13)**
3. **Heed These Warnings (11:14-54)**
4. **Live by These Truths (12:1-34)**
5. **Ponder These Parables (12:35–13:21)**

Lesson Material

1. **Follow the Scripture (Luke 10:25-28)**
2. **Listen to Jesus (10:29-35)**
3. **Show Compassion (10:36-37)**

Bible Truth

We can be good neighbors by helping other people.

The Bible in Context (Luke 10:31)

The priests were the spiritual leaders of Israel. They were in charge of the sacrifices and offerings in the temple. On Mount Sinai, after the Israelites left Egypt, God told Moses to appoint Aaron and his four sons to serve as priests (Ex. 28:1,41). Aaron was from the tribe of Levi. The priests were supported by special offerings (Num. 18:20-24). They were also the scribes, or teachers, of the Law (Deut. 31:9-12). They interpreted the Law and became a very powerful influence in the nation.

Explore . . . Levites (Luke 10:32)

Moses and his brother, Aaron, were both Levites. The Levites were from the tribe of Levi but not related to Aaron. They assisted the priests but did not offer sacrifices (Num. 3:5-10; 18:1-7). They had political responsibilities also. In return, the other tribes gave a tithe to the Levites. They acted as musicians (1 Chron. 6:33-38; 15:16; Neh. 11:17, 22). They had no inheritance in Canaan (Num. 18: 23-24) but they had the tithe and a claim on the gifts of the people at feast times (Deut. 12:18-19; 14:27,29).

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Summarize the several incidents between the end of the previous lesson, Luke 9:43a, and 10:25 where this one begins.
- The title and theme of today's lesson is about being a good neighbor. The text includes the familiar parable of the Good Samaritan. Someone jokingly said it should be "the parable of the two bad Jews" because of the actions of the priest and Levite!
- Use a Bible map to locate Jerusalem, Jericho, and Samaria. Note Jesus has gone south to Judea from Galilee.
- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss priests from "The Bible in Context," and Levites from "Explore..." above, and other resources.

STEP TWO – FOLLOW THE SCRIPTURE (LUKE 10:25-28)

- Note how the lawyer addressed Jesus with respect as teacher or rabbi. Often this seems to be said as an insult, since they did not consider Jesus a true rabbi. Jesus did not study in their schools.
- Notice also how Jesus responded with a question, and a final question in verse 36.

STEP THREE – LISTEN TO JESUS (10:29-35)

- **Make the lesson come alive!** Consider having four members of the class perform a skit, but don't tell them ahead of time. Instead, ask your best reader to tell the story of the Good Samaritan. Then as he tells it the second time, let class members mime the parts of the man, the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan. On cardboard strips print the words PRIEST, LEVITE, and SAMARITAN, and put them on the actors as crowns.

STEP FOUR – SHOW COMPASSION (10:36-37)

- Encourage discussion of how our definition of *mercy* needs to be interpreted from God's mercy toward us, because He loved us while we were still in sin.
- Ask two persons to sign verses 36-37. One speaks for Jesus, the other for the lawyer. This will highlight the conversation.
- Note the lawyer did not say, "The Samaritan." Call attention to the fact that Jews and Samaritans did not like each other, so the idea of the Samaritan as the hero of the story truly must have irritated the lawyer.

STEP FIVE - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson by emphasizing the significant points of the parable.
- Close with prayer that class members will identify their "neighbor" this week and be a good neighbor to him.

Christianity 105: Manage Money Well

Background Study Outline

1. **When Time Matters**
(Luke 13:22-14:6)
2. **What Discipleship
Involves** (14:7-35)
3. **When to Rejoice**
(15:1-32)
4. **How to Handle
Money** (16:1-31)
5. **What Service Means**
(17:1-10)

Lesson Material

1. **What Do You Think
of Money?**
(Luke 16:13-15)
2. **How Do You Use Your
Money?** (16:19-21)
3. **Do You Know the
Consequences?**
(16:22-26)
4. **Do You Need to Re-
pent?** (16:27-31)

Bible Truth

God holds us responsible for having the right attitude about money and for using money in right ways.

The Bible in Context (Luke 16:14)

The word *Pharisee* means “separated people.” They separated themselves from others in order to study and teach the Scriptures. The Pharisees were the most important of the Jewish religious parties. They controlled the synagogues where the Law was taught. They were strong in their belief that the Law, as they interpreted it, must be obeyed. They opposed Jesus because He did not accept their interpretations of the Law. The Pharisees accused Jesus of blasphemy several times (Matt. 26:65; Mark 2:7; 14:64; Luke 22:66-67).

Explore . . . The Rich Man (Luke 16:19)

This verse is a photo of excessive display of wealth. Other translations suggest more about the rich man’s fine clothes and food. Fresh linen and clothes of purple dye indicate his wealth, as do his daily feasts inside his mansion with its own gate. Clothes of purple dye (made from a snail) were very expensive. Linen may refer to expensive undergarments. This man lived like a king with no concern for others. (See Prov. 31:22.)

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Summarize Luke 10:38–16:11 to fill in the background for today’s lesson.
- The title and theme of today’s lesson is “Managing Money Well.” The Bible does not oppose wealth, but opposes how a person misuses what he has.
- **Make the lesson come alive!** Create a display with an open Bible covered with paper money and coins. Encourage discussion of what happens when our money keeps us from God’s Word. Then add a few other objects—a picture of a TV, a car, a house, a family. These things also can keep us from God’s Word.

STEP TWO – WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MONEY? (LUKE 16:13-15)

- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss *Pharisees* from “The Bible in Context,” above, and other resources from the church library.
- Note what Jesus said before He told this story. That is the key to interpreting the story. Ask, “Who or what is your master?”
- Also note how Jesus spoke to the Pharisees about their attitude before He talked about riches and poverty.

STEP THREE – HOW DO YOU USE YOUR MONEY?(16:19-21)

- Ask someone ahead of time to review “Explore ... The Rich Man.”
- Encourage discussion of the implications of a selfish attitude toward wealth as compared to an unselfish attitude.

STEP FOUR – DO YOU KNOW THE CONSEQUENCES? (16:22-26)

- Try not to get bogged down in an interpretation of where Lazarus and the rich man went. That is not the point of this story. Be prepared for questions from the class by researching these verses in reference books in the church library.
- Note the parable suggests it is possible for someone in hell to see heaven. That may not be what Jesus meant, but if it was, this may be the worst part of hell!
- Encourage discussion of how Jesus established the role of each man in these verses and how those roles were reversed at death.

STEP FIVE - DO YOU NEED TO REPENT? (16:27-31)

- Encourage discussion of the fact the rich man was not there because of his wealth but because of his attitude and his rejection of God’s law of mercy, but it was too late for him to change his mind.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson, focusing on the theme of the lesson—how we manage our money, whether it is a lot or a little.
- Close with prayer that class members will seek God’s leadership in the use of their finances.

Christianity 106: Learn to Pray

Background Study Outline

- 1. What About the Kingdom? (Luke 17:11-37)**
- 2. What About Praying? (18:1-17)**
- 3. What About Eternal Life? (18:18-19:10)**
- 4. What About the Future? (19:11-27)**

Lesson Material

- 1. We Can Pray with Persistence (Luke 18:1-5)**
- 2. We Can Pray with Faith (18:6-8)**
- 3. We Cannot Pray with Arrogance (18:9-12)**
- 4. We Can Pray with Humility (18:13-14)**

Bible Truth

We need to pray in ways to show we understand God's love and mercy.

The Bible in Context (Luke 18:12)

The Bible has many examples of fasting. Going without food or drink is one way a person can focus on God, with nothing else to interrupt. Some examples of people who fasted are found in Ezra 8:23 and Joel 2:12. Fasting needs to be a private act, not public (Ex. 34:28, Matt. 6:17). The only requirement in the Law is in Leviticus 16:29-31. The purpose of fasting was to understand God's will, or to mourn, or seek forgiveness of sin (Joel 1:14; 2:12). Moses fasted while he was on the mountain receiving the Ten Commandments (Ex. 34:28).

Explore . . . Tax Collectors (Luke 18:14)

Tax collectors in the New Testament were Jews, but they worked for the Roman government. They were sometimes called *publicans*. The Jewish people hated them because they were not loyal to their own people. Also, they often collected more taxes than were required and became rich by taking extra money for their own use. They were thought of like prostitutes and other sinners who did not obey the Jewish law. Tax collectors were not permitted to worship in the synagogues or the main part of the temple.

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Summarize the incidents reported by Luke since the last lesson, ending with 16:31.
- The title and theme of today's lesson are about learning to pray, taken from two of Jesus' parables.
- **Make the lesson come alive!** On the board write the word *CONTRASTS*. Then make two columns below the word. On the left put the words *unfair judge* and on the right *God*. Do the same with *Pharisee* and *tax collector*. As you go through the lesson note the contrasts (Judge—not fair, no compassion; God—fair, full of compassion. Pharisee—proud; tax collector—humble; etc).

STEP TWO – WE CAN PRAY WITH PERSISTENCE (LUKE 18:1-5)

- Discuss the meaning and appropriate sign(s) for the word *persistence* (continuing to try).
- Encourage discussion of the status of women and especially widows during this time. They had few rights. They were fully dependent on others to help them.

STEP THREE – WE CAN PRAY WITH FAITH (18:6-8)

- Discuss how God is ready to answer our prayer when we go to Him in faith and obedience, and we repent of our sin. Emphasize how our attitude must be right when we pray.
- Emphasize how God wants to answer our prayers, but He cannot bless us when our sin stands in the way.

STEP FOUR – WE CANNOT PRAY WITH ARROGANCE (18:9-12)

- Discuss the meaning and appropriate sign(s) for *arrogance* (self-importance).
- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss fasting from "The Bible in Context," above, and other resources from the church library.
- Ask if anyone in the class has had experience with spiritual fasting (not just fasting for health reasons). Encourage them to read more about fasting in their Bibles.
- Note the Pharisee listed fasting as only one of his good characteristics, along with tithing, and a moral life. Ask why Jesus was critical of him (His proud attitude was wrong).

STEP FIVE - WE CAN PRAY WITH HUMILITY (18:13-14)

- Ask someone ahead of time to review "Explore ... Tax Collectors."
- Note that the tax collector did not try to tell God how good he was; he only asked for mercy. His attitude was right in the eyes of Jesus.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using "What This Lesson Tells Us."
- Close with prayer that class members will learn from Jesus how to pray effectively.

Unit 3

Lord: Trust Him

Luke 19:28–24:12,36-53

- The first unit focused on Jesus as the Son of God. The second unit looked at some of Jesus' teachings. The three lessons in this unit cover the crucifixion, resurrection, and final teachings of Jesus before His ascension. Help your class see how these lessons apply to them today. This is the heart of the gospel. We must believe in the resurrection or the rest of the gospel has no value.
- Prepare a poster with the three topics and dates below the title for this unit. These lessons emphasize the truth: Jesus is Lord. After the first topic "He Voluntarily Suffered," add the words, "Thank Him." After the second topic, "He Offers Salvation," add the words "Trust Him." And after the third topic, "He Lives Eternally," add the words "Obey Him."
- Each week, encourage discussion of what your class members have learned from this study. Review the themes of the lessons from the Table of Contents. Encourage them to read all the Background Study material to keep up with the events in the life of Jesus.
- Use the Bible Truth, What These Verses Tell Us, the Study Questions, and the last two sections of the pupil material to help your class remember the theme of each lesson. The Study Questions provide a quick review of the significant points of the lesson. Encourage class members to find the answers to these questions. If they have difficulty, take class time to help them.
- Encourage your class to read the Background Passage each week.
- Encourage your class members to participate in the class with assignments, discussion questions, and opportunities to sign a Bible verse or a verse from a hymn during the class. Find something for each one, including those who have very little experience or skill.

He Voluntarily Suffered: Be Grateful

Background Study Outline

- 1. Many Like a Parade (Luke 19:28-44)**
- 2. Everyone Faces Challenges (19:45-21:4)**
- 3. All Need More Teaching (21:5-38)**
- 4. Some Suffer Greatly (22:1-65)**

Lesson Material

- 1. Suffering in Anticipation (Luke 22:14-20)**
- 2. Suffering Disappointment (22:21-22,39-40,45-46)**
- 3. Suffering Great Stress (22:41-44)**
- 4. Suffering Humiliation (22:63-65)**

Bible Truth

We need to respond with thanksgiving because Jesus suffered voluntarily for us.

The Bible in Context (Luke 22:14)

The ritual of the Passover celebration followed the instructions for the first Passover with the sacrifice of a special Passover lamb. In the home, someone told the story of the first Passover each year (Ex. 12:24-27). Someone in the family read Psalms 113-118 as part of the celebration. Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples in what is now called the Last Supper (Luke 22:20). The lamb chosen for the Passover meal was to be perfect (Ex. 12:5). Isaiah identified the Messiah as the Lamb of God (Isa. 53:7). John referred to Jesus as the Lamb several times in the book of Revelation.

Explore . . . The Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39)

The Mount of Olives was important in the life of the Israelites. Jerusalem was on the western slope. Its peak was 200 feet higher than the city. It got its name because there were many olive groves on the mountain. This mountain served as a military base to look out for attacking armies. Jesus often went to this mountain to pray (Luke 22:39-46). The Garden of Gethsemane is on the Mount of Olives. This is where Jesus prayed on the night He was betrayed (Matt. 24:3; John 8:1). Jesus also ascended from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:6-11).

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Summarize the incidents involved in the verses since the end of last week's lesson (Luke 18:14).
- The title and theme of today's lesson are about how Jesus voluntarily suffered and our need to be thankful for Him.

STEP TWO – SUFFERING IN ANTICIPATION (LUKE 22:14-20)

- Summarize verses 7-13 to give the background for this section.
- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss the Passover from "The Bible in Context," above, and other resources from the church library.
- Ask if class members have ever shared in a *Seder* (Passover meal) celebration. Discuss how this is done. Use reference books from the church library if this is unfamiliar.
- Note how our Lord's Supper service is patterned after the events of the Last Supper. Ask someone to sign 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

STEP THREE – SUFFERING DISAPPOINTMENT (22:21-22,39-40,45-46)

- Ask someone ahead of time to review "Explore ... The Mount of Olives," above, and other resources.
- **Make the lesson come alive!** Find pictures of the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane from Bible reference books in your church library. Use these to help the class understand why Jesus chose this place as a special place of prayer. Encourage discussions of places class members find it easier to pray (In a small chapel, in the woods, special room in their house).

STEP FOUR – SUFFERING GREAT STRESS (22:41-44)

- Ask someone to sign verses 41-45. Encourage discussion of the words showing how Jesus suffered (pain, sweating blood).
- Encourage discussion of what events can cause us to pray with great emotion (family illness, concern for children, lost friend or family member).

STEP FIVE - SUFFERING HUMILIATION (22:63-65)

- Summarize verses 47-62. Note how Peter's denial truly hurt Jesus more than the physical abuse from the soldiers.
- This mistreatment was not appropriate or necessary. The soldiers showed their ignorance and lack of respect for others.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson using "What These Verses Tell Us."
- Close with prayer that class members will think about how Jesus suffered and thank Him for His sacrifice.

He Offers Salvation: Believe

Background Study Outline

- 1. Declaring Victory
(Luke 22:66-67)**
- 2. Enduring Injustice
(23:1-31)**
- 3. Displaying Trust
(23:32-49)**

Lesson Material

- 1. Believe: He Forgave
(Luke 23:32-34)**
- 2. Believe: He Obeyed
(23:35-39)**
- 3. Believe: He Saved
(23:40-43)**
- 4. Believe: He Was Vindicated (23:44-49)**

Bible Truth

We can receive salvation because Jesus died to save people who believe in Him.

The Bible in Context (Luke 23:32)

Calvary, or Golgotha or the Skull is the name for the place where Jesus was crucified. The exact location is not known. It was a small hill just outside the western walls of ancient Jerusalem. The name *Golgotha* is the Greek form of the Aramaic word meaning “skull” (Matt. 27:33; Mark 15:22). Our English word *Calvary* is from a Latin word with the same meaning. It seems to be a hill or a rock with the shape of a skull.

Explore . . . Casting Lots (Luke 23:34)

Casting lots is mentioned 70 times in the Old Testament and 7 times in the New Testament, but little is known about the actual lots themselves. They may have been sticks of various lengths, flat stones like coins, or some kind of dice. This practice was used often in connection with the division of the land under Joshua (Josh. 14–21). The sailors on Jonah’s ship cast lots to determine who had brought God’s wrath upon their ship (Jonah 1:7). Casting lots eventually became a type of gambling (Luke 23:34; Matt. 27:35).

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Summarize the material between this lesson and last week's lesson (22:66–23 31).
- **Make the lesson come alive!** Note from verse 27 a large crowd followed Jesus to the cross. Ask class members to locate names of people from today's lesson (vv. 32–49). List these on the board. Have your own list ready for your reference. This emphasizes the crucifixion was a very public event. Then ask class members to decide which of these were believers and which ones were not. The theme of today's lesson is: believe!

STEP TWO – BELIEVE: HE FORGAVE (LUKE 23:32-34)

- Ask someone to discuss Calvary from "The Bible in Context," above, and other resources from the church library.
- Ask someone else to review the discussion of casting lots from "Explore ...," above, and other resources.
- Encourage discussion of who is meant by *them* when Jesus said "forgive them" (Probably everyone involved in the crucifixion).

STEP THREE – BELIEVE: HE OBEYED (23:35-39)

- Encourage discussion of what Jesus faced as a man (pain, humiliation, rejection) and as the Son of God (the sin of all the world).

STEP FOUR – BELIEVE: HE SAVED (23:40-43)

- Emphasize while Jesus was dying for the whole world, He took time for one lost person who repented and asked for salvation. He cares for each person.
- Only two other places in the New Testament uses the term *paradise* (2 Cor. 12:4 and Rev. 2:7). The meaning is "the place of righteous dead" or "heaven."

STEP FIVE - BELIEVE: HE WAS VINDICATED (23:44-49)

- Ask someone to sign verses 44–46. Encourage discussion of how the disciples and faithful women felt at this moment as they stood and watched (v. 49). Hold up a picture of Jesus on the cross and ask the class to silently look and see Jesus.
- Encourage discussion of how important it is to believe in the resurrection. Without it, the whole story of Jesus has no meaning.

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson by asking class members to name things they remember about the crucifixion. List these on the board.
- Close with prayer that class members will thank God for their salvation and tell others about their Savior.

He Lives Eternally: Carry On

Background Study Outline

1. Do You Remember?
(Luke 23:50–24:8)
2. Do You Believe?
(24:9–12, 36–43)
3. Do You Understand?
(24:44–46)
4. Do You Follow
Through? (24:47–53)

Lesson Material

1. Do You Remember?
(Luke 24:1–8)
2. Do You Believe?
(24: 36–40)
3. Do You Understand?
(24:44–46)
4. Do You Follow
Through? (24:47–53)

Bible Truth

God raised Jesus from the dead and He lives forever and calls for us to carry on His work.

The Bible in Context (Luke 24:1)

Who were the women who went to the tomb? They are not named by Luke in verse 1, but they are listed in verse 10 and in the other Gospels. They were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James. Matthew lists Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary (Matt. 28:1). Mark lists Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome (Mark 16:1). John lists only Mary Magdalene (John 20:1). John also wrote about Mary Magdalene talking with Jesus at the tomb (John 20:14–18). Joanna is identified in Luke 8:3 as the wife of the manager of Herod's household. Salome was possibly the mother of James and John (Mark 16:1; Matt. 27:56; John 19:25).

Explore . . . The Ascension (Luke 24:51)

Luke does not tell when the ascension took place. Most Bible scholars place the ascension 40 days after the resurrection based on Acts 1:3. Peter wrote how Jesus ascended to heaven and is at God's right side (1 Pet. 3:21–22). Paul wrote about Jesus ascending higher than all the heavens (Eph. 4:7–13). To Timothy, Paul said Jesus was taken up in glory (1 Tim. 3:16). The image of Jesus rising bodily into the heavens reflects the ancient view that heaven was above the earth.

STEP ONE – OVERVIEW

- Use a Bible map to show the relationship between Bethany, Emmaus, Jerusalem, and Galilee.
- Make the lesson come alive!** Use a Bible map to show where Jesus went during the 40 days after the resurrection. The tomb was just outside Jerusalem. On Easter Sunday we read about Jesus meeting with the men on the road to Emmaus. The upper room where He met with His disciples was in Jerusalem. Luke wrote how Jesus went into heaven from a place near Bethany. John wrote about Jesus meeting with His disciples near the Sea of Galilee, also called Lake Tiberias (John 21:1). This was 100 miles—at least 4 days by walking—north of Jerusalem. Why? Perhaps because Nazareth and Capernaum were where Jesus’ family lived. Then, Jesus and His disciples went back to Bethany, a few miles from Jerusalem.

STEP TWO – DO YOU REMEMBER? (LUKE 24:1-8)

- Ask someone ahead of time to discuss the women at the tomb from “The Bible in Context,” above, and other resources from the church library.
- Note how each of the four Gospels tells the story in a different way, sometimes giving different bits of information from the others. They were speaking from memory, as good witnesses. They do not contradict the truth, however. None of them say the women they named were the only ones.

STEP THREE – DO YOU BELIEVE? (24:36-40)

- Encourage discussion of how difficult it was for the disciples to understand and believe. Ask, “Was their doubt a sin?” (Not if they were sincerely seeking the truth).

STEP FOUR – DO YOU UNDERSTAND? (24:44-46)

- Emphasize how the Holy Spirit will open our minds if we ask in prayer—with faith.

STEP FIVE - DO YOU FOLLOW THROUGH? (24:47-53)

- Ask someone ahead of time to review the discussion of the ascension from “Explore...” above and other resources.
- Emphasize verses 48-49. Ask, “What did Jesus promise to send? (Holy Spirit).”

STEP SIX - CONCLUSION

- Review the lesson by asking class members what they feel was most helpful for them in this study from Luke’s Gospel.
- Introduce Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, to start next week.
- Close with prayer that class members will continue faithfully to follow Jesus.