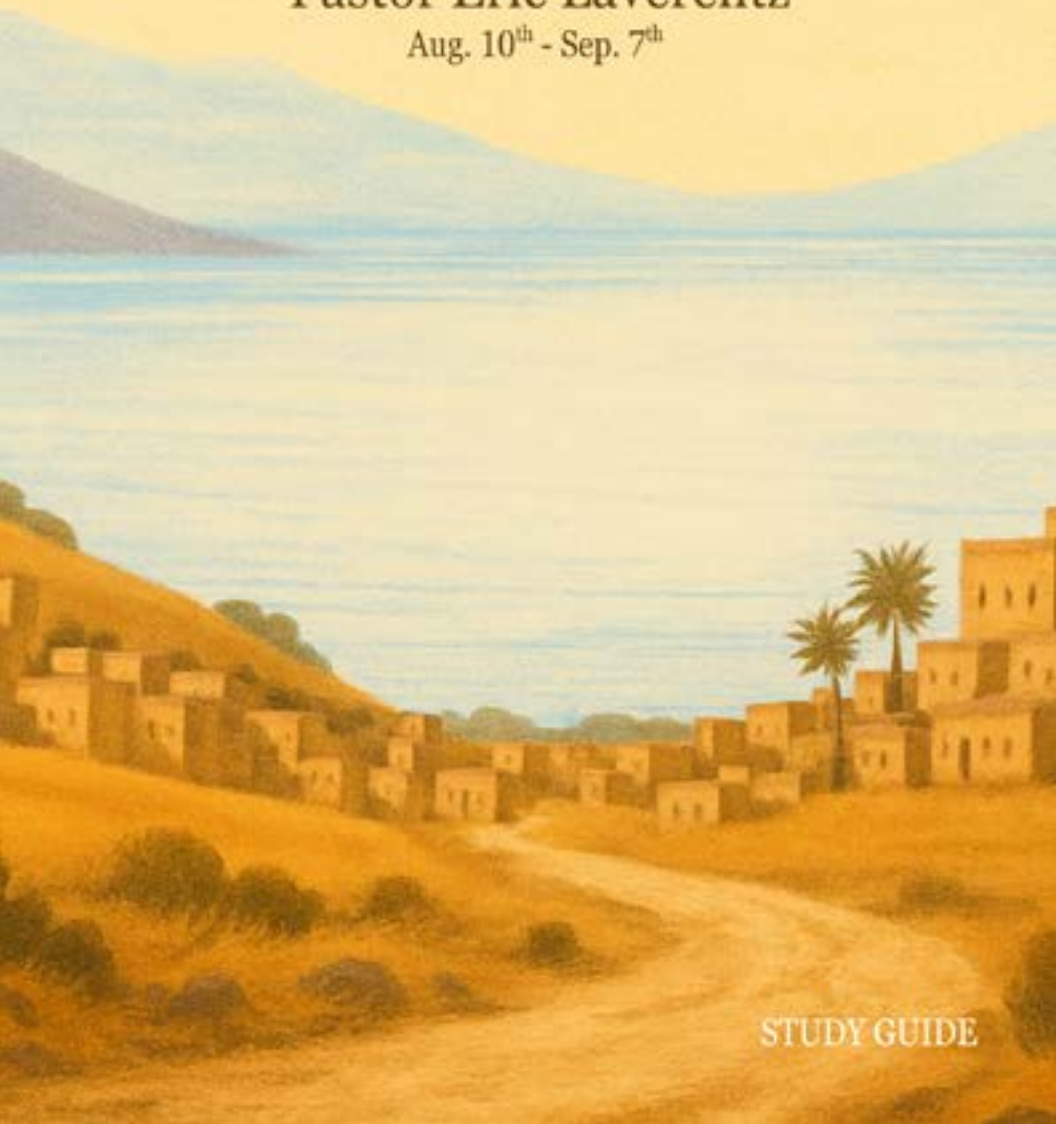


Jesus' Town

Sermon Series by
Pastor Eric Laverentz

Aug. 10th - Sep. 7th



STUDY GUIDE

“Jesus’ Town”

Sermon Series by Pastor Eric Laverentz

On the banks of the Sea of Galilee lies the city that became Jesus’ hometown and base of operations during the three years of His earthly ministry: Capernaum. How Jesus lived, ministered, taught, related to others, and rested there gives us valuable insight into how to live as His disciples. At Capernaum, Jesus modeled the patterns and practices of the “normal” Christian life. We also see the kinds of people we may encounter when we follow Him—both friends and foes.

Join Pastor Eric Laverentz as we take a deep dive into the city known as Jesus’ town and discover what a life of following Him is truly meant to look like.

August 10 From Nazareth to Nahum’s Town - Luke 4:29-37

August 17 The Family of God - Luke 4:38-44

August 24 When Jesus Moves In - Mark 2:1-11

August 31 A Typical Day in Jesus’ Town - Matthew 9:1,18-31

September 7 Scattering the Gathered - John 6:52-66



Share Your Story

Invest In Others

Read the Word

Pray Faithfully

Worship Passionately

Serve Community

Give Generously



NEW LIFE,
through **JESUS,**
for **EDMOND**
and the **WORLD.**

Lesson 1:

From Nazareth to Nahum's Town

And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. 30 But passing through their midst, he went away. And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, 32 and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority. 33 And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, 34 "Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God." 35 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. 36 And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!" 37 And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

Luke 4:29-37

1. Share or reminisce about a time when what seemed like a good plan did not turn out as well as you expected. How did you respond? Did God do something unexpected or extraordinary instead? What did He do?

2. Why would Jesus believe Nazareth would have been a good place to begin His ministry? (Luke 4:16-17) What was the initial response to Jesus' teaching in the synagogue? (Luke 4:20-22) Where did everything begin to turn for Jesus? (Luke 4:23-28) What point was Jesus making and why would the Jewish-focused people of Nazareth have been upset by what Jesus had to say? How can Christians be very focused on our own people even today? What does the Bible teach about God's plan for all people? (Genesis 12:3, Revelation 7:9-10, Acts 2:38-39)

3. How did Jesus respond when the people tried to throw Him off the cliff? (Luke 4:30) Are you surprised that some people from Nazareth, including Jesus' own family, didn't try to defend Him from the mob? Why or why not? Was this the last time Jesus would be rejected by His own people? (John 19:14-16) How was rejection a theme for Jesus' life? (John 1:11) Have you rejected or received Jesus? Why is this such an important question? (John 1:12-13)

4. What was the reaction to Jesus' teaching at Capernaum? (Luke 4:32) Why did this positive reaction to His teaching encourage Jesus to stay at Capernaum? How did this provide a model for His ministry and instruction for the 72 He sent out? (Luke 10:8-12) Why do you think the people at Capernaum were more

receptive to Jesus' teaching? What reason did they give at Capernaum? (Luke 4:36-37)

5. Who else greeted Jesus at Capernaum? (Luke 4:33-34) Are you surprised that this demon knew who Jesus is? Why or why not? What does this tell us about the demonic? Are they ignorant or rebellious? How else can we know that they are rebellious? (Isaiah 14:12-15) What does Jesus command over this demon demonstrate? Why do you think Jesus commanded the demon to be silent about His identity?

Next Steps:

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you a place or someone to share the Gospel where you risk being rejected. Share with your small group what happened and any doors the Lord might have opened.



Reconstruction of the First Century Synagogue in Capernaum

Lesson 2: The Family of God

And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. 39 And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them. Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. 41 And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ. 42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, 43 but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

Luke 4:38-44

1. How do you think of your home? Is it a place of retreat and relaxation? A sanctuary? A place to raise your family? Have you ever welcomed strangers into your home or used your home for ministry? What happened?

2. What does it mean that Jesus entered Simon's house? (Luke 4:38) Does it mean that Jesus just walked into Simon's home or does it mean something more? (Mark 2:1-2) Why do you think Jesus became a part of Simon Peter's household? (Mark 3:20-21) Why was it important for Jesus to heal Simon Peter's mother-in-law? (Luke 4:38-39) What did this simple act establish for Jesus in their household? How do we know her healing was complete? Why was it important that she served? What pattern does that establish?

3. What happened immediately after Simon's mother-in-law was healed? (Luke 4:39) What kind of people began to stream into their home? Were these respectable people? Would they have been welcome anywhere else in Jesus' society? (Leviticus 13:1-3, 21:16-21) Why do you think Jesus welcomed them? (Acts 10:15) How did Jesus make them clean? (1 John 1:9) Are we any different? Why was it important that people began coming after sundown? (Leviticus 23:32)

4. Why do you think Jesus went to a desolate place the next day? What was He trying to accomplish? (John 5:19-20) What does this suggest about Jesus' power and approach to ministry? (Mark 1:9-11, Luke 4:14-15) If it was important for Jesus to be in communication and relationship with the Father, how important is it for us? What role does time alone with God play in your life?

5. Why do you think Jesus declared He must preach elsewhere? (Luke 4:42-43) What was driving Him? (Mark 1:14-15) How does this approach of being on the move square with Jesus' command to His disciples? (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8) How much are you on the move to share the Gospel?

Next Steps:

Invite someone into your home for a meal and fellowship who you would not normally invite. They may be someone who isn't Christian or perhaps someone in need. They might be hurting or ailing in some way. Serve them as you believe Jesus would. Seek opportunities to build a relationship with them and allow them to serve you as Simon's mother-in-law served.



Capernaum Waterfront of Simon and Andrew's Home

Lesson 3: When Jesus Moves In

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. 3 And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. 4 And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. 5 And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— 11 "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." 12 And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Mark 2:1-12

1. Have you ever experienced someone going the extra mile for you? What did they do? What have you done for others to bring them to Jesus? What is the most extreme thing you have done or someone has done for you to show you Jesus?

2. What do you think it means to say Jesus was "at home?" (Mark 2:1) Why would this have been a surprising thing for Jesus? What happened to His old home? (Luke 4:29-30) What did Jesus proclaim about His lack of a home? (Matthew 8:20) Why does this proclamation only affirm His status living in Peter and Andrew's home? What is home to you? Do you think this is what made this home for Jesus? Why or why not?

3. Why do you think this home was so full? What was Jesus doing there? (Mark 2:2, Mark 1:32-34) Why do you think hearing the Word has the power to transform and heal? (Psalm 30:2-3) Have you ever experienced the Lord's healing? What did He do? Why do you think the Lord uses healing in the way He does as a proclamation of His Kingdom? What do we know about the Kingdom? (Revelation 21:1-4)

4. What did these men do for their friend? (Mark 2:3-4) What do you think was going through the mind of Peter and Andrew's family when they saw the roof of their house being dug through? What would be going through your mind? What motivated Jesus to heal their friend? (Mark 2:4) Why do you believe the faith of others can have redemptive effects for us? (James 5:16) Do you consider this grace? Why or why not?

5. What did the Pharisees and Scribes grumble about? (Mark 2:5-6) How did this demonstrate that they fundamentally misunderstood Jesus? (John 10:30-38) How did Jesus show the Pharisees that He had the power to forgive sin? (Mark 2:8-11) How did the crowd at the house react to this miracle? (Mark 2:12)

Next Steps:

Commit to praying daily for someone who needs Jesus' healing. You can let them know or you can keep it to yourself. But if you let them know ask how you can specifically pray for them and then follow up on those prayers.



Oikos: The Extended Family Home of Sioan and Andrew

Lesson 4: A Typical Day in Jesus' Town

And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city...While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." 19 And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples. 20 And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, 21 for she said to herself, "If I only touch his garment, I will be made well." 22 Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well. 23 And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, 24 he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. 25 But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. 26 And the report of this went through all that district. 27 And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." 28 When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." 29 Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." 30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one knows about it." 31 But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

Matthew 9:1,18-31

1. What's your typical day like? What do you think Jesus' typical day was like? Are they different or similar? What makes them different? What habits of Jesus could you adopt to make your day more like His?

2. What do you think it means by saying "Jesus came into his own city?" (Matthew 9:1) What city is this referring to? Where had Jesus been? (Matthew 8:28-34) What disciple did Jesus call this day? (Matthew 9:9) How did the author of this Gospel know all the details of this story and Jesus' day in Capernaum? Does knowing the author of the Gospel's backstory increase your appreciation for his work? Why or why not? Why is the human author important but not decisive? (1 Peter 1:21)

3. What did the ruler want from Jesus? (Matthew 9:18) Who was this ruler and why was he important? (Mark 5:22-23) What does this tell you about Jesus' relationship with the Capernaum synagogue and His ministry in the town? How is this different than the Nazareth synagogue? How did Jesus respond? (Matthew 9:19)

4. Who delayed Jesus' trip to Jairus' home and what was her illness? (Matthew 9:20) How had she sought to address her illness before? (Mark 5:25-26) Why do you think she pursued Jesus so desperately? Who else do we see in Scripture who had been let down by other kinds of cures? (John 5:1-8) What caused Jesus to heal her? (Matthew 9:22) How is this different than the man near the pool of Bethesda?

5. What was the result of Jesus healing Jairus' daughter? (Matthew 9:26) Is this report what made the blind men follow Him? Why or why not? Overall, what is the picture you see of Jesus' day in Capernaum? What was the Holy Spirit doing?

Next Steps:

Try for a week beginning your day in 30 minutes of prayer. Leave your phone behind or turn off notifications. Bring your Bible and let Scripture guide you. Ask the Lord to help you notice people today and be aware of the opportunities the Holy Spirit lays before you. Share with your small group what you saw God do.



Lesson 5: Scattering the Gathered

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. 55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. 56 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." 59 Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum. 60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." 66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

John 6:52-66

1. What effect does a controversial truth usually have upon people? Does your fear ever prevent you from speaking the truth? Why or why not? Have you ever rejected someone for saying something harsh that you later found out was true? What happened? What truth about Jesus do you find most challenging to embrace or accept?

2. Where does this event happen? (John 6:22-25) What happened immediately before that caused Jesus to make these strong assertions about His identity? (John 6:10-15) What was Jesus' first response to the crowd's reaction to His miracle? (John 6:15) Do you think Jesus was tempted to ride the wave of enthusiasm and proclaim Himself King of the Jews? (Hebrews 2:17-18) Where did He face this temptation before? (Luke 4:5-9) Why did Jesus not take up this opportunity? (Matthew 20:25-28)

3. How did Jesus go from the site of the feeding to Capernaum? (John 6:16-21) What does this prove about Him? Was Kingship of Israel too large or too small a position for Him? Do you ever underestimate or make Jesus too small? How do you do that? How should you see Him instead? (Colossians 1:15-20)

4. What did Jesus say that provoked some of the Jews following Him? (John 6:35-40) What was Jesus trying to do here? Who and what was He training the hearts of His followers to seek? (Matthew 6:24, Matthew 6:33) To what did Jesus compare 'eating His flesh'? (John 6:47-51) What made this an important comparison, especially given the grumbling of some? (Exodus 16:6-8)

5. Why was Jesus' teaching about eating His flesh and drinking His blood so challenging? (John 6:60-61) How did some respond to Jesus' teaching? (John 6:66) Why did this not seem to bother Jesus? (John 6:64-65) Does it ever bother you to feel rejected for speaking truth? Should it? Why or why not?

Next Steps:

Ask the Holy Spirit to share with you a difficult truth. Use your Bible to help interpret what the Spirit is telling you. Be mindful of how you receive it. Share it with someone else to see how they respond and be aware of any judgment or pressure you feel. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you courage to be rejected by the world.



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