



The Gospel of Luke

A 71-Week Study of the Life of Christ

Luke 1:1 – 24:53

Curriculum Guide

The Goal

Park Community Church's small groups are built upon three pillars and rhythms: gather, transformation, and impact. Using these three fundamental pillars, we anticipate the Holy Spirit to mold everyone in our small groups into the likeness of Christ as we push back the darkness in our city. Much of this work comes from knowing God personally, correctly, and intimately. Our hope is that the small group curriculum will facilitate a deeper understanding of God through his revealed Word in a way that transforms our lives together and moves us into Christ-like action.

Liturgical Prayer (1 min)

We pray that every small group will develop rich spiritual growth that informs rich spiritual living. Therefore, we want to begin each week by joining in the prayers of faithful Christians who have gone before us. This section is a liturgical-style prayer that has ministered to generations of faithful Christians yet remains relevant and powerful for us today. These prayers reach back in time and unite us to a deep, rich history of men and women calling out to God. Take a moment here to slow down with your small group and lean into these beautiful prayers, remembering God's promise to reveal himself to us through the Holy Spirit.

Consider the Context (5 mins)

Context is key when it comes to interpreting the Bible. Each week, we hope that you will take a few minutes to remind one another of where you are at in your journey through the gospel of Luke. During this time, you'll ask questions like, "What events immediately preceded the passage we're studying today? Are there any open questions we want to address from the previous week? How does the cultural context impact what this text means? Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?" Don't feel bound to the suggested questions, but feel free to let the conversation flow naturally.

Observe the Text (20 mins)

As a group, you will observe the text and look for the details. Considering the sermon preached the previous Sunday and let the following questions guide you: What is this text about? Are there any repeated words or phrases? Who is involved in this part of the story, and what do we learn about them from this text? Are there any questions you have from reading the text? Is there anything that particularly stands out to you from this text? What do you learn about God from this text? What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?

Stir Up the Heart (15 mins)

This section will have two questions aimed at stirring the hearts of your group. We encourage you to consider being vulnerable with one another by sharing personal challenges, celebrations, growth, or accountability between group members.

Practice Obedience (15 mins)

James 2:14-26 warns us that faith without works is dead. In other words, right belief without right living is meaningless. For this reason, we hope each week ends with accessible, practical steps of obedience to the Word of God. Begin by discussing particular areas of life where the lesson from this study might apply. Perhaps there is a new way of thinking, a new heart posture, a conviction of how to behave differently tomorrow, a conviction of sin that needs to be repented of, an area in the life of your family that needs greater attention, in the life of your Church that needs more attention, or an area where we are stretched to understand more of the gospel.

Spend Time in Prayer

Prayer is the heartbeat of the Christian faith. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 goes so far as to say that praying without ceasing is an aspect of the will of God for our lives. It is crucial that prayer not be a convenient way to close small groups but instead is essential to your ministry as a small group. As you participate in small group, feel free to look for ways to weave prayer into other areas while you're together.

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Week One

Introduction

Luke 1:1-4

Liturgical Prayer

Almighty God, and most merciful Father, we humbly submit ourselves, and fall down before your Majesty, asking you from the bottom of our hearts, that this seed of your Word now sown among us, may take such deep root, that neither the burning heat of persecution cause it to wither nor the thorny cares of this life choke it. But that as seed sown in good ground, it may bring forth thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold, as your heavenly wisdom has appointed. Amen.

Middleburg Liturgy, 1586

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart



1. Luke begins his Gospel by stressing the “certainty” of the things Theophilus has been taught (v. 4).

- a. In a world full of uncertainty and shifting truths, where in your walk with Christ have you personally longed for deeper assurance?
- b. How has God met, or how do you hope He will meet, you in those longings?

2. Luke carefully gathered eyewitness accounts so that Theophilus could encounter Jesus with confidence.

- a. Think back on your own encounter with Jesus. Who were the “eyewitnesses” in your life whose faith helped you see Jesus more clearly?
- b. How has their testimony shaped your story of faith?

Practice Obedience

1. Just as Luke intentionally sought out truth and wrote it down.

- a. how might you practice being more intentional in remembering and recording God’s work in your life (journaling, prayer, or conversations with others) so that you can grow in confidence in your faith and help others do the same?

2. Theophilus was discipled not only through teaching but also through Luke’s careful account of Jesus’ life.

- a. Who in your life might benefit from you taking time to share with them the story of Jesus, or even your own testimony of what He has done?
- b. What’s one practical way you can do that this week?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Two

John's Birth Foretold

Luke 1:5-25

Liturgical Prayer

O God, your Word is more precious than fine gold, and sweeter than purest honey. As we turn to your Scripture, send your Holy Spirit to infuse your Word with truth and grace — so that the good news of your love would shine before our eyes and delight our senses so that we cannot help but respond with wonder, faith and trust. Amen

Consider the Context

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Stir Up the Heart

1. Modern culture has become so rationalistic in its worldview that it often fails to make any space for the reality of a spiritual realm. The Bible, on the other hand, as this passage clearly shows, is full of spiritual realities unseen to the human eye.
 - a. Do you believe you have ever had an encounter with an angel of God?



- b. How should this reality have an impact on your walk with God?

2. Zechariah was punished for doubting the message of the angels (v. 18). We live in an age of constant skepticism, where the clear and straightforward reading of Scripture is called into question at nearly every turn.

- a. Are there parts of the Bible you have difficulty believing or are skeptical of?
- b. If any areas of concern are brought up, take time right then and there to pray for a spiritual breakthrough and for God to respond with a deepening of faith.

Practice Obedience

1. In verses 24-25, after Elizabeth discovers the miracle of her pregnancy, she immediately withdraws for five months and spends time in prayer. She praises God for blessing her with a son in her old age. We often fail to create lengthier space in our busy schedules to be alone with God and to thank him for his goodness.

- a. Is there time in your schedule (or something you could sacrifice in your schedule) to spend more time meditating with God?

2. John's mission to Israel is stated in verse 17, "and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared." Like John, we also have a mission to point the people in our lives to their Savior.

- a. Who are two people in your life right now who are unbelievers?
- b. What can you do in the next two weeks to intentionally take a proactive step in reaching them with the Gospel?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Three

Jesus' Birth Foretold

Luke 1:26-38

Liturgical Prayer

Holy Spirit, pour out upon us
wisdom and understanding
that, being taught by you in Holy Scripture,
our hearts and minds may be opened to receive
all that leads to life and holiness.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Ancient Collect

Consider the Context

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Observe the Passage

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5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. In verse 29, Mary was "troubled" or perplexed over the angelic greeting. The text says she tried to "discern" or understand the message's meaning. Discerning what God asks you to do in any given circumstance can often be perplexing.

- a. Share a time when God revealed the wisdom you needed to move forward with a difficult decision or circumstance.
- b. How did he reveal it to you?

2. Mary was caught up in God's miraculous story as a young woman. She was given an assignment that she must have felt unequipped and unprepared for. Yet, she responded in praise, humility, and gratefulness.

- a. Share a time when God led you to do something you felt unequipped and unprepared for.
- b. What was that experience like, and what did God teach you through it?

Practice Obedience

1. Mary's response to the angel Gabriel was, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (v. 38). She surrendered her plans in obedience to God and his plan.

- a. Have you ever had to surrender your plans in order to be obedient to God?
- b. What spiritual truths or practices did you take away from that experience that you hope to be able to build upon in future similar situations?

2. Verse 37 reads, "For nothing will be impossible with God." To know the God of the Bible and to walk with the God of the Bible is to be a living testimony of this reality.

- a. What is one area of your life, or one relationship, that you have begun to grow weary in praying for a miracle?

- b. Share with your group – resolve today not to grow weary as you pray fervently to the God of miracles for his merciful response.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Four

Mary's Song

Luke 1:39-56

Liturgical Prayer

Lord, thou hast given us thy Word for a light to shine upon our path;
grant us so to meditate on that Word, and to follow its teaching,
that we may find in it the light that shines more and more until the perfect day;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Jerome, 342-420 AD

Consider the Context

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Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. After receiving the angel's news about her son Jesus, Mary immediately shares the good news with her cousin, Elizabeth. We all need one or two people in our lives who

are our closest confidants, whom we can trust with our most important thoughts, concerns, and news.

- a. Who do you go to first when you have good news to share? Why them?

2. One overall theme of Mary's prayer is that God "scatters the proud" (51) and "exalts the humble" (2). Like what Mary describes, biblical humility is totally counter-cultural and requires a true dependence on God.

- a. Who in your life models biblical humility best, and what qualities/habits do they have that you would like to adopt?

Practice Obedience

1. In Mary's short song, she confesses "He has" seven times. Mary's trust in the Lord is built upon her knowledge and reflection of God's faithfulness in the past. Often, we can forget about the many things we have prayed for in the past and move on to the next request we have for God.

- a. Take a moment to reflect on an answered prayer God has given you and thank him for his steadfast faithfulness.

2. In the previous passage, Mary is obedient to God despite the unknowns and very real fears of her circumstances (having a child out of wedlock in that culture was punishable by death). This passage shows how Mary's response is to praise God amid those circumstances. We often encounter circumstances we did not foresee and need to navigate without notice.

- a. How can you/do you celebrate the goodness and faithfulness of God in your current circumstances as Mary did?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Five

The Birth of John the Baptist

Luke 1:57-80

Liturgical Prayer

Show me your ways, O LORD,

teach me your paths;

guide me in your truth and teach me,

for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. Amen

Psalm 25:4-5

Consider the Context

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Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
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4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. While this may seem like a strange request today, Zechariah displayed extreme humility in submitting to the Lord's decision to name his son John. Verse 64 shows us that immediately after Zechariah showed his faithfulness by writing John's name on a tablet,



"his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God." While none of us hold the office of a prophet like Zechariah, many of us will experience moments where the Holy Spirit powerfully speaks through us in order to encourage or equip others in some unique way.

- a. Have you ever experienced this?
- b. How do you know what you shared or received was from the Lord?

1. Elizabeth and Zechariah's faithfulness to God in naming their son "John" instead of "Zechariah" was extremely counter-cultural. In the first century, your name was always tied to your family, as your name defined your identity. Thus, the relatives questioned their decision incessantly (v. 61-62), and news of their decision even spread throughout Judea (v. 65). Faithfulness to God often calls us to live counter-culturally even when culture's way isn't intrinsically "bad" (ex. naming your son Zechariah).

- a. In your faith, how have you had to act/live differently than the culture around you?
- b. How did the non-Christians in your life respond?

Practice Obedience

1. At the very end of Zechariah's prophecy, he writes that the Messiah will "... guide our feet into the way of peace" (v. 79). The way of peace is the way of Christ. It is the way that turns the other cheek, that goes the extra mile that prays for our enemies.
 - a. Is there any relationship in your life right now where you are failing to live up to this supernatural way of peace? Remember, we cannot control how others respond, but we can offer our response to the Lord prayerfully (Romans 12:18).
 - b. What actions can you take to apply the gospel to that situation?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Six

The Birth of Jesus

Luke 2:1-40

Liturgical Prayer

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Amen.

Colossians 3:12-15

Consider the Context

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Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
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5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart



1. Simeon, moved by the Spirit, took Jesus in his arms and declared he had finally seen God's salvation (v. 28–30). His waiting ended in worship.
 - a. Can you recall a season where God met you after a long period of waiting?
 - b. How did that deepen your faith or shape your view of God's faithfulness?

2. Jesus entered the world not in a palace, but in a manger, fragile, humble, and unnoticed by most.
 - a. What does the humility of Christ's birth stir in you about God's heart for you personally?
 - b. How does it reshape the way you see weakness in your own life?

Practice Obedience

1. The shepherds not only heard the good news but went "with haste" to see Jesus (v. 16) and then made Him known to others (v. 17).
 - a. Where might God be calling you to move from simply hearing about Him to actively sharing Him with others this week?

2. Mary "treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart" (v. 19).
 - a. In the busyness of life, what intentional practices could you put in place to pause, reflect, and treasure God's work in your life, rather than rushing past it?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Seven

Jesus in the Temple

Luke 2:41-52

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, you are our Father, and we are wayward children;

you are our Creator, we are the work of your hands;

you are our Shepherd, we are your flock;

you are our Redeemer, we are the people you bought back;

you are our God, we belong to you.

Therefore, do not be angry against us, to correct us in your wrath.

Recall not our iniquity, to punish it, but chastise us gently in your kindness.

Your anger is inflamed because of our demerits.

But please remember that we do call upon your name and that we bear your mark and badge.

Undertake rather the work you have begun in us by your grace,

so that the whole world may recognize that you are our God and Savior. Amen.

John Calvin

Consider the Context

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3. What do you learn about God from this text?
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5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. The fear of a missing child, followed abruptly by Jesus' simple response of "being in his Father's house," caused Mary to worship God as she "treasured up all these things in her heart." There are times in the Christian life when God leaves an overwhelming impression on our souls, the kind of thing that we keep in our minds and recall as needed in the future.
 - a. Have you had any experiences that have caused you to "treasure in your heart?"

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2. Almost all we know about the first 30 years of Jesus' life is that "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (v. 2:52). This example of growth Jesus gives us is antithetical to our fast-paced culture of instant gratification.
 - a. Where do you grow frustrated with the slow process of spiritual maturation in your life?

Practice Obedience

1. Jesus's statement in verse 49, that he "must be in his Father's house" reveals the intimacy that Jesus experiences with God the Father. You, too, have a Heavenly Father who delights in you and invites you into deeper intimacy with Him.
 - a. Which aspects of your life are you experiencing intimacy with God the Father right now?
 - b. Which parts of your life do you need to change that hinder your intimacy with the Father?



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2. Luke 2:52 says Jesus “increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.” The Christian life is one of slow progressive growth, upward and outward, as Christ works through our faith to develop us into His likeness.
 - a. What does Luke mean by growing in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man?
 - b. Which of these areas of development do you find most challenging, and how can you track genuine growth in that area?
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Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Eight

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

Luke 3:1-22

Liturgical Prayer

Blessed Lord, you have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning – grant us that we may in such a way hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them; that by patience and comfort of your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, 1552

Consider the Context

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Stir Up the Heart

1. Growing in Christian maturity is one of regularly discovering inconsistencies in our lives.



- a. Has the Holy Spirit revealed any inconsistencies (habits, passions, actions) in your life that you need to surrender?

- 2. Luke 3:20 tells us that John the Baptist was imprisoned and was later killed for preaching truth to power. Sometimes speaking the truth of God's Word has personal consequences. It is often challenging to navigate the daily decision of when to speak the truth to others and when to remain silent.

- a. Have you had to navigate this tension in your life?
- b. Share an example where it has been challenging to determine what or how much to speak. What did you decide to do? Were there consequences?

Practice Obedience

- 1. Part of John the Baptist's main message was to "bear fruit in keeping with repentance" (v.8).
 - a. Is there an area of your life where persistent repentance is challenging?
 - b. What practices can you incorporate to "keep with repentance" regularly?

- 2. John the Baptist was bold in confronting both individuals God had placed in his life and the cultural issues facing his day.
 - a. Is there anyone in your life that you have been avoiding a difficult or direct conversation with?
 - b. Similarly, are there any cultural issues that you have avoided taking a Biblical position on?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Nine

The Genealogy of Jesus

Luke 3:23-38

Liturgical Prayer

O, make your Word a swift Word,
passing from the ear to the heart,
from the heart to the lip and conversation;
that, as the rain returns not empty,
so neither may your Word,
but accomplish that for which it is given. Amen.

George Herbert, 1593-1633

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Stir Up the Heart



1. In addition to the faithful, God used the broken, the forgotten, and the weak in the lineage of Christ.
 - a. Do you recognize any names or stories in either Luke's or Matthew's genealogy?
 - b. Why did He use these people?
 - c. In what ways does the unimpressive, underwhelming genealogy of Christ demonstrate God's love for us?

2. Who are the women mentioned in Matthew's genealogy, and what do you know about them?
 - a. How does knowing their stories impact your understanding of God's use of your brokenness for redemption?

Practice Obedience

1. Unlike God, we tend to overlook weak and vulnerable people around us.
 - a. Is there someone in your life that you may have overlooked recently?
 - b. Could they be someone that God is calling you to right now?

2. Like Jesus, we often also have a "spiritual lineage," people who have lived before us and poured out their faith into our lives.
 - a. Has anyone in your "spiritual lineage" influenced your faith?
 - b. How can you recognize and thank them for their influence this week?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Ten

Temptation in the Wilderness

Luke 4:1-13

Liturgical Prayer

Divine Spirit, illuminate to me the words of the Lord.

Show me the wealth of glory that lies beneath the old familiar stories.

Teach me the depths of meaning hidden in the songs of Zion.

Raise me to the heights of aspiration that is reached by the wings of the prophet.

Lift me to the summit of faith that is trod by the feet of the apostle.

Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. Amen.

George Matheson, 1842-1906

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart



1. As Satan attempts to deceive Jesus, part of his strategy is to utilize Scripture. By quoting Scripture out of context, he tries to support his evil intentions with God's Word. The devil has not abandoned this tactic. Even today, it is common in our culture to hear Scripture used out of context to support all kinds of false ideas.

- a. Have you come across false beliefs deceptively supported by Bible verses?
- b. What were they, and how did you navigate discerning the truth?

2. Luke 4:13 says that even after the Devil had finished this set of temptations, he waited for another "opportune time" to attack Jesus. Each of us has our own experiences with spiritual warfare, areas in our lives where we are particularly prone to demonic attacks. Nobody is exempt from this; in fact, the most vicious attacks often come upon those in seasons of rich nearness to God.

- a. How are/have you experienced spiritual warfare or temptation in your life?

Practice Obedience

1. Considering the unique ways that you are prone to attack by the enemy (desires, affections, actions, attitudes, thoughts, doubts, etc.)
 - a. What systems of encouragement and accountability do you have/need from this group to come alongside you the next time you experience a similar attack?

2. Jesus teaches us how to defend ourselves in spiritual warfare through reliance on the Word of God. The New City Catechism teaches that one should study the Word of God with diligence, preparation, and prayer.

- a. When you read the Word of God, do you study with diligence, preparation, and prayer?

- b. If so, share with your group what your habits are. If not, discuss with your group what diligence, preparation, and prayer might look like

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Eleven

Jesus Begins His Ministry

Luke 4:14-30

Liturgical Prayer

"O heavenly Father, whose law is perfect, converting the soul; a sure testimony, giving wisdom to the unlearned, and enlightening the eyes – we humbly implore you, through your boundless goodness, to enlighten our blind intellect by your Holy Spirit, so that we may truly understand and profess your law and live according to it. Since it has pleased you, most merciful Father, to reveal the mysteries of your will only to the little ones; and since you look to him alone who is of a humble and contrite spirit, who has reverence for your Word, grant us a humble spirit and keep us from all fleshly wisdom, which is enmity against you. Bring to the right way those who stray from the truth, so that we all may unanimously serve you in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life. We ask this from you, most merciful Father, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Martin Micronius, 1523-1559

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
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3. What do you learn about God from this text?
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5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Luke 4:24 says, "No prophet is acceptable in his hometown." According to this familiar verse, the people who rejected Jesus in this passage knew him from a young age and had become so familiar with him that they couldn't accept Jesus as the Messiah. Like them, it is possible to grow so familiar with Jesus that we lose our awe of Him and the splendor of the Gospel.
 - a. Have you ever experienced this over-familiarity indifference?
 - b. How do you reclaim your wonder and reverence for Jesus when this happens?

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2. One of the major themes across all Gospel accounts is that Israel has rejected their Messiah (John 1:11). In this text, we see that Jesus began his ministry with rejection from the people in his hometown. These people were his friends, neighbors, and relatives.
 - a. Have you ever experienced rejection or the fracture of a relationship because of your faith?

Practice Obedience

1. We see in verse 18 that Christ came to address spiritual poverty, captivity, blindness, and oppression. However, he also addressed physical poverty, captivity, blindness, and oppression.
 - a. As a community, which of these needs (spiritual or physical) do you tend to address more diligently?
 - b. Where are the overlooked areas of need in the city that you can step into collectively as a small group?

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2. The fear of rejection often paralyzes us from having spiritual conversations with others, especially those we are very close with.
 - a. Who is one person in your life who you fear will reject you if you bring up your faith in Christ?
 - b. Share with your group, and commit to praying intentionally for an opportunity to talk about faith with that person.
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Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twelve

Jesus Heals

Luke 4:31-44

Liturgical Prayer

Grant, Almighty God, that as you shine on us by your Word, we may also not be blind at midday, nor willingly seek darkness, and thus lull our minds asleep; but we may be roused daily by your words, and may we stir up ourselves more and more to fear your name and thus present ourselves and all our pursuits as a sacrifice to you, that you may peaceably rule, and perpetually dwell in us, until you gather us to your celestial habitation, where there is reserved for us eternal rest and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

John Calvin, 1509-1564

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Demonic activity is something many modern Christians feel uncomfortable discussing. Yet, many of the stories about the life of Jesus involve demons.

- a. Why do you think the supernatural has become a taboo subject in the modern Church?
- b. How do you think demonic activity is present in our culture?
- c. Have you ever experienced demonic activity?

2. Luke 4:41 says the demons knew that Jesus was the Christ. However, this knowledge was empty and lifeless because a heart of worship did not accompany it (Read James 2:19). Within the church, many people know the right things about Jesus. Yet, there is little evidence of genuine worship in their life; this might look like an absence of a real prayer life, a lack of desire to join in singing as worship, and, most importantly, a lack of real growth in the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-26).

- a. Have you experienced the difference between knowledge about God and worship-filled belief?
- b. Do you see evidence, or a genuine desire for these things, in your life?

Practice Obedience

1. Despite the many miraculous healings and the potential for many more, Jesus withdrew from the crowds to a desolate place. Finding healthy rhythms of prayer like this can be very difficult in a loud, busy world around us.
 - a. Do you have rhythms of undistracted time alone with God built into your life?
 - b. If so, share them. If you don't have these rhythms, share the challenges that prevent you.

2. In Luke 4:32 and 4:36, we see the authority of Jesus over and against every other power. His Word still has that same authority, power, and beauty to govern our lives and guide us into truth perfectly. The challenge for us, like in the days of Christ, is that competing authorities make claims to truth. These collision points can be challenging for faithful Christians trying to uphold God's Word.

- a. Can you give an example where you have experienced or are experiencing this difficulty?
- b. Which Bible-based resources have been most helpful for you in navigating these tension points?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirteen

Jesus Calls His Disciples

Luke 5:1-11

Liturgical Prayer

Almighty, gracious Father, since our whole salvation depends on our true understanding of your holy Word, grant that our hearts – freed from worldly affairs – may hear and understand your holy Word with all diligence and faith, so that we may rightly discern your gracious will, cherish it, and live by it with all earnestness, to your praise and honor, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Martin Bucer, 1491-1551

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. When Jesus called Peter, Peter's first reaction was, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (v. 5:8). Many people, like Peter, instinctively withdraw from Christ in the

face of their sin. But Jesus is tender towards us and draws us deeper into his love when we discover our sins.

- a. Have you ever pulled away from Christ because of your sinfulness?
- b. How have you felt the depth of God's love in these moments?

2. Jesus responds to his first disciples, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men" (5:10).

- a. Who do you admire for their effective disciple-making?
- b. What about them makes them so effective?

Practice Obedience

1. Jesus invites the disciples to be disciple-makers. The way they were to do this was by following Him, watching Him, and imitating Him.
 - a. Who is someone in your life who functions like a mentor, pointing you toward a deeper walk with Jesus?
 - b. Who is someone in your life you mentor and point toward a deeper walk with Jesus?
 - c. Who can you begin this relationship with if you aren't being mentored or mentoring?

2. When Jesus called his disciples, their lives were forever changed. First, they left everything immediately and followed him (v.11). Second, they embraced a radically different life by following Jesus.
 - a. What did you have to leave or embrace when Christ called you?
 - b. Is there anything Christ is calling you to leave or embrace now?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Fourteen

Jesus and the Leper

Luke 5:12-16

Liturgical Prayer

Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled.

My Lord, fill it.

I am weak in faith; Strengthen thou me.

I am cold in love; Warm me and make me fervent

That my love may go out to my neighbour.

I do not have a strong and firm faith; At times I doubt and am unable to trust thee altogether.

O Lord, help me.

Strengthen my faith and trust in thee.

In thee I have sealed the treasures of all I have.

I am poor; Thou art rich and didst come to be merciful to the poor.

I am a sinner; Thou art upright.

With me there is an abundance of sin; In thee is the fullness of righteousness.

Therefore, I will remain with thee of who I can receive

But to whom I may not give. Amen.

Martin Luther

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?

3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. In the 1st century, perhaps no group of people was as despised, rejected, and loathed as those with leprosy. Lepers were considered not only physically but also spiritually unclean. Many believed leprosy was a sign of God's curse on an individual and those with the disease had to live in communities separated from society. Jesus not only spoke to the leper, but he touched him (v. 13).
 - a. What does this contextually scandalous act reveal about the heart of God?
 - b. How have you experienced Christ in this way in your life?

2. Scripture indicates that God still moves and heals in miraculous ways even today.
 - a. Have you ever witnessed/experienced supernatural healing?
 - b. What is one thing you're asking God to heal right now?

Practice Obedience

1. Jesus spent most of his time with people who were outcasts in society. He saw those who were overlooked, he touched those who were diseased, and he loved those who were unloved.
 - a. Think about where you live and the people Jesus would be spending his time with if he was here right now.
 - b. Are these the same people you spend your time with?
 - c. How, as a small group, can you care for, love, and engage the marginalized around you?

2. The demands of life and the incredible needs of people pushed Jesus into more time alone spent in prayer, not away from it (v. 15-16).
 - a. What happens to your prayer life when life becomes demanding?
 - b. What practices can you continue incorporating into your daily routine that mirrors Jesus' dedication to prayer when life becomes taxing?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Fifteen

Paralytic Through the Roof

Luke 5:17-26

Liturgical Prayer

I appeal to you, Lord, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob and Israel, You the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Infinitely merciful as You are, it is Your will that we should learn to know You. You made heaven and earth, You rule supreme over all that is. You are the true, the only God; there is no other god above You. Through our Lord Jesus Christ...and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, grant that all who read what I have written here may know You, because You alone are God; let them draw strength from You.

Irenaeus of Lyons, 130–202 AD

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. The men had brought their friend to Jesus to heal his paralysis. They appear to be drawn to Jesus for physical healing, not spiritual. Yet, initially, Jesus did not heal his physical body but forgave his sins according to their faith (v.20). For Jesus, there was a deeper issue behind the issue.
 - a. Share an example of a time when you thought the issue you faced was one thing in your life, but God revealed a deeper spiritual issue at play.

Practice Obedience

1. The friends of the paralytic man went to extreme lengths to get him in the presence of Jesus. They navigated the crowds, climbed on a roof, and lowered him through the ceiling to the ground. It seems there was nothing they wouldn't do to help their hurting friend. Similarly, we are called to sacrifice and carry the burdens of hurting people.
 - a. Has anyone helped you with this level of persistence?
 - b. Who has God placed in your life that needs help, and how can you "carry them to Jesus?"

2. Jesus healed both soul and body in his interaction with the paralytic. This revealed the arrival of the Kingdom of God, which brings redemption to both spiritual and physical brokenness. In our ministry, we can often focus on one of these but not the other (sharing the Gospel but not helping the poor or helping the poor but not sharing the Gospel).
 - a. Do you tend to focus primarily on only one of these in your ministry?
 - b. Where can you (and your small group) better incorporate both?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Sixteen

Levi, The Tax Collector

Luke 5:27-32

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, heavenly Father, in whom the fullness of light and wisdom, enlighten our minds by your Holy Spirit,

and give us grace to receive your Word with reverence and humility,
without which no one can understand your truth. For Christ's sake, Amen.

John Calvin, 1509-1564

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
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5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. "Grumbling" is something the Pharisees and scribes were excellent at. Here, we find them grumbling at Jesus' methods of ministry.

- a. Honestly assess yourself. Are you a grumbler? Where have you seen yourself grumbling about others and their ways?

Practice Obedience

1. In his ministry, Jesus chose to spend his time with sinners and outcasts because "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick" (v. 31). Often, our attention can be so focused inward, among other Christians, that we forget about the very people Christ came to be with. Our society is filled with "tax collectors and sinners."
 - a. Who is this in your community?
 - b. Is your life too insulated by other Christians?
 - c. What changes might you make to create an intentional space to be around more people who are distant from Christ?

2. Jesus' feasting with sinners does not mean he approved of their sin. He was with them, but not of them, just as we are "in the world but not of the world."
 - a. Are there any particular areas of your life where being around particular sins or environments causes you to be tempted toward those sins?
 - b. Share these "temptation triggers" with your group members for accountability.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Seventeen

A Question About Fasting

Luke 5:33-39

Liturgical Prayer

Breathe in us, O Holy Spirit, That our thoughts may all be holy.

Act in us, O Holy Spirit, That our work, too, may be holy.

Draw our hearts, O Holy Spirit, That we love but what is holy.

Strengthen us, O Holy Spirit, To defend all that is holy.

Guard us, then, O Holy Spirit, That we always may be holy. Amen.

Augustine of Hippo, 354-430 AD

Consider the Context

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Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Jesus' metaphor of new wineskins means that the old ways of Pharisaical Judaism – of trying to find acceptance with God through obedience to His laws – are incompatible



with Christ's teachings on grace. Grace says we are saved by Christ's obedience, not our own. Yet, many Christians mistakenly behave as if being saved by grace now somehow removes the call to obedience to God's law.

- a. Have you ever seen a sense of this in your own heart?
- b. What questions do you have about the Christian's relationship to the law?

Practice Obedience

1. The Pharisees believed that their religion was based on their performance and how others perceived it. Like the Pharisees, we often accidentally slide into a performance-based faith.
 - a. Discuss with your group where performance-based religion was present in your upbringing or is present in your habits now.
 - b. Specifically, what areas of "performance-driven-faith" do you tend to fall into?

2. Consider the prayer requests made in your small group over the past few weeks.
 - a. What consistent requests have arisen that you could fast over together as a group?
 - b. Discuss what it might look like to get an optional fast for the group to do together, perhaps for half a day or a full day.
 - c. Consider breaking the fast together one evening in small group over a meal and sharing your experiences.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Eighteen

Lord of the Sabbath

Luke 6:1-11

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord our God, let the light of your presence guide us to your truth.

Illuminate our minds and hearts,

that we may discern your will and walk in your ways. Amen.

Augustine of Hippo, 354-430

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Watch this short video on [Sabbath](#). Jesus' declaration that "the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath" (v. 5) alludes to his humanity and divine authority. He points them to the true significance of the Sabbath, which they had strayed from by adding man-made

rules to God's decrees. One aspect of practicing the Sabbath that Noah shared is resisting- saying "no" to more in order to say "yes" to rest in Christ.

- a. What is something you have difficulty saying "no" to that might rob you of true Sabbath?

2. In the Pharisees' radical effort to keep the Sabbath, they ironically missed its point. They believed faithfulness to God was only about strict adherence to man-made rules. For the average Jew of the day, they had turned a day designed for joy and rest into a day of misery.

- a. Is there or has there been a spiritual practice in your life that began as a life-giving gift from God but eventually turned into a life-taking set of rules?

Practice Obedience

1. Living in obedience to the Sabbath is so much more—though not less—than not working for one day a week. It's about living a "perpetual Sabbath," a life of constant rest in God, which allows you to be aware of and enjoy the gifts he constantly gives. The concept of Sabbath is very antithetical to our culture, which prides itself on accomplishment. Like our culture, many of us are tempted to find our identity in our productivity.

- a. Is this a matter of identity for you?
- b. What incremental changes can/do you make to repent of the idol of productivity to enjoy constant rest in Christ?

2. In verses 6-11, Luke shares a story of Jesus healing a man with a withered hand. In verse 10, he commands the man to "stretch out your hand." This seemed like an impossible

task to this man, but God gave him the ability to do it. Often in our lives, God calls us to do something that seems impossible but gives us the ability to do it.

- a. Is there anything in your life that feels too impossible?
- b. How can you trust God that he will give you the ability to do it?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Nineteen

Blessings & Woes

Luke 6:12-26

Liturgical Prayer

Lord, enlighten my understanding with the light of your knowledge.

Grant me to know you truly and to understand wisely,
that I may live according to your divine wisdom. Amen.

Anselm of Canterbury, 1033-1109

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Jesus' teaching of blessings and woes contradicts our cultural definitions. Culture considers wealth, full stomachs, laughter, and fame as blessings, while Jesus calls those who are poor, hungry, weeping, and excluded on account of the Son of Man blessed.

For Jesus, living a blessed life is living for eternal rewards, not temporary comfort. Consider Jesus' words in this passage.

- a. Which of Jesus' blessings is most challenging to believe is true?
- b. Which of his woes do you find most convicting?

Practice Obedience

1. Jesus regularly prayed on mountains (Mark 6:46; John 6:15). For Jesus, the mountain was a place of withdrawal from the business of daily life. It was a place of seclusion, isolation, quietness, and holiness. The mountain was a place for Jesus to spend extended time with his Father in prayer and silence. Despite being God himself, Jesus needed to spend this precious time in silent, undistracted prayer with God.
 - a. Do you have a quiet space where you spend time alone with God in prayer?
 - b. If not, think about where that could be and set some time aside in the coming weeks to go there.

2. Before choosing his disciples, Jesus prayed all night to God (v. 12). Even Jesus had to labor in prayer to his Father before making big decisions.
 - a. Are you praying or discerning any big decisions right now?
 - b. Spend some time as a group praying for those decisions together.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty

Loving Enemies

Luke 6:27-36

Liturgical Prayer

O God, who are the light of the minds that know you, the life of the souls that love you, and the strength of the wills that serve you, help us to know you so that we may truly love you, and so to love you that we may fully serve you, whom to serve is perfect freedom. Amen.

Thomas Aquinas, 1225-1274

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Scripture teaches that before the cross, all of us were once enemies of God.
 - a. How does understanding that we were enemies of God help you as you consider what it would mean to bless your enemies?

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2. Read verses 27-36 as a small group. Jesus' teachings in this passage are incredibly radical and challenge how many of us live. However, Jesus is not speaking figuratively here; he truly expects his followers to live this way! Imagine how powerful the testimony of our church would be if these teachings marked our lives.
 - a. Who is somebody who comes to mind who has exemplified living out these teachings of Christ?
 - b. What about them is so compelling?
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Practice Obedience

1. In the Church, we often do an excellent job of loving those who look like us, talk like us, and think like us. In other words, we do an outstanding job of loving loveable people. However, Jesus says in verse 33 that this isn't distinctively Christian - even unbelievers do this! What distinguishes Christians from the world is our love for the unlovable, our kindness to the hateful, and our generosity to those who can't repay. If this is a true hallmark of Christianity, this must be true of each of us.
 - a. Which of Jesus' teachings in this passage is most challenging for you?
 - b. Who can you show love, kindness, and generosity without reciprocation in the coming weeks?
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Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?
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2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty-One

Judging Others

Luke 6:37-42

Liturgical Prayer

Father, I know the insecurities of my own heart. I can soar on the praise of another, or crash on their criticism. You are a more secure foundation. Whether I next receive praise or critique, help me hold fast to these truths— My worth is found in your love. My hope is secure in your faithfulness. My joy rests in your provision. Now free me O Christ, to more fearlessly live, labor, love, and create. Amen.

Every Moment Holy, Vol. III

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Read verses 37-42 as a small group. Jesus' teachings in this passage are incredibly radical and challenge how many of us live. Jesus is not speaking figuratively here; he



truly expects his followers to live this way! Imagine how powerful the testimony of our church would be if these teachings marked our lives.

- a. Who is somebody who comes to mind who has exemplified living out these teachings of Christ?
- b. What about them is so compelling?

Practice Obedience

1. The illustration of the log and the speck in verses 39-42 is quite popular, even among non-Christians. In short, these verses teach about the hypocrisy of confronting others about their shortcomings and sins without considering their own.
 - a. What is a “log” that is currently bothering you that you see in someone else’s eye? Don’t share their “log” with the group.
 - b. Rather, consider your own heart in the matter and share what “splinter” may be in your own eye that you are reluctant to remove.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty-Two

Building Life on the Rock

Luke 6:43-49

Liturgical Prayer

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Many Christians struggle with the assurance of salvation and passages like this can challenge many people to reconsider if they are truly saved. However, this beautiful doctrine deepens our understanding of grace, restores us to joy when we are disheartened and reminds us of God's unconditional love and the promise of the cross.

- a. Have you ever or are you currently struggling with assurance of salvation?
- b. What might you say to a friend who is wrestling with this?

**If you or anyone you know is struggling with the assurance of salvation, please do not hesitate to reach out to a pastor.*

- 2. In verses 43-45, Jesus talks about discerning the identity of a tree based on the fruit it produces. He alludes to the idea that good trees with good fruit are believers and evil trees with bad fruit are unbelievers.
 - a. Considering that Christians *and* non-Christians are often kind, generous, and moral, what is the difference between “good fruit” and “bad fruit?”
 - b. Have you noticed the difference in your “fruit”?

Practice Obedience

- 1. Verse 45 says, “...An evil person produces evil out of the evil stored up in his heart, for his mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart.” The challenge here is two-fold. First, there are the words we speak with our mouths that reflect the condition of our hearts. Second, there are the words we think in our head but never speak out loud that also reveal the condition of our hearts.
 - a. Consider your inner dialogue. Do even your hidden words honor Christ?
 - b. Where do you need to see fresh fruit grow?

- 2. In this passage, Jesus essentially says that our true identity is tied to what we say *and* do. Even though it is hard to admit, many people try to measure their love for God merely by their intentions, not their actions - by what they *want* to do, not what they *actually* do.

- a. What are good intentions you have now that you have been delaying/ negligent to put into action?
- b. How might you match those intentions with your actions this week?

Spend Time in Prayer

- 1. What are you thanking God for?

- 2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty-Three

God of Compassion

Luke 7:1-17

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, enlighten my mind with the light of your understanding. Open my heart to receive the words of your Gospel. Teach me by your Holy Spirit to discern what is pleasing to you, and may I be changed into the likeness of your Son. Amen.

Eastern Orthodox Prayer of Illumination

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Read verses 4-6. The elders of Israel were sent to Jesus and asked him to heal the Centurion's servant. However, they believed the Centurion's love for Israel and his money given to the synagogue made him *worthy* of Jesus' healing. But, when the Centurion heard that Jesus was actually coming, he sent his friends to stop Jesus

because of his *unworthiness*. When Jesus heard of this, he was amazed by the centurion's faith and healed the servant from a distance.

- a. Why did Jesus associate "unworthiness" with faith?

2. It's difficult to understand the shame, hurt, and abandonment that the Widow would have been experiencing (v. 11-17). In this culture, a mother lived under the provision of her husband, and if he died, she would be under the care of her son. However, in this story, both the people meant to protect, provide, and care for her have passed away, leaving her to navigate the world alone. When Jesus sees this woman in her pain, abandonment, and vulnerability, he extends the deepest concern and compassion. Likewise, this is what He does for every Christian.

- a. How have you experienced the concern and compassion of Christ in your own life?

Practice Obedience

1. The miracle of resurrection filled everyone with awe and they praised God and shared the news.
 - a. Is there anything you are praising God for right now?
 - b. If so, share it with your small group and spend time praising God through prayer together.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty-Four

The Unexpected Messiah

Luke 7:18-35

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, I am a fool in myself, but I desire to be wise through your wisdom. Make me understand your ways and grant me insight into your Word. May the light of your truth shine brightly in my heart. Amen.

Charles Spurgeon, 1883-1892

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. In this text, Jesus tells John the Baptist that he is awaited Messiah who fulfills Old Testament prophecy. The fulfillment of prophecy in the Bible provides not only a profound insight into God's epoch-spanning communication to humanity but it also provides a statistically sound basis for confidence in the storyline of Scripture.

- a. Have you ever studied the fulfillment of prophecy before?
- b. What did you discover? How did it impact your faith?

2. While in prison for a wrongful conviction, John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask if Jesus was "the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" (v. 20). It seems that John is wrestling with some degree of doubt about Jesus' identity and mission. All Christians will experience some range or degree of doubts across their life of faith.

- a. How have you (or are you) experienced doubt?
- b. What ministered to you the most during that season?

Practice Obedience

1. Jesus does not reject John the Baptist for bringing his questions about Jesus' identity to Jesus. Rather, he responds with gentleness and grace to a question that should have been obvious. Becoming a "safe" person for others to ask open, honest questions about faith takes work.
 - a. What qualities do Christians need to develop to help them become this kind of person for others?
 - b. What qualities hinder Christians from being this kind of person?

1. In verses 31-35, Jesus accuses his generation of having an overly critical spirit. They are never satisfied. This, unfortunately, can happen among Christians today as well. Sometimes we develop a critical spirit towards other Christians or even towards our Church that is unhealthy and even unbiblical.
 - a. Have you experienced this before?

- b. What can you do the next time you sense an unhealthy critical spirit welling inside you?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Twenty-Five

Great Need, Greater Forgiveness

Luke 7:36-8:3

Liturgical Prayer

Grant, Almighty God, that as you once opened the mouth of your servant Balaam, and made even an ass to speak, so also at this day, as we are now met together in your name, to offer to you our sacrifices and prayers, and as your only-begotten Son has consecrated us all to be a royal priesthood, may it please you to open our minds and mouths, that we may be able to declare what is right and just and to magnify your name; and may we be so attentive to the external and internal doctrine, that we may not turn aside either to the right hand or to the left, but proceed in the pure and right worship of your majesty until we shall at length reach that happy and celestial life, which your only-begotten Son has obtained for us by his own blood. Amen.

John Calvin, 1509-1564

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Watch this short video on [Anointing with Oil](#). The practice of anointing with oil is foreign to a lot of Evangelical Christians, and churches seldom practice it. However, it is a beautiful practice for the church to make their prayers tangible before God and to be reminded of God's constant comfort and care.
 - a. Why is this practice so "weird" for many of us?
 - b. What do you think the church misses without tangible expressions of our faith?

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2. Grace is offensive to many. In this story, the Pharisees missed the whole point of God's love. Rather than seeing themselves as the "chief of sinners" needing grace and forgiveness, they had become elitists who looked down on sinners like the woman in this story. Seeing yourself as the "chief of sinners" must be more than a Christian catchphrase. There is a work involved in letting God reveal the depth of our sin in our actions, minds, and affections. The more we allow God to reveal the depth of our sin, the more we will experience the bounty of the gospel!
 - a. What areas of sin has God revealed to you that you were once unaware of?

Practice Obedience

1. In 8:2-3, Luke acknowledges that many of the women who traveled with Jesus were healed, either physically or spiritually, and that many of them financially supported his ministry. Discussing finances in the Church is, for many, a taboo subject. But this shouldn't be the case! The Bible is full of practical instruction on the godly stewardship of our finances.
 - a. What principles have you learned and habits you practice concerning godly financial management?
 - b. What questions do you have about godly financial management?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty-Six

Parable of the Sower

Luke 8:4-21

Liturgical Prayer

Lord, thou hast given us thy Word for a light to shine upon our path;
grant us so to meditate on that Word, and to follow its teaching,
that we may find in it the light that shines more and more until the perfect day;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Jerome, 342-420 AD

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. People who read the Parable of the Sower often believe that the seed that falls on the ground is salvation. However, in verse 11, Jesus reveals that the seed is the Word of



God and the good soil in which it lands are those who hear God's Word, hold it in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience (v.15).

- a. Why do you think Jesus recognizes patience as a quality of having "good soil?"
- b. Think about your spiritual life; where is exercising patience most difficult regarding the Word of God?

2. Jesus speaks of three ways people lose their grip on the Word of God: The Devil (v. 12), times of testing (v. 13), and the riches and pleasures of the world (v.14).

- a. According to the corresponding verses, how do each of these pull people away from the Word of God?
- b. Share a time when one of these tried to pull you away from your faith. How did you respond?

Practice Obedience

1. In verse 17, Jesus warns that the secrets we often seek to keep hidden will come to light. Our natural inclination is to keep our sin hidden and away from those we're in community with. Because of this, confession is not a common practice as it can seem daunting to be vulnerable about the deepest part of your life, but it's through confession and repentance that we open ourselves up to the mending work of the cross.
 - a. Pair up with someone in your group – confess your sins, lay hands, and pray over one another, asking the Spirit for redemption.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty-Seven

Parable of the Sower

Luke 8:4-21

Liturgical Prayer

Breathe in us, Holy Spirit, That our thoughts may all be holy.

Act in us, Holy Spirit, That our work, too, may be holy.

Draw our hearts, Holy Spirit, That we love but what is holy.

Strengthen us, Holy Spirit, To defend all that is holy.

Guard us, then, Holy Spirit, That we always may be holy. Amen.

Saint Augustine, 354-430 AD

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. In verse 23, the threat of the wind and storm causes the disciples to take their eyes off Christ's presence. Likewise, we tend to take our eyes off Christ in the storms of life.

- a. Reflect on instances when you've been tempted to lose sight of Christ during difficult times.

Practice Obedience

1. In verses 42-48, we read about the healing of a woman who endured suffering for twelve years. That's a long time. It's common for us to endure suffering silently or consider it abnormal to the Christian journey. However, suffering is not uncommon in the Christian life. Considering your prolonged suffering experiences, discuss what insights you've gained about Christ and the Gospel.
 - a. If you haven't experienced long-suffering yet, consider others who have and what you've learned about faith from them.

2. When others go through long-suffering, Christians often unintentionally make a handful of mistakes. We might try to fix their problem by offering easy solutions. We might compare their suffering to our experience, making them feel diminished. We might overpromise God's deliverance when uncertain if that is God's desire. We might even be "hyper-spiritual" in such a way that focuses on the blessings and dismisses the deep reality of pain. We all have been on both sides of this in the past.
 - a. Discuss how to faithfully have compassion (a "co-suffering") for the hurting in your group.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty-Eight

The King's Mission

Luke 9:1-17

Liturgical Prayer

O God, your Word is more precious than fine gold,
and sweeter than purest honey.

As we turn to your Scripture,
send your Holy Spirit to infuse your Word with truth and grace,
so that the good news of your love would shine before our eyes and delight our senses
so that we cannot help but respond with wonder, faith and trust. Amen.

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. A well-known phrase among Christian circles says, "God does not call the equipped; he equips the called." We see the sentiment of this statement in verses 3-5 when Jesus



sends his disciples to preach the Gospel without the things they would have considered essential.

- a. Has there been a time Jesus called you to a task that you felt under-equipped for?
- b. What was it, and how did God provide for you?

2. In verses 7-9, Herod is perplexed by the life of Christ. In the same way, non-Christians should be confused by the life of everyday Christians.

- a. What aspects of your life have non-believers been perplexed by? (weekly sabbath, living generously, etc.)?
- b. Moreover, is there any aspect of your life that *should* be perplexing to others but is indistinguishable from the life of your neighbors?

Practice Obedience

1. The story of the feeding of the 5,000 is similar to the story of Christ sending out his disciples in verses 2-5. In both situations, the disciples are forced to depend on Christ and exhibit faith, where they otherwise may have relied on their skills or resources.
 - a. Are there any steps of faith God is asking you to take this season that you feel under-equipped or lacking resources to accomplish?
 - b. What is holding you back from trusting Christ by taking a step of faith?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Twenty-Nine

Who is Jesus to You?

Luke 9:18-36

Liturgical Prayer

Holy Spirit, pour out upon us
wisdom and understanding
that, being taught by you in Holy Scripture,
our hearts and minds may be opened to receive
all that leads to life and holiness.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Ancient Collect

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Though the Messiah was anticipated, Israel waited thousands of years for Christ to come. At times they did this well, but often they did not.
 - a. Discuss the role of faith and patience in your walk with Jesus.
 - b. How do you apply the patience of Israel in your life as you wait on God?

2. Though Peter's confession of Jesus may seem obvious to us reading this Scripture, it was a revolutionary declaration about who Jesus is. Jesus is the long-anticipated Messiah of Israel. Whether we like it or not, everyone claims who Jesus is.
 - a. What are some beliefs about Jesus that you hear in our current culture today?
 - b. What does culture get right about Jesus? What does it get wrong?

Practice Obedience

1. Verses 23-27 are some of the most challenging words Jesus taught during his ministry. Perhaps his most startling is in verse 26 when he warns his followers about being ashamed of him. The Reformer Martin Luther once said, *"If I profess with loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except that little point which the world and the Devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battlefield besides, is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point."*
 - a. Living where you do, there are constant moments where it is challenging to faithfully stand with Christ on the issues of our day?
 - b. Where have you experienced this, and how does this text encourage you?

2. The Transfiguration wasn't just an ordinary event; it was a supernatural encounter with Jesus that deeply impacted Peter and significantly marked him for the rest of his life.

Likewise, many Christians can recall moments of profound intimacy with Christ, moments so powerful that they serve as a source of encouragement in difficult times.

- a. Have you had a similar experience where you felt the presence or comfort of the Holy Spirit in such a remarkable way that you find yourself returning to that memory?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty

Faith & Humility

Luke 9:37-50

Liturgical Prayer

Give me grace to be holy, kind, gentle, pure, peaceable,
to live for thee and not for self,
to copy thy words, acts, spirit,
to be transformed into thy likeness,
to be consecrated wholly to thee,
to live entirely to thy glory.

O God, the Eternal All, help me to know that
all things are shadows, but thou art substance,
all things are quicksands, but thou art mountain,
all things are shifting, but thou art anchor,
all things are ignorance, but thou art wisdom.
If my life is to be a crucible amid burning heat, so be it,
but do thou sit at the furnace mouth to watch the ore that nothing be lost. Amen.

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Jesus harshly rebukes the lack of faith of some of his disciples, referring to them as a "faithless and twisted generation." Likewise, Proverbs 3:12 says, "For the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights." As the Puritan William Gurnall once said, "God's wounds cure—sin's kisses kill."
 - a. Have you ever experienced reproof from the Lord?
 - b. How did you discern the Lord was reproofing you, and what did you learn from the experience?

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2. In the midst of a pride-filled discussion about who would be greatest, Jesus celebrates the faith of a child (v. 46-48). What attributes of child-like faith is Jesus pursuing here? Evaluate your own lives and motivations.
 - a. Are there any areas of your faith or life where childlike faith is easy?
 - b. Are there any areas where you struggle to have it?
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Practice Obedience

1. In verses 49-50, the disciples express their concern to Jesus about someone casting out demons in his name yet not adhering to their specific methods. Unexpectedly, Jesus advises them against hindering such individuals, as they are still performing works in his name. This situation parallels instances in our modern culture where, like the disciples, we may demonstrate similar attitudes towards fellow followers of Jesus who differ from us on denominational background or secondary theological beliefs.
 - a. Have you encountered such divisions within Christianity?
 - b. Where do we find the balance between partnering with those who worship differently and maintaining legitimate separation when our beliefs differ?
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Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty-One

Following Jesus

Luke 9:51-62

Liturgical Prayer

Look upon us, O Lord,
and let all the darkness of our souls
vanish before the beams of thy brightness.
Fill us with holy love,
and open to us the treasures of thy wisdom.
All our desire is known unto thee,
therefore perfect what thou hast begun,
and what thy Spirit has awakened us to ask in prayer.
We seek thy face,
turn thy face unto us and show us thy glory.
Then shall our longing be satisfied,
and our peace shall be perfect. Amen.

Augustine of Hippo, 354-430 AD

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Samaria was a place and a people whom Jews in Judah considered unworthy. So much so that Jews often intentionally took longer routes to avoid going through Samaritan areas, yet Jesus intentionally sought to stay in a Samaritan village.

- a. Who are you moving towards that is challenging to love or that is different from you in some way?
 - b. Who have you intentionally *not* been moving towards?
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2. Reading Jesus' words in verses 57-62 sounds quite extreme. We might be prone to attempt to water down Christ's tone to make "following Jesus" less demanding. Very often this is imply people pleasing. As William Gurnall said, "We fear man so much because we fear God so little. One fear cures another. When man's terror scares you, turn your thoughts to the wrath of God."

- a. How have you been tempted to soften the demands of following Jesus, or the truth of God's Word, particularly when faced with the Bible's challenging teachings?
 - b. Reflect on a specific area of your life, past or present, where you've felt this temptation and its implications on your faith journey.
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Practice Obedience

1. In verses 57-62, Jesus encounters three individuals whom he calls to follow him. However, despite their initial eagerness, each person must make a sacrifice to follow Jesus faithfully. Similarly, we each face a call to consider the cost of discipleship to Jesus. In our journey with him, there will inevitably be sacrifices required.

- a. Reflecting on your own discipleship to Jesus, is there something presently, or in the near future, that you feel the Spirit calling you to surrender to follow him more closely?

2. James and John hated the Samaritans so much that they genuinely wanted to see them killed. The Bible speaks a lot about the human emotion of anger.
 - a. Read the following proverbs out loud to each other and discuss what you've learned: Proverbs 12:16, Proverbs 14:17, Proverbs 15:1, Proverbs 19:3.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Thirty-Two

The Best of Joy

Luke 10:1-24

Liturgical Prayer

May God the Father bless us;

may Christ take care of us;

the Holy Ghost enlighten us all the days of our life.

The Lord be our defender and keeper of body and soul,

both now and for ever, to the ages of ages. Amen.

Bishop Æthelwold, 904-984 AD

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. Verse 10 is a surprising verse, as Jesus instructs his disciples to leave the town to itself if they are not greeted well. Throughout the New Testament, we see two aspects of

evangelism and ministry. On the one hand, we are to persevere in pursuit of others. On the other, there are times when we are instructed to walk away (Matthew 7:6, "Do not throw your pearls before pigs").

- a. Have you ever experienced a time when walking away was the best course of action? How did you know?

2. Reading Jesus' words in verses 57-62 sounds quite extreme. We might be prone to attempt to water down Christ's tone to make "following Jesus" less demanding. Very often this is imply people pleasing. As William Gurnall said, "We fear man so much because we fear God so little. One fear cures another. When man's terror scares you, turn your thoughts to the wrath of God."

- a. How have you been tempted to soften the demands of following Jesus, or the truth of God's Word, particularly when faced with the Bible's challenging teachings?
- b. Reflect on a specific area of your life, past or present, where you've felt this temptation and its implications on your faith journey.

3. In verse 24, Jesus mentions that the prophets and kings of the Old Testament yearned for the Holy Spirit's power and the salvation found in Christ, blessings that Christians now possess. Hebrews 11:13 emphasizes how these figures lived in faith without receiving the promised blessings but recognized them from afar, acknowledging their temporary existence on earth. Sometimes, we become overly accustomed to salvation and the Spirit's power, forgetting their profound significance.

- a. What does it mean to be "overfamiliar" with these blessings? Have you experienced this?
- b. Reflecting on the longing of past prophets and kings for what you now have in Christ, how does it deepen your appreciation for these promises?

Practice Obedience

1. Jesus says in verse 2 that we are "therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Within our churches and surrounding communities, there are all kinds of fields for harvest.
 - a. Take a moment to list various places where more kingdom laborers are needed.
 - b. Put this verse into immediate action by praying for God to send more laborers into the harvest.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty-Three

The Good Samaritan & Mary and Martha

Luke 10:25-42

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, who hast mercy upon all, take away from me my sins,
and mercifully kindle in me the fire of thy Holy Spirit.

Take away from me the heart of stone,
and give me a heart of flesh,
a heart to love and adore thee,
a heart to delight in thee,
to follow and to enjoy thee,
for Christ's sake. Amen.

Ambrose of Milan, 339-397 AD

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?



Stir Up the Heart

1. The lawyer's grasp of the law is quite insightful. He recognizes that the essence of the entire Law lies in the command to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." However, faced with the daunting challenge of embodying this love for his neighbor, he seeks clarification from Jesus on the identity of his neighbor. Jesus' story reveals that one's neighbor is anyone around you who is in need.
 - a. As you reflect on this interaction, consider who the neighbor in your life is that you are called to embody the love of Jesus toward.
 - b. What does it mean to love them *as you love yourself*?
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Practice Obedience

1. In verses 38-42, Mary and Martha respond in contrasting ways to the presence of Jesus. Mary, recognizing the extraordinary nature of Christ's presence, pauses all activities to sit at his feet and enjoy his company. On the other hand, Martha, eager to serve Jesus, becomes "distracted with much serving" (v. 40). Often, like Martha, we can become distracted by various tasks, even those done for Jesus, that we overlook the significance of simply being in his presence and enjoying him.
 - a. Discuss what quiet, still enjoyment of Jesus' presence looks like today.
 - b. What typically distracts you from doing this?
 - c. Consider practical ways to prioritize spending time with Jesus in the upcoming week.
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2. In verse 42, Jesus praises Mary for selecting the "better portion," indicating that certain priorities outweigh even the most pressing tasks. Put differently, there are moments in our spiritual life when we must say "no" to good things in order to say "yes" to better things. Reflect on your current relationship with the Lord.

- a. Are there areas of your spiritual life or disciplines you want to grow in (perhaps you made a New Year's resolution)?
- b. Is there anything you need to say "no" to in your life to create room for this growth?

Spend Time in Prayer

- 1. What are you thanking God for?

- 2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty-Four

The Lord's Prayer

Luke 11:1-13

Liturgical Prayer

Our Father in Heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Jesus Christ

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?



Stir Up the Heart

1. Jesus was the first Rabbi, as far as we know, to refer to God as "Father." More specifically, he used the Aramaic word "Abba" which translates in English to "Papa" or "Dad". This name demonstrates the deeply personal and relational nature of prayer. Jesus is showing us that we are not praying to an abstract, impersonal deity, but to a God who asks us to call Him "Abba".
 - a. In what ways does using this language make you uncomfortable or bring you comfort?
 - b. What would your prayer life be missing if you never knew God as "Abba"?

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2. When the disciples ask Jesus how to pray, he instructs them using collective language: "Give *us* each day *our* daily bread, and forgive *us our* sins" (v. 3-4). However, in our individualistic culture, we often pray in the singular: "Give *me my* daily bread, and forgive *my* sins."
 - a. How does using collective language in prayer change your perspective on how/what to pray?

Practice Obedience

1. The disciples did not ask Jesus to teach them the "miraculous" things such as casting out demons, preaching sermons, or healing the sick. Instead, they humbly asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Even for those closest to Jesus, prayer is something that needs to be learned, practiced, and developed.
 - a. Have you ever felt a barrier in your prayer life because you weren't sure how to pray or if you were doing it right?
 - b. If you have studied or practiced prayer before, what have you found helpful?
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2. In verses 5-13, Jesus illustrates that God, Abba, not only listens to the prayerful requests of His children but loves to give them incredible gifts.
 - a. Do you find it hard to believe that God wants to give you good, practical, and incredible gifts?
 - b. As a group, share what you have been asking God for lately and pray for one another with the conviction that what Jesus said about our Father is true.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty-Five

Jesus & Beelzebul

Luke 11:14-26

Liturgical Prayer

Holy Spirit, Comforting fire, Life of all creation.

Anointing the sick, cleansing body and soul, Fill this body!

Holy Spirit, Sacred breath, Fire of love,

Sweetest taste, Beautiful aroma, Fill this heart!

Holy Spirit, Filling the world, from the heights to the deep,

Raining from clouds, filling rivers and sea, Fill this mind!

Holy Spirit, Forgiving and giving, uniting strangers, reconciling enemies,

Seeking the lost, and enfolding us together, Fill these gathered here!

Holy Spirit, Bringing light into dark places, igniting praise,

Greatest gift, our Hope and Encourager,

Holy Spirit of Christ, I praise you! Amen.

Hildegard of Bingen, 1098-1179

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?



Stir Up the Heart

1. In verse 16, Luke writes about a group of people who kept testing Jesus and seeking signs from heaven. Despite Jesus' many miracles, they still needed more signs before they would follow Him. Sometimes, like this crowd, people today can find themselves seeking undeniable signs and assurances before fully committing to Jesus.
 - a. Have you ever asked God for more signs?
 - b. What would you tell someone who says they will only believe in God, or trust Him within a particular area of life, if He gives them a sign?

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2. After Jesus casts out the mute demon, two groups react from the crowd. The first group rejects Jesus altogether, while the second group asks for additional signs. Jesus responds to both groups with a striking statement, "Whoever is not with me is against me" (v. 23). Jesus makes it clear that being undecided about Him is equivalent to rejecting Him outright. In today's postmodern culture, where truth is a relative concept, these words from Jesus can be considered hostile and divisive.
 - a. How do you navigate the claims of Christ with skeptics around you?

Practice Obedience

1. In Luke 11:24-26, Jesus tells a parable about an unclean spirit that after being cast out, returns to the person it left. Finding the place clean and empty, the spirit brings back seven others even more wicked than itself. This parable highlights the importance of not just experiencing God's work, but allowing His Spirit to fill and guide us afterward.
 - a. Has there been a time in your life when darkness returned, even after you thought you had been delivered?
 - b. How can we guard our hearts so patterns of sin do not come back?

2. After sharing the _____ from the previous question, split into groups of 2-3 to intentionally pray for one another.
 - c. Do your best to not let the prayer and accountability end tonight – pray for one another throughout the week and follow up to keep each other accountable.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty-Six

The Sign of Jonah

Luke 11:27-36

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, who has mercy upon all, take away from me my sins,
and mercifully kindle in me the fire of Your Holy Spirit.

Take away from me the heart of stone,
and give me a heart of flesh,
a heart to love and adore You,
a heart to delight in You,
to follow and to enjoy You,
for Christ's sake. Amen.

Ambrose of Milan, 337-397 AD

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?



Stir Up the Heart

1. Everyone has a different definition of what it means to be “blessed.”
 - a. How does Jesus redefine what it means to be blessed (v. 28)?
 - b. What does it mean to be blessed by hearing and obeying the word of God?
 - c. How does this challenge or affirm your understanding of blessing?

2. Verses 33-36 emphasize the importance of the eyes as the body's lamp, or in other words, what we give our attention to affects our spiritual health.
 - a. Discuss your media use (television, social media, news, etc).
 - b. In what ways does what you consume develop or harm your spiritual formation?
 - c. What adjustments might need to be made?

Practice Obedience

1. In verse 28, Jesus corrects a woman by saying, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it.” Notice the dual emphasis of hearing and keeping. Christians cannot simply hear or delight in God’s Word; we must keep God’s Word.
 - a. Are there any areas of life where you feel unequipped to “keep God’s Word”?

2. In verse 35, Jesus warned, “Be careful lest the light in you is darkness.” From time to time, God reveals to us that something we thought to be true and right and good was in fact inconsistent with Scripture. In our modern hyper-ideological era, this is often the case for Christians who attempt to navigate many ideas at once.
 - a. Share a time God revealed that your thinking on a particular subject was dark, not light.

b. How did He reveal that? And what was the change process like?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty-Seven

Woes

Luke 11:37-54

Liturgical Prayer

Holy Spirit, come into my heart;
draw it to Thee by Thy power, O my God,
and grant me charity with filial fear.
Preserve me, O beautiful Love, from every evil thought;
warm me, inflame me with Thy dear love,
and every pain will seem light to me.
My Father, my sweet Lord, help me in all my actions.
Jesus, love, Jesus, love.
Eternal God, eternal Trinity,
You have made the Blood of Christ so precious
through His sharing in Your Divine nature.
You are a mystery as deep as the sea;
the more I search, the more I find,
and the more I find, the more I search for You.
But I can never be satisfied;
what I receive will ever leave me desiring more.
When You fill my soul, I have an ever greater hunger,
and I grow more famished for Your light.
I desire above all to see You,
the true Light, as you really are. Amen.

Catherine of Siena, 1347-1380

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
 2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
 3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?
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Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
 2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
 3. What do you learn about God from this text?
 4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
 5. What questions do you have from reading the text?
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Stir Up the Heart

1. The Pharisees were experts at presenting themselves as upright, righteous people. In verses 37-38, the Pharisees judge Jesus for not washing before dinner. However, Jesus turns the script, accusing them of being concerned with how others perceive them but ignoring their internal spiritual maturity. If we're honest, the Pharisees' tendency here is not unique. As humans, we all try to hide parts of ourselves and project an ideal image.
 - a. Have you ever struggled with this?
 - b. How does/has the Gospel freed you from this?

2. In verses 39-44, Jesus issues several warnings to the Pharisees regarding their sins: they exhibit greed and lack of genuine generosity (v. 39-41), practice strict tithing without embodying "justice and the love of God" (v. 42), seek recognition (v. 43), and neglect the needs of others (v. 44). Again, their issue was prioritizing the appearance of their actions without truly developing their heart towards God.
 - a. What practices/disciplines have you cultivated to maintain an internal life devoted to God?

Practice Obedience

1. In verse 42, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for tithing (giving a tenth of everything they produced in a year) while neglecting deeper issues of the heart. Despite His critique, Jesus affirms the goodness of the tithe, saying, "These (tithes) you ought to have done, without neglecting the others." Giving one-tenth of everything we produce back to God is a beautiful expression of faith that aligns with God's law.
 - a. What practices about tithing have served you well?
 - b. What challenges do you face when it comes to the idea of tithing to your church?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty-Eight

Fear Not

Luke 12:1-12

Liturgical Prayer

Be kind to Your little children, Lord;
that is what we ask of You as their Tutor,
You the Father, Israel's guide; Son, yes, but Father as well.
Grant that by doing what You told us to do,
we may achieve a faithful likeness to the Image and,
as far as is possible for us, may find in You a good God and a lenient Judge.

May we all live in the peace that comes from You.

May we journey towards Your city,
sailing through the waters of sin untouched by the waves,
borne tranquilly along by the Holy Spirit, Your Wisdom beyond all telling.
Night and day until the last day of all, may our praises give You thanks,
our thanksgiving praise You:
You who alone are both Father and Son,
Son and Father,
the Son who is our Tutor and our Teacher,
together with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Clement of Alexandria, 150-215 AD

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?



2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. In Luke 12:3, Jesus reveals that all our gossip, even words we have spoken in private, will be revealed on the housetops.
 - a. Do you struggle with gossip?
 - b. Are there particular relationships or circumstances that draw gossip out of you?
 - c. What impact does this have on your spiritual formation?

2. In Luke 12:4-5, Jesus teaches about the fear of man versus the fear of God. While we may not face physical persecution for our faith, it is still easy to fear people more than God.
 - a. How have you experienced this in your own life?
 - b. Are there current situations where the opinions or expectations of others are weighing heavily on your heart?
 - c. How do you navigate these challenges while maintaining a reverence for God?

Practice Obedience

1. Pretend for a moment that your friend continually struggles with the fear of man in an unhealthy way.
 - a. In light of Jesus' call to "fear God," how would you begin to counsel your friend?
 - b. What practical advice would you give to help them take steps toward not fearing other people?

2. In verse 12, Jesus encourages the disciples that “the Holy Spirit will teach in that very hour what you ought to say.”
 - a. Can you recall a time the Spirit gave you the words to say? What was that experience like?
 - b. How should we prepare ourselves for the Holy Spirit to move in this way?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Thirty-Nine

Parable of the Rich Fool

Luke 12:13-34

Liturgical Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to spread your fragrance everywhere we go.

Flood our souls with your spirit and life.

Penetrate and possess our whole being so utterly
that our lives may only be a radiance of yours.

Shine through us and be so in us that every soul we come in contact with
may feel your presence in our soul.

Let them look up and see no longer us, but only Jesus.

Stay with us and then we shall begin to shine as you shine,
so to shine as to be light to others.

The light, O Jesus, will be all from you. None of it will be ours.

It will be you shining on others through us.

Let us thus praise you in the way you love best by shining on those around us.

Let us preach you without preaching, not by words, but by our example –
by the catching force,

the sympathetic influence of what we do,

the evident fullness of the love our hearts bear to you. Amen.

Teresa of Calcutta, 1910-1997

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?



Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. In verses 16-21, Jesus highlights the relationship between material wealth and the soul's condition by calling someone who hoards wealth a "fool" (v. 20) and contrasting them with those "rich toward God" (v. 21).
 - a. While we may not be literally building barns to store our riches, what does the life of a "rich fool" look like in your setting?
 - b. How does this parable challenge your current relationship with wealth and possessions?

2. In verses 22-26, Jesus addresses the anxiety we often feel regarding our material needs and encourages us to trust in God's provision.
 - a. While it may be easier said than done, have you seen God provide for you in unexpected ways? How?
 - b. What practical steps have you taken to trust God with your material needs?
 - c. What aspects of God's character have you found comforting in times of uncertainty?

Practice Obedience

1. Read Luke 12:32-34. In this passage, Jesus wants the disciples to practice trusting God and seeking the kingdom He gives them by selling their possessions and giving to the

poor. When it comes to our resources, it's often not natural for us to give generously but to steward prudently.

- a. Does giving generously come naturally to you?
- b. Who do you know that gives extravagantly?
- c. How is giving like this challenging for you?

2. In verses 29-30, Jesus calls his followers to live lives distinguished from those in the world.

- a. What specific worries or ambitions do you have that reveal a continuing "worldly" mindset in your life?
- b. What steps can you take to see transformation in this area of your life?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Forty

The Hour You Least Expect

Luke 12:35-48

Liturgical Prayer

Blessed Lord,

you have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning -
grant us that we may in such a way hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them;
that by patient and comfort of your holy Word,
we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer, 1552

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart



1. In verses 35-40, Jesus advises his followers to stay prepared for his return, which will come at an unexpected time. This is so the people of God will always remain prepared for their master's return.

- a. What does a life prepared for Jesus' return look like?
- b. What does an unprepared life look like?

2. In verse 41, the disciples ask Jesus if the parable about being prepared is meant for them or everyone. Instead of directly answering, Jesus tells another parable about servants managing their master's possessions. This teaches that everyone is responsible for stewarding whatever God has given them.

- a. What resources, abilities, tasks, or opportunities do you believe God has specifically entrusted to *you* (v. 48)?
- b. What resources are you stewarding well in this season?
- c. Is there anything you are stewarding poorly or uncertain how to steward well?

Practice Obedience

1. One thing is certain from this text: Jesus will one day return.
 - a. What if Jesus was going to return six months from now?
 - b. What would change about your current life and lifestyle in those six months as you prepared for Him?

2. In verse 47, Jesus starkly warns servants who know their master's will, desire, and plan but refuse to act accordingly.

- a. Is there anything God is calling you to do now that you are delaying, unwilling, or afraid of?
- b. How might you step into obedience in the coming weeks?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Forty-One

Not Peace, But Division

Luke 12:49-59

Liturgical Prayer

We bring before Thee,

O Lord, the troubles and perils of people and nations,
the sighing of prisoners and captives,
the sorrows of the bereaved,
the necessities of strangers,
the helplessness of the weak,
the despondency of the weary,
the failing powers of the aged.

O Lord, draw near to each;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Anselm of Canterbury, 1033-1109

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. In verses 49-53, Jesus announces in a rather shocking way that his mission on Earth will often bring division rather than unity, even within families.
 - a. What does Jesus mean by this?
 - b. In your life, have you experienced any relational divisions because of your faith in Jesus?

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2. Jesus does not hide the fact that following Him will lead to challenges with those closest to us. However, as His followers, we become part of a new family of faith transcending all socioeconomic, cultural, geographical, and historical boundaries.
 - a. How have you experienced support, love, and peace from being part of this family of faith?

***This is your chance to really celebrate and honor all the ways God has used other Christians to care for you deeply.*

Practice Obedience

1. One reason many modern Western Christians may never experience the type of division referred to in verses 49-53 is that we tend to be people pleasers, making us timid in our faith.
 - a. Are there any areas/relationships in your life where you have been avoiding a boldness of faith or difficult decision because of the fear of man?

2. In verses 57-59, Jesus urges His followers to reconcile with those they are indebted to before they are in prison and unable to repay their accuser.
 - a. Is there anyone you have wronged that you have not truly sought reconciliation with?
 - b. What actions might you need to take in order to follow Christ's commands in this passage?
 - c. On the other hand, are there people who have wronged you and have not reconciled?
 - d. What has God done in you as you work through those wounds?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Forty-Two

A Call to Repentance

Luke 13:1-9

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babies and infants,

you have established strength because of your foes,

to still the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

what is man that you are mindful of him,

and the son of man that you care for him?

Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings

and crowned him with glory and honor.

You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;

you have put all things under his feet,

all sheep and oxen,

and also the beasts of the field,

the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,

whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth! Amen.

Psalms 8

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
 2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
 3. What do you learn about God from this text?
 4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
 5. What questions do you have from reading the text?
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Stir Up the Heart

1. In verses 1-5, Jesus teaches about repentance. This is a term that unfortunately does not get enough attention in the modern church. To repent involves both grieving over and turning from sin. The beginning of repentance is always a grieved heart of one's sin.
 - a. What watered down versions of repentance are in the church today?
 - b. How do you think those ideas of repentance impact people's faith?
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2. In verses 1-3, Jesus challenges this notion that those who suffer are more sinful than those who do not.
 - a. How does the teaching in this passage confront the idea of "deserving" or "undeserving" suffering?
 - b. What implications does this have for how we understand/respond to the suffering of others?
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Practice Obedience

1. Jesus' warning about everyone perishing unless they repent was meant to spur listeners into immediate action – first, by turning to God themselves, and second, by sharing the Good News. In the story, the tragic deaths highlight the urgency of repentance; nobody



knows how much time they have!

- a. Is there someone in your life you've been meaning to tell about Jesus but have hesitated/delayed?
- b. If so, what obstacles have stood in your way?
- c. What can you do in the near future to share the hope of Christ with them?

2. It is no secret that this text reveals the difficulty of following Jesus.

- a. How might the teachings in this passage alter how we respond to and interpret suffering in our lives or others?
- b. How can we support those grappling with suffering while maintaining a call to repentance and transformation?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Forty-Three

Faith that Works

Luke 13:10-21

Liturgical Prayer

O, make your Word a swift Word,
passing from the ear to the heart,
from the heart to the lip and conversation;
that, as the rain returns not empty,
so neither may your Word,
but accomplish that for which it is given. Amen.

George Herbert, 1593-1633

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart



1. Despite suffering from an extreme disability for many years, the woman still went to the synagogue to worship the Lord. Her faith and persistence are truly remarkable.
 - a. Do you know someone who, despite facing significant hardships, continues to have extraordinary faith and trust in the Lord?
 - b. If so, share their story and its impact on you.

2. In verses 18-20, Jesus likens the incredible grandeur of the Kingdom of God to a tiny, seemingly insignificant mustard seed and the work of leaven in a ball of dough.
 - a. How does the idea of slow and sometimes unnoticed growth (as in the mustard seed and yeast) inform your understanding of spiritual development and the progress of God's work in the world?

Practice Obedience

1. Verses 18-21 suggest that the Kingdom of God will grow gradually but consistently. This implies that Christians should be optimistic about the expansion of God's Kingdom in the world.
 - a. Looking back at 2,000 years of church history, we can see that Jesus' words have proven true.
 - b. What signs of God's Kingdom growing do you see in the world today?

2. The woman Jesus healed had been disabled for eighteen years—that's a really long time. Therefore, it makes sense that when Jesus healed her, she immediately glorified God in celebration.
 - a. Is there something you've been praying for a long time that you'd like to share with the group for prayer?
 - b. Has God answered a prayer that you can together glorify God for and celebrate?

c. Take some time and pray for these things.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Forty-Four

The Narrow Door

Luke 13:22-30

Liturgical Prayer

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, Selah.
that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you!

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you!

The earth has yielded its increase;

God, our God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us;

let all the ends of the earth fear him? Amen.

Psalms 67

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?

4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart

1. In verse 24, Jesus speaks about striving to enter through the narrow door.
 - a. What does this striving entail and how does it compare to other biblical teachings about salvation by grace through faith?

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2. Luke 13:25-28 are some of the most haunting verses in the New Testament because they describe the fate of hypocrites, people who believed themselves to be eternally secure but never actually “knew” Jesus.
 - a. If you were to provide a test to somebody about whether their faith is secure in Christ, what test would you assign? In other words, what are biblical ways of revealing whether or not a person is a hypocrite or a genuine believer?

Practice Obedience

1. Considering Christ’s command to “strive to enter the narrow door,” we might consider the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the famous WWII theologian who resisted Hitler. He wrote,

“Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate. Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows

him. Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son."

- a. Discuss this quote and compare "cheap grace" to "costly grace."

2. Jesus calls all of us to follow him through the narrow door.

- a. How do your daily actions/decisions reflect your commitment to the narrow door and values of the Kingdom of God?
- b. Are there areas in your life where you need to adjust to better align with these values?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Forty-Five

The Sabbath, a Wedding Feast, and a Great Banquet

Luke 14:1-24

Liturgical Prayer

For you are my rock and my fortress;
and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me;
you take me out of the net they have hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.
Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

Psalms 31:3-5

Consider the Context

1. Who is Luke writing to/for? Why?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage

1. Are there any repeated words/phrases? What are the key ideas from the text?
2. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
3. What do you learn about God from this text?
4. What did you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
5. What questions do you have from reading the text?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)



1. In verses 7-11, Jesus teaches about humility, encouraging his listeners to take the lowest place rather than seeking honor. This is because, in the end, the first shall be last and the last shall be first.
 - a. In what areas of your life are you tempted to seek recognition or status?
 - b. How does this teaching from Jesus challenge you?

2. In verses 12-24, the invited guests make excuses as to why they cannot come and consequently miss the joy of the banquet.
 - a. Are there “excuses”, “distractions”, or “bad habits” in your life keeping you from fully responding to God’s invitation to participate in His kingdom?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In Luke’s Gospel, Jesus heals on the Sabbath four times. This challenges the Pharisees’ rigid interpretations and reminds them that the Sabbath is meant to be a time for restoration and compassion.
 - a. Do you currently practice a full Sabbath day’s rest? If not, what is holding you back?
 - b. If you do, how could you intentionally incorporate acts of service or helping others into your Sabbath rhythm?

2. In verses 12-24, Jesus challenges the party host for inviting only friends, family, and those who can repay him. Instead, He says the host should have invited those who cannot repay – the poor, crippled, and marginalized. This parable reminds us that when it comes to God’s banquet, none of us can repay Him for the invitation, yet we are invited anyway.

- a. How do you practice inviting the “unlikely” in your life?
- b. Who are those in your life that you can invite to your table or include in your circle?

Spend Time in Prayer

- 1. What are you thanking God for?

- 2. What are you asking God for?

Week Forty-Six

The Disciple's Cost

Luke 14:25-35

Liturgical Prayer

Look upon us, O Lord,
and let all the darkness of our souls
vanish before the beams of thy brightness.
Fill us with holy love,
and open to us the treasures of thy wisdom.
All our desire is known unto thee,
therefore perfect what thou hast begun,
and what thy Spirit has awakened us to ask in prayer.
We seek thy face,
turn thy face unto us and show us thy glory.
Then shall our longing be satisfied,
and our peace shall be perfect.

St. Augustine of Hippo

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?

3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In verse 33, Jesus gives a great summary of his teaching: "So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple."
 - a. What does he mean by this statement?
 - b. What in your life have you had to renounce for the call to follow Jesus?

2. In this parable, Jesus describes someone who began building a tower but stopped because they hadn't first considered the cost.
 - a. Can you think of someone in your life who started to show signs of faith but turned away when it required sacrifice?
 - b. What challenges do you think led them to step back?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. How do you reconcile Jesus' call to renounce everything for the sake of following Him with the understanding that God delights in giving His children good gifts (Luke 11:13)?
 - a. Discuss with each other how you discern, in your own life, the difference between blessings from a loving God and things that may be hindering your walk with Him.
 - b. Consider how you can practice this discernment and be open to what God is calling you to let go of in the coming weeks.

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2. In verses 34-35, Jesus emphasizes the significance of salt and its purpose. He pointed out that if it loses its flavor, it becomes worthless. In light of the previous verses, He teaches that a life not fully devoted to Him is similarly "worthless," failing to fulfill its intended purpose.
- a. As you reflect on the past year, how have you excelled in maintaining your "saltiness" as a disciple? Where was it difficult?
 - b. Looking forward to this new year, where would you like to grow?
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Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?
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2. What are you asking God for?
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Week Forty-Seven

Lost & Found
Luke 15:1-10

Liturgical Prayer

Seek the Lord while he may be found;

call on him while he is near.

Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the unrighteous their thoughts.

Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the Lord.

"As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:6-9

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?

3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. At the heart of both parables is a powerful message of pursuit: a shepherd who actively seeks out his lost sheep and a woman who searches diligently for her lost coin. Each Christian has a story of how God has pursued us in our own lives when we felt lost.
 - a. What are the ways God reached out and pursued you?

2. This parable beautifully reminds us that we were all once lost, pursued by Christ, and ultimately found in Him. Often, this pursuit comes through other Christians evangelizing and sharing their faith. Today, many see evangelism as an unnecessary or very challenging aspect of their faith.
 - a. What barriers do you experience in sharing your faith with others?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. The shepherd and the woman both celebrate when they find what was lost.
 - a. How can we create a culture of joy and celebration in our communities when someone returns to faith or finds Christ for the first time?

2. Just as Jesus sought us out, we are called to join Him in His Kingdom mission to reach the lost. As believers, we are encouraged to engage in intentional relationships with those who are far from God.

- a. How are you currently intentional about being present in the lives of those who are far from God?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Forty-Eight

The Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

Liturgical Prayer

Glory be to the Father
and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

Gloria Patri

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. The father's unconditional love and willingness to forgive and celebrate his son's return challenges our understanding of what it means to love someone.
 - a. How does this challenge you, especially when a person hurts you personally?
 - b. Can you share a personal experience where you received or offered this kind of love? What was that experience like?

2. The younger brother had to find out the hard way that a life of sin is full of hardship, difficulty, broken relationships, and pain.
 - a. Write down and share with your group about a time when you experienced this in your life.

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. The story of the younger son illustrates true repentance - reaching the end of oneself and turning back to the father in hope of mercy. Reflecting on repentance, J.C. Ryle said, "Feelings, and tears, and remorse, and wishes, and resolutions, are all useless until they are accompanied by action and a change of life."
 - a. What steps are you currently taking to live out repentance in your own life?

2. Both sons misunderstood their father's love - one sought it through rebellion, the other through performance.
 - a. Which tendency do you most relate to and why?
 - b. How can you practice resting more in the truth of God's unconditional love?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Forty-Nine

Knowing the Master¹

Luke 16:1-17

Liturgical Prayer

Blessed Lord,

who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:

Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn,

and inwardly digest them,

that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life,

which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

¹ Leader Tip: See this short video for help interpreting this passage:

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/does-jesus-commend-dishonesty-in-luke-16>

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. This parable is one of the more challenging ones to interpret. While the steward's dishonesty is clearly an example to avoid, his "shrewdness" is presented as a quality Christians can learn from.

- a. In what ways should Christians practice shrewdness in their lives, particularly when it comes to stewarding resources and advancing God's kingdom?
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2. In our culture, it's easy to justify how we handle our finances, either to others or to ourselves.

- a. As a Christian, what are the biggest questions or challenges you face when it comes to managing money?
 - b. What resources or tools have you found helpful in shaping a biblical perspective on finances? What is the best advice you've received about managing money in a way that honors God?
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Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verse 10 of this parable, Jesus highlights the importance of faithfulness in small things.

- a. How have you seen God use small acts of faithfulness in your life or the lives of others to accomplish something greater?
 - b. What small acts of faithfulness do you feel God calling you into in the coming weeks?
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2. Who in your life stands out as someone who honors God exceptionally in the way they steward their finances and why?
 - a. This week, consider reaching out to them to share how their example has impacted you and encouraged you to view finances through a faith-centered lens.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Fifty

Sanctity of Marriage

Luke 16:18

Liturgical Prayer

Grant, Almighty God, that as you once opened the mouth of your servant Balaam, and made even an ass to speak, so also at this day, as we are now met together in your name, to offer to you our sacrifices and prayers, and as your only-begotten Son has consecrated us all to be a royal priesthood, may it please you to open our minds and mouths, that we may be able to declare what is right and just and to magnify your name; and may we be so attentive to the external and internal doctrine, that we may not turn aside either to the right hand or to the left, but proceed in the pure and right worship of your majesty until we shall at length reach that happy and celestial life, which your only-begotten Son has obtained for us by his own blood. Amen.

John Calvin

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. For each of us - whether we're single, married, divorced, or have experienced divorce in our families - Jesus' words here may bring up complex emotions. Consider this verse and other teachings Jesus gives on marriage and divorce.

- a. How have you personally wrestled with or found comfort in what he teaches?

2. According to Jewish law at the time, men could divorce their wives for nearly any reason. Jesus stands out among anyone we know in antiquity by declaring marriage as a permanent union.

- a. Why does he emphasize this aspect of marriage?

- b. What would be lost in the Biblical significance of marriage if Jesus did not teach this?

3. How does Jesus' teaching in this text contrast our culture's perspective of marriage?
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Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. Even among those who truly profess faith in Christ, divorce and remarriage can still occur. For someone in that situation, a passage like this might feel overwhelmingly condemning.

- a. How does the Gospel speak into that situation, offering healing, forgiveness, comfort, and hope?



2. Consider today's culture around singleness and dating.
 - a. What do modern singles need to know and have solid convictions around when dating and looking for a spouse, in light of Christ's incredibly high value of marriage?
 - b. What traps are most common in today's dating scene, that Christians must avoid in order to stay faithful to Christ's high value of marriage.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Fifty-One

Heaven & Hell

Luke 16:19-31

Liturgical Prayer

Almighty God, and most merciful Father,
we humbly submit ourselves,
and fall down before your Majesty,
asking you from the bottom of our hearts,
that this seed of your Word now sown among us,
may take such deep root, that neither the burning heat of persecution cause it to wither,
nor the thorny cares of this life choke it.
But that as seed sown in good ground,
it may bring forth thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold,
as your heavenly wisdom has appointed. Amen.

Middleburg Liturgy

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?



5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. The rich man lived in constant comfort but ignored Lazarus, who was lying sick at his gate.
 - a. Do you ever feel desensitized to the needs of others?
 - b. How can we guard our hearts against this, especially when we live in relative comfort?

2. This story has perhaps the most vivid description of the experience in Hell across Scripture.
 - a. What emotions does reading this passage bring up in you?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. The rich man, now facing the consequences of his choices, is filled with regret over how he lived. Unfortunately, his choices are final, and he can't go back to change them.
 - a. What do you imagine he would want to do differently if he had a chance to live his life over?
 - b. Now, think about your own life. How do his regrets challenge your priorities, how you treat others, or the lifestyle you live?

2. In this passage, the rich man pleads for his family to be warned about the reality of Hell, hoping they might be spared from his fate. But Abraham replies that they already have the teachings of Moses and the prophets and that even someone returning from the dead wouldn't convince them if they won't listen now.
 - a. How does this story move you to share the Good News with those who don't yet know Jesus?
 - b. What steps can you take—through your actions, your words, and how you live your faith—to make that message real for them? How can you reach out or pray for them this week?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Fifty-Two

Unworthy

Luke 17:1-19

Liturgical Prayer

Almighty, gracious Father,

since our whole salvation depends on our true understanding of your holy Word,
grant that our hearts freed from worldly affairs
may hear and understand your holy Word with all diligence and faith,
so that we may rightly discern your gracious will, cherish it,
and live by it with all earnestness,
to your praise and honor, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Martin Bucer

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?



Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In verses 5-6, Jesus responds to an apostle who asks him to increase his faith. However, Jesus replies that it is not the size of faith that counts but the quality of one's faith. Even the smallest amount of genuine faith has indescribable power.
 - a. How does this shift your understanding of what it means to have "enough" faith?

2. On his way to Jerusalem, Jesus was met by ten lepers who "stood at a distance."
 - a. In what ways do people "distance themselves" from Jesus today?
 - b. Has this ever been your experience? If so, how did Jesus draw you near?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verses 1-4, Jesus warns about causing others to stumble and calls His followers to forgive repeatedly, even multiple times in a single day.
 - a. Is there anyone you've been struggling to forgive?
 - b. How does this text and the forgiveness offered in the Gospel challenge you to extend forgiveness to those who've wronged you?

2. In verses 11-19, Jesus heals ten lepers, but only one returns to thank Christ and praise God.
 - a. Why do you think only one returned?
 - b. Is there anything God has given you that you haven't thanked him for? If so, share with the group and spend time praising God together.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Fifty-Three

Now & Not Yet

Luke 17:20-37

Liturgical Prayer

My soul glorifies the Lord

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.
His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors.

Luke 1:46-55

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)



**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. This passage calls readers to live with readiness and urgency, anticipating Christ's return and the fullness of His Kingdom.
 - a. What are the distractions, fears, or challenges in your life that keep you from living with the kind of urgency and hunger for the Kingdom that Jesus describes?

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2. Verse 32 says, "Remember Lot's wife."
 - a. Discuss the mistake Lot's wife made (see Genesis 19:26).
 - b. What is Jesus communicating to us today?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. Reflecting on verse 21:
 - a. How can we help others understand that the Kingdom of God is not just a future hope but also a present reality actively at work in the world?
 - b. In what ways do we participate in His Kingdom now?

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2. If you knew with certainty that Jesus would return in 30 days, how might that knowledge change how you live your daily life?
 - a. What priorities would shift?
 - b. How would it impact your relationships, decisions, and lifestyle?
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Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?
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2. What are you asking God for?
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Week Fifty-Four

Faithful Humility

Luke 18:1-8

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord,

You who have measured The heights and the earth In the hollow of your hand,
And created the six-wing Seraphim
To cry out to you with an unceasing voice
Holy, Holy, Holy, Glory to your name.
Deliver me From the mouth of the evil one, O Master.
Forget my many evil deeds And through the multitude of your compassion
Grant me daily forgiveness,
For you are blessed unto the ages. Amen.

Amma Sarah

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (10 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. The Parable of the Persistent Widow highlights the importance of persistence in prayer, encouraging us to bring our needs to God continually.
 - a. What does persistence in prayer look like in your life?

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2. Jesus understands that prayer can be exhausting, especially when we've been asking for the same thing and seeing little change. In verse 1, He shares this parable to encourage His followers to persevere in prayer and not lose heart—but as many of us know and have experienced, that's often easier said than done.
 - a. Are there prayers you've grown weary of praying? Where have you felt discouraged in bringing the same requests to God?
 - b. How has God met you or shaped you in this waiting?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. Jesus contrasts the unjust judge with God, who is perfectly just and loving. The widow had to beg and fight for justice from someone who didn't care about her, but Jesus reminds us that God is not like that—He is a loving Father who hears us and responds with care.
 - a. When you think about your own prayers, do you approach God more like He is a distant judge, someone you need to beg for justice from, or a caring Father who loves responding and caring for his children?
 - b. If you tend to see God as distant or reluctant to hear, try praying through and meditating on Scriptures that speak of God's nearness and love. (ex. Isaiah 63:9, Matthew 7:9-11, Psalm 103:13, Romans 8:15)

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2. One of the challenges of persistent prayer is that we often carry our burdens alone. Yet, the Christian life was never meant to be lived in isolation; as Christians, we are called to support one another, lifting each other up when we're weak and offering encouragement when we're discouraged.
 - a. As a group, take time to pray for the needs shared today.
 - b. Find a way to commit to being reminded of these prayers, persistently praying for one another in the weeks, months, and even years ahead.
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Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Fifty-Five

The Posture of Humility

Luke 18:9-17

Liturgical Prayer

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil,

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff,

they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Amen.

David, Psalm 23

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?

2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?

3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

**Observing the text really is the heartbeat of the study. The questions below are prompts to help observe, but do not feel limited by these. We want the main idea of the text to become the main idea of the discussion.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. The Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector compares the hearts of two different men, a self-righteous man and a humble man. John Chrysostom once said, "Humility is the mother, root, nurse, foundation, and center of all other virtues."
 - a. Why do you think this is?
 - b. Are there other passages that come to mind that instruct us on humility?

2. In verses 15-17, the disciples tried to stop people from bringing their children to Jesus, but Jesus welcomed them.
 - a. What are the characteristics and personality traits of a child that Jesus is commending in these verses?
 - b. Which of these do you struggle embodying the most in your faith?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, Jesus warns against the self-righteousness and pride that comes from comparing ourselves to others.
 - a. What practical measures can you take to more quickly spot pride, or a lack of humility, when it bubbles up?
 - b. What passages would be helpful to memorize in order to combat pride when you sense it in yourself?

2. There is no more trying place to exercise humility, than when receiving criticism or feedback.
 - a. Is this something that's difficult for you?
 - b. When confronted with feedback, how can you respond with humility rather than defensiveness?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Fifty-Six

The Rich Young Ruler

Luke 18:18-43

Liturgical Prayer

Breathe in us, Holy Spirit, That our thoughts may all be holy.

Act in us, Holy Spirit, That our work, too, may be holy.

Draw our hearts, Holy Spirit, That we love but what is holy.

Strengthen us, Holy Spirit, To defend all that is holy.

Guard us, then, Holy Spirit, That we always may be holy. Amen.

St. Augustine of Hippo

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

*Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

**Observing the text really is the heartbeat of the study. The questions below are prompts to help observe, but do not feel limited by these. We want the main idea of the text to become the main idea of the discussion.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. As Westerners, this teaching from Jesus is one of his most challenging. Like the rich young ruler, many of us struggle to apply this seemingly radical teaching into our lives.
 - a. In what ways is money able to remove your dependence on God or hope in God?
 - b. Have you seen this in your own heart at all?

2. Imagine for a moment that *you* are the rich young ruler, standing face-to-face with Jesus as He speaks these words to you.
 - a. How do you think you would respond?

3. Jesus clearly tells the disciples about His coming suffering, death, and resurrection, yet they don't fully understand.
 - a. Why do you think it's sometimes hard to grasp or accept God's plans, especially when they involve suffering?
 - b. Can you recall a time when you experienced this personally?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. Throughout the Gospel of Luke, Jesus has taught about finances repeatedly.
 - a. As you reflect on our Luke study thus far, where have you seen growth in your approach to handle money?
 - b. Where do you still need to grow?

2. In verse 41, Jesus asks the blind man, “What do you want me to do for you?” even though his need was obvious.
 - a. Why do you think Jesus wanted the man to name his specific need?
 - b. What does this teach us about bringing our own needs to Jesus?
 - c. What is something specific in your life you want Jesus to do for you?
 - d. As a group, spend some time sharing these needs with one another. Then, call out to God in prayer, trusting Him with your requests, just as the blind man trusted Jesus to restore his sight.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Fifty-Seven

Zaccheaus

Luke 19:1-10

Liturgical Prayer

Be kind to Your little children, Lord;
that is what we ask of You as their Tutor,
You the Father, Israel's guide; Son, yes, but Father as well.
Grant that by doing what You told us to do,
we may achieve a faithful likeness to the Image and,
as far as is possible for us, may find in You a good God and a lenient Judge.
May we all live in the peace that comes from You.
May we journey towards Your city,
sailing through the waters of sin untouched by the waves,
borne tranquilly along by the Holy Spirit, Your Wisdom beyond all telling.
Night and day until the last day of all, may our praises give You thanks,
our thanksgiving praise You
You who alone are both Father and Son,
Son and Father,
the Son who is our Tutor and our Teacher,
together with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Clement of Alexandria, 150-215 AD

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

**Observing the text really is the heartbeat of the study. The questions below are prompts to help observe, but do not feel limited by these. We want the text to speak. We want the main*

idea of the text to become the main idea of the discussion.

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. When Jesus calls Zacchaeus by name and invites Himself into his home, Zacchaeus, in turn, responds with joy and repentance. There was a sense of astonishment that Jesus would meet with him.
 - a. Do you feel your faith has a sense of astonishment to it?
 - b. If so, how do you maintain that astonishment?
 - c. If not, what can be done to develop a sense of astonishment?
2. Zacchaeus, as a chief tax collector, worked for Israel's enemy, the Roman government, who often took money from the poor to fund their own oppression. He also used his position to defraud his own people, collecting more taxes from them than they owed (v. 8).
 - a. Imagine someone treated you as Zecchaeus did. How would you feel about Jesus' response to them in this story?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. How does Jesus' willingness to extend grace and seek restored relationship with someone as wicked as Zacchaeus challenge your view and response to people who have wronged you?

2. In this story, Zacchaeus didn't just acknowledge his wrongdoing. He immediately took action to make things right by giving half of his wealth to the poor and repaying those he defrauded four times over. Throughout our study in Luke, we've reflected on the importance of restoring relationships with those who have wronged us or those we've wronged.

- a. What practical and sacrificial steps have you taken toward reconciliation or extending grace?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Fifty-Eight

Parable of the Ten Minas

Luke 19:11-27

Liturgical Prayer

Holy Spirit, pour out upon us
wisdom and understanding
that, being taught by you in Holy Scripture,
our hearts and minds may be opened to receive
all that leads to life and holiness.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Ancient Collect

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?



Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In this parable, the nobleman entrusts his servants with his personal resources to steward while he is away.
 - a. Discuss with each other what gifts, responsibilities, talents, and resources God has given you to steward.
 - b. Are there any areas you wonder if you are stewarding faithfully?

2. One aspect of this parable that often gets overlooked is the sudden return of the master. Christians, likewise, eagerly await the second Advent of Christ, when he will come to judge every action and set all things right.
 - a. Is anticipation of Christ's second coming a significant part of your faith?
 - b. In light of this parable, what impact do you think an eager and zealous expectation of Christ's imminent return should have on your day to day life?

3. Very often, the areas that we close to accountability are the areas we are stewarding most poorly.
 - a. Are there any areas of your life that have little to no accountability?
 - b. Are there areas where you would be afraid or nervous to have total open and honest accountability with others in the Church?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. The parable highlights accountability for how the servants managed what they were given. There were various degrees of faithfulness in the management of the master's goods.

- a. What accountability structures do you have in your life that challenge and even force you to steward God's gifts faithfully?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Fifty-Nine

The King of Peace

Luke 19:28-48

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, who hast mercy upon all, take away from me my sins,
and mercifully kindle in me the fire of thy Holy Spirit.

Take away from me the heart of stone,
and give me a heart of flesh,
a heart to love and adore thee,
a heart to delight in thee,
to follow and to enjoy thee,
for Christ's sake. Amen.

Ambrose of Milan, 339-397 AD

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. Jesus' triumphal entry in Jerusalem is a far more significant event than we might imagine. It was hundreds of years in the making (see Zechariah 9:9). It was a signal that the long awaited Messiah-King, he who was prophesied in Genesis 3:15, had arrived and was claiming his kingdom.
 - a. When you think of Christ as King, what comes to mind?
 - b. What questions emerge when you think about the extent of his kingdom?
 - c. What questions emerge when you think about how his Kingdom (big K) interacts with other kingdoms (little k)?
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2. JC Ryle commenting on this passage writes, "Let us leave the whole passage with the cheering reflection, that the joy of Christ's disciples at His entry into Jerusalem, when He came to be crucified, will prove as nothing compared to the joy of His people when He comes again to reign. That first joy was soon broken off and exchanged for sorrow and bitter tears. The second joy shall be a joy for evermore."
 - a. Ryle's comments about "leaving the passage with a cheerful reflection" is insightful. How should we study the Bible in order to avoid affectionless study, and grow our hearts toward God?
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Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verses 45-46, Jesus drives out those who had turned it into a marketplace for profit, rather than a place of prayer and worship. In 1 Corinthians 3:16, we are reminded that we are now the temple, the actual dwelling place of God. If that's true, then Jesus' actions here also carry a deeper meaning for us.
 - a. If Christ were to walk into your heart as he did in this story, what activities incompatible with his presence might he "drive out?"

- b. Now consider your community of faith, your church family. What activities might Christ find inconsistent or incompatible with His purposes?

2. The religious leaders felt threatened by Jesus because His teaching and actions challenged their control and authority in the religious establishment (v. 47). In the same way, many people resist Jesus' authority today because it disrupts their sense of control or security.

- a. Are there areas in your own life where you struggle to fully submit to His rule?
- b. What might be holding you back, and how can you take a step toward trusting Him more completely?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Sixty

The Resurrection

Luke 24:13-35

Liturgical Prayer

Divine Spirit, illuminate to me the words of the Lord.

Show me the wealth of glory that lies beneath the old familiar stories.

Teach me the depths of meaning hidden in the songs of Zion.

Raise me to the heights of aspiration that is reached by the wings of the prophet.

Lift me to the summit of faith that is trod by the feet of the apostle.

Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. Amen.

George Matheson, 1842-1906

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

**Observing the text really is the heartbeat of the study. The questions below are prompts to help observe, but do not feel limited by these. We want the main idea of the text to become the main idea of the discussion.*

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?



5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. The two disciples on the road to Emmaus were walking with Jesus but didn't recognize Him until He broke bread with them.

- a. How can we cultivate our eyes to see Christ more clearly in the ordinary moments of our life?

2. In verse 32, the disciples recall how their hearts burned within them as Jesus explained how the Old Testament Scriptures (v 27 "the law and the prophets") ultimately revealed that Christ would suffer these things.²

- a. Some have a difficult time understanding and engaging the Old Testament? Why do you think this is the case?
- b. What lessons can we encourage one another with, regarding the Old Testament, to deepen our understanding and personal study?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. The disciple's eyes were opened to recognize Jesus in a simple, ordinary act - sharing a meal.

- a. Why do you think Jesus chose to reveal Himself in this way? What does this teach us about how He meets us in the ordinary moments of life?
- b. When you take communion, do you approach it as an opportunity to truly experience the presence of Christ?

² Leaders consider engaging this helpful article on Desiring God before group begins:
<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/where-is-jesus-in-the-old-testament>

- c. If not, how can you prepare your heart more intentionally so that communion becomes a deep space of connection with Him?

2. Jesus' resurrection is the most incredible news the world has ever received. The disciples knew this because as soon as they recognized Jesus, they immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell others. There is an old quote that says, "The average 'Christian' in America will be born in a Christian home, attend Church their entire life, and have a Christian funeral, but never once share their faith with a nonbeliever."

- a. Assuming that quote is true, what does this reveal about our hearts towards Christ?
- b. What practical steps of faith might we take to break this "norm"?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Sixty-One

Rejecting the King's Authority (Part 1)

Luke 20:1-18

Liturgical Prayer

Almighty, gracious Father,

since our whole salvation depends on our true understanding of your holy Word,
grant that our hearts – freed from worldly affairs –
may hear and understand your holy Word with all diligence and faith,
so that we may rightly discern your gracious will, cherish it, and live by it with all earnestness,
to your praise and honor, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Martin Bucer, 1491-1551

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
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Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. Jesus masterfully responded to the religious leader's questions with a question. Christ's question served to reveal hidden hypocrisies in the chief priest's own heart. Following Christ's example, it is often very advantageous to use questions in our own evangelism and spiritual discussions.
 - a. Do you have any examples where you have used question asking to deepen a spiritual conversation with a nonbeliever?

2. The son sent to servants is immediately rejected and killed (v 15). This foreshadows Jesus' own fate, where he will be killed by his own people and hung on the cross.
 - a. How does this parable deepen your understanding of the Father's sacrifice and Jesus' willingness to surrender His life for us?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. While the parable of the wicked tenants is certainly a lesson in what happens to those who reject Christ, it is also a lesson in the patience of God. The Master in this parable sent three separate servants to collect fruit from the vineyard before sending his son.
 - a. As we reflect on the patience God has with us, how might we foster a greater patience with others in our life?
 - b. Who have you not had patience with recently, that this passage might provide instruction on how to be more patient?

2. In verse 18, Jesus, the cornerstone, offers us the choice to either fall upon Him in humility and be broken or have Him fall upon us, "crushing us" in judgment.
 - a. What does it mean to fall on Jesus and be broken to pieces?

- b. What does it practically look like for you to continually fall on Jesus and be "broken"?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Sixty-Two

Rejecting the King's Authority (Part 2)

Luke 20:19-45

Liturgical Prayer

Almighty God, and most merciful Father,
we humbly submit ourselves,
and fall down before your Majesty,
asking you from the bottom of our hearts,
that this seed of your Word now sown among us,
may take such deep root, that neither the burning heat of persecution cause it to wither,
nor the thorny cares of this life choke it.
But that as seed sown in good ground, it may bring forth thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold,
as your heavenly wisdom has appointed. Amen.

Middleburg Liturgy

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
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Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

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4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. Jesus' response, "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's" (v.25), points to a deeper truth that if we bear God's image (Genesis 1:27), then our whole lives belong to Him.
 - a. How does knowing this bolster your faith and life with God?
 - b. How does this identity challenge you?

2. In verses 34-36, Jesus teaches that there will be no marriage in the resurrection of the just, saying people "neither marry nor are given in marriage."
 - a. What emotions or questions, particularly about Heaven, does this stir up in you?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verses 19-26 Jesus responds to his critic's questions about taxes. In our world, there are any number of legitimate (honestly searching) and illegitimate questions (looking to trap Christians) people have about Christianity.
 - a. What resources have been most helpful for you in developing courage to speak into these types of scenarios?

2. Consider Jesus' haunting words in verses 45-47.

- a. What religious behaviors would be modern-day parallels to what Jesus accuses the scribes of?
- b. What strains of these behaviors, perhaps even in your heart, are present in your life? And what would it look like to truly repent and change?

Spend Time in Prayer

- 1. What are you thanking God for?

- 2. What are you asking God for?



Week Sixty-Three

Condemnation and Commendation

Luke 21:1-38

Liturgical Prayer

Lord, enlighten my understanding with the light of your knowledge.

Grant me to know you truly and to understand wisely,
that I may live according to your divine wisdom. Amen.

Anselm of Canterbury, 1033-1109

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

**Observing the text really is the heartbeat of the study. The questions below are prompts to help observe, but do not feel limited by these. We want the main idea of the text to become the main idea of the discussion.*

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4. What questions do you have from reading the text?
5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?



Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. The Widow's Mite in verses 1-14 is a somewhat debated passage. Some say the main point is to celebrate her faithful giving even in her poverty. Others say that this passage is rather a condemnation of the Pharisees who are "devouring widow's houses (Luke 20:47)" when they ought to be supporting those widows. Still others find a balance of the two.³

- a. How are you encouraged, or motivated, by these different interpretations?

2. In verses 10-36, Jesus speaks about the persecution His followers will face after His ascension, as well as the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, which would happen in 70 AD. He warns them that everything they have come to trust in will suddenly be gone. However, amid these impending realities, Jesus offers ways for them to find comfort and hope.

- a. Go through chapter 21 again and note the different ways Jesus assures His followers that they will find comfort during trials.
- b. When life has been turned upside down, how have you experienced the comfort and assurance Jesus speaks of in this passage?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. There are multiple ways that theologians interpret verses 5-28. Some see these verses as still yet to be fulfilled. Others see these verses as fulfilled in 70 AD, when the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. Still others see these verses as "idealistic" speaking of many events throughout history that will culminate in "the end of the world." Any way you look at it, the lesson of verses 34 applies.

- a. What 'cares of life' might pose threats to your ability to 'watch yourself' (v. 34)?

³ Small Group Leaders are encouraged to read this article on the Widow's Mite: <https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/widows-mite>

- b. What is one small, practical change you could make, whether in a spiritual discipline, a prayer habit, or another practice, that would help you stay focused on His kingdom and ready for His coming?

2. In verse 36, when instructing us how to “watch ourselves” we are told to continue in prayer. Thomas Brooks once said, “Prayer is only lovely and weighty as the heart is in it, and no otherwise. It is not the lifting up of the voice, nor the wringing of the hands, nor the beating of the breasts, nor an affected tone, nor studied motions, nor seraphical expressions, but the stirrings of the heart that God looks at in prayer. God hears no more than the heart speaks. If the heart be dumb, God will certainly be deaf. No prayer takes with God, but that which is the travail of the heart.”

- a. Is your prayer marked by a weightiness of the heart?
b. If so, what do you do that helps maintain that zeal in prayer?
c. If not, what can you do to inspire that weightiness of prayer?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Sixty-Four

Preparing for the End

Luke 22:1-23

Liturgical Prayer

O God,

you prepared your disciples for the coming of the
Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ:
Make the hearts and minds of your servants ready to receive the
blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the
strength of his presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

**Use these questions as prompts to guide the conversation – feel free to adapt for your group.*

1. What events immediately precede the passage we're studying today?
2. How does the cultural context impact how this text is understood?
3. Why is this text included in the Bible? What would we be missing without it?

Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

1. Who is in this story and what do we learn about them?
2. What stands out to you from this text? What are the key ideas?
3. What do you learn about God from this text? What do you learn about our fallen nature from this text?
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Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. It is a sad fact of history, that Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus Christ for a few silver coins. As miserable as that sounds, there are many today who turn their backs on Christ for far less. When someone rejects Christ, it is because they worship something else more.
 - a. What common reasons do people give for rejecting Christ, and what does that reveal about what they worship?

2. At the end of verse 2, when describing the motivations driving the chief priests to kill Jesus, it is said that they “feared the people.” In Galatians, the Apostle Paul writes, “For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”
 - a. Where do you sense a “fear of people” or a “desire to please man” in your own life and faith?

3. The Lord’s Supper (verses 14-23) is a precious moment in redemptive history. In verse 20, Jesus says “This cup is the new covenant in my blood.” This is a direct reference to Jeremiah 31:31, “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah...”
 - a. Read Jeremiah 31:31-34, which describes the New Covenant.
 - b. How has this been fulfilled in Christ’s death and resurrection and the giving of the Holy Spirit?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In Robert Bruce's book *The Mystery of the Lord's Supper*, he describes four primary purposes of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. 1) The bread and wine symbolize the full spiritual nourishment of our soul in Christ. 2) That we openly testify to our brothers in Christ as well, as to those who despise us, that we belong to Jesus. 3) To serve as spiritual medicine, comforting us in our weakness, and convicting us in our sin. 4) Thankful hearts to God for his body and blood that were given for us.
 - a. Do you experience these four ideas, when you take the Lord's Supper?
 - b. Do you prepare your heart before receiving the Lord's Supper?
 - c. Is the Lord's Supper precious to you?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Sixty-Five

Reconsidering Greatness

Luke 22:24-38

Liturgical Prayer

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Amen.

Colossians 3:12-15

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

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Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

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Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In verse 24, Luke tells us the disciples were arguing about who among them was the greatest. Like the disciples, we often tend to compare ourselves to others. Sometimes, like the disciples, to feel like we are superior; other times, we feel like we don't measure up.
 - a. In what ways/areas of your life are you most tempted to compare yourself to others?
 - b. Thinking about those areas of your life, how do Jesus' words in this text challenge/ encourage you?

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2. In verse 33, as if to prove that he is the greatest, Peter tells Jesus he will follow him to prison or even death. Yet, Jesus knows he will publicly deny him three times later that day.
 - a. Are there places in your faith where you tend to feel/ project confidence outwardly to others but are actually wrestling with fear or weakness inwardly?
 - b. How do Jesus' interactions with Peter encourage you to be honest about these aspects of your faith (in addition to this text, see John 21:15-17)?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verse 31, Jesus tells Peter the terrifying reality that Satan has asked to sift him like wheat. However, Jesus encourages him by saying he has prayed for his faith not to fail.
 - a. What does it mean to be sifted by Satan? Have you ever experienced this?
 - b. Thinking about the future, what changes for you, knowing that Jesus prays for you in those moments?

2. In verses 35–38, Jesus reminds the disciples how he provided for them in the past as a way to strengthen their trust for trials that are ahead. We often forget God’s past faithfulness and provision, which can lead to certain anxieties about the future.
- a. Share a moment God provided for you in the past in a way that felt unmistakably from him?
 - b. What are you currently worried about, and how does remembering his past provision encourage you today?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Sixty-Six

Pray to Not Fall into Temptation

Luke 22:39-46

Liturgical Prayer

O Lord, you are our Father, and we are wayward children;

you are our Creator, we are the work of your hands;

you are our Shepherd, we are your flock;

you are our Redeemer, we are the people you bought back;

you are our God, we belong to you.

Therefore, do not be angry against us, to correct us in your wrath.

Recall not our iniquity, to punish it, but chastise us gently in your kindness.

Your anger is inflamed because of our demerits.

But please remember that we do call upon your name and that we bear your mark and badge.

Undertake rather the work you have begun in us by your grace,

so that the whole world may recognize that you are our God and Savior. Amen.

John Calvin

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

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Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

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5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In Jesus' prayer, Jesus demonstrates that a rich prayer life has two movements: requesting and releasing. Jesus prays boldly that the cup of death be removed from him, yet he releases it to God, saying, "nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done" (v.42). While many of us are comfortable making requests to God, we often struggle to release them and trust his will.
 - a. Which of your current prayers is the hardest to release to God, and why?

2. In the Garden of Gethsemane, the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) together tell us the disciples fell asleep three times after Jesus asked them to pray. At some level, this should encourage us that even Jesus' disciples struggled with staying present in prayer.
 - a. Do you ever find prayer difficult? If so, what makes it hard for you?
 - b. What helps you stay engaged/persistent with prayer when it's difficult?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. Twice in this passage, Jesus urges his disciples to pray so they won't fall into temptation.

- a. Do you ever pray preemptively, before you're in temptation, or only once you're already in it?
- b. What temptations do you face most often, and how might regular, intentional prayer help prepare you to resist them?
- c. Take a few moments now to ask the Spirit for strength in those moments.

2. Amid the most difficult and stressful moments of Jesus' life, he asks his closest friends to pray with him (though they fall asleep).

- a. Who in your life do you reach out to for prayer when you're going through something difficult?
- b. What makes it hard to ask others to pray with or for you when you're going through something?
- c. Share your prayer requests and spend time now praying for one another.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Sixty-Seven

Betrayed & Denied

Luke 22:47-65

Liturgical Prayer

Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled.

My Lord, fill it.

I am weak in faith; Strengthen thou me.

I am cold in love; Warm me and make me fervent

That my love may go out to my neighbour.

I do not have a strong and firm faith; At times I doubt and am unable to trust thee altogether.

O Lord, help me.

Strengthen my faith and trust in thee.

In thee I have sealed the treasures of all I have.

I am poor; Thou art rich and didst come to be merciful to the poor.

I am a sinner; Thou art upright.

With me there is an abundance of sin; In thee is the fullness of righteousness.

Therefore, I will remain with thee of who I can receive

But to whom I may not give. Amen.

Martin Luther

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

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Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In verse 49, one of the disciples asks if they should fight to defend Jesus. However, before Jesus can respond, Peter lashes out and cuts off the servant of the high priest's ear.
 - a. How does Jesus' example of healing the man, even in the face of betrayal, challenge or shape how you respond to those who hurt you?

2. After Peter denies Jesus three times, Jesus turns and looks at him, and Peter remembers his words and begins weeping.
 - a. What do you think was in that look? Disappointment, love, compassion?
 - b. When you've failed, how do you imagine Jesus responds/ sees to you?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verse 54, Peter follows at a distance as Jesus is taken to the high priest's house. But when the light of the fire exposes him, he denies knowing Jesus three times.
 - a. Have you ever found yourself 'keeping your distance' or hiding your faith in certain settings?

- b. What situations, settings, or groups of people make it hardest for you to be open about following Jesus?
- c. What's one practical way you can show your faith more boldly this week?

- 2. Throughout his betrayal and trial, Jesus was mocked, beaten, humiliated, and rejected by the very people he came to love and save. At no point did he defend himself or fight back with force or even words.
 - a. Have you ever faced criticism or pressure because of your faith?
 - b. How do you discern when to speak up and defend yourself (or your faith) and when to remain quiet and suffer in silence like Jesus?

Spend Time in Prayer

- 1. What are you thanking God for?

- 2. What are you asking God for?



Week Sixty-Eight

The Trial

Luke 22:66-23:25

Liturgical Prayer

I appeal to you, Lord, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob and Israel, You the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Infinitely merciful as You are, it is Your will that we should learn to know You. You made heaven and earth, You rule supreme over all that is. You are the true, the only God; there is no other god above You. Through our Lord Jesus Christ...and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, grant that all who read what I have written here may know You, because You alone are God; let them draw strength from You.

Irenaeus of Lyons, 130–202 AD

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

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5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In Luke 22:66-23:25, we see a legal and political tug of war over what to do with Jesus. He's passed between Pilate (the Roman governor) and Herod (the ruler of Galilee), discussing what his fate might be. Despite all the leaders declaring Jesus innocent, they handed Him over to be crucified, not because of justice but because of political pressure and fear of the people.
 - a. What does the shifting of blame and power between Pilate and Herod show us about human authority versus God's authority?
 - b. How does this passage show that God's plan was unfolding even in the midst of injustice and human failure?
 - c. How can this help us to trust God when life feels unfair or chaotic?

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2. When Jesus was brought before Herod, verse 8 tells us, "When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him." In other words, Herod was excited to meet Jesus because he wanted a miracle worker, not a Messiah.
 - a. How can you tell the difference between someone who's a fan of Jesus and someone who's a true follower?
 - b. What are some signs you've noticed in your own life when your faith starts to drift toward wanting things from Jesus more than wanting Jesus Himself?
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Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In 23:18-25, the crowd saw fit to set Barabbas, who was guilty of his crime, free instead of Jesus.
 - a. How is this a picture of the Gospel?
 - b. Have you ever struggled to accept or show this radical kind of grace?

- c. How can we offer this kind of grace to those who wrong us?

2. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent and tried to release him three times, but in the end, he gave in to the pressure of the crowd.

- a. Have you ever felt strongly about a conviction or doing what's right, but ended up going along with others out of fear of what they'd think or how they'd respond?
- b. Can you think of a time when you stood firm in your convictions, even though it cost you something (reputation, comfort, or relationships)? If so, what helped you stay strong in that moment?
- c. What can you do to prepare yourself for those moments before they come?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?



Week Sixty-Nine

Death & Burial

Luke 23:26-56

Liturgical Prayer

For you are my rock and my fortress;
and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me;
you take me out of the net they have hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.
Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

Psalms 31:3-5

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

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Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

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5. If you are gathering after this text was preached, what did you learn from the sermon?

Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. As Jesus is led to His crucifixion, a group of women mourn for Him. But instead of receiving their sympathy, He redirects their grief towards the future of Jerusalem.
 - a. What does this teach us about Jesus' heart, even while suffering?
 - b. Think about the suffering in your own life and the pain that others around you are experiencing. How might Jesus' response shape how we respond to suffering and pain?

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2. Jesus' words from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," offer a sobering glimpse into the depth of his grace and the tenderness of his heart toward us. Like the criminals crucified beside him, we are not innocent spectators in this story. Our sin is part of what placed Jesus on the cross; we stand guilty with the rest of humanity. And yet, in the face of our guilt, Jesus responds not with judgment, but with mercy, compassion, and forgiveness, freely given on account of his sacrifice.
 - a. What does it mean for you that Jesus saw your sin clearly and still chose to forgive you from the cross?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verses 50-56, Joseph of Arimathea is described as "a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God." Joseph of Arimathea risked his social and political status to care for Jesus' body.
 - a. Can you think of a time when following Jesus meant standing up quietly but firmly in a difficult situation? What did that cost you? What held you back?
 - b. How does Joseph's example teach us about when and how to take a stand? How might God use small, faithful acts to serve a greater purpose?

2. Jesus' final words are "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" (v.46). This echoes Psalm 31, which is a prayer of complete surrender to the Father.
- a. What can we learn from Jesus' trust at the point of death?
 - b. How does this challenge you to surrender control during times of fear, suffering, or uncertainty?
 - c. Spend time in prayer as a group over the areas of your life that you often struggle to surrender to God.

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Seventy

The Road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-35

Liturgical Prayer

Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices;

my flesh also dwells secure.

For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol,

or let your holy one see corruption.

You make known to me the path of life;

in your presence there is fullness of joy;

at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 16:9-11

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

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Observe the Passage (20 minutes)

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Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In verse 16, we see that the disciples' eyes were "kept from recognizing" Jesus, even though he was alive and walking beside them. It wasn't until later that "their eyes were opened" (v. 31), and they could recognize Jesus for who he truly was. This experience mirrors what happens in conversion: we can hear about Jesus, even try and walk with an awareness of him, and still not see him clearly. But then, sometimes suddenly, but often gradually, our eyes are opened and we see Jesus as the risen savior who is alive, present, and loves us.
 - a. How does the disciples experience in seeing Jesus reflect your experience in coming to know him?
 - b. Did you have an "eyes opened" moment, or was it gradual?

2. Three days after Jesus' crucifixion, two of the disciples walked away from Jerusalem carrying disappointment, confusion, and fear about what lies ahead. Everything they had hoped for seemed lost. And yet, *that's* where Jesus chose to meet them.
 - a. Why do you think it's often hard to recognize Jesus' presence in the middle of disappointment or doubt?
 - b. Have you ever looked back on a difficult season and realized that Jesus was walking with you the whole time, even if you didn't see it then?
 - c. What helped you see him more clearly in hindsight?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verse 27, one of the first things the risen Jesus does is open the Scriptures and walk with His disciples through them. Rather than simply revealing Himself with a dramatic,

"Here I am!", Jesus chooses to reveal himself by teaching them how the entire story of Scripture, beginning with Moses and the Prophets, has been pointing to Him all along.

- a. Are the Old Testament Scriptures a part of your Scripture reading?
- b. Do you find it challenging to see how Jesus is revealed in these books?
- c. What tools help you read the Old Testament with Jesus at the center?
- d. How might you grow in this?

2. In verse 30, Jesus takes bread, blesses it, *breaks it*, and gives it to the disciples, and in that moment, their eyes are opened, and they recognize Him. While there's some debate about whether this was a formal celebration of the Lord's Supper, many scholars believe that Jesus intentionally used this moment, echoing the Last Supper in Luke 22:14-23, to reveal himself.

- a. Why do you think Jesus used this moment to open their eyes?
- b. What does this tell us about how communion is meant to shape our awareness of Jesus' presence?
- c. How has, or how might, the Lord's Supper help you see Jesus more clearly or encounter him in a deeper way?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?

Week Seventy-One

The Ascension

Luke 24:36-53

Liturgical Prayer

O Eternal God and King of all creation, who has granted me to arrive at this hour, forgive me the sins that I have committed today in thought, word and deed, and cleanse, O Lord, my humble soul from all defilement of flesh and spirit. And grant me, O Lord, to pass the sleep of this night in peace, that when I rise from my bed I may please Your most holy Name all the days of my life and conquer my flesh and the fleshless foes that war with me. And deliver me, O Lord, from vain and frivolous thoughts, and from evil desires which defile me. For Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Macarius the Great, 300–391 AD

Consider the Context (5 minutes)

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Stir Up the Heart (15 minutes)

1. In verses 36–42, the risen Jesus goes out of his way to show the disciples that he’s not a ghost or a Spirit. He invites them to touch his hands and feet, and he eats real food in front of them. He wants them to know he is fully alive, fully human, and physically present.
 - a. Why do you think it mattered to Jesus that they knew he had been raised in a real, physical body, not just as a spirit?
 - b. How does this change the way you think about your own future resurrection, the physical world around you, or how you live as a Christian today?

2. Even with the risen Jesus physically standing in front of them with his wounds visible, and his voice familiar, the disciples were still “troubled” and had “doubts arise in their hearts” (v. 38). Despite everything they had seen and heard, it was hard for them to believe that resurrection could be real and the man in front of them was really Jesus.
 - a. Can you relate? Do you ever have doubts or fears that make it hard to fully embrace/believe in the hope of resurrection?
 - b. What does it look like to bring your honest questions to Jesus?
 - c. How do you think he responds to our doubts?

Practice Obedience (15 minutes)

1. In verse 45, we're told that Jesus "opened their minds to understand the Scriptures."
 - a. Have you ever had a moment where a Bible passage suddenly clicked? It was as if you were reading something you had read before, but this time, it came alive in a new way.
 - b. What might it practically look like to regularly invite Jesus into your reading, asking Him to open your mind and heart before you begin?

2. As we come to the end of our series in Luke, take a moment to reflect:
 - d. What's one way this series has deepened your understanding of who Jesus is?
 - e. What's one way this series has changed the way you follow him in your daily life?

Spend Time in Prayer

1. What are you thanking God for?

2. What are you asking God for?
