The Book of Luke

Lesson 11

In our previous study, we saw Jesus exercising kingdom authority by healing and forgiving sins. The Pharisees declare that only God can forgive sins. In response, Jesus asks them: “Which is easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say ‘Get up and walk’?” To show them that He has the authority to forgive sins, he tells the paralyzed man to pick up his mat and go home. The man stands up, picks up his mat and goes home praising God.

As you prepare for this lesson, please take a moment to praise God for who He is and the wonderful things He does. Also ask Him for insight into His Word and for help answering the questions.

Jesus Demonstrates His Kingdom Authority by Calling Sinners to Repentance


A. Who does Jesus see?

B. What is his name?
C. Where is he when Jesus sees him?

D. What does Jesus command him?

E. From Luke 5:28 and 29:

(1) How does Levi respond to Jesus’ command? What does he do?

(2) How is Levi’s response a positive illustration of what it means to “leave everything” and follow Jesus? How has Levi changed? What has been lost? What has been gained?

(3) From your own experience:

(a) Can you identify with Levi?
(b) If so, how has your life been changed by Jesus? What has been lost? What has been gained?

(c) Is the gain greater than the loss? Please explain.


   A. What is Jesus’ attitude toward tax collectors and sinners? How does His viewpoint contrast with that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law?
B. Is the complaint voiced by the Pharisees and the teachers of the law valid? Please explain.

C. From Luke 5: 31 and 32: How does Jesus answer the complaint?

D. How might we apply Jesus’ response in our own lives?

3. Use a dictionary to define “righteous.”

4. Read Psalm 143:1, 2; Isaiah 64:6 and Romans 3:9-10.

   A. Are any righteous? Please explain.
B. Why does Jesus answer His critics the way He does? (Luke 5:31-32)

C. Use a dictionary to define “repent.”

D. From Psalm 51:1-4, Psalm 143:1-2 and Acts 2:36-39, what is involved in repenting?

5. Read Luke 5:33-39, Matthew 9:14-17 and Mark 2:18-22. These Scriptures establish the fact that with the advent of Jesus, God is doing something remarkably and wonderfully new in His relationship with His people.

A. List the three illustrations Jesus uses to declare that indeed something or someone new has come.
B. How do these three illustrations encourage people to embrace the new (Jesus) and how do they rebuke those who hold onto the old (traditions)? What are the two incompatible examples in each illustration?

**Jesus Demonstrates His Kingdom Authority**
**As Lord of the Sabbath**


A. In Luke 6:9, Jesus says, “I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?” How do the above Scriptures demonstrate that it is not only lawful to do good on the Sabbath, but also that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath?
B. According to Exodus 20:8-11 and Mark 2:27, was man made for the Sabbath or was the Sabbath made for man?

C. According to the above Scriptures, how do working, resting on the Sabbath and doing good relate to one another?

D. How do the Pharisees react to Jesus’ teaching and restoration of the shriveled right hand of a man on the Sabbath?

Jesus Demonstrates His Kingdom Authority By Calling His Disciples


A. What does Jesus do before calling His disciples? What important principle do we learn from Jesus?
B. What authority is given to the disciples? For what purpose are they called?

C. List the names of the disciples.
In our previous study, we saw Jesus exercising kingdom authority by healing and forgiving sins. The Pharisees declare that only God can forgive sins. In response, Jesus asks them: “Which is easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say ‘Get up and walk’?” To show them that He has the authority to forgive sins, he tells the paralyzed man to pick up his mat and go home. The man stands up, picks up his mat and goes home praising God.

As you prepare for this lesson, please take a moment to praise God for who He is and the wonderful things He does. Also ask Him for insight into His Word and for help answering the questions.

Blessings and Woes


   A. How are these passages similar?

   B. How are they different?
C. What in your opinion might account for these similarities and differences?


   A. Describe the setting. Who was there?

   B. Why had they traveled to see Jesus?

   C. Where had they come from? (See also Matthew 4:23-25.)

      (1) Using a map in the back of your Bible or from some other source, identify the various places mentioned in these passages. What do you notice about these locations?

      (2) From Matthew 11:20-22, what else do we know about Tyre and Sidon?
(3) What point is Jesus making?

3. Read Luke 6:18b, 19. What were the results of their coming to Jesus? Why?

   A. What do you think it means to be “poor” or “poor in spirit”?
   B. In response, Jesus promises a blessing. Describe what the blessing is and when it is to be received. Is it tangible or intangible, seen or unseen, or all of these?

   A. Describe what it means to “hunger now” or “hunger and thirst for righteousness.”
B. What does Jesus promise in return?

C. How might this promise be fulfilled in our lives?

D. Luke records Jesus saying, “Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.” What do you think He means?


A. Describe the types of suffering recorded in these passages.

B. Who are those that suffer in this manner?

C. For what reason do they suffer?
D. Why does Jesus say that those who suffer like this are “blessed” and that they are to “rejoice in that day and leap for joy” (Luke passage) or “rejoice and be glad” (Matthew passage)?

E. Read Acts 5:12-41. How does this passage illustrate the principles outlined in Luke 6:22-23 and Matthew 5:11-12?


A. “Woe” may be better understood as “alas” or “how terrible,” that is, an expression of regret and compassion instead of a threat. Contrast the woes spoken here by Jesus with the blessings proclaimed in verses 20-23.
B. Read 1 John 2:15-17, Matthew 16:24-26 and Revelation 19:1-8. In what ways do these verses reinforce the principles of blessing and woe above?

C. How might you apply what you have learned from this lesson to your life? What things are our hearts to focus on?
The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 13

In the previous lesson, we saw Jesus contrast “blessings” with “woes.” Looking at his disciples, He said: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets. But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort. Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets” (Luke 6:20-26).

In this lesson, we will see Jesus continue to draw a sharp distinction between the ways of the world and the ways of God. As you prepare to study, ask God to give you not only insight and understanding into his ways and Word but also a desire to do that which is pleasing in his sight, that you might grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Love Your Enemies

1. Read Luke 6:27-49. How would you outline or subdivide this passage of Scripture? What subtitles would you use?
2. Define:
   
   A. Hear
   
   B. Love
   
   C. Enemy
   
   D. Mercy
   
   E. Judge
   
   F. Condemn
   
   G. Parable


(1) List the seven aspects of unconditional love that Jesus mentions in these verses.

(2) What is the implied attitude that we are to have?

(3) From 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, what else do you learn about love?
C. Read Luke 6:32-34. How are the seven aspects of unconditional love (true righteousness) contrasted with the ways of the world found in these verses?

   A. How is this passage like Luke 6:27-34?
   B. How is it different?

   A. What else are we commanded to do?
B. What is to be our attitude as we follow this command?

C. What is the promised result?

D. Why are we to do this?

E. From verse 36:

   (1) What do we learn about God?

   (2) From Scripture, can you cite other examples of this characteristic of God?
(3) What are we to do because of this characteristic of God? How might this be accomplished?

6. Read Luke 6:37-37 and Galatians 6:7. What is the universal principle found in these passages?


   A. Summarize the main points He is making.

   B. What will be the ultimate outcome of our hearing/applying the counsel of Jesus? Of rejecting His word to us?
The Gospel of Luke
Lesson 14

In the previous lesson, we studied Luke 6:27-49, a passage in which Jesus challenges us first of all to love our enemies, and second, to be careful when judging others. In loving our enemies, He says that we are to do good to those who hate us, bless those who curse us, pray for those who mistreat us and give to those who ask without demanding or expecting to be repaid. Our attitude in such matters should be to “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, the apostle Paul writes that love is “…patient and kind; it is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

In Luke 6:37-38, Jesus says, “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” Paul declares in Galatians 6:7, “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.”

Since a tree is known by the kind of fruit it bears, we should be careful and wise farmers, not foolish ones, and heed the teachings of Jesus by loving the unlovable. Before we seek to remove the speck from another’s eye, we should first remove the log in our own eye so that we might better see how to help our brother.
Before you begin this lesson, please take a moment to pray and ask God for grace to love your enemy, as well as insight to see clearly those “logs” in your own eye before attempting to remove any “specks” in your brother’s eye. Also ask God for insight, knowledge and understanding of His Word as we undertake the study of Luke 7.

The Faith of the Centurion

   A. Using one of the maps in your Bible, locate Capernaum. What body of water is it near?
   B. Using a dictionary, define “centurion.”

2. From Luke 7:2-3:
   A. What is the centurion’s concern?
   B. What is the centurion’s attitude toward his servant?
   C. Describe the four ways the centurion shows concern for his servant.
D. How do these activities illustrate the principle outlined in Colossians 4:1?


A. According to verse 4, what do the elders of the Jews say about the centurion?

B. What attitude or emotion do they display in making their request?

C. Using a dictionary, define:
   (1) Plead ("beg" in some translations)
   (2) Earnestly

D. From verse 5, why did they plead earnestly on behalf of the centurion?

E. How does the centurion illustrate the principles stated in Luke 6:27 and 31?
F. Read Romans 9:1-5 and Luke 4:23-27. The Israelites were God’s chosen people, a nation called to be a light to Gentiles. What is ironic about this scenario with the centurion, his servant and the Jews?


   A. From verse 6, how does Jesus respond to the leaders’ request?

   B. Describe what happens as Jesus approaches the centurion’s house.

   C. What do you think it means to be “a man under authority”? How does the centurion illustrate this principle from his life?

   D. What is Jesus’ reaction to the centurion’s statement? What is the result?
Jesus Raises a Widow’s Son


A. Locate Nain on a map in your Bible. Where is it in relation to Capernaum?

B. Describe the scene as Jesus approaches the town gate.

C. From verse 13, what is touching and/or comforting to you about Jesus’ response to the widow?

D. From verse 14, what does Jesus do?

E. From verse 15, what is the result? What do we learn about Jesus from this incident?
F. What is the reaction of the crowd? How is God glorified? How are the people encouraged? What effect does Jesus’ action have upon those living in Judea and the surrounding country?

**Jesus and John the Baptist**


   A. Consider John 1:6-8, 15 and 19-36. Why does John the Baptist send two of his disciples to ask Jesus: “Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?” What is going on here?

   B. Luke has already recorded that Jesus healed the centurion’s servant and raised the widow’s son from the dead. In verse 21 Luke writes, “At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind.” How might Jesus’ reply (verse 22) be an encouragement not only to John but also to all who are under severe stress, fear or doubt?
C. What does Jesus mean when He says, “Blessed is the man who does not fall away because of me”? (verse 23)

D. How does Jesus honor John the Baptist in verses 24-28? What do you think Jesus means when he says, “I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he”?


Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman


A. Contrast the attitudes and actions of Simon and the sinful woman.
B. Who is commended by Jesus and who is chastised by Him? Why?

C. Read verses 48 and 50.
   (1) What blessings does Jesus bestow upon the woman?

   (2) What is the biblical definition of faith? (See Hebrews 11:1)

   (3) Is faith produced by our own efforts or is it a gift from God? (See Ephesians 2:8, 9)

D. Read 1 Peter 2:4-8 and circle who views Jesus as
   (1) the living stone, chosen by God and precious to him? Simon Woman
   (2) a chosen and precious cornerstone? Simon Woman
   (3) the One to believe in and trust? Simon Woman
   (4) the stone the builders rejected? Simon Woman
   (5) a stone that causes men to stumble? Simon Woman
   (6) a rock that makes them fall? Simon Woman

E. From 1 Peter 2:6, what is the promise of God to those who choose to put their trust in Jesus, the chosen and precious cornerstone?
The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 15

In the previous lesson, we studied how Jesus displays His divine authority as the Son of God by healing the centurion’s servant, raising from the dead a widow’s only son, and forgiving and restoring a sinful woman. The centurion, a man under authority and one who genuinely cares for his servant and the Jewish people, demonstrates great humility toward Jesus and great faith in Jesus by requesting that his servant be healed. Jesus responds by commending the centurion for his faith and healing his servant.

In raising the widow’s only son from the dead, Jesus shows great compassion. He also clearly establishes the fact that as the Son of God, He has power and authority over death. Jesus also reminds John the Baptist that through Him the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are healed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

Jesus makes clear that even when circumstances are not going “our way,” we can trust Him for the ultimate outcome. We are not to take offense when God’s ways are not our ways. If we do, we run the risk of falling away from the Lord.

In forgiving and restoring the sinful woman, Jesus extends great compassion, mercy and peace to her, illustrating the principle that those who are repentant will find compassion, mercy, forgiveness and peace. However, those who are like Simon the Pharisee and reject Jesus will find Him to be the stone that causes men to stumble and the rock that makes them fall (1 Peter 2:4-8).
As you prepare to study Luke 8, may you by God’s grace not take offense at Jesus, and may you not complain when things do not go according to your plan. Instead, may you go to God in prayer, expressing your needs and concerns to Him. By faith may you trust His goodness, mercy, and love, believing that He will work all things for His glory and our blessing (Romans 8:28).

As you begin this lesson, please take a moment to pray and thank Him for His many blessings. Ask Him to give insight and understanding of His Word.

**Parable of the Sower**


   A. As Jesus traveled from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God, who was with Him besides the twelve disciples?

   B. From Luke 8:2-3:

      (1) What were their names?

      (2) What were they doing?

      (3) Considering the culture of their day, do you think their actions were unusual? Why or why not?
(4) What do their actions toward Jesus and the 12 disciples reveal about their character?

C. Using a dictionary, define “parable.”

D. From Matthew 13:1 and Mark 4:1, where was Jesus when He told the parable of the sower?

E. In your own words, explain the parable of the sower.

F. How does this parable complete or fulfill the prophecies in Psalm 78:1-8 and Isaiah 6:8-10?

G. How is this parable a source of information, knowledge, insight and blessing on the one hand and a pronouncement of judgment on the other?
H. From Luke 7:23, 8:8 and 15, what are the key factors in determining whether this parable becomes a blessing or a pronouncement of judgment?

2. From Luke 8:16-18 and Mark 4:21-25:

A. What exhortation, instruction and warning does Jesus give?

B. What illustration does He use to make His point?

3. “All scripture is God-breathed and is useful [profitable] for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, that the man [woman] of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Considering this, what specific applications for yourself do you find in the parable of the sower and the illustration of a lamp on a stand?
Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

4. Read Luke 8:19-21, Matthew 12:46-50 and Mark 3:31-35. In the Matthew and Mark passages, Jesus asks a rhetorical question: “Who is my mother and who are my brothers?”

   A. To whom does Jesus point when He answers His own question?

   B. How does He answer, i.e. what does He say?

   C. What is the main idea Jesus wants us to learn?

D. Read James 1:19-25.

   (1) What are James’ instructions to his readers?

   (2) What is the danger of merely listening to God’s Word?

   (3) What is the result of obeying God’s Word?

E. From Matthew 13:55-56 and John 19:25-27, what are the names of Jesus’ brothers and his mother? Did Jesus have sisters? How does Jesus honor and respect His mother? How does He provide for her?
Jesus Calms the Storm


A. What prompts Jesus’ disciples to be afraid?

B. What good principle do the disciples illustrate in dealing with their fear? To whom do they turn?

C. How is Jesus’ response to the disciples both an encouragement and a gentle rebuke?

D. Why do you think the disciples were afraid and amazed after Jesus calmed the wind and raging waters?

E. What do the disciples ask one another?

F. From Luke 8:28, John 1:2-4 and Colossians 1:15-20, how would you answer the previous question?
Jesus Heals the Demon-Possessed Man


A. How does Matthew’s account differ slightly from the accounts of Mark and Luke? (See the commentary at the end of the lesson.)

B. What particularly stands out to you from these accounts?

C. Contrast the reactions to what Jesus does with the actions of the following:

   (1) The demons

   (2) The demon-possessed man before and after his encounter with Jesus
(3) The pig herders

(4) The townspeople

D. Why do you think the townspeople ask Jesus to leave?

E. Why do you think the demon-possessed man, now fully clothed and in his right mind, begs to go with Jesus?

F. How does Jesus answer the man?

G. What does the man end up doing?

H. What has Jesus done for you? From Luke 8:39, what does Jesus say we are to do?
A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman


A. Who is Jairus? Why does he fall at Jesus’ feet? What does he want?

B. What happens as Jesus is on the way to Jairus’ house?

C. What additional information about the woman do Matthew and Mark provide that is not part of Luke’s account?

D. Why do you think Jesus specifically asks, “Who touched me?” (Luke) or “Who touched my clothes?” (Mark)
E. When Jesus arrives at Jairus' house, He tells everyone who is wailing and mourning over the death of the girl: “Stop wailing. She is not dead but asleep.” Why do the people laugh?

F. How does Jesus respond? What does He do and say? What is the result?

G. What does Jesus tell her parents to do? What happens?

Commentary from Table Talk, March 2016
by Dr. R.C. Sproul

Read the Bible carefully and you’ll find variations of perspective. Consider the Gospels’ presentation of the resurrection. For example, Matthew 28:1-10 and Mark 16:1-8 say there was one angel at the empty tomb, while Luke 24:1-12 mentions the presence of two angels at Jesus’ grave.

We should assume for the sake of argument that two angels were present. If so, would it not be possible for one eyewitness to be more concerned about who wasn’t there—Jesus—than he was about the number of angels present, especially if one of them didn’t speak?

The disciple could have said, “I went there, and I saw an angel, who said, ‘x, y, z,’ without mentioning the second angel, because the presence of two angels wasn’t that significant to the disciple who was visiting....
What word is conspicuously absent from the disciple’s report that must be there to have a true contradiction? The answer is clear: the word “only.” If there were two angels, we know there had to be at least one; thus, since Mark and Matthew don’t say there was “only” one angel there, there’s no contradiction between them and Luke....

The doctrine of inspiration doesn’t mean we won’t find difficult-to-reconcile texts in Scripture. The Bible is a divine book—but it is also a very human book, not that it is filled with human errors but that it reflects how humans tell stories. Two people can accurately represent the same event without covering all the same details. That’s the kind of thing we find in Scripture. Difference does not mean contradiction.
The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 16

In chapter 8, we learned out the parable of the sower, in which Jesus notes that the seed in the parable is the Word of God. When that Word falls upon those with a good and noble heart, they hear it, retain it, and produce a crop. Jesus mother and brothers are there and want to see Him but cannot because of the crowd. Jesus tells bystanders that His mother and brothers are those “who hear God’s word and put it into practice.”

One day while Jesus and His disciples were out on the Sea of Galilee, a squall came up and began to swamp their boat, putting them in great danger. Responding to a plea for help from His disciples, Jesus demonstrates His Kingdom authority over nature by rebuking the wind and raging waters. The storm immediately subsided and all was calm on the lake. The disciples were terrified. In fear and amazement they asked one another, “Who is this who commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?”

In the remaining part of chapter 8, Luke records three incidents of healing by Jesus. In the first, Jesus demonstrates His authority over the demonic world by healing a demon-possessed man and returning him to his right mind. When the man begs to go with Jesus, Jesus urges him, “Return home and tell how much God has done for you.” Interestingly, Luke notes that the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

In the second instance, Jesus heals a woman with an issue of blood and provides comfort to her, saying, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.” In the third instance, Jesus demonstrates His power over death and raises a young girl of about twelve, who was the daughter of a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue.

Before you begin this lesson, please take a moment to thank Jesus, who is the image of the invisible God and in whom all the fullness of God was
pleased to dwell (Colossians 1:15, 19). Thank Him for His power and authority not only over the demonic world but also over nature, sickness and death. And then ask the Lord to give insight into and understanding of His Word so that you may know and love Jesus better.

**Jesus Sends Out the Twelve**


   A. Who does Jesus call together? What are their names?

   B. For what purpose does Jesus gather them?

   C. How does Jesus equip them for their mission? Are they to take any tangible provisions with them? Why do you think Jesus equips and instructs the disciples like this?
D. Where are they to go and where are they not to go? Why do you think Jesus directs them in this way?


   (1) What do the disciples do?

   (2) What do you think it means to “preach the gospel”?

F. How does Acts 1:8 summarize the instructions Jesus gave to His disciples? How might we apply this principle today?

G. From Matthew 10:11-17, Mark 6:10-11 and Luke 9:4-5:

   (1) What warnings and cautions does Jesus give to His disciples?

   (2) From Matthew 10:16-17a, what is their attitude to be as they carry out their assignment?
(3) How are they to respond if they are received?

(4) How are they to respond if they are rejected?
   Why is this significant?

(5) How might we apply the above principles to our own lives?
   Do you have an illustration that would be helpful to others?
   Please explain.

Herod Wants to Meet Jesus


   A. Who is Herod?

   B. Using a Bible dictionary or Bible footnote, define “tetarch.” Of what area was Herod tetrarch?

   C. What had Herod heard and why was he perplexed?

   
   A. What had Herod the tetrarch, also referred to as King Herod in Matthew 14:9 and Mark 6:14, initially done that was a violation of God’s law?

   B. What else did he do subsequently to compound the problem?

5. From Mark 6:19-20 and Luke 9: 9, what internal dilemma do you observe in Herod?

6. How we respond to what we hear is important in order to make wise choices and decisions in life. How do Matthew 17:1-5, John 5: 24, Romans 10:9-17, James 1:19-25 and Revelation 3:19-22 inform our choices and decisions?
7. Read Psalm 14:1, 119:11 and 105; Proverbs 1:7; and Mark 3:28-29. How was Herod foolish in his thinking and decision making?

8. According to Mark 3:28-29, how do we blaspheme the Holy Spirit?

“The Unpardonable Sin,” p. 1567 of the New Geneva Study Bible:

Jesus solemn warning about a kind of sin that will not be forgiven, either in this world or the next, is found in three Gospels: Matt. 12:31, 32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10. It is specifically “blasphemy against the Spirit.” This blasphemy is an act performed by speaking, understood as an expression of the thoughts of the heart (Matt. 12:33-37; cf. Rom. 10:9, 10). In the particular context, the opponents of Jesus were saying that the Power doing good works among them was not God but the devil. Jesus distinguishes between this blasphemy and other sins, both other sins of speech and other sins in general. As the Bible teaches, God forgave sins of incest, murder, lying, and even Paul’s persecution of the church, which Paul did while “breathing threats and murder” against God’s people (Acts 9:1).

What makes the unpardonable sin different from the others is its relation to the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit’s work to enlighten the mind of sinners (Eph. 1:17, 18) to reveal and teach the gospel (John 14:26), persuading souls to repent and believe the truth (cf. Acts 7:51). The Spirit not only explains the Word of God,
but He opens the mind so that it is perceived (2 Cor. 3:16, 17). When His influence is deliberately and knowingly refused, in opposition to the light, then the irreversible sin can be committed as a voluntary, informed act of malice. In response, there is a hardening of the heart from God that rules out repentance and faith (Heb. 3:12, 13). God permits the decision of the human will to be permanent in this case. God does not do this lightly or without cause, but in response to an offence against His love.

A person who wants to repent, that is, to reverse the sins they may be guilty of, has not suffered this hardening and has not committed this hardening and has not committed the profound hatred that God has determined He will not forgive. Anyone who has been born again will not commit this sin, because the Holy Spirit lives in that person, and God is not divided against Himself (1 John 3:9).

The other verses dealing with the unpardonable sin are Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29; and 1 John 5:16, 17. These show that the possibility of this sin depends on there being a particular enlightening and understanding from God that it is not a common, everyday matter. Jesus said “all sins” and “whatever blasphemies” will be forgiven, excepting only this one sin.

“Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit: Can I Be Forgiven?” from The Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible, p. 1606:

Jesus taught that that every kind of sin can be forgiven except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mt. 12:31-32; Lk 12:10). If anyone blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, that person demonstrates that he or she is not among the elect—that person will never be saved (“a tree is recognized by its fruit,” Mt. 12:33). But what exactly is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? How can we know if we have committed this unforgivable sin?

Generally, blasphemy is speaking impiously, slandering or using abusive language. When the Pharisees insisted that he exorcised demons by being in league with Satan (Beelzebub), Jesus warned them that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unpardonable, both in this age and in the next (Mt. 12:32; Mk. 3:29, 30). By denying that the Holy Spirit was the power behind the exorcism, by attributing that power to Satan, the Pharisees spoke against the Holy Spirit. On this basis, theologians have commonly
understood blasphemy against the Holy Spirit to be attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan or other demonic forces.

Even this definition, however, needs refining. In responding to the Pharisees, Jesus also made the point that the work He did was obviously from the Holy Spirit (according to the logic of his argument in Mt. 12:25-29 and Mk. 3:23-27). There was no reasonable explanation for the exorcism other than the power of the Holy Spirit and this should have been evident to all. The Pharisees’ rejection of the Holy Spirit was this informed and willful; they had not simply made a mistake. Speaking from the evil of their hearts (Mt. 12:34,35), they had intentionally blasphemed what they knew to be the power of the Holy Spirit.

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is informed and intentional, motivated by evil. Because it is unforgivable, it cannot be committed by a Christian or by someone who is not yet a Christian but will later come to faith. Even so, sincere Christians sometimes fear that they have blasphemed the Holy Spirit. Usually these people have simply misunderstood that nature of such blasphemy or have misjudged their own actions. In any event, since the reprobate (those who will never come to faith) cannot truly repent of their sin (cf. Ac, 11:18), Christians who fear that they have committed this unpardonable sin generally show by their very anxiety and repentance that they have not done so.
The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 17

Luke records in the opening section of chapter 9 that Jesus called together his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to drive out demons and cure diseases. He then sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. Jesus sent them to the lost sheep of Israel and specifically directed them not to go to the Gentiles or to the Samaritans at that time.

Why did Jesus do this? The apostle John provides the answer by writing in his gospel that Jesus, as the Jewish Messiah, was first sent by God to the Jews. Sadly, John notes that when Jesus “…came to his own, his own did not receive Him” (John 1:11). But the good news is that “…to all who receive him, who believe in his name, he gives power to become children of God; who are born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12).

In chapter 9, Luke writes that Jesus further directed his disciples not to take any provisions for their journey, thereby teaching them to be dependent upon Him for their provision. Whenever they entered a town, they were to stay at whatever house received them until they left that town. However, if a town did not receive them, they were to shake the dust off their feet when they left that town as a testimony against it. In either event, wherever they went, the disciples “…preached that people should repent” (Mark 6:12).

Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed, because some were saying that John the Baptist had been raised from the dead, while others were saying that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. But Herod said, “I beheaded John. Who then, is this I hear such things about?” (Luke 9: 7-9a).
In seeking to answer this question, we noted that how we respond to what we hear is important to making the right choices and decisions in life. This principle was implied at the transfiguration of Jesus when God the Father spoke to Peter, James and John out of the cloud: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!” (Matthew 17:5). And on another occasion, Jesus said, “Whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life” (John 5: 24).

As we begin this study, spend a moment in prayer, asking God for help “hearing His voice” and making the choices and decisions that are pleasing to Him. Ask for grace that we might say along with the Psalmist, “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you” (Psalm 119:105). And further, may we always rest fully in the grace of God, assured that when we do sin, if we repent and confess our sins “…He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (John 1:9). “For God demonstrates his love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8) and “there is therefore now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).

**Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand**


A. What two events cause Jesus and his disciples to withdraw to a quiet and solitary place to get some rest?

B. What happens as they attempt to withdraw by boat to a solitary place?
C. From Matthew 14:14 and Mark 6:34:

(1) What is Jesus’ attitude toward the crowd? Why?

(2) By way of application, what is our attitude to be when we are hard pressed by the demands of others?

(3) What good counsel does Philippians 2:4 provide in responding to the needs of others?

(4) How does Jesus respond to the crowd?

D. What is the approximate size of the crowd? What do you imagine the size of the crowd to be if you include women and children? Is this a local crowd? Why or why not?

2. From these passages, what is the general concern that arises late in the afternoon? (Luke 9:10-17, Matthew 14:6-21, Mark 6: 30-44, and John 6:1-15).
3. In developing a solution to the problem, how does Jesus test the disciples? What do you think Jesus is teaching them in this situation?

4. How do the disciples respond to Jesus’ test? What do the disciples say to Jesus? In like manner, how are we to respond to Jesus when we have a problem?

5. What does Jesus do to meet the needs of the people? What is the result? What is the reaction of the crowd? How much is left over?

6. Read 2 Kings 4:42-44. In what ways does this passage of Scripture foreshadow the feeding of the five thousand?
7. Read John 6:32-40. What are the promises of the Father and the Son to those who believe in and receive Jesus as the Bread of Life?

8. Read Deuteronomy 8:2-3 and take a moment to reflect upon the Scriptures referenced earlier in this lesson. What important truths from these passages most encourage you? What principles most challenge you?

Who Do You Say I Am?


   A. In what region of Israel are Jesus and his disciples now?

   B. Jesus expands the disciples’ understanding of who He is. What is the first question Jesus asks them?

   C. What reply do the disciples give Jesus?
D. What follow-up question does Jesus ask them?

E. Who responds and what does he say?

F. What does Jesus say in response and what truth does He reveal to the disciples? (Also see 1 Corinthians 2:10-14.)

G. From Luke 9:21, why do you think Jesus strictly warns them not to tell this to anyone?

10. From Luke 9:22, what does Jesus say must happen to the Son of Man?


A. What must someone do in order to follow Jesus?
B. What do you think it means for someone to “deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Jesus”?

C. From Luke 9:24-27, what principles does Jesus state to illustrate His point?


   A. Describe the Transfiguration.


      (1) How do these verses provide Peter, James, John and us a deeper understanding of who Jesus is?
(2) Read Deuteronomy 4:10-14 and 5:4-5. What similarities and differences do you note between these passages and Matthew 17:5-8?

(3) Why do you think Jesus instructs the three not to tell anyone what they have seen until He has been raised from the dead?

13. Referring to Luke 9:27, what do you think Jesus means when He says to the disciples, “I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they have seen the kingdom of God”? 
The Book of Luke  
Lesson 17

In feeding the five thousand Jesus shows great compassion for the people, who were like sheep without a shepherd (Mark 6:34). Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, Jesus gave thanks, broke the loaves and gave them to his disciples to give the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. All of them ate until they were satisfied (Luke 9:16-17).

The physical reality of feeding this hungry crowd was a graphic demonstration of the greater spiritual truth that Jesus is Himself the very Bread of Life and that “man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 8:3). Jesus would further emphasize this truth on another occasion by saying “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never thirst” (John 6:35).

One day Jesus asked His disciples who the people said He was. The disciples replied that some people thought He was John the Baptist, others thought He was Elijah, and still others said He was one of the prophets of long ago who had come back to life. When Jesus asked the disciples who they thought He was, Peter answered, “The Christ of God” (Luke 9:18b-20). To this Jesus replied, “Blessed are you Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven” (Matthew 16:17).

Jesus is making the point here that it is only the Spirit of God, working in our hearts and minds to remove blindness, that allows us to gain insight and understanding into who Jesus is. As the apostle Paul would later write to the Corinthian Christians, “We [believers] have not received the spirit of the
world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us” (1 Corinthians 2:12).

The transfiguration provides greater revelation about who Jesus is as God the Father speaks out of the cloud to Peter, James and John: “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.” As they were coming down the mountain Jesus, knowing what lay ahead for him to accomplish on the cross in Jerusalem, instructs the disciples not to tell anyone what they have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead (Matthew 17:9).

Jesus would go on to finish His work and complete His purpose here on earth by sacrificing Himself for the sins of His people. By exchanging His righteousness for the sin of His people, He would remove their guilt and set His people free. As Scripture says, “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free” (Galatians 5:1).

As you begin this week’s lesson, please take a moment in prayer to thank Him for all that He has done in setting us free.

**The Healing of a Boy with an Evil Spirit**

Luke 9:37-50 details several incidents that show either a lack of faith, slowness to learn, pride or intolerance. After studying each incident you will be asked which of these unfortunate traits applies to that particular situation.


   A. A father in the crowd calls out to Jesus to help his only son. Briefly describe the symptoms and condition of the boy.
B. Before appealing to Jesus for relief, whom had the father asked for help and healing? What had been the result?

C. What is Jesus’ initial comment regarding this situation? What is the point Jesus in making?

D. What happens to the boy as he is being brought to Jesus?

E. What does Jesus ask the father (Mark 9:21)?

F. What is the father’s response?

G. What is of interest to you about Jesus’ reply to the father in Mark 9:23?

H. How does the father’s reply in Mark 9:24 instruct, encourage and challenge you?
I. What action does Jesus take to heal the boy? What is the result?

J. After the boy has been healed and returned to his father, what questions do the disciples ask Jesus in private? (See the accounts recorded in Matthew and Mark.) How does Jesus reply? How might we apply Jesus’ response to ourselves?

K. For the father and/or the disciples, indicate how this incident reveals:

Lack of faith or
Slowness to learn or
Pride or
Intolerance or All
the above or None
of the above

What can we learn from this incident to improve our relationship with the Lord?
L. In Luke 9:44, Jesus instructs His disciples to listen carefully to what He is about to tell them.

   (1) What does He say?

   (2) Why does He say it?

   (3) What is the reaction/response of the disciples?

Who Will Be the Greatest?


   A. What are the disciples discussing among themselves?

   B. How does Jesus intervene in their discussion?

      (1) How does He answer their concern?

      (2) What powerful illustration does He use to make His point?
(3) Matthew 20:25-28 and Mark 9:35 express the fundamental principle required of followers desiring to attain true greatness in the kingdom of God. What is it?

(4) According to 1 John 3:11, 16 and 18, what inner attitude and outward action are we to have in fulfilling this principle? Why?

C. For the disciples, indicate how this incident reveals:

- Lack of faith or
- Slowness to learn or
- Pride or
- Intolerance or
- All the above or
- None of the above

What can we learn from this incident to improve our relationship with the Lord?
Competition and Opposition


A. What has upset John and the other disciples?

B. What do they initially try to do about it?

C. What complaint do they voice to Jesus?

D. How does Jesus rebuke and instruct the disciples?

E. From Luke 9:51-56:

   (1) Why do the Samaritans refuse to welcome Jesus and His entourage?

   (2) What do James and John propose to Jesus that should be done about Samaritan opposition?

   (3) What is Jesus’ response?
F. For the disciples, indicate how this incident reveals:

Lack of faith or
Slowness to learn or
Pride or
Intolerance or All
the above or None
of the above

What can we learn from these incidents to improve our relationship with the Lord?

Counting the Cost of Following Jesus


A. As Jesus presses on toward Jerusalem and the cross, three considerations, factors or costs are mentioned for potential disciples to weigh in deciding whether to follow Him. What are they?
B. Referring back to Luke 9:23 and 24, what does Jesus say a follower of His must do in order to be truly His disciple?

5. What do Jesus’ comments in Luke 9:57-62 suggest about the urgency, primacy and importance of responding to the call of God?


   A. How is this instructive for us? How does it illustrate how we are to respond to the Lord?

   B. Why are we to respond to Jesus in this manner?
The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 19

After Jesus descends from the Mount of Transfiguration and resolutely sets out for Jerusalem and the cross, four incidents serve as tests for the disciples, revealing their lack of faith, slowness to learn, intolerance and pride.

In the first incident, Jesus points out that their failure to heal the demon-possessed boy demonstrates a lack of faith. He says, “I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you” (Matthew 17: 20-21).

In the second incident, while everyone was marveling that Jesus had rebuked the evil spirit, had healed the boy, and had given him back to his father, Jesus forewarns his disciples of his betrayal. Jesus said, “Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.” The disciples did not grasp this and were afraid to ask Jesus about it (Luke 9: 43-45), thus revealing their slowness to understand.

Their dullness, as well as their intolerance and pride, is evident in the third incident, occurring as they walked along arguing which of them would be the greatest in the kingdom of God. Jesus tells them that “…he who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven must become the least and servant of all.”

The fourth incident reveals their intolerance of others in vainly attempting to prevent a man driving out demons in Jesus’ name and in asking Jesus if they should call fire down from heaven to destroy Samaritans who had
rejected Jesus on His way to Jerusalem. Jesus rebuked them for this (Luke 9:49, 54).

These four incidents remind us of our need to ask God daily for grace to trust Jesus more so that through the Holy Spirit He might give us greater insight and understanding into God’s ways. Ask Him for grace to become free of pride, to become more tolerant in personal relationships and to love and serve others in ways that are a blessing for them and pleasing to God.

**The Lord of the Harvest**


   A.  Is this the same incident recorded in Luke 9:1-6? Why or why not?

   B.  From verses 1-3:

      (1)  How many “others” were appointed by Jesus?

      (2)  The Revised Standard Version and the New International Version record different numbers of those appointed. From a Bible footnote or other source, why the difference? What might these numbers symbolize?

      (3)  Where were they being sent (verse 1)?
(4) Explain verse two in your own words.

(5) What command and caution does Jesus give those being sent?

(6) How are we to apply the first three verses to our own lives?

C. From 10:4-12:

(1) How were the appointed ones to be equipped?

(2) The culture and custom of the day required an elaborate amount of time and discourse in greeting others. Why do you think Jesus tells them not to greet anyone on the road?

(3) What are they to say when they enter a house?
(4) What are they to do if a man of peace is there? What are they not to do? Why?

D. According to 10:8-9, what response are they to give when a town welcomes them?

E. From 10:10-12:

(1) What response are they to give when a town does not welcome them?

(2) What do you think Jesus means when He says that the “kingdom of God is near” (10:11)?


A. Why does Jesus speak so harshly against Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum? What had been performed there?
B. If the miracles performed in these cities had been performed in the evil cities of Tyre and Sidon, what would have been the response according to Jesus?

C. When people listen to the followers of Jesus, who are they really listening to (10:16)?

D. When people reject the followers of Jesus, who are they really rejecting?

E. From 10:17-20:

   (1) Why do the 72 return with joy?

   (2) What do you think Jesus means in 10:18 when He replies, “I saw Satan fall like lightening from heaven”?
(3) In verse 19, Jesus tells His disciples that He has given them authority to overcome all the power of the enemy and that nothing will harm them. However, in verse 20, He tells them not to rejoice over the fact that the spirits submit to them but that their names are written in heaven. What deeper truth is Jesus revealing to them and to us from these verses, John 15:16 and Revelation 20:11-15, 21:1-4 and 21:22-27

F. From verses 10:21-24, what other truths does Jesus reveal to His disciples?

The Parable of the Good Samaritan


A. Describe what unfolds here in your own words.
B. What impressed you in this passage?

C. As you meditate on these verses, what do you think are the most important lessons Jesus wants us to remember and apply?

Martha and Mary


A. On the way to Jerusalem, to whose home do Jesus and the disciples go?

B. From verse 39, who is Mary?
C. How would you compare and contrast the sisters in actions and attitude of heart?

D. What is Martha’s complaint to Jesus?

E. What is Martha worried and upset about according to Jesus?

F. On the other hand, for what does Jesus commend Mary? Why?

G. Mary actually sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what He said. Figuratively speaking, how do we sit at the Lord’s feet listening to what He says?
H. From verse 42, what is the only thing needed? What has Mary chosen that is better? As a result of her choice, what does Jesus promise Mary, and by way of application, to us?

I. If you have made the same choice as Mary, how has the “it shall not be taken away from her” (you) worked out in your life? Please explain.
The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 20

In chapter 10 of his gospel, Luke records the sending out of the 72, the parable of the Good Samaritan and Jesus’ visit to the home of Martha and Mary. Jesus sends 72 followers to neighboring towns and villages to proclaim that the Kingdom of God has come near to them, not only in the person of Jesus Himself but also in the sending of his disciples.

Where the disciples were received, they were to stay; where they were not received, they were to shake the dust of that town off their feet as a sign of judgment against that town. When the disciples returned with joy, they said to the Lord, “Even the demons submit to us in your name.” Jesus replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven,” most likely meaning that Satan and the forces of evil were being defeated by Jesus and those He commissioned to proclaim that the Kingdom of heaven was near. Jesus also tells the 72 not to rejoice that the spirits submit to them, but that their names are written in heaven.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus makes the point to a teacher of the law who is testing Him, that it is more important to walk the talk, than to have mere academic knowledge of the Scripture. Those who were to have stopped to care for the man who was beaten, robbed and left for dead did nothing, while the Samaritan dressed his wounds, took him to an inn and proved to be a good neighbor to the injured man.

At the home of Martha and Mary, Jesus tenderly and lovingly encourages Martha to worry less about things and focus more on Him as Mary has done. He notes that Mary, by sitting at his feet and listening to what He has
said, has “…chosen what is better, and that which is better will not be taken away from her.”

As you begin this lesson, take a moment—if you belong to Jesus—to thank Him that by God’s grace alone your name is written in heaven. And may we, also by God’s grace, walk the talk more and more and prove to be “good Samaritan neighbors” to those in need around us. And finally, may we worry less and choose like Mary to sit at Jesus’ feet listening to what He has to say to us.

**Jesus’ Teaching on Prayer**

1. Use a dictionary to define “prayer.”


   A. From Luke 11:1, why do you think one of his disciples says to Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples”? What do you think the disciple has seen that prompts him to speak to Jesus in such a fashion?

   B. From Matthew 6:5-8, what warnings and instructions does Jesus provide to the disciples? Why do you think He does this?

(1) Why do you think there is a slight difference between the two prayers?

(2) What is the format, pattern or content of each section of the prayer? Why might this be a good pattern for us to follow in our personal prayers?

(3) From Matthew 6:14, Matthew 18:21-35, Mark 11:25-26, Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 3:13, what is Jesus’ point?


A. Briefly describe the story Jesus tells.
B. For what reason does the man in bed get up and give his friend all he needs?

C. What spiritual truth is Jesus teaching here? How are we to apply this story to our prayer life? Why?


A. Using a dictionary, define “ask,” “seek” and “knock.”

B. In the biblical sense, what do you think it means to ask, seek and knock?

C. From Luke 11:10 and Matthew 7:8, what does Jesus promise to those who ask, seek and knock?
D. For personal reflection: Have you applied the principle of asking, seeking and knocking in your prayer life? If so, please record an example of your experience. What have you learned?

E. From Luke 11:11-13 and Matthew 7:9-12, how does Jesus reinforce His point?

5. What important truths about prayer do you discern from the following Scriptures?

A. Jonah 2:1

B. 2 Chronicles 7:14

C. Matthew 5:44
D. Luke 6:28


6. What additional truths do you glean from the following Scriptures?

A. John 16:19-24

B. Philippians 4:6 Colossians 4:2

C. Colossians 4:2

D. 1 Thessalonians 5:17

E. 1 Timothy 2:1-4

F. James 5:13-16

G. 1 Peter 3:7
7. How do you intend to apply what you have learned from this lesson?