

# “Fall in Love with Jesus”

## Quiet Times from the Gospel of Luke

### Introduction

The book of Luke (the physician) is the longest and most comprehensive of the four gospels. Along with the book of Acts, it explained the life of Jesus and the early church to help Gentiles to believe. It emphasized several unique themes:

- The humanity of Jesus, the "Son of Man" (a term that appears 25 times in Luke).
- The power of the Holy Spirit (the word "spirit" is used 34 times in Luke).
- The universality of the gospel: women, outcasts, lepers, Samaritans, Gentiles, and especially sinners are welcome.
- The dangers of materialism.
- The heart of God.

The careful reader will undoubtedly find other themes in this amazing book, including the importance of faithful prayer, the spread of the kingdom of God, and the amazing mercy of God. The author's goal was to present a logical and compelling picture of Jesus. As we go through this beautifully and carefully written book, let us fall in love with Jesus all over again.

# **"Fall in Love with Jesus"**

## **14-Day Quiet Time Outline**

- Lesson 1: Do Not Be Afraid (Luke 1-2)
- Lesson 2: Dealing with Temptations (Luke 3-4)
- Lesson 3: Jesus Came for Sinners (Luke 5)
- Lesson 4: Love Your Enemies (Luke 6)
- Lesson 5: Great Faith (Luke 7-8)
- Lesson 6: Loving God (Luke 9-10)
- Lesson 7: Clean on the Inside (Luke 11-12)
- Lesson 8: No Excuses (Luke 13-14)
- Lesson 9: God Runs (Luke 15)
- Lesson 10: Money, Relationships, and Judgment Day (Luke 16-17)
- Lesson 11: The Heart God Expects (Luke 18-20)
- Lesson 12: Decision Time (Luke 21-22)
- Lesson 13: Chosen to Carry a Cross (Luke 23)
- Lesson 14: Dealing with Disappointment (Luke 24)

## Day 1      Do Not Be Afraid

### Read Luke 1-2

Luke started his gospel by telling his readers that his gospel is based on eyewitness testimony. He then explained how God did miracles in the lives of faithful, ordinary people like Zechariah and Elizabeth, and Joseph and Mary. Luke went into great detail about the births of John and Jesus, but mentioned very little about their childhoods (Luke 1:80, 2:40-52). There is a hidden message in his approach: our backgrounds and upbringing do not matter nearly as much as our behavior. We are responsible for how we live in this world!

The first two chapters introduce all the main themes of the book: the humanity of Jesus (2:7, 2:41-45), the power of the Holy Spirit (1:15, 1:35, 1:67, 2:25-26), the universality of the gospel (all kinds of people interacted with Jesus in Luke 2), the dangers of materialism (1:48, 1:51-53, 2:7), and the heart of God (see the prayers in Luke 1-2).

### Examining the Text

- The angel told Zechariah that God had answered his prayer and that he would have a son. What are five things that the angel said about this boy?
- Both Mary and Zechariah praised God (1:46-55 and 1:68-79). What are five great things about God that we learn from each of their prayers?
- Three times in these verses angels appeared to people and told them, "Do not be afraid" (Zechariah in 1:13, Mary in 1:30, and the shepherds in 2:10). How did each of these three respond to these words? How did God respond to their disbelief, doubt, and immediate faith?
- Seven different people (or groups) interacted with Jesus in Luke 2: the innkeeper (2:6-7), the shepherds (2:15-20), Simeon (2:27-35), Anna (2:36-38), the teachers at the temple (2:46-47), and his parents (2:6-7, 16-19, 22-24, 27, 33, 39-40, 48-52). What is unique about each one?
- The first recorded words of Jesus (at the age of 12) are written in 2:49. What do you notice about what he said?

### Applying the text

- Consider Zechariah, Mary, and the shepherds' responses to God's word. Which of these people are you most like? What is your greatest fear today?
- Pray through Mary's prayer aloud, specifically noting great things God has done for you (1:49), ways he has shown you mercy (1:50, 1:54), and the good things he has given you (1:53).
- What was your first reaction to Jesus? How do you react to him now? What do you love the most about him?

## Day 2      Dealing with Temptations

### Read Luke 3-4

Luke began chapter 3 by reminding the reader that he is speaking about historical events (3:1-2). He focused on John's practical message of repentance - no other gospel goes into such detail about what John was teaching (3:7-20). John the Baptist taught about the temptations most likely to affect his hearers. Chapter 4 then recounted Jesus' own temptation (4:1-13) and the beginning of his ministry.

Once again we see the humanity of Jesus (his baptism and temptation, and the fact that his genealogy goes back all the way to Adam), the power of the Holy Spirit (3:16, 3:22, 4:1, 4:14, 4:18), the universality of the gospel (crowds listened to John and Jesus, and Jesus emphasized that Elijah and Elisha were sent to a non-Israelites (4:25-27)), the dangers of materialism (3:11-14, 4:3-7, 4:18), and the heart of God (4:18-20, 4:36, 4:39-40, 4:43).

### Examining the Text

- John called people to repent before their baptisms. He was very specific in talking about sin. What were the sins he talked about in vv. 10-14 and v.19?
- How does Luke's genealogy (3:23-38) differ from Matthew's (Matt 1:1-17)? Do you think traditional scholars are right when they say that Matthew gave Joseph's genealogy, while Luke gave Mary's? Why do you think Luke started with Jesus and ended with Adam?
- Why does Luke use such violent illustrations as swords (2:35), axes (3:9), and cliffs (4:29)?
- Why did Jesus heal people (4:35-36, 38-39, 40-41)?
- What was special about Jesus' teaching and preaching? [He came to the people and taught them where they were. He met people's physical needs. He taught with authority (4:32).]

### Applying the text

- What are your biggest temptations? How did Jesus fight his temptations? Did you pray through Mary's prayer yesterday? Do you pray about your sins? Choose a Scripture to memorize to deal with your biggest temptation.
- People were furious with Jesus because he challenge their prejudice and pride (4:23-28). What makes you angry? Is there anyone you need to apologize to because of things you said or did in anger? Talk to them today.
- Jesus came to preach good news to the poor (4:18). Many of our churches have lots of poor people. Is that a bad thing? How have you helped the poor in the last year? Is there more you can do in the future?

## Day 3      Jesus Came for Sinners

### Read Luke 5

Soon after Jesus started preaching and healing, he called people to be disciples. His first follower, Peter, described himself as a "sinful man" (5:8) and begged Jesus to go away. Crowds came to hear Jesus and to be healed (5:15). Yet Jesus wanted them to see that faith and forgiveness were even more important than physical healing (5:17-26). He also talked about the need for new wineskins for new wine (5:38); i.e., we need new hearts to receive the new message of the gospel.

The themes of Luke continue to be evident in this chapter. He was human and sometimes needed to be alone and pray (5:16). The power of the Lord (i.e., the Holy Spirit) allowed him to do miracles after he prayed (5:16-18). He called all kinds of people: fishermen (5:1-11), lepers (5:12-16), religious people (5:17), a paralytic (5:18), do-gooders (5:19-20), and even tax collectors (5:27-32). He challenged people to leave material things (5:10-11). And he showed God's gracious heart of forgiveness (5:17-26).

### Examining the Text

- What was Simon doing when Jesus first met him (5:2)? What had he been doing before that (5:5)? What was the first thing Jesus asked him to do when they met (5:3)? Why did Jesus ask for Simon's help before he did anything for Simon?
- What do we learn about faith from Simon's response to Jesus (5:5)? Why did Simon want Jesus to go away (5:8)? What was Simon's real problem (5:10)?
- How did the faith of the paralytic's friends help him to be forgiven (and healed; 5:17-20)? Why did Jesus do miracles (5:24)? How often did Jesus pray (5:16)? What was the result (5:17)?
- Whom did Jesus hang around with (5:27-32)? Why did he spend time with them?
- What did the story of the garments mean (5:36)? What about the wineskins? When you became a disciple, what were some of the ways that you became a new wine-skin? How did you radically change?

### Applying the Text

- Do you have anyone whom you talk to about your sin (5:8, 5:20-23, 5:30)? Call a brother or sister today and plan to meet up so that you can be open about your life. Think about yesterday's challenge - have you started to memorize a Scripture yet?
- What kind of friends do you have (5:18-19)? Did the friends of the paralytic care about what people thought, or about the cost of the roof of that house? Have you gone out of your way to help someone get close to Jesus? Make a plan today about going the extra mile to help a fellow sinner - maybe a church member, or someone in the world.
- How have you been doing as a fisher of men (5:10)? Have you been taking advantage of opportunities to evangelize the way that Jesus did? How can you be more evangelistic?  
Make a decision today to call sinners (i.e., evangelize) the way Jesus did.

## Day 4 Love Your Enemies

### Read Luke 6

Jesus interacted regularly with difficult people like the Pharisees at the start of this chapter (6:1-10). He had to pray to deal with them, to choose his followers, and to build his ministry

(6:12). Jesus had an unusual idea of how we should react to people who mistreat us - he said we should rejoice and consider ourselves blessed (6:22-23). He delivered one of the hardest messages of the gospel in these verses: we must *love our enemies* (6:27, 6:35), not simply tolerate them.

As usual, the chapter highlights the main themes of Luke: Jesus' humanity (he and the disciples were hungry; 6:1-5), the Holy Spirit's power (6:18-19), the universality of the gospel ("give to everyone"; 6:30), the dangers of materialism ("blessed are you who are poor...woe to you who are rich"; 6:20, 24), and the heart of God ("he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked"; 6:35).

### Examining the Text

- Why did the Pharisees think it was wrong for Jesus to heal people on the Sabbath (6:1-11)? What was their real reason for criticizing him (6:7)?
- What four qualities that make us blessed in the eyes of God (6:20-23)? What are qualities that he despises (6:24-26)?
- Some people say all the religions are the same, because they teach us to do good to others. Does any other religion teach what Jesus says (6:27-36)? Why is it hard to obey these verses?
- Do you have a teacher (discipler) in the church who is training you (Luke 6:39-40)?
- Is reading the Bible a habit in your life (6:46-49), or do you need quiet time series like this one to help you to be consistent?

### Applying the Text

- How do you respond to difficult people? Did Jesus become quiet (or start typing into his smartphone) when the Pharisees were difficult (6:1-11)? Have you ever turned the other cheek by treating an enemy kindly? Reach out (kindly) to someone this week who hurt you in the past.
- What was the worst experience of your life? Pray about it, and leap for joy (6:23).
- Did you enjoy the conference and the quiet time series? Have you been putting the word into practice (6:46-49)? Have you acted on your decision (from chapter 5) to reach out to people? Consider starting a quiet time journal, where you write a sentence about how you put what you read into practice.

## Day 5 Great Faith

### Read Luke 7-8

In these chapters, soon after Luke describes some of Jesus' most challenging teachings on sin and loving our enemies, he shared about Jesus' teachings on faith. Jesus built and challenged the faith of several people in these chapters: the centurion and his friends (7:1-10), the widow and her funeral procession (7:11-17), John the Baptist and his disciples (7:18-35), the sinful woman and Simon (7:36-50), the crowd (8:4-15), the disciples (8:22-25), the demon-possessed man (8:26-39), and the dead girl, her family, and the sick woman (8:40-56).

The main themes of Luke are again visible in chapters 7-8:

- Jesus' humanity: "The Son of Man came eating and drinking" (7:34).
- The Holy Spirit's power: Jesus healed the centurion's servant (7:10), raised the dead son of the widow of Nain (7:15), calmed the storm (8:24), and healed the demon-possessed man (8:33-35).
- The universality of the gospel: a Roman Centurion had faith (7:10), and so did a widow (7:11-15), a sinful woman (7:36-50), the people who produced a crop (8:15), the people who put God's word into practice (8:21), a demon-possessed man (8:26-39), a sick woman (8:43-48), and a dead girl and her family (8:49-56).
- The dangers of materialism: "the good news is preached to the poor" (7:22); "those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces" (7:25); and "These women were helping to support them" (8:3).
- The heart of God: "When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her" (7:13).

### Examining the Text

- What are five good qualities of the centurion? What was Jesus' attitude towards each of the people he met in Luke 7: the centurion (7:1-10), the widow (7:11-17), John the Baptist (7:18-35), and the sinful woman and Simon (7:36-50)?
- Jesus told John's disciples to tell him what they had seen and heard (7:22). Make a list of Jesus' miracles and pray through them. What is your favorite? Why?
- Do you think that the woman in Luke 7:36-50 owed more than Simon (7:43)? What point was Jesus trying to make?
- Jesus talked about the four kinds of soils. Think about your life. When were you hard, like the path (8:12)? Shallow in your faith (8:13)? Choked spiritually (8:14)? Producing a crop (8:15)? Where are you now? What is choking you?
- When Jesus healed legion, the people from the area asked him to leave (8:34-37). Why? How much do you think the drowned pigs were worth? What about that man's soul?

### Applying the Text

- Even John the Baptist doubted. What makes you doubt? What can you do to overcome these doubts? Talk to someone about your doubts.
- The sinful woman sacrificed greatly for Jesus by giving up her perfume (7:37-38), while Simon the Pharisee "gave little" (7:44-47). When was the last time you sacrificed for Jesus? Do you need to do more in that area? Did you sacrifice the way we talked about in chapter 6, by reaching out to someone who has hurt you?
- Two people were raised from the dead in these two chapters. What would be an amazing miracle in your life? What would you have to do to make it happen? What would God have to do? Pray about it, and act on it.

## Day 6 Loving God

### Read Luke 9-10

These chapters introduced a new phase in Jesus' ministry: he started sending out his disciples to preach, heal, and serve (9:1-6, 9:10-17, 10:1-24). Jesus wanted to teach people to love God - how he takes care of us (9:10-17), the cost of following him (9:18-27, 9:57-62), and his greatness (9:37-43). He explained that the greatest commandment is to love God. In practice, this means caring for other people (10:25-37). Chapter 10 concluded with the lesson for Mary and Martha: "only one thing is needed" - to sit at the feet of Jesus.

The two chapters again illustrate the major themes of Luke:

- Jesus' humanity ("How long shall I stay with you and put up with you?"; 9:41).
- The power of the Holy Spirit (10:17-21).
- The universality of the gospel: Jesus likely fed a total of 15,000 - 20,000 people (including women and children) in 9:10-17, and it was a non-Jewish Samaritan who was the hero in Luke 10:25-39.
- The dangers of materialism (9:25, 10:35).
- The heart of God (10:33).

### Examining the Text

- Why did Jesus tell his disciples to "take nothing" for the journey (9:3)? How can you tell if someone is open to the message of the gospel (9:5)?
- What do we learn about God's love from the feeding of the 5,000 (9:10-17)? Why did Jesus ask the disciples to feed the people (9:13)? Why do you think he specified groups of 50 people (9:14)?
- What did Peter's confession and the transfiguration teach the disciples about Jesus (9:18-27, 9:28-36)? What do Elijah and Moses represent? What did God mean when he told the disciples to "listen" to his Son (9:35)?
- Why did Jesus use the parable of the Good Samaritan to teach the meaning of real love for God (10:25-37)? Why did the priest and the Levite walk on the opposite side of the road from the wounded man? What were five ways the Samaritan sacrificed to help him?
- What do you think the "many things" were that Martha was worried about (10:38-42)? What is the "one thing" that Jesus said is necessary to Martha?

### Applying the Text

- Why did Jesus need to be "resolute" when he set out for Jerusalem (9:51)? What is a challenge that you need to be resolute to overcome?
- When the disciples returned from preaching and healing, they joyfully shared their victory stories (10:17-20). Jesus told them to rejoice in their salvation. Are you happy today, or worried and upset about many things (10:41)? Are you regularly thanking God for your salvation? Are you in love with God, or only in love with working for him?
- Jesus defined love for God as practical love for strangers. When was the last time you sacrificed and showed love to a stranger? A poor person? A friend? A family member? Make a decision today to demonstrate your love for God through service.

## Day 7      Clean on the Inside

### Read Luke 11-12

Luke turned to the hearts of his readers in these chapters as he explains Jesus' teachings on prayer, hypocrisy, worry, and service. The key verses in these chapters focus on our inner lives; Jesus first spoke about how our eyes light up our body. The things we see and perceive can fill us with light or darkness - the choice is ours (11:33-36). Jesus also warned against religion that looks good on the outside, but is filled with hidden sin and injustice on the inside (11:37-52, 12:1-3). He ended by reminding his audience that God will take care of them.

These chapters again touch on the various themes of Luke. Jesus showed his humanity by sharing his distress at his upcoming baptism (the cross; 12:49-50); he promised the Holy Spirit would give them the right words at the right time (12:8-12); he again preached to a diverse crowd of thousands in 12:1-3; he condemned greed in 11:39 and the parable in 12:13-21, calling for them to give to the poor in 11:41 and 12:33; and he showed the heart of God by telling his audience in 12:4-7 that God loves even the sparrows, so they should not fear.

### Examining the Text

- When Jesus taught about prayer, what did he say they should ask for (11:1-4)? What was the point of Jesus' story about a man asking his friend for bread at midnight (Luke 11:5-13)?
- Jesus talked about Jonah and the Queen of the South in Luke 11:29-32. Did Jesus believe the Old Testament was true? What was his point about Jonah? Who was the "Queen of the South" and how can we imitate her example?
- What were six good things that the Pharisees did (11:37-54)? How do Pharisees react to challenge? How do you react?
- Why was Jesus so concerned about the inside of people's hearts? (Hint: Read John 2:25).
- What was Jesus talking about in 12:4-7? Why did he suddenly jump from talking about throwing people into hell to God's love for sparrows?
- Jesus especially focused on money in chapter 12. He shared about a successful, career-focused man who was not rich towards God (12:13-21), and he talked about pagans who run after money (12:30). What does it mean to be "rich towards God"?

### Applying the Text

- Do you pray specifically for every area of your life (the kingdom (church), daily bread (your work and finances), and sins (yours and others), and temptations (11:1-4)? Sometimes we compartmentalize our faith; we pray about church stuff but not our jobs or other issues. Have you been relying on your own strength in some areas?
- Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for hypocrisy. What would he say to us? How are you doing in the areas he emphasized: giving to the poor (v.41), seeking justice and God's love (v.42), avoiding the limelight (v.43), and leading by example (v.46)? If what you said in the dark was proclaimed from the rooftops (12:3), would you be afraid?
- How is your relationship towards money? Do you worry about money? Are you generous with friends, or do you worry about the exact distribution of a shared restaurant bill? Are you hospitable? Do you work extra to advance your career? Do you give generously to the church and the poor? Have a prayer time exclusively focused on money, and talk to God about every detail of your financial life.

## Day 8      No Excuses

### Read Luke 13-14

Jesus stressed the need for urgency and seriousness about the kingdom in these chapters. He called for repentance in 13:1-9 and for people to "make every effort" to enter the kingdom in 13:22-30. In 14:15-24 he told the story of a great banquet where people made excuses instead of attending. He ended by warning against half-built towers in 14:28-30, calling on people to give up everything to become disciples in 14:33. Jesus taught that there was no valid excuse for people not to carry their crosses.

These chapters especially emphasize the theme that the gospel is for everyone. Jesus explained in 13:1-8 that everyone needs to repent; he talked about yeast affecting "all the dough" in 13:20; he spoke about people from the four corners of the earth in the kingdom in 13:29; and he encouraged people to invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind to their banquets in 14:12-14 and 14:21.

### Examining the Text

- Jesus urged people to think about current events in 13:1-5. As you look at the suffering in the world today, do you think that those in trouble are less righteous than you and I?
- What was the point of Jesus' parable in 13:6-9? What are some of the visible fruits of true repentance?
- Think about the woman who had been bent over for 18 "long" years (13:10-17). What were the challenges that she faced every single day? How do your challenges compare to hers?
- Did Jesus think that eating and drinking with him and listening to his messages was enough for salvation (13:22-30)? What does it practically mean to "make every effort" to enter the kingdom?
- Think about the excuses in 14:15-24. Why were they bad excuses? What excuses do we make about our sins and lack of commitment?

### Applying the Text

- In which areas of your life are you "making every effort"? In which ones are you not trying your hardest?
- Jesus called for each person to carry their own cross to follow him (14:25-27). What is your cross? What is your greatest spiritual challenge? Make a decision to take action on your greatest challenge. This might involve confession of sin, or a difficult conversation with a non-Christian. Share about your greatest challenge - your cross - with a good friend in the church.
- Would God describe you as still salty (14:34-35)? What are some things you used to do as a young Christian that you no longer do now? Have you taken this quiet time series seriously, or are you quickly skimming through it, without doing the challenges?

Read Luke 15

Perhaps the single most important element of a successful romance is that both parties must be in love with each other. The entire Bible is all about God's love affair with a rebellious and unrighteous mankind; as Isaiah 65:1-2 says, "I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, 'Here am I, here am I.' All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people." This chapter is about a God who "goes after" lost sheep, lost coins, and lost sons until he finds them. If we can wake up to how much God loves us, then we can complete the romance by loving him back.

While there are many themes in Luke, this chapter especially highlights the heart of God. Our God runs through the fields to find a single lost sheep, then carries it home on his shoulders (15:3-7). Our God crawls on her knees, scraping the dust on the floor in search for a single lost coin (15:8-10). Our God suffers insult and humiliation with grace and dignity as his youngest son asks for his share of the estate prior to his father's death (15:11-12). He stands in a field scanning the horizon, hoping that one day his lost child will come home (15:20). And when the boy does come, the father greets him with a hug and party. This is our God.

Examining the Text

- What was the Pharisees' criticism of Jesus (15:2)? What were the two things Jesus did with sinners (15:1-2)? Have you ever watched an important sporting match with a group of friends? How do they react when their team does well? What does God get excited about according to 15:1-10?
- What would a shepherd have to do to find a lost sheep in the countryside (15:3-7)? What three things did the woman do in order to find her coin (15:8-10)?
- Why did the father not react when his younger son was obviously making an insulting, selfish, and ultimately foolish decision (15:11-12)?
- What were some of the son's experiences in the "distant country"? What was it like for him when he had money? What was his new job like? What did he learn?
- How did the older brother react? What was he resentful about? How did the father treat him? Do you think he was better, the same as, or worse than his younger brother?

Applying the Text

- Think about people who have fallen away. Have you "gone after them" the way God would do? Reach out to someone today who used to be a disciple to see how they are doing.
- Think about other lost souls that you know among your family, work colleagues, neighbors, old friends and classmates, former visitors to the church (who stopped coming). Is it possible that, like the lost son in the far away country, their circumstances have changed (15:14)? Make a list and reach out to them.
- The younger son decided to make the long walk home and admit that he was wrong (15:17). The older son was unwilling to change when asked to do so by his father (15:28). Do you have attitudes towards other children of God? Is there an old broken relationship that you do not want to fix? Pray and take advice about making things right, and then take action.

## Day 10 Money, Relationships, and Judgment Day

### Read Luke 16-17

Jesus turned to the subjects of money, relationships, and eternal judgment in Luke 16 and 17. He explained through the parable of the shrewd manager that God wants us to use money as a tool to build relationships in 16:1-15; he then warned that how we handle money can determine our eternal destiny through the story of the rich man and Lazarus in 16:19-31. In chapter 17 he focused on the issues of forgiveness (17:1-6), diligence (17:7-10), and gratitude (17:11-19). He again talked about judgment in 17:20-37, warning how suddenly the end will come.

These chapters appear to be particularly focused on the theme of materialism, with the key verse being Luke 17:13, "You cannot serve both God and money." Luke contrasted the rich man's materialistic lifestyle in the face of the misery of his fellow man just a few feet away; he made it clear that selfish materialism in this life is not compatible with salvation (16:19-31).

### Examining the Text

- Why did the manager cut the customer's bills when he knew that he would soon lose his job (16:1-7)? Why did the master commend the manager for cheating (16:8)? What was Jesus trying to teach them through this story (16:8-9)?
- How does God want us to deal with money (16:10-15)? Why did Jesus say it was impossible to serve both God and money (16:13)?
- In 16:19-31, what was the rich man concerned about in life? And after his death? What was the point of the story (16:29-31)?
- Why do you think it takes faith to keep forgiving people (17:1-6)? Should we expect to be thanked for our work, even our sacrifices (17:7-10)?
- What two examples did Jesus give to describe how suddenly the judgment will come (17:20-37)? Why did Jesus emphasize this?

### Applying the Text

- How can we apply the teaching of Jesus in 16:1-9? What does it mean to be shrewd in our workplaces? Are you using money to gain friends for the afterlife (16:9)? Are you generous to those in need (16:19-21)? When did you last personally help someone who was poor?
- The rich man got fired up about evangelizing his brothers after he was dead (16:27-31). Have you done enough to reach out to your physical family? Pray about your family and make a decision to do more to reach out to them. Talk about this with a friend in the church.
- Only one of the ten leprosy patients whom Jesus healed showed true gratitude. How grateful are you for your family? Your job? The church? Your salvation? Make a point of showing your gratitude for all these things (to both people and God).

## Day 11      The Heart God Expects

### Read Luke 18-20

Luke described on the heart of a disciple in these chapters that recounted Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (19:28-48). The parables of the persistent widow (18:1-8) and Pharisee and tax collector (18:9-14) stressed the need for a faith that never quits and a spirit that is truly humble. Jesus then interacted with children (18:15-17), a rich young ruler (18:18-30), his disciples (18:31-34), a blind beggar (18:35-43), and Zaccheus (19:1-10); in each case, he pointed out that we must come to God on his terms, ready to submit (18:17), to sacrifice (18:22), to suffer (18:32), to beg (18:39), and to change (19:8). In return, God gives us the kingdom (18:16), treasure in heaven (18:22), resurrection (18:33), sight (18:42), and salvation (19:9). The parables of the minas and tenants both taught that we must each use our gifts for God (19:11-17, 20:9-19). The Pharisees' attacks on Jesus intensified in chapter 20; they questioned his authority (20:1-8), his attitude towards government (20:20-26), and his views on resurrection (20:27-40); in each case, Jesus encouraged commitment to God and warned against religious hypocrisy.

Jesus particularly emphasizes the heart of God in these chapters: he hugged children, wept for the lost, and was indignant with those who were proud. His humanity was also particularly evident, as he hugged children, predicted the suffering and execution of the "Son of Man," and parried the attacks of his enemies.

### Examining the Text

- Why does God not immediately answer our prayers according to 18:1-8? Why did Jesus commend the unrighteous tax collector instead of the disciplined Pharisee in 18:9-14? When we are honest about our lives, there are so many ways that we have messed up; we have hurt people and have often fallen short. We should remember the tax collector.
- Religious people often get mad about the wrong things. The disciples rebuked both the children (18:15) and the blind beggar (18:39) for coming to Jesus; the people slandered him for visiting sinful Zaccheus' home (19:7); the subjects hated their king in 19:14; the Pharisees asked Jesus to rebuke his joyful followers in 19:39; the tenants killed the master's son in 20:14-15; the priests wanted to arrest and kill Jesus in 19:47 and 20:19; and religious leaders tried to trap him in 20:20 and 20:27. Why do people so often misunderstand Jesus?
- Contrast the good qualities of the hearts of the widow (18:1-8), the tax collector (18:9-14), the children (18:15-17), the beggar (18:35-43), Zaccheus (19:1-10), and the joyful disciples (19:28-40) with the Pharisee (18:9-14), the rich ruler (18:18-30), the religious leaders (all 3 chapters)? Write down five good qualities and five bad ones as you compare them.
- Why did Jesus weep for Jerusalem in 19:41-44? Do you think Jerusalem would have been destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. if they had welcomed Jesus instead of crucifying him?

### Applying the Text

- When you look at the rich young ruler, the beggar, and Zaccheus, which one reminds you of yourself? When was the last time someone looked down on you because of your love for Jesus? Write down at least 10 reasons why you still need mercy from God (18:13, 18:39). Pray through this list, asking God for mercy.
- If Jesus came to you today and said, "You still lack one thing" (18:22), what would that be? Make a decision to change that one thing, and talk about it with a friend in the church.
- Have you been trustworthy in handling your family, work, and church responsibilities (19:17)? Take time over the next few days to complete something you have been delaying.

## Day 12      Decision Time

### Read Luke 21-22

As Jesus neared the cross, he tried to prepare both himself and the disciples for the trials that were coming. Luke started with the example of a poor widow. Though she had only two small coins, her decision to sacrifice made her an example to endless generations of future disciples (21:1-4). Luke implicitly contrasted her attitude with that of Judas, who sold Jesus for a small amount of money (22:5). Even as the disciples admired the amazing beauty of the world around them (21:5), Jesus warned the disciples that they would be tested and needed to be ready (21:6-38). Jesus warned the disciples of the persecution they would face, but he also promised to give them words and wisdom that none of their adversaries would be able to resist or contradict (21:15). Luke especially focused on Peter's hubris (22:31-34), temptation (22:54-60), and humiliation (22:61-64). He also showed Jesus courageously serving his disciples (22:15-19), praying with them (22:39-46), and discipling them - even as he was being arrested (22:47-53).

These chapters return to the theme of materialism by comparing the examples of the widow and Judas. They also highlight Jesus' humanity, especially as he said goodbye to his disciples (22:7-38) and prayed in anguish in the garden of Gethsemane (22:39-46).

### Examining the Text

- What sins did Jesus warn about in 21:34? Look up dissipation in a dictionary. When we are under pressure, Satan tempts us with overindulgence and anxiety.
- Why did Satan enter Judas (22:3)? How do we open ourselves up to him?
- Why did Jesus institute the communion (22:17-20)? How long does it take to forget Jesus (about five minutes into a journey on public transit, or five minutes after we go to school or work, or five minutes after we enter a shopping mall, we might forget)?
- Jesus' prayer in the garden was amazing (22:39-46). Even then, he was thinking about his disciples (22:40, 22:46). In his anguish, God sent him an angel (22:42-44).
- Examine 22:54-62 carefully. Peter was torn between following Jesus and saving himself. He ended up doing neither. How do you think he felt when Jesus looked straight at him in 22:61? Have you ever been caught in a sin? How did it feel?

### Applying the Text

- Think about 21:34, 22:40, and 22:46. What temptations do you run to for comfort when you are under pressure? How can you avoid such traps in the future? Pray about these temptations, and confess your typical sin pattern to a close friend.
- Peter followed Jesus at a distance (22:54). In what areas of your life have you put a distance between yourself and Jesus? Why? Pray for a change of heart.
- Can you imagine circumstances that would lead you to fall away like Peter or Judas? What do you think Satan's plan is for you? Write down how he might scheme to attack you, and pray for the courage to avoid such a fate.

## Day 13 Chosen to Carry a Cross

### Read Luke 23

This amazing chapter started with Jesus' interaction with King Herod and Governor Pilate. Each man's character was revealed as he interacted with Jesus; Herod was cruel (23:8-11), while Pilate was political (he passed the buck to Herod in 23:1-7; he became friends with his enemy, Herod, in 23:12; he condemned an innocent man to please the people in 23:13-25. We witness Simon of Cyrene's chance encounter with Jesus in 23:26-31; what appears to be terrible bad luck (forced to carry a condemned man's cross) turns out to be the greatest day of his life, as he got to walk a step behind the bleeding messiah. One of the criminals' last day also turned out amazingly, as he realized what a privilege it was to die next to Jesus in 23:32-43. Luke also showed how Jesus had an impact even after his death, as the centurion (23:47), Joseph (23:50-53), and the women pondered their responses (23:27-30, 48, 23:55-56).

We again see the various themes of Luke reemerge in this chapter. Jesus' humanity was evident as he was mocked and ridiculed (23:11), remind us of our own times of humiliation. Jesus gave up his [Holy] Spirit as he died, quoting Scripture (Psalm 31:5). His suffering on the cross next to common criminals was a reminder of the universality of the gospel - even a dying, ineffective (he got caught) criminal can be saved! The soldiers gambling for his clothing reminded us of how little Jesus cared for material things (23:34); his words on the cross ("Father, forgive them" and "Today you will be with me in paradise"; 23:34-43) again showed the heart of our God.

### Examining the Text

- What are five things that we learn about Herod in 23:7-12? What are five things that we learn about Pilate in 23:1-25?
- Read Luke 23:26-31, Mark 15:21, Acts 2:10, Acts 11:19-21, Acts 13:1-2, and Romans 16:13. What do we learn about Simon from these passages? Did he grumble about his cross?
- Jesus asked the women not to cry for him in 23:27-31. What did he mean by "green" and "dry" trees (22:31)? If the Romans were willing to condemn the innocent Jesus (green and innocent), what would they do to armed rebels (dry and ready to burn)?
- Think about the criminals. Do you think they wanted this fate when they were young? How did they end up getting crucified? How did they both react? Why did one of them change?
- What did Jesus mean when he said, "Today you will be with me in paradise" (23:43)? What stops for each of us as soon as we die? Who lives outside of time?

### Applying the Text

- Have you ever been falsely accused? Jesus reacted to the lies and distortions about him (23:1-2, 23:5, 23:14) with silence (23:9). How do you react when you are mistreated? Later we see in 23:26-31 that Jesus did not fall into self-pity, even though people were crying for him. If you sometimes fall into sulking or giving people the "silent treatment," make a decision to change and pray.
- Jesus forgave the people who killed him, saying "they do not know what they are doing" (23:34). Who has hurt you the most in this world? Does it still hurt? Even though you have forgiven them before, do you find yourself having to forgive them again?
- What crosses has God handed to you? Which ones are the hardest to carry? Are you embracing them, or grumbling about them? When people watch you carry your cross, are they inspired?

## Day 14      Dealing with Disappointment

### Read Luke 24

Luke concluded his gospel with the miracle of the resurrection. He focused on the fear (24:5, 24:37), confusion (24:12, 24:22-24), doubts (24:11, 24:38), and disappointment of the disciples (24:21) after the tragedy of the crucifixion. As it dawned on them that Jesus really was raised from the dead, their hearts caught fire (24:32-35) and they worshipped God with great joy (24:52-53). Having seen the life and love of Jesus, the disciples were ready to be transformed by the cross and the resurrection. We pray that studying this gospel has done the same for you, helping you to fall in love with Jesus all over again. The gospel's conclusion ("stay in the city," 24:49) also sets up the beginning of Luke's next book, Acts, which starts with the disciples waiting in Jerusalem.

The final chapter touches on the themes of the book. Jesus came back as a man, walking and eating in Luke 24:13-31. He promised to send the Holy Spirit ("power from on high") just before he ascended into heaven (24:49-51). Jesus talked about preaching to all nations in 24:47, again highlighting that the gospel is for everyone. The chapter featured the items and activities that feature prominently in the lives of the poor: strips of linen in 24:12, walking in 24:13-15, eating bread in 24:31, and everyone staying at the temple in 24:53. The book concluded with people's hearts burning (24:32) and joyfully praising God (24:52-53), just as God's heart burns for us.

### Examining the Text

- Why do you think the disciples forgot Jesus' predictions about the resurrection (24:5-8)? Why were the disciples so disappointed and downcast (24:17)?
- Why did the disciples not realize it was Jesus when they were walking with him along the road (24:13-35)? Why did God prevent them from recognizing Jesus (24:16)?
- How did the disciples view Jesus before they realized he would rise from the dead (24:19-21)? List five things that they thought about him.
- Have you ever had a hallucination? A very vivid dream? How do we know that Jesus' appearance in 24:36-43 was not a hallucination or dream?
- Why did Jesus keep emphasizing the Old Testament Scriptures as he explained God's plan (24:25-27, 25:44-48)? According to 24:46-47, what is the essence of the gospel?

### Applying the Text

- What are your biggest disappointments in life? Are those things really worth being disappointed about? Are you "worried and upset about many things" (10:41) and forgetting the "one thing" that is needed (10:41)? Have a prayer time where you give your disappointments back to God.
- When was your heart last "burning" for the gospel (24:32)? Have you been spending enough time in your walk with Jesus? What activity could you cut (slightly) to give more time to God in your quiet times? TV? Internet surfing? Sports? Video games? Make a decision today to devote more time daily to prayer or Bible study (or both!).
- Are you more in love with Jesus now than when you started this quiet time series? Have a prayer time where you and God talk about all the reasons why you love Jesus; you can use the book of Luke to remind yourself as you pray.