

AGES 11 - 16 YEARS OLD

Gospel of Luke

Lesson #1: Jesus as a Child

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview understanding of the Gospel of Luke
2. To expose students to the unique narratives and details that Luke shares
3. To inspire students to follow Jesus in new ways

Topics

Behavior, Difficulties, Endurance, Godliness

Scripture Memorization

Luke 2:52

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

Go around your group sharing "When I was a kid stories."

You start for your group, sharing something that is unique about you when you were a kid. Then allow students to share as well. For example:

"When I was a kid, I had a bad habit of chewing on the collar of my t-shirts."

"When I was a kid, I moved four times."

"When I was a kid, I thought I could fly."

Just allow students to share a couple times and then move on to "Getting Started."

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

Ask your students if they can name the famous people below based on the facts from when they were younger.

- This famous American actor's first job was as a mascot for a fast-food chicken restaurant. (Brad Pitt)
- This comedian/actor quit school at 15 to get a job as a janitor to support his family after his father lost his job and they were living out of a van. (Jim Carrey)
- This internationally-known singer's first job was to knock Praying Mantis bugs from Christmas Trees. (Taylor Swift)
- This actress was voted "most talkative" in 7th grade. (Jennifer Lawrence)
- This actor declined an invitation to join the pop group Backstreet Boys to pursue an acting career. (Ryan Gosling)

Tough, huh?

The truth is, we don't know a lot about people when they were a kid, even if they are famous later in life. This is especially true about Jesus.

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DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

As we go through Luke, we're going to explore some facets of his book that only he shares. Today we start with a prime example — details about Jesus' life that only Luke includes. We start with Jesus as a child.

Read Luke 2:22-40

Jesus is taken to the temple so that Mary and Joseph can obey the law and offer sacrifices. This will bring a close to Mary's forty-day purification after childbirth as well as allow them to offer sacrifices to God (Exodus 13, Leviticus 12). It is notable that Mary and Joseph select the sacrificial option for the poor, that being two doves or pigeons.

While there, they meet two people that only Luke tells us about in his Gospel.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the man's name that they meet? (*Simeon.*)
2. For what has this man been waiting? (*The "consolation" of Israel.*)
3. He had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he saw who? (*The Messiah.*)
4. How does Simeon know that Jesus had appeared in the temple? (*The Spirit moved him.*)
5. How does Simeon celebrate Jesus? (*He takes Him in his arms and praises God.*)
6. What are some of the things Simeon says about Jesus? (*He is salvation for all, revelation, and glory.*)
7. What is Mary and Joseph's response? (*They marveled" at what was said.*)
8. Simeon includes one troubling detail in verse 34. What is it? (*That Jesus would cause the rise and fall of many, be spoken against, and a sword would pierce Mary's heart.*)
9. What do you think these words are prophesying? (*The judgment, suffering, and loss that would mark Jesus' earthly ministry.*)

Immediately after meeting Simeon, we meet another prophet named Anna.

Discussion Questions (Continued):

10. How does Luke describe Anna? (*She is of the tribe of Asher, a widow, and was very old.*)
11. How does Anna spend her days? (*Worshiping in the temple, fasting and praying.*)
12. When does she approach Mary, Joseph, and Jesus? (*See verse 38 "at the very moment" that Simeon was speaking.*)
13. What does Anna say? (*She spoke about Jesus to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.*)
14. If you were Mary and this old lady said that your child would bring redemption to Israel, how would you respond? (*It surely would have been a mixture of confusion and faith.*)
15. Do you think Mary and Joseph truly grasped what was being said about Jesus? (*It's hard to imagine that they could.*)
16. What does this passage tell us as to what happened in Jesus' life from infancy on? (*He grew in wisdom, physical strength, and spiritually.*)

From then until the age of twelve, we know nothing of Jesus' life. But in Luke 2:41 Luke picks up the narrative and gives us one more window into the childhood of Jesus.

Read Luke 2:41-52

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are Mary and Joseph in Jerusalem on this occasion? (*To be present for Passover.*)

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2. How old is Jesus here? *(Twelve.)*
3. What is the crisis that arises at the end of the feast? *(Mary and Joseph's traveling company leave, but Jesus stays behind.)*
4. How long does the group travel before they realized Jesus is not with them? *(One day.)*
5. How long does it take for Mary and Joseph to find Jesus? *(Three days.)*
6. What do they find Jesus doing? *(He is in the temple teaching and was amazing the crowds with His questions and answers.)*
7. When asked what He was doing, what is Jesus' reply? *(See verse 49 "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my father's house?" some manuscripts say "about my father's business.")*
8. What do you think Jesus means by this answer? *(That He was drawn to, compelled to, and designed for pointing people toward the Good News about who He and the Father are.)*
9. In verse 51, what do we learn Mary does with this experience? *(She treasured it in her heart.)*

Verse 52 tells us Jesus continued to grow. This moment at the temple marks a time when He was coming of age, and His purpose on earth began to be revealed to many. Luke alone records these two events, and we can learn a lot from them—not just about Jesus' life, but our life, too.

MAKING IT REAL (15 minutes)

The things that people say about Jesus (or that He says about Himself) inform us on how we should look at our lives once we surrender to Jesus.

Your Life Has a Purpose

General Discussion:

- How would you summarize Simeon's and Anna's comments about Jesus? *(He would really change things...make a difference...things were going to be different because of Him, etc.)*
- When you think about the purpose of Jesus' life, what would you say it is? *(To make a way for creation to be redeemed, to invite us into deep relationship with Him, etc.)*
- When you think about the purpose of your life, what would you say it is? *(Students may struggle to answer this, but let them struggle.)*

Read 2 Timothy 1:9

Discussion Questions:

1. Per this verse, what is our purpose in life? *(To be called of God to be saved and live a holy life.)*

Sometimes we make this super complicated, but I just want you to hear this plain and simple — your purpose in life is to belong to Jesus.

Your Life Will Be Glory & Suffering

There are some other interesting things said by Simeon and Anna about Jesus' life.

General Discussion:

- From our reading before, would you say that everything said about Jesus was positive or encouraging? *(No, Simeon said Jesus would be opposed and a sword would pierce Mary, etc.)*
- With what you know about Jesus' ministry, would you say this came true? *(Of course, He was opposed and later executed for doing what He did.)*
- When you think about your life, do you often think about the suffering, opposition, and difficulty you'd face? *(Probably not.)*
- Why do you think we tend to only daydream about the good stuff in life and never embrace the suffering we'll face in following Jesus? *(It's uncomfortable, particularly when we're young, to think*

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about such things...we don't like to think of things being difficult.)

The truth is, Jesus invites us to follow Him, but He never dodges the fact that it will be tough. Later in Luke, Jesus twice says that following Him means suffering, even as He heads to His own cross.

Read Luke 9:23 and Luke 14:27

Life isn't all glory...it's suffering, too.

Your Life Should Be About Pointing People to Jesus

When Jesus is twelve, he gives us a good reminder of what our lives should be about.

General Discussion:

- Jesus' devotion to the Father is evident from a young age. How do you think your devotion to Christ is being shaped in you right now? *(Allow students to share.)*
- What are some things that distract you from being "about your father's business?" *(Sports, relationships, school, family drama, etc.)*
- Has your faith, devotion, and understanding of the Gospel ever "amazed" someone? *(Allow students to struggle with this answer.)*
- What is one way you can start making Jesus more central to your life's purpose, pointing people to Him? *(Allow students to brainstorm ideas, affirming each idea.)*

Look, none of us are Jesus, but we can all strive to make our lives about pointing people to Jesus, sharing the Gospel, being people who are about our Father's business.

CLOSING PRAYER (3 minutes)

Pray that students would grow just like Jesus did, and allow Jesus to be the purpose of their lives.

Gospel of Luke Lesson #2: Jesus Prepares for Ministry

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview understanding of the Gospel of Luke
2. To expose students to the unique narratives and details that Luke shares
3. To inspire students to follow Jesus in new ways

Topics

Godliness, Habits, Knowledge, Word of God

Scripture Memorization

Luke 4:8

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OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

Split your group up into teams of 4-5 or if you have a smaller group, stay together and play as individuals.

Call out common objects: a quarter, hair brush, Bible, pen, lip gloss, etc. Come up with 10-12 things. Go through the list and see which team has the most items on your list. The catch is that they must already have it in their purse, pocket, or wallet.

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

We're going to continue in our study of Luke's Gospel today, considering Jesus' life as he begins his ministry. We've fast forwarded from Luke's exclusive coverage of Jesus as a boy to the launching of his public ministry.

General Discussion:

- What would you expect Jesus to need to prepare for what He's about to undertake? (*Allow students to share.*)
- We can only speculate, but how do you think Jesus is feeling as He "goes public" in ministry? (*We are only speculating, obviously Jesus knew what was ahead for Him, but it's important for students to consider and empathize as they get into this lesson.*)

DIGGING IN (25 minutes)

Luke gives us some insight into how Jesus prepared for ministry. In these passages, we're going to learn how we can follow Jesus by preparing for whatever ministry God might call us toward.

Read Luke 3:21-23a

Discussion Questions:

1. Jesus is perfect and without sin, why do you think He was baptized? (*He was marking the beginning of His ministry, He was setting an example, He was surrendering to the will of the Father, etc.*)
2. What happens when Jesus is baptized? (*The Holy Spirit descends on Him "like a dove."*)
3. The voice from heaven said what? (*"You are my son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."*)
4. How old was Jesus when this happens? (*About 30.*)
5. Why do you think He waited until this time to begin His ministry? (*There's no right or wrong answer to this, but it is a good question to get students thinking a little differently.*)
6. How would an action like baptism help prepare Jesus for ministry? (*It sets Him apart, gives Him a public platform, and makes His authority from the Father known.*)

After His baptism, Jesus is lead to another place of preparation. Let's read about it.

Read Luke 4:1-13

Discussion Questions:

1. After His baptism, Jesus is full of what? (*The Holy Spirit.*)
2. He endures forty days of testing from the devil. What are His temptations? (*To turn a stone to bread, to worship Satan for power, and to throw Himself off the temple.*)
3. How does Jesus with each of these temptations? (*With scripture, refusing to do what Satan asks.*)
4. Why do you think Satan chose these three temptations in particular? (*We can't be sure, but he seems to be taking advantage of where Jesus might be vulnerable—His hunger, for instance.*)
5. Do you think it is significant that Jesus is tempted immediately following His baptism? (*Yes, it is often when we are most committed and excited to do something for God that Satan attacks.*)

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6. How is this temptation and time in the wilderness preparation for Jesus' ministry? *(He will face constant opposition, and the things Satan is trying to get Him to do—embrace power, indulge in physical needs, etc.—are things that He'll have to resist while on earth.)*

The very next verse, Luke 4:14, says that Jesus returns to Galilee and word spreads about Him. He is full of the Spirit. His ministry begins. He is prepared.

But what about us?

MAKING IT REAL (15 minutes)

I don't know how much you think about your life in terms of it being a ministry, but in these two narratives we read about all the preparation necessary to serve Jesus faithfully.

Surrender

The first thing we read about Jesus' preparation for ministry is that He is baptized, a beautiful symbol of surrender. We, too, must surrender to Jesus, and not just once—always.

Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-29

Those words were written by Paul, but it's interesting to note that Luke travelled with Paul for parts of his ministry. These sacrifices are things Luke would have witnessed. As we think about Paul's ministry, and Jesus' ministry, it's good to allow it to inspire our own.

General Discussion:

- When you think of the word "surrender" what do you think of? *(A white flag, a loser in war, etc.)*
- How does Paul's ministry illustrate surrender? *(Every day he had to realize that the cause was worth his suffering, that Christ was worth it.)*
- How does a willingness to surrender prepare you to do ministry? *(It gives us perspective, allows us to trust, etc.)*

Jesus, surrendering in baptism, showed that He was committed to being faithful to the Father. But it is the one who baptized Him, John the Baptist, who gives us a great phrase to remember if we want to be prepared to for that same kind of faithfulness.

Read John 3:30

The biggest way surrender prepares us for ministry is it is our intentional emptying of ourselves so that God's Spirit can fill us up.

The Word

Hardship will come in ministry, as Jesus' temptation in the wilderness demonstrates. Having surrendered to the Father, it is His knowledge and trust in the Word that allows Him to continue in faithfulness.

Read Psalm 1:1-3 and 12:6

Discussion Questions:

1. What does the Psalmist share about a wise person's attitude toward the Word of God? *(We should delight in it, meditate on it, consider it flawless, etc.)*
2. What does the Psalmist share are some benefits regarding a close relationship with the Word of God? *(It is a solid foundation, lasting, and allows us to prosper and grow.)*
3. How do you see ministry being more difficult if you don't have the foundation of God's Word? *(You lack a source of inspiration, rootedness, and wisdom.)*
4. Do you feel like your knowledge of God's Word is such that you could quote it during times of temptation or trouble? Why or why not? *(Allow students to share.)*

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I want to challenge each of you to grow in your knowledge of God's Word. In doing so, you'll be more prepared to serve Him in various ways.

CLOSING PRAYER (10 minutes)

Close with an extended time of prayer. Invite students to pray for one another, asking God to prepare them for whatever sort of ministry He might call them to do. Then finish by praying for your group—that they would have the courage to surrender and find truth and foundation in God's Word

Gospel of Luke Lesson #3: Jesus Ministers in Galilee

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview understanding of the Gospel of Luke
2. To expose students to the unique narratives and details that Luke shares
3. To inspire students to follow Jesus in new ways

Topics

Sacrifice

Scripture Memorization

Luke 7:9

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

Split your group into pairs. Have one member of the pair put on blindfolds. One pair at a time, have the non-blindfolded person guide their partner through a room, hallway, etc. toward a seat that they must sit in, taking only instruction from their non-blindfolded partner.

Then, have the pairs switch places and do the exercise again.

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

General Discussion:

- Was that difficult? Why? (*I couldn't see, I couldn't hear my partner, I was confused, I'm a control freak and didn't like it, etc.*)
- How could you know for certain that you were going to be, okay? (*You couldn't, you were placing your faith in your partner.*)
- How did you feel different when you were the one giving instructions? (*I was more confident because I knew where I was leading my partner, I could see the big picture, etc.*)

Today we're going to talk about Jesus' ministry in Galilee. There is triumph and opposition, healing

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and teaching, and Jesus even raises someone from the dead. But we're also going to consider what it means to follow Jesus and what it means to follow Him even when we're not in control and can't "see" where we're headed.

DIGGING IN (35 minutes)

Have individuals or groups read these sections and then answer the questions about the section they've read. Have them read simultaneously on their own (to save some time) and then ask the questions of each group.

- **Luke 4:14-30**
- **Luke 4:31-37**
- **Luke 5:12-16**
- **Luke 7:1-10**
- **Luke 7:11-17**
- **Luke 8:26-39**

Discussion Questions:

1. Where is Jesus when the events in your passage take place? *(He is in Galilee in each case, but sometimes we get more info — Nazareth, Capernaum, etc.)*
2. What type of audience is present? *(Synagogue worshippers, a large crowd, etc.)*
3. What does Jesus do while He's here? *(In each case Jesus either teaches something, performs a miracle, heals someone, drives out an evil spirit, etc.)*
4. What is the reaction of the people who are impacted by the events? *(Some are amazed, some place their faith in Him, and others reject Him.)*

General Discussion:

1. How do the crowds change from the first story to the last? *(The crowds go from wanting to kill Him to shouting praises.)*
2. Luke puts all these stories back-to-back (and we didn't even cover them all). What impact do you think he's trying to have on us as a reader? *(Allow students to speculate)*

The truth is, Luke tells us why he writes what he writes, not just here, but in his entire Gospel.

Read Luke 1:1-4

Discussion Questions:

1. Let me ask again—why does Luke tell all these stories about Jesus' healing, teaching, etc. in Galilee? *(So, that we can "know with certainty" the things we've been taught about Jesus.)*
2. What do these accounts we've read and talked about together teach us about Jesus? What can we "know with certainty?" *(That Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, that He had power over demons and nature, that He worked miracles, that He had authority, etc.)*
3. What does hear stories like this help you know for certain about Jesus? *(Allow students to share.)*

MAKING IT REAL (15 minutes)

What is so interesting about Luke's gospel is that he introduces us to so many people who were impacted by Jesus. Just in the stories we've read, there are dozens, even hundreds:

- In Luke 4:14-30, we meet those who had gathered in the synagogue on the Sabbath, who reject Jesus, even trying to kill Him.
- In Luke 4:31-37, we meet the townspeople of Capernaum who were amazed by Jesus and a man

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possessed by a demon who is healed, leading to those in the surrounding area to be amazed.

- In Luke 5:12-16, we meet a leprous man and others with sickness that Jesus heals, causing word of Him to spread even further.
- Later, in Luke 7:1-10, we meet a Centurion, his servant, and some town elders who are all impacted by Jesus' healing of the servant.
- In Luke 7:11-17, surrounded by a large crowd, Jesus raises a widow's son from the dead, evoking awe from the crowds.
- And in Luke 8:26-39, we met a demon possessed man who is healed by Jesus, which strikes fear into the townspeople.

In each case, these people are living proof that Jesus is who He said He is.

Most of these people leave being persuaded of Jesus' power and authority. But even those who oppose Him or are afraid of Him prove that He did miraculous things. Luke writes, even to us, so that we would be persuaded and know for certain that what we've been taught about Jesus is true!

General Discussion:

- What impact do these real-life accounts from Luke have on your faith? *(Allow students to share.)*
- Who from these stories do you relate to? The Nazarenes who are made uncomfortable by Jesus? The widow who gets her son back, the Centurion of great faith, someone else? *(Allow students to share.)*
- Why do you think the same Jesus endeared Himself to some and endangered Himself to others? *(While He stayed the same, it was the condition of people's hearts that was different.)*
- Are you always ready to accept Jesus as-is? Even when it inconveniences you or do you accept Him only when it benefits you? *(Allow students to share.)*

Jesus is someone who makes an impact. Through teaching he can both inspire and frustrate. Through healing He can evoke awe and anger. Sometimes what He does in our lives is obviously beneficial. Other times we don't see the benefit. But we must trust Jesus not just when it is convenient or what we prefer, but all the time, knowing that He knows best.

General Discussion:

- Why do you think Jesus told some of the people not to tell anyone what had happened? *(He knew that crowds would be fickle and come just to see His power.)*
- As the crowds following Jesus grew, did He change? *(No.)*

Read Luke 9:57-62.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Luke puts this account right after all the things we just read? *(To show that Jesus wasn't a miracle-working rock star trying to produce His greatest hits to increase His fame, but rather to demonstrate that following Him would cost the follower something.)*
2. How does this change your answer from before? Are you always ready to follow Jesus no matter what? *(Allow students to share.)*

Jesus' power draws us to Him, but it is His eventual sacrifice that we must be willing to participate in if we want to be a disciple.

CLOSING PRAYER (10 minutes)

Pray that both you and your students can walk with Jesus in awe-inspiring faith and even courageous sacrifice

Gospel of Luke

Lesson #4: Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview understanding of the Gospel of Luke
2. To expose students to the unique narratives and details that Luke shares
3. To inspire students to follow Jesus in new ways

Topics

Evangelism, Following Jesus, Obedience, Perseverance, Serving

Scripture Memorization

Luke 9:62

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

Play a simple game meant to test people's concentration. Have students sit in a circle. Everyone in the circle is responsible for keeping a clapping beat—two beats as they clap their hands on their knees and one beat as they clap their hands together. On the hand clap, whoever's turn it is must name something in a category. For instance, if the category is "types of dogs," then each time the circle claps their hands (every third beat) the players take turns saying a different type of dog. (Clap, clap "husky", clap, clap "boxer", etc.). Take turns going around the circle. If someone can't think of a type of dog that hasn't been named already (or whatever the category may be), or if they name it off beat, they are eliminated.

The point of the game is to concentrate the best and last the longest. Play a couple different rounds with different categories and see who has the best focus in the group.

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

General Discussion:

- Was the game difficult? Why/why not? (*It was hard to focus, there was too much going on, etc.*)
- Does life ever feel like that to you? (*Yes, we get stressed and confused and mess up.*)
- Do you think Jesus ever felt that way? (*Allow students to share*)

Today we're going to talk about how Jesus grew in His focus — and His focus was on us.

DIGGING IN (35 minutes)

Jesus' journey to Jerusalem, as recorded by Luke, gives us insight into how Jesus is obsessed with His mission to seek and save the lost. He shows great power in this passage, but twice reminds people that He will be surrendering that power at the cross.

Read Luke 9:18-27

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Jesus asks the disciples who people say—and who they say—He is? (*Among other reasons, He's about to tell them, and it is His way of starting the conversation.*)

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2. Why do you think Jesus does not want them to share that He is the Messiah, as Peter says? (*"Messiah" in common lingo meant that He would rescue them from Roman oppression.*)
3. What does Jesus say about Himself in this passage? (*He says that He must suffer, be rejected, be killed, and then raise to life.*)
4. What does Jesus say this means for people who want to follow Him? (*That they must also accept suffering, rejection, and sacrifice.*)

After being clear that His path will go through the cross, about eight days' pass. Then something incredible happens.

Read Luke 9:28-43

Discussion Questions:

1. If you were Peter, James, and John, how would you have responded to this incredible sight of transfiguration? (*It would've been shocking, confusing, etc.*)
2. What do Moses and Elijah speak about, per verse 31? (*About His upcoming suffering and "departure."*)
3. How do you think the power Jesus displays in the transfiguration contrasts with this reminder that He's going to suffer and die? (*It surely is a contrast. Why would someone with this kind of supernatural power choose to suffer?*)
4. Right after the transfiguration, Jesus displays His power in a different way. What does He do? (*He heals a demon possessed boy.*)
5. How did people respond to this healing? (*They were amazed at the greatness of God.*)

Right after this, Jesus reminds His followers that this power should not be misunderstood. He's not gaining a following to overthrow a government. He's not showing off to make money. He reminds them of what He came to do.

Read Luke 9:44-62

Discussion Questions:

1. Jesus says that He will be delivered into the hands of men. How do His followers respond in verse 45 and 46? (*They do not understand and they begin to argue about which one of them is the greatest.*)
2. How does Jesus respond to their selfish arguments? (*He reminds them to be like children. That humility makes you great.*)
3. What do you make of the fact that Jesus "resolutely" set out for Jerusalem? (*He is purposeful, devoted, laser focused, etc.*)
4. Immediately, He faces opposition in a Samaritan village. How does Jesus respond? How do His disciples respond? (*They want judgment on their opponents, Jesus rebukes them.*)
5. With different people approaching to follow Him, how does Jesus challenge each of them? (*He reminds them of the sacrifice required.*)
6. What is His demand in Luke 9:62? (*That you must keep your hand to the plow if you want to follow Him, you can't be distracted, etc.*)

It's fascinating that Jesus is modeling at this very moment the same thing He is requiring of others. He is "resolute" in His approach to Jerusalem. All He's asking is that we are as devoted to Him as He is to us.

Jesus' journey lasts from Luke 10 to Luke 19 when He finally enters Jerusalem. During that time, there's a continued revisiting of these themes — He illustrates great power but insists that his primary

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mission is to go to the cross and suffer and die and rise again. It is the same path, we learn in this text, that we're called to.

MAKING IT REAL (15 minutes)

Despite all His miraculous works, Jesus came for a purpose — to die for our sins.

Most believers acknowledge this. But a challenging question we must ask ourselves is do we live our lives to serve Him?

General Discussion:

- Can you identify what your life's purpose is? *(Allow students to struggle with this.)*
- Do you think Jesus being "resolute" in fulfilling His mission an example to us? If so, how? *(It is so easy for us to be distracted, to compromise, to get our priorities out of order, etc.)*

I want to revisit the last thing we read, because the conversations Jesus has with three people who think they want to follow Jesus are tested in the same way that we often are.

Read Luke 9:57-62

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Jesus challenge the first person who said he will follow him wherever he goes? *(Jesus told him that the Son of Man had no place to lay His head.)*
2. When Jesus invites a second person to follow him, what excuse does that man offer? How does Jesus respond? *(The man wants to go bury his father, Jesus replies, "let the dead bury their own dead.")*
3. What excuse does a third person give? How does Jesus reply to that person? *(He wants to say goodbye to his family, Jesus replies, "no one puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service")*
4. How would you summarize these objections to following Jesus? *(People are underestimating what it costs to follow Jesus or not willing to give certain things up to follow with Him.)*

This is a huge question for anyone who wants to be a disciple. How much do we value the person of Jesus? How much do we believe in the mission of Jesus? How willing are we to sacrifice to join Him in this mission?

General Discussion:

- Can you identify the things that take priority over your pursuit of Jesus? What are they? *(Friends, achievement, comfort, money, etc.)*
- If we were in a conversation with Jesus, how do you think He'd respond to our protests? *(He would remind us that those things will take care of themselves if we're faithful to Him.)*
- When you realize that Jesus was resolute in His efforts to save us, how are you inspired to be resolute in your effort to serve Him? *(It is humbling to know that Jesus' pursuit of us is so focused, it is encouraging to know He doesn't ask anything of us He's not willing to give Himself.)*

I don't know what's stopping you from following Jesus, but nothing stopped Him from pursuing you. He was resolute. We should be too.

CLOSING PRAYER (10 minutes)

Pray that your students could resolutely follow Jesus.

Gospel of Luke

Lesson #5: Jesus Ministers in Jerusalem

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview understanding of the Gospel of Luke
2. To expose students to the unique narratives and details that Luke shares
3. To inspire students to follow Jesus in new ways

Topics

Knowing Jesus, Prejudice, Truth

Scripture Memorization

Luke 9:47-48

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

Give everyone a note card or small piece of paper. On one side, have them write a question — anything from “What color is the sky?” to “Who is your favorite person?” On the other side, have them write the answer, for instance: “blue” and “my grandma.”

Then have them trade their paper with someone else in the group.

Next, go around the room and have the first person read the question on their paper. Have the next person read the answer on theirs. It won’t make sense, and can end up being fun. For example, “What color is the sky?” “My grandma.”

Once you’ve gone around, start over with the second person which will give you all new combinations of questions and answers.

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

Sometimes things are funny because we don’t expect them. They take us by surprise.

Today we’re going to talk about some expectations people had of Jesus. But He didn’t always live up to those expectations. And for us, in our lives, He may not live up to our expectations of what He should do.

We’ve reached the point in Luke where Jesus has reached Jerusalem. He’s about to enter the great city and start the last week of His ministry on earth. Let’s pick up the action in Luke 19.

DIGGING IN (35 minutes)

Read Luke 19:11-27

Discussion Questions:

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1. As Jesus neared Jerusalem, what were people expecting? (*The Kingdom of God to appear at once.*)
2. What did this mean to them? (*A physical Kingdom where Jesus was King and they were out from under the power of Rome.*)
3. What does Jesus do in response to their anticipation? (*He tells a parable.*)
4. What is the parable about? (*Have someone summarize the parable.*)

A mina was around three months' wages. That means that these servants are entrusted with a couple years' worth of wealth. Jesus' point is that to whom much is given, much is going to be required. If they don't honor the King's investment, there will be consequences.

As we'll soon see, Jesus told the parable for a reason.

Read Luke 19:28-44

Discussion Questions:

1. What does Jesus do immediately follow sharing this parable? (*He enters Jerusalem.*)
2. How do the people respond to Him? (*They cry out to Him for blessings, they praise Him, they attempt to crown Him king.*)
3. How does Jesus respond to the people, according to verses 41-44? (*He weeps over them because they don't understand what is happening.*)

This procession resembles that of royalty. They're laying down cloaks and such to "pave the way" for Jesus. This is an attempted inauguration. The Pharisees urge Jesus to quiet the crowd — they don't want an insurrection on their hands, or they'd be out of power when Rome came and set things back in order, but Jesus says that the stones will cry out if the people aren't permitted to do so.

Read Luke 19:45-48

Discussion Questions:

1. Once Jesus is in Jerusalem, what does He do? (*He goes to the temple and drives out those who are selling things and taking advantage of people.*)
2. In subsequent days, how does Jesus spend His time? (*Teaching at the temple.*)
3. The religious officials are plotting to do what? (*Kill Jesus.*)
4. What is the condition of the crowds? (*They are hanging on Jesus' every word.*)

Jesus enters Jerusalem like a king, but then goes to the temple and makes a scene. People are turning the sacred space into a place for commerce. He rejects this. Still, people are drawn to Him...except for the people who are trying to kill Him.

How does this all tie together?

So back to the parable. What you likely don't know is that this parable was a spin on actual Jewish history, when a man (Archelaus) who succeeded his father (Herod the Great) as Tetrarch of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea. But he travelled to Rome to request the title of King. The Jews sent a delegation to Rome to request that he not be named king, because they didn't respect him.

The twist in Jesus' story — and what connects it with the other events of this passage — is that in His parable the man does return as king.

The connection between the parable and the triumphal entry and the cleansing of the temple is clear:

Jesus, like the king from a generation before, is rejected as king by His own people. But Jesus, unlike

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the historical king, is the king. Some may not see it or want it, but it's the truth.

The people call Him such as they usher Him into Jerusalem. But they've got it twisted — He's not the kind of king they think He is. In a few days, they reject Him and call out for His execution. Even in this passage, in the last section we read, people are trying to trap and trick Jesus so they could kill Him. This, again, highlights their misunderstanding...as if killing Him would stop His mission.

MAKING IT REAL (15 minutes)

General Discussion:

- As simply put as you can make it, what do you think Jesus' mission on earth was? *(To save the lost, to restore our relationship with God, to be our King, to rule in a heavenly, not earthly, way.)*
- Why do you think people who were in and around Jerusalem at this time misunderstood Jesus? *(They were desperate for freedom from Rome, hungry for political power, etc.)*
- What does Jesus' response of weeping over the city show? *(That He cares deeply, that the rebellion of His people brings Him sorrow, etc.)*

It is easy to examine this passage and wonder why people just don't get it. But is it possible we mix up Jesus' role in our lives as well?

(Pass out a blank piece of paper and a pen to each student. Ask them to write a job description for Jesus. What do they think Jesus should do in their lives? Challenge them to be honest about it, articulating their expectations of what Jesus does for them or will do for them in an ongoing way. After they're done, have a few people share.)

General Discussion:

- What do your expectations say about who you believe Jesus is? *(Allow students to share.)*
- How are your expectations similar to the people who wanted Jesus to be an earthly king? *(Chances are, many of our expectations are selfish and based on our desires, not who Jesus actually is.)*
- In the parable, Jesus is represented by a king who is misunderstood and underestimated. How is who Jesus actually being so much bigger than our expectations? *(As an eternal king, the center of His contribution is not what He does for us, but who He is in relationship to us.)*

There are a few groups of people in this passage — from the parable to the Triumphal Entry to the religious leaders at the temple to the people Jesus drove away. They each had an idea of who the king should be — and they were all wrong.

We can miscalculate who Jesus is. In the parable, those that do are met with judgment. In the triumphal entry, those that do are disappointed. In the temple, those that do are confronted.

In our own lives, we can experience judgement, disappointment, or confrontation from Jesus when we try to make Him something He's not. Let's pray we don't do that, and then let's rip up our job descriptions!

CLOSING PRAYER (10 minutes)

Pray for your students to know Jesus for who He is and not place selfish expectations on their King.

Gospel of Luke

Lesson #6: Jesus' Death, Burial and Resurrection

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Goals

1. To give students an overview understanding of the Gospel of Luke
2. To expose students to the unique narratives and details that Luke shares
3. To inspire students to follow Jesus in new ways

Topics

Knowing Jesus, Resurrection, Witnessing

Scripture Memorization

Luke 24:34

OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

Split your group into two groups. Have them line up in a straight line, with about 3 feet in between each of them, and have them be seated. Give each group a banana.

Their mission is to pass it all the way down their line and back to the original person without dropping it. The catch is they can only use their feet.

First team to do it wins — you guessed it — a bunch of bananas!

GETTING STARTED (5 minutes)

Today we conclude our study of Luke. It's been great to get an overview of Jesus' ministry.

General Discussion:

- What sticks out to you about this study most? (*Allow for discussion.*)
- What's something new you've learned? (*Allow for discussion.*)
- Do you see the life and ministry differently now? If so, how? (*Allow for discussion.*)

Well to finish up Luke's Gospel, we're going to talk about a narrative you're likely familiar with, in some ways: the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

DIGGING IN (35 minutes)

Luke includes several people in this narrative that we sometimes overlook. We're going to study the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus through the lenses of those characters.

Death (Simon of Cyrene, The Women)

Read Luke 23:26-28

Discussion Questions:

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1. Who is leading Jesus? (*Soldiers, who are trained executioners.*)
2. Why do you think Simon was forced to carry the cross for Jesus? (*It is likely that due to Jesus severe flogging, the exhaustion He is experiencing is vast...the rough timber on His open wounds was surely excruciating.*)
3. What emotions do you think Simon felt upon being summoned into duty? (*It was surely an awkward experience, one that was not optional—he was under Roman rule as well—and a difficult task, as the cross beam he was told to carry weighed more than 70 pounds.*)
4. Who follows behind this procession? (*Many people, including women who mourn and wait for Him.*)
5. Why do you think Jesus says what He says in verse 28? (*He knew the end of the story, but knows that those blinded by their hate and religious ambition were in danger of missing the point of His mission.*)
6. What do you think it would've been like to be an onlooker to this scene, with Jesus marching to His death? (*Allow students to share.*)

Burial (Joseph)

Read Luke 23:50-56

Jesus died at approximately 3PM. Sun down at this time of year was around 6PM. In order to get the bodies off the cross for the Sabbath, the executioners break the legs of those being crucified. Jesus is already dead, so that step is skipped. Instead, His side is pierced and it is determined that He is, in fact, dead. We pick up the story as it's time for the bodies to be removed.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do we know about Joseph? (*He is a member of the Council — the Sanhedrin — a good and upright man, and he did not consent of what was done to Jesus. He is from Arimathea, and was awaiting the kingdom of God.*)
2. Asking Pilate for Jesus' body is a bold step. It defies his peers and is bold considering Pilate's power. Why do you think Joseph asks for Jesus' body? (*Maybe he's ready to go public in his faith, maybe he wants to ensure Jesus' body is honored, etc.*)
3. Who else is present? (*The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee, who witness the tomb and how Jesus was laid.*)
4. What do they do? (*They prepare spices and perfumes, but rest on the Sabbath.*)
5. If you were Joseph or the women, what do you think you'd be thinking at this point? (*Allow students to share.*)

While other authors (Matthew, Mark, John) include this narrative, only Luke tells us that Joseph does not consent with the Sanhedrin. Matthew and Mark, meanwhile, confirm that others witness where He's laid, drastically reducing the often-used objection that Jesus was not resurrected and that His disciples went to the wrong tomb on Sunday.

Resurrection (Men of Emmaus Road)

Read Luke 24:13-35

One of these men is named Cleopas, who one early church historian identifies as Joseph's brother, thus Jesus' uncle by marriage. Others speculate that the other is Luke himself, though there is no solid evidence to suggest this, much less prove it.

No matter who they are, there is some interesting stuff in this exchange with the resurrected Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

1. Where are the men going and what are they talking about? (*They are returning to Emma's from Jerusalem, discussing "everything that had happened."*)

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2. When Jesus joins them, why don't they recognize Him? (*"They are kept from recognizing Him."*)
3. The men are surprised when Jesus asks what they're talking about...why do you think so? (*The events were so public, so talked about, so outrageous, they couldn't believe He hadn't heard about it.*)
4. When they summarized for Jesus what happened, how did they describe it? See verses 19-24. (*Jesus was a powerful prophet, executed by Jewish leaders, disappointing many by not ruling over and redeeming Israel, and now missing from His tomb.*)
5. How does Jesus reprimand them? (*By reminding them of what the Old Testament — the Jewish Scriptures — said had to happen.*)
6. After convincing Him to stay, Jesus is briefly revealed to them for who He is before disappearing. What is the men's response? (*They remember their burning hearts and returned at once to Jerusalem — a seven mile walk they'd just taken — to report the findings.*)
7. If you were the men on the Emma's road, how would you feel after this encounter? (*Let students share.*)

MAKING IT REAL (15 minutes)

Luke gives us some unique details in these accounts. As we reflect upon his account, it's easy to think of why these events matter so much even today. While we may not have been an immediate witness to these things, we are witnesses, thanks to Luke's narrative. The question for us is the same for Simon, Joseph, the women, and the men on the road to Emmaus — what do we do now?

General Discussion:

- Which of the three people/groups of people that we discussed do you feel like it would have been the most difficult to be? Why? (*Allow students to share if it would've been harder to witness Jesus' death, bury Him, or witness His resurrection.*)
- Knowing the end of the story, we find it hard to feel what they likely felt in those moments. How would you have dealt with your emotions? What emotions would you have felt? (*Sadness, confusion, fear, isolation, nervous, anxious, etc.*)
- Does knowing the risks these people faced cause you to doubt this narrative or be more convinced it's true? (*More convinced it's true...why would they lie or act this way unless they were persuaded, they knew the truth?*)
- How does Simon carrying Jesus' cross inspire you to action? (*Allow students to share.*)
- How does Joseph's sacrifice of his expensive tomb inspire you to action? (*Allow students to share.*)
- How does the men returning to Jerusalem inspire you to action? (*Allow students to share.*)

It's likely students may have touched on a way our lives should be lived likewise, but we want to draw some parallels with scripture directed to us as disciples.

Read Luke 9:23

Discussion Questions:

1. How does this passage instruct us to live like Simon did? (*He carried a cross, we're called to do the same.*)
2. What do you think it means to deny yourself and follow Jesus? (*Allow students to share.*)

Takeaway: Just because Jesus carried His cross doesn't mean we're not called to do the same.

Read 1 Peter 3:15-16

Discussion Questions:

1. How is this passage related to how Joseph of Arimathea acted? (Even though he would face

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opposition, he was willing to sacrifice his own possession so Jesus would have a tomb, he was willing to do the work of burying him to honor him, and he was willing to face opposition for honoring Christ.)
2. How can we prepare ourselves to give the reason for our hope in Christ? (*Bible study, prayer, etc.*)

Takeaway: No matter what position you're in, use it to honor Jesus.

Read Acts 10:40-42

Discussion Questions:

1. How is this passage related to the men who talked with Jesus on the Emmaus Road? (*They witnessed the resurrected Christ and then they told of what they'd experienced.*)
2. What are we commanded to do? (*To witness about who Jesus is and proclaim that He is the judge of the living and the dead.*)

Takeaway: Once you experience the risen Jesus, don't keep it to yourself.

CLOSING PRAYER (10 minutes)

Ask a student to pray for your group to live like they've encountered the resurrected Christ.