

The Son of Man

Week 9

This week in summary

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Day 1

Summary of Luke

We've called Mark's account of the life of Jesus "the gospel on-the-go." It's for the person who has little time for extensive details. She wants the bottom line: "Can I get, like, the Cliff's Notes version of this and if I want details, I'll ask?"

By contrast, Luke is a scholar's delight—a detailed, two-volume, full scroll-length document that goes into filling in details that Mark was too busy running around to mention. The language that's used is that of a learned man who is laying down good foundations. He's done his research carefully. He's methodical. He's even well-funded by an apparent single source named Theophilus (who could have, in turn, been the spearhead fund raiser in Luke's behalf). In fact, Luke himself was a physician (Colossians 4:14) and this document, for the intellectuals and the detail-oriented, is just what the doctor ordered.

Luke presents us with this Messiah who just doesn't fit the bill with anyone

Even the forerunner to the Messiah is named, "John"-- something out of sync with standardized naming protocol ("There is no one among your relatives who has that name" = "That's not normal. That's weird. Pick. Something. Normal").

The forerunner, John, is also of unusual birth—born to an older, barren woman. John was still regarded as a prophet of God—but not by the religious elite

10 Themes to look for in Luke's Gospel

1. God's big picture plan for all humanity God's plan unfolds steadily calm and measured. Jesus is in control of each scene. He is the fulfillment of prophecies and He is the perfect answer at just the right time, and we anticipate his return.
2. Jesus: "The Son of Man"
3. Salvation for all people
4. Radical inclusiveness Jesus seemed to have a deep love for people from the "wrong demographic"
5. Table fellowship In Luke, Jesus is either at a meal, going to a meal or coming from a meal. Meals are places where Jesus demonstrates his program of inclusiveness crossing social boundaries.
6. The Holy Spirit, Good news, Joy and Praises to God! These appear frequently and there may be a connection.
7. Prayers of Jesus and others. Even his prayers were unconventional.
8. Parables Jesus told stories to teach eternal lessons.
9. Wealth and Poverty (In Mark, Jesus is hard on the disciples and religious leaders. In Luke, Jesus opposes the rich and powerful)
10. Jesus' treatment of marginalized people:
 - Foreigners:** Gentiles, Romans, Samaritans
 - Sinners:** prostitutes, tax collectors
 - Women:** Jesus taught women. Treated them as disciples; reversing the cultural prohibition against allowing women to learn.
 - The Poor**
 - The Sick**

Reading Today: Luke 1

10-15 minutes

Day 2

Jesus the Friend

It's not surprising that Jesus loved sinners. Jesus was a great guy and didn't get caught on the same issues that make religious people furrow their brow. By contrast religious teachers prided themselves on who they didn't associate with.

Some religious teachers bragged about throwing rocks at "undesirable" people. One traditional prayer that is still common today is: "I thank you God, that you have not made me a gentile, a slave or a woman." There's a story about someone taking this prayer even further to demonstrate their disdain of the immoral sinners.

The Pharisee standing by himself prayed thus: "God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortionists, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector."

Luke 18:11

Jesus is not like religious types who are known for the people they oppose. He loved sinners.

What's surprising is that sinners love Jesus. Jesus' moral teachings are the greatest the world has ever known, but it's the 'immoral' that flock to him and love to hear him speak. Jesus embraced them with open arms at great risk to himself. Jesus knew that those who are forgiven much appreciate much. He loves the gentiles, the slave and the women. He loves the sinners, foreigners, poor and the unclean. He lifted up the oppressed.

Jesus stood as the champion of the outcasts. He taught women though his culture prohibited education for women.

He looked for the people that society wanted to throw away because he saw a value in them that no one else did. He picked up society's garbage and with the inspiration of an artist he said, "Now, watch what I can do with them."

Jesus believed in them.

As you read through the life of Jesus pay attention to whom Jesus eats with. In his culture meals were used as a way of demonstrating who they are willing to socialize with.

Reading Today: Luke 2-3

10-15 minutes

Day 3

Faith: Trusting Jesus

In Jesus' language Faith, Trust and Belief are the same word. He used them interchangeably but not the way you'd think.

It is only quality that impresses Jesus.

Our Faith.

He asked people to trust him. He was deeply impressed by people did trust him and he was hindered by people that would not believe him. He regularly healed people and then told them that it was their faith that saved them.

Jesus is not impressed by intellectual or athletic ability. Your acts of heroism don't even register. Trust is the only quality that Jesus cares about in us.

What does faith do?

Faith doesn't change the nature of reality. $2+2=4$ no matter what you believe. No matter how physicists debate ideas of gravity, it still affects them all the same. My belief in the resurrection of Jesus doesn't change what happened that day. What does faith actually do?

How does it affect your life?

Does faith change the way God sees us?

Do we trust God? There's a common understanding that *faith in God* amount to a *belief in the existence* of God.

But, there's a world of difference between "I believe that God exists, and I believe God." The former is impersonal. It requires no action and doesn't make a significant impact on the way we live life. We can go on as we see fit. God will do his thing, I will do mine.

My daughter believes that she has a father. That is a fact. But she also believes me when I say I will catch her as she jumps into my arms.

The faith Jesus requires goes beyond a belief in a historical fact. It is a belief that compels action and puts us in a place of dependence and vulnerability on the object of our faith (himself).

But to say "I trust God" requires action and risk and a level of intimacy. What if you trust God and He doesn't come through for you? What if God does something that you weren't expecting? How can you rely on God? Will he ultimately do his will?

That's why it's important to put your faith in someone worthy of your trust.

Trusting God is not an intellectual exercise but leap of vulnerability. How does vulnerability allow for deeper experiences and gives the moments of our lives greater meaning?

What steps can you take to trust God more?

Reading Today: Luke 4-5

10-15 minutes

Day 4

Influence**Serving my Friends and Family**

Jesus was a King yet he came to serve. His idea of leadership is humbly serving others, not being waited on and pampered by our power. Following in his footsteps we will be serving our friends and family this week. This may require creativity. Here's a few suggestions:

- Give a gift such as baked goods.
- Try the obvious; "what can I do to serve you?"
- Ask, "What are you doing this weekend?"
- Or "What do you need?"
- Let them know you're eager to help them

Look for ways to serve but leave the choice in their hands. As always use your best judgment.

Reading Today: Luke 6-7

10-15 minutes

Day 5

My Service

⁸ For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of **wisdom**, and to another the utterance of **knowledge** according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another **faith** by the same Spirit, to another gifts of **healing** by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of **miracles**, to another **prophecy**, to another the ability to **distinguish** between spirits, to another various kinds of **tongues**, to another the **interpretation** of tongues.

- 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first **apostles**, second **prophets**, third **teachers**, then **miracles**, then gifts of **healing, helping, administrating**, and various kinds of **tongues**. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹ But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

- 1 Corinthians 12:27-31

The greatest of these is **love**.

- 1 Corinthians 13:13

Are some gifts higher than others? Which gifts are more desirable to humans, which gifts are more desirable to God?

Desired by humans/Why?

Preferred by God/Why?

Wisdom God-given insight about living rightly with God.

Discernment the ability to correctly identify if a situation, spirit or message serves God’s agenda or someone else.

Knowledge ability to understand truth revealed by God.

Interpretation the ability to take a message and connect with an audience.

Linguistics (tongues) includes supernatural ability to speak a language previously unknown, the ability to effectively a message translate between languages.

Healing ability to restore a person physically, emotionally, spiritually and/or their relationships.

Miracles Extraordinary occurrence that reveals God’s love for humanity.

Help willingness to give your time and work beyond your skill set to help others

Love always hopes, trusts and is demonstrated by sacrifice.

Why would apostles and teachers be more useful than administration or miracles?

Which gift is the greatest and why?

Do you recognize yourself in the description of any of these gifts? which one(s)?

Reading Today: Luke 8-9

10-15 minutes