

'On the road'

Luke's account of the life and ministry of Jesus

Luke is up front about his intention in writing his gospel record: it was to help a man called Theophilus to have the confidence to trust in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. He wanted to bolster the embryonic faith of this man in the face of both the hostility he was likely to face and the adversity which almost certainly would be his experience.

The aim of this study of Luke's gospel, therefore, is to help us all "*fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith*", to the end that we "*run with perseverance the race marked out for us*" (see Heb.12.1-2)

You can find the background to this series [here](#).

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7. Luke 5.1-32 [w/b Sunday 4th March 2018]

“.. they .. left everything and followed Him ..”

Jesus came to exercise the rule of God: His ministry was from the start, therefore, essentially through the Word. We've seen previously that as He *releases* the Word of God, so too the power of God is released in a transforming and renewing manner.

This next section (which should be read in conjunction with 4.31-44) shows how Jesus *applies* the Word: the gospel, we have seen, is essentially a command - and thereby He calls us into discipleship.

[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! Key questions which you should certainly aim to cover in your Group are perhaps questions 1, 6 & 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. Read Luke 4.31-5.32. Read through this whole passage: note how the record in chapter 4 of Jesus' delivering and healing power is followed by the call of Simon, and how again, in chapter 5, the record of His healing and forgiving power is followed by the call to Levi.

How did you experience the Lord's calling you to Himself?

Why do you think Luke orders his material like this, with the record of these miracles of deliverance and healing being followed by the call first to Simon and then to Levi?

2. Read Luke 5.1-11. Jesus' call to Simon comes as he 'finished speaking': He means the crowds He's been addressing to see the import of His teaching.

The call on Simon's life is gradual: loaning his boat, putting out into deep water, leaving everything to follow Jesus: in what ways have you seen a similar pattern in His dealings with you?

What makes a fisherman respond to such an extraordinary catch (vv.6 & 7) in the way that Simon does?

How does Jesus' exhortation to Simon (v.10) encourage you?

3. Read Luke 5.12-16. Luke was a doctor, and gives a bit more detail about the man's condition than the other gospel writers. Jesus show both His willingness and His ability to cleanse.

Why do you think the leper was so confident of Jesus *power* to cleanse him?

What would have made him wonder whether Jesus would be *willing* to make him clean?

Which do you find yourself struggling with more in the midst of your struggles - Jesus' ability or His willingness?

4. Read Luke 5.17-20. Our deepest need is always for the inner 'cleansing' of God's forgiveness: perhaps that's why Luke records this next incident immediately after the leper's cleansing.

Why is it that Jesus responds to the man lowered through the roof to Him with this statement of forgiveness (rather than an anticipated healing)?

Note that again this incident takes place in the context of Jesus teaching (v.17): how has the teaching of the Word of God brought the experience of forgiveness to you?

5. Read Luke 5.21-26. Jesus' words were clearly understood by the Pharisees and teachers of the law as a claim on His part to deity: He responds to what they were thinking with a fresh claim about, and demonstration of, His authority.

Read **Dan.7.9-14**: why did Jesus use the self-designation 'Son of Man'?

What effect did Jesus intend in the healing of the paralytic?

Can you become 'casual' about your forgiveness from God, and does this passage prompt you to praise God again for the forgiveness He has effected and extended in Jesus?

6. Read Luke 5.27-28. The terminology used by Luke to narrate the response of the tax collector to Jesus is identical to that used about Simon and his partners.

Why do you think Levi was so quick to respond as he did to Jesus?

What does 'leaving everything and following Jesus' mean for you?

7. Read Luke 5.29-32. Simon's response ('Go away from me ... I am a sinful man') is mirrored by the response of the Pharisees and teachers of the law ('Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?')

What is the difference between Simon's response and that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law?

What do you find challenging about the way Jesus engaged with those viewed as 'sinners'?

As Jesus continues to minister by His Spirit through His church today, what might this scenario look like here?