

# '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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## 8. Luke 5.33-6.11 [w/b Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018]

*“.. new wine must be poured into new wineskins ..”*

In previous sections we have seen how Jesus first *declared* the rule of God, then along with that *demonstrated* the reality and blessing of the rule of God, and then *drove* the rule of God home into the lives of individuals with the summons to leave everything and follow Him.

In this next section, through to the end of chapter 6, we see Jesus *explaining* the Word of God, helping people understand what the Word of God actually entails, over against the ‘traditions’ which have grown up around, and on the basis of, that Word of God.

*[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 this week are perhaps questions 3, 5 & 6. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]*

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**1. Read Luke 5.33-6.11.** Read the whole passage. It became clear from early in His ministry that Jesus’ teaching of the Word of God brought Him into conflict with the authorities and their traditions.

Can you think of situations which might parallel today the tension between Jesus and the Pharisees?

What would you say lay at the heart of the ‘clash’ between Jesus and the Pharisees and teachers of the law?

**2. Read Luke 5.33.** The Pharisees were hardly big fans of John the Baptist, but they show themselves keen here to drive a wedge between Jesus and John.

What are the reasons for practising the spiritual discipline of fasting and praying?

Have you made a habit of engaging in this discipline?

How can we avoid this spiritual discipline (or any other for that matter) becoming a 'legalistic' practice?

**3. Read Luke 5.34-35.** Jesus uses the graphic picture of a wedding celebration to respond to the Pharisees' question and explain why different expressions of 'piety' are now in order.

What does Jesus suggest (by implication) was the reason for the 'fasting and praying' of John and his disciples - and indeed of the Pharisees as well?

How does the picture Jesus uses here help us understand what constitutes the good news?

What does Jesus mean by what He says in v.35 and what implications does that have for us?

**4. Read Luke 5.36-38.** The two short parables (both variations on a theme) which Jesus tells provide a further explanation of just why things have changed with His coming.

What is the basic point Jesus is making through these two parables?

In what ways might new clothes and new wine be viewed as telling pictures of the new life Jesus brings?

**5. Read Luke 5.39.** As a sequel to the short parable about new wine and new wineskins, Jesus comes out with another powerful 'one-liner', highlighting the fact that with His coming a new situation has arisen.

What is the point He is making?

How resistant to change are you? Can you identify any particular areas where you recognize this resistance to change? What makes you resistant to change?

**6. Read Luke 6.1-5.** The Sabbath (and Sabbath observance) had become a particularly sensitive subject after the experience of

the exile amongst those who sought the Lord (read Is. 58.13-14, Ezek.20.13ff, and Neh.10.28ff)

How does Jesus validate His disciples' actions on the Sabbath?

What difficulties do you find in getting a right balance between honouring the Lord's Day without it becoming a legalistic practice?

**7. Read Luke 6.6-11.** Jesus explains the Bible as much by the way He applies its truth to different situations: in healing this man He is again taking the opportunity rightly to expound the teaching of the Word of God in relation to the Sabbath.

Why do you think the Pharisees and teachers of the law were so furious?

Should we expect that in our own gatherings of worship on the Lord's Day the risen Lord Jesus will be at work to bring healing into the experience of people present?