

'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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9. Luke 6.12-49 [w/b Sunday 18th March 2018]

“.. power was coming from Him and healing them all ...”

This long passage provides a flavour of Jesus' teaching. We have seen in previous studies that the rule of God is always exercised through the Word of God, and that that Word is in essence a summons - as it was from the outset ('Let there be light!').

Here in this more extended record of the teaching of Jesus we see how He carefully and pointedly *explains* the Word of God and drives home its practical message to the hearts of His hearers..

[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! Try and ensure that in this study you cover question 4, at least one of questions 5 or 6, and question 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. Read Luke 6.12-49. Read the whole passage and get a feel for the substance of the teaching ministry in which Jesus engaged - and to which His apostles themselves were called.

What impression does it make on you?

What is it in the teaching of Jesus, as seen here, which you find compelling and/or challenging?

2. Read Luke 6.12-16. Luke records the care with which Jesus appointed some of His disciples as 'apostles' (the word literally signifies one who is 'sent forth').

What (a) symbolic and (b) practical reasons might there have been in Jesus appointing *twelve* apostles?

What lessons might we learn in regard to the making of important decisions from Jesus' practice here?

Have you ever engaged in such a prolonged season of prayer?

3. Read Luke 6.17-19. Jesus exercised the rule of God through His ministry of the Word of God: in these verses Luke gives a feel for the setting before recording the substance of His teaching.

Why was such 'a large crowd' drawn to Jesus - and that from such distances?

People came to hear and to be healed: how may we expect a similar pattern to be seen in the continuing ministry of Jesus by His Spirit through His church?

4. Read Luke 6.20-26. The teaching of Jesus starts here - and will later end (vv.46-49) - with a stark contrast, underlining the radical choice which the rule of God demands of us all.

Jesus contrasts the experience of living *under* the rule of God, with that of living *outside* the rule of God: what has your experience been of that contrast?

How do these four contrasts challenge you today?

5. Read Luke 6.27-36. The call to 'love your enemies' is one which goes right against the grain of our natural instincts: Jesus explains the 'what' and the 'why' of this call.

Without naming names(!), who might you think of as your 'enemies'?

What motivation does Jesus give in exhorting us to relate to others like this?

Is there any practical action you are prompted to take having read these verses?

6. Read Luke 6.37-42. Jesus here addresses the natural tendency towards a *critical* spirit: we perhaps recognize such a spirit in ourselves, and often experience it from others.

How have you experienced this critical spirit?

What might putting these words of Jesus into practice (see vv.46-49) involve for you?

7. Read Luke 6.43-49. The challenge of His teaching is rounded off by Jesus in two striking pictures - the one drawn from the world of nature, the other from the construction industry.

What lesson does Jesus mean to impress on His hearers' hearts by reference to the fruit which trees bear?

The call by Jesus to put His words into practice might easily become legalism: how can that be avoided?

If someone asked you to explain what 'the Kingdom of God' is, how would you answer them?