

'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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14. Luke 9.28-50 [w/b Sunday 13th May 2018]

“.. they did not grasp it..”

In the previous study (9.1-27) we saw how ‘multiplication’ is always an integral feature of the Kingdom of God (see Gen.1.28): and that means *you!* ‘*You go,*’ He says, ‘*you proclaim, you heal, you feed, you say .. and you die*’. He exhorts us to start doing what He is doing, in the confidence of His empowering.

In this present passage (for our encouragement!) we’re given to see how ill-fitted the disciples of Jesus actually are for this. They don’t know (v.33), they’re not able (v.40), and they just don’t get it (v.45). And yet it’s through such disciples that He moves His purpose forward.

[There may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group - but try and ensure that in this study you cover questions 3, 5 and 6. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer - and let the passage inform your praying together!]

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1. **Read Luke 9.28-50.** Read through the whole passage slowly to get a feel for the flow of the narrative.

Are there any common themes which you can see running through the passage?

Remember Luke’s intent in writing (Luke 1.1-4): what do you think Luke was meaning to highlight through these verses?

2. Read Luke 9.28-36. This incident is one which Peter was still recalling long years later (**read 2 Pet.1.16-18**): it clearly made a profound impression on him.

The Old Testament is sometimes described as 'the Law and the prophets', of which Moses and Elijah are respectively the representative figures: what is the significance of their speaking with Jesus about his 'departure' (lit.'exodus')?

Peter, having been asleep, was oblivious to what was being talked about: why was his suggestion of 'three shelters' so wide of the mark?

3. Read Luke 9.28-36. The sight of Jesus' glory (v.32) was then matched by the experience of God's presence (the cloud) and the sound of God's voice (v.35).

When we see Jesus for who He is our primary response is to be to 'listen to Him': how do we learn to listen to Jesus - both as individuals, and as a fellowship?

In what ways does this challenge you? What practical steps might you resolve to be taking?

4. **Read Luke 9.37-43.** Jesus moved down from the exalted experience on the mountain to face the distress of an anguished father and the inability of His disciples to meet need.

Read Luke 9.1-6 again: why do you think the disciples were unable to drive out the demon?

What was Jesus pointing to in using the phrase 'unbelieving and perverse generation' (**read Deut.32.5ff**)?

5. **Read Luke 9.43-45.** Having demonstrated again at the foot of the mountain His 'majesty', Jesus stresses what the cost of bring such healing and restoring grace to a broken world will be.

Read **Luke 9.21-22**: what is it that makes what Jesus is saying so difficult to grasp?

Why do you think 'they were afraid to ask Him about it'?

Are you afraid to ask similar questions? How might we make it easier for people to air the questions they have?

6. **Read Luke 9.46-48.** Over against the display of the greatness of God (v.43), the disciples start arguing between themselves as to who is the greatest

Can you think of ways in which this same competitive spirit shows itself among the followers of Jesus today?

Read Luke 22.24: why do you think this sort of thing so regularly rears its head?

What does Jesus mean by the answer He gives His disciples here?

7. **Read Luke 9.49-50.** Luke records how the same 'competitive' spirit then came out in a different context - the narrowness of a 'not-one-of-us' mindset.

Read vv.38-40 again: do you find it hard to rejoice when other Christians are seeing God powerfully at work and you are not?

Read Phil.1.15-18: how can we cultivate this generosity of spirit?