

'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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15. Luke 9.51-13.30 [w/b Sunday 2nd September 2018]

“.. an orderly account for you ..”

This is the central ‘panel’ (of seven) in Luke’s gospel. I entitle it simply ‘**mission**’, since it contains material largely exclusive to Luke and which relates to Jesus’ ministry ‘on the road’ as He travels from Galilee to Jerusalem. This takes Him through Samaria, and provides an insight into gospel ministry in a ‘hostile’ culture.

This study is introductory, easing us back into Luke’s account of the life and ministry of Jesus by rehearsing some of the key themes Luke has already set out: hopefully this will help set the scene for our reflection on this important part of Luke’s work.

[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 questions 4, 5, and 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. Read Luke 1.1-4. Luke helpfully sets out right at the start of his book what his purpose is. It’s as well to keep that in mind all the way through.

What is Luke’s aim in writing this account of the life and ministry of Jesus?

What steps does he say he has taken to try and ensure that this purpose is realized?

Can you think of particular people for whom Luke's record might prove especially helpful?

2. Read Luke 1.26-38. The gospel writers are all concerned from the outset to throw the spotlight on who Jesus is and why He is so important.

By recording the visit of the angel to Mary, what truths about Jesus does Luke mean his readers to grasp?

In what ways does this passage help you understand how Jesus can be at once both fully human and fully divine?

3. Read Luke 3.1-18. In the first section of his gospel, Luke is concerned to introduce to the Man - who He is and why He matters: he highlights the ministry of John to that end.

What is the significance of Luke's drawing attention to the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah in describing the ministry of John?

In ways will Jesus be different from John, according to what the latter says here (vv.16-17)?

4. Read Luke 4.1-13. The second section of Luke's gospel (from 4.1-6.49) throws important light on what Jesus has come to do. As Adam was tempted by the serpent in the garden at the start, so the 'son of Adam' (3.38) will be tempted by the devil.

In what ways is Jesus' being tempted similar to, and in what ways does it stand in contrast to Adam's being tempted in the Garden of Eden?

Read **Hebrews 4.15**: how does this encourage you?

5. Read Luke 4.14-30. Who better than Jesus Himself to spell out for us what He is about! Luke alone of the gospel writers gives us the content of Jesus' preaching at Nazareth.

If an interested friend asked you what Jesus was about, starting from this passage how would you answer them?

What was it that occasioned such 'fury' in regard to Jesus when not long since "*all spoke well of Him*"??

6. Read Luke 7.18-35. The third section of Luke's gospel sees him recording a significant number of miracles which Jesus performed: He clearly raised a lot of questions for people!

Why do you think John the Baptist began to question if Jesus really was the 'One who was to come'?

How might the response of Jesus help you respond to those with similar questions today?

7. Read Luke 9.10-27. The feeding of the 5,000 is the one incident in the ministry of Jesus which is recorded in all four gospels.

Why do you think this miracle is given such prominence in the gospel records?

On the back of all that they have witnessed in His ministry, Jesus at last puts His disciples on the spot: why do you think He chooses this moment?

Should we similarly put people 'on the spot' about Jesus?
How can we tell when the critical moment is?