

'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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18. Luke 10.25-37 [w/b Sunday 23rd September 2018]

“.. what must I do to inherit eternal life? ...”

This passage records one of the most famous stories told by Jesus: but both its ‘fame’ and its familiarity can mean that we miss its force! It’s important, therefore, to read it *in context* - both the immediate context of the expert in the law’s questioning, and in the wider context of its place in Luke’s gospel record.

Jesus, remember, is on a journey (9.51) which takes Him through the ‘hostile’ territory of Samaria. The story He tells here reverses the roles: it centres around people on a journey through terrain which is infamously dangerous - and in particular a Samaritan travelling through this twice-over ‘hostile’ Jewish territory.

[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 2, 5, and 6. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read Luke 10.25-37.** Read the whole passage, noting both the context of the parable Jesus tells, and the conclusion He is keen that the ‘expert in the law’ should draw from it.

In what ways does this passage challenge you?

If all Scripture is intended to help you ‘fix your eyes on Jesus’, how do these verses help you delight in Jesus?

2. **Read Luke 10.25-26.** The background to this familiar story Jesus told involves an exchange of questions between Jesus and an 'expert in the law' (we would think of him as a Bible scholar).

How would you define the 'eternal life' about which the man is enquiring?

Read **Acts 16.30** where the Philippian jailer asks a similar question: how might your contemporaries frame this sort of question?

What was Jesus' point in answering the man as He did with the questions He asks?

3. **Read Luke 10.27-28.** The answer given by the expert in the law is the classic summary of the 'Law' as given by God to the people of Israel (see also **Matt.22.34-40**).

By saying 'Do this and you will live' was Jesus advocating 'salvation' by works?

Why do we find this summary of the 'law' of God both so very appealing and yet so very challenging as well?

4. Read Luke 10.29. The expert in the law comes back to Jesus with a further, slightly loaded question: Jewish oral tradition had defined 'neighbour' in ways that excluded non-Jews.

How was the question asked by the expert in the law a way of 'justifying himself'?

In what ways have you found people you're speaking with 'hiding' behind 'religious' questions?

5. Read Luke 10.30-35. The 17-mile trek from Jerusalem to Jericho was a notoriously dangerous road down (3,000ft down) through the Judaeen wilderness.

What lay behind the priest and the Levite deliberately passing by on the other side? How might they have justified this action?

How might their action be paralleled in our lives? How do we justify such action?

6. Read Luke 10.30-35. Jesus uses the element of surprise to highlight the thrust of His story: the focus falls on an unexpected, even controversial, 'hero': a Samaritan.

What is it about the Samaritan which is highlighted by Jesus in the story?

How would you respond to someone who argued from this story that the essence of Jesus' message is that religious beliefs are irrelevant and that we should simply be kind to others?

7. Read Luke 10.36-37. The last question belongs to Jesus! The story has a 'point' and He puts the expert in the law on the spot in such a way that the man has to state the truth himself.

What is the lesson which Jesus wanted to impress on the 'expert in the law' from the story?

How did Jesus practice what He preached?