

'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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20. Luke 11.14-36 [w/b Sunday 7th October 2018]

“.. Whoever is not for Me is against Me ...”

There is a real cohesion to this whole passage, which records the response of people to Jesus driving out a demon that was mute. What Jesus did, and what He taught, put people on the spot, and required of them a verdict.

Jesus, full of grace and truth, doesn't hesitate to show just how flawed and distorted our response to Him can be, and, against the backdrop of the coming judgment, underlines how dangerous it is to hide behind specious arguments and excuses.

[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! It may be helpful to start briefly with question 1: thereafter, try and ensure that in this study you cover questions 2, 5, and 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. Read Luke 11.14-36. There's benefit in reading through the whole passage to get a feel for the flow of Luke's narrative here and how each part relates to the others.

What would you identify as the common 'theme' running through the whole passage?

Which bits in the passage do you find difficult - either to understand or to apply?

2. **Read Luke 11.14-20.** The narrative of Jesus driving out a demon that had left this man mute follows immediately after the record of Jesus' teaching on prayer - our *speaking* to God.

What significance do you think Luke means us to see in his 'juxtaposing' of this narrative with Jesus' teaching on prayer?

Having just said 'Ask and it will be given you' (v.9) why does Jesus respond as He does now to their *asking* for a sign (v.16)?

How does He answer the assertion that it is by Beelzebul that He drives out demons?

3. **Read Luke 11.21-23.** Jesus uses the picture of a strong man, guarding his house and possessions, being overpowered by someone stronger.

What did He mean His hearers to understand by this? Who is the 'strong man' and who is the 'someone stronger'?

How does this picture bear on the previous narrative of the mute man having the demon driven out?

Compare what Jesus says in v.23 with His words in 9.50: how should we explain this difference?

4. **Read Luke 11.24-26.** The parable is again unique to Luke's gospel record - a story which highlights the dangers of a house, however well cleaned, which is now left 'vacant'.

What is the point Jesus is making through this story?

In what ways might it be applied to ourselves and our land today?

5. **Read Luke 11.27-28.** A woman in the crowd, impressed by the way Jesus has handled His opponents, compliments Him in a manner typical of the middle east.

What is the force of the contrast Jesus is drawing here?

How does what Jesus says here reinforce what has gone before?

Read **Matt.7.21-27.** This could sound like 'salvation by works', blessing obtained by obedience: why is it not?

6. Read Luke 11.29-32. The crowd had asked for a sign (v.16): Jesus now speaks about the only sign they will be given - the sign of Jonah.

In what way was Jonah himself a sign to the Ninevites, and how would that be paralleled in Jesus Himself?

What point is Jesus making by reference to the Queen of Sheba and the Ninevites?

As you read these verses how are you applying them to yourself?

7. Read Luke 11.33-36. Jesus rounds off His response to His opponents by drawing an analogy between the light which a lamp gives and the sight which our eyes afford.

What is the point Jesus is making?

When people don't 'get' the gospel, is that because of a lack of evidence or does it represent a moral failure? Are people morally culpable for their spiritual blindness?