

'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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23. Luke 12.13-34 [w/b Sunday 4th November 2018]

“where your treasure is there your heart will be also”

Jesus' incisive teaching on the inadequacy of a merely formal faith, which sticks with just the visible 'externals' of religion, is rudely interrupted by a man who wants some guidance on a very practical matter: the distribution of some significant material wealth as between him and his brother.

Behind the request, and the dispute which the man wants resolved, Jesus detects a deeper, underlying problem in the man's own heart. His teaching here is directed, therefore, not to the specifics of a particular situation, but to the ease with which our hearts are all enticed away from God's best.

[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 try and ensure that in this study you cover questions 3, 4, and 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read Luke 12.13-34.** These verses really belong together, so reading through the whole passage will give a feel for the train of thought in what Jesus is teaching.

What would you say was the theme, and the basic message, of these verses?

In what ways do you find yourself challenged? And in what ways (if any) do you find the teaching of Jesus liberating?

2. Read Luke 12.13-14. The situation prompting Jesus' teaching here was common enough - a man looking to a rabbi to resolve a particular problem or dispute.

How would you describe the problem which the man wanted Jesus to resolve? What might be modern parallels?

Why do you think Jesus declined to get involved in resolving this dispute?

3. Read Luke 12.15. As elsewhere in His ministry, Jesus showed a pastoral discernment, recognizing and identifying the actual malady which lay at the root of the man's enquiry.

What did Jesus discern in the man which prompted Him to sound such a warning to him?

How do we combat the subtle pressures in our society today which are a breeding ground for greed?

4. Read Luke 12.16-21. Jesus tells a short parable, a simple 'mini-saga', for the benefit of both the man and the crowd, in order to teach an important truth.

Parables have one basic point: what would you say is the 'point' of this particular parable?

What makes it hard to live in the light of eternity?

What does it mean for us to be 'rich towards God'?

5. Read Luke 12.22-26. Parables make people think: Jesus here goes on to elaborate further on the truth on which the parable has been casting light.

Are you a worrier?

What does Jesus suggest here will help you rise above your worry?

What is life all about if indeed 'life is more than food'?

6. Read Luke 12.27-31. Jesus uses a second illustration to add weight to the point He's been making and to press home its underlying challenge.

What is Jesus teaching us here about God?

What does it mean for us to 'seek His kingdom'?

How focused on that are you?

7. Read Luke 12.32-34. Jesus brings His message here to a memorable climax which sees Him turn on its head the value-system of the world by providing an entirely fresh perspective.

It's easy to be anxious and afraid: according to Jesus' words here, what helps dispel such anxiety and fear?

We've been given 'the kingdom': in what, then, does our 'treasure' now consist?

The state of our hearts is revealed by where we invest our time, energies, resources: how helpful (albeit challenging too!) do you find that as a barometer of your heart?