

JESUS

The Savior of the World



Learning the Gospel According to Luke



Jesus, the Savior of the World: Learning the Gospel According to Luke

© 2025 Young Life Discipleship

Published by 1941 Publishing, a division of Young Life Discipleship

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Printed in the United States of America

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Thank you to the Young Life Store and a faithful friend of Young Life whose generous gifts made this book possible. Their hope is that these pages inspire and strengthen your walk with Jesus.



This book belongs to

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FYI

[Here you'll find helpful info about places, people, and other stuff mentioned in the verses.]

Luke x:y-z ← [read this]

[Some thoughts about the story or teaching in Luke.]

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

[List one thing here, like, "I want to learn about humility" or, "I want to be a better listener" or, "I want to help my friends with their jobs."]

REFLECT & RESPOND ← [things to help learning]

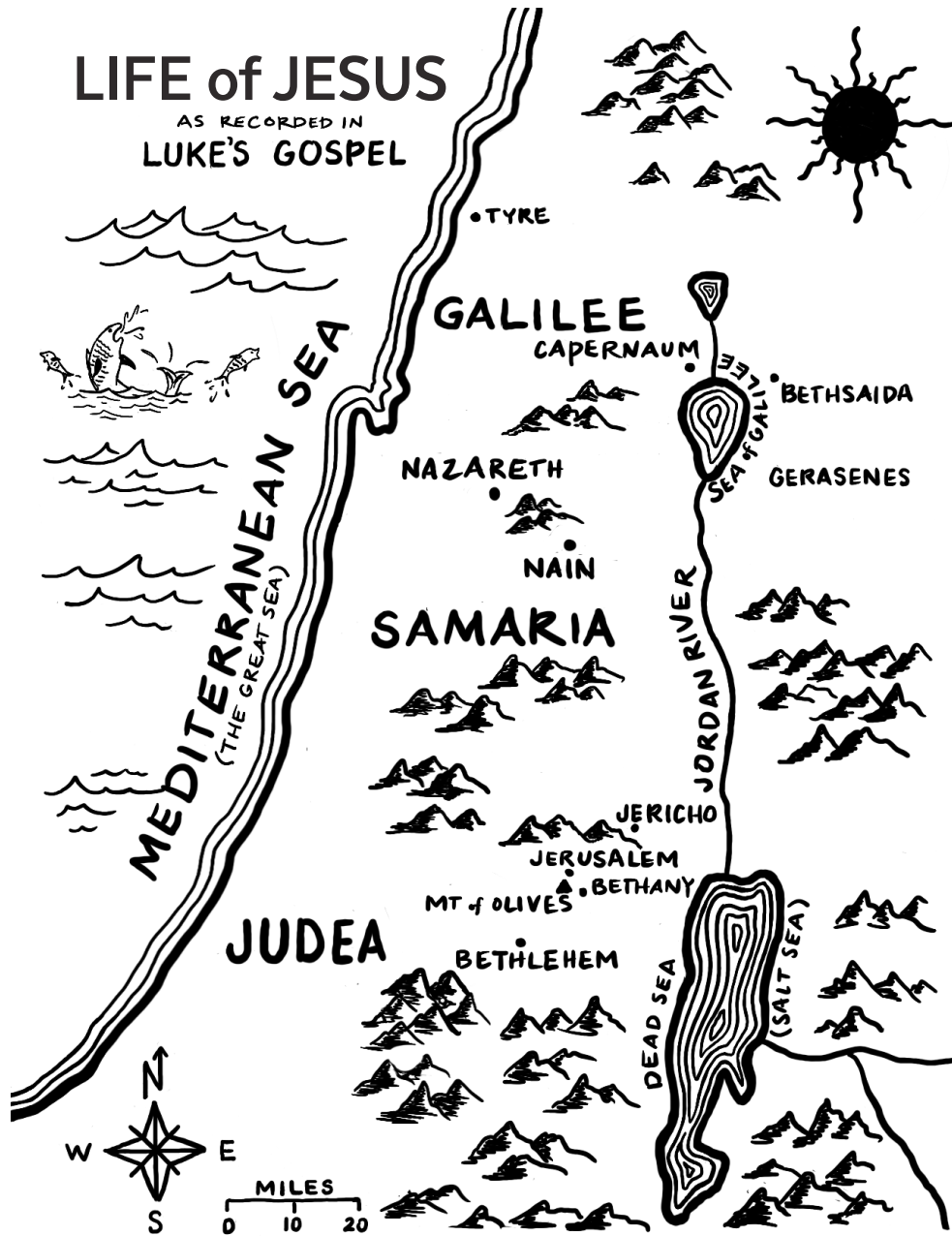
[Think, write, process, pray, discuss, and learn stuff in this space.]

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

[List one thing here, like, "Jesus is teaching me about how to love others" or, "Jesus is showing me that he truly cares about the questions I bring to him" or, "Jesus is helping me be more patient with myself and others."]

LIFE of JESUS

AS RECORDED IN
LUKE'S GOSPEL



MARGIN MARKS

As you read Luke, mark these key themes in your Bible margins.

Add more themes and icons to the list as you notice them.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 👑 Messiah King Kingdom | → obedience new life |
| * glory worship | ↔ disobedience old life |
| ⚡ Jesus' miraculous power | ↻ repentance |
| ↓❤️ God's love for us | ↑ faith belief trust |
| ↑❤️ our love for God | ↕ prayer |
| ←❤️ our love for others | ABC parable |
| 🧑 God is for all people | 🔥 Holy Spirit |
| # cost of discipleship | 💬 witness talking about Jesus |
| 🍏 spiritual fruit | 😊 joy |

The Prequel

The story of God starts with the miraculous birth of all things:

Genesis 1:1 ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.***

Genesis 1:31 The story started out very good. God said so himself. But humanity, God’s special and beloved creation, spoiled things by rejecting the identity and the responsibility God had given them. In other words, they rejected God himself. It would have been fair for God to reject humanity in return. But he didn’t.

Genesis 12–50 Instead, he chose a specific family to be his people and to share his truth with all the nations. Except they didn’t. They failed miserably.

*Exodus
Numbers
Deuteronomy* At one point God’s people were enslaved for hundreds of years. A man named Moses eventually led them to freedom. But on their journey to a new home, they messed up again and again. When they finally arrived in the Promised Land 40 years later, God gave them leaders called judges (not like our modern judges), some of whom did a great job and some of whom failed miserably.

1–2 Samuel One day God’s people said, “No more judges. We want a king, like all the other nations have,” forgetting that they already had a King — God himself. Once again, God had every right to reject the people who’d rejected him. But he didn’t. He gave them what they asked for. A few of the kings did a good job. Most of them failed miserably. The most important king was David. God promised David that someday one of his descendants would reign over God’s people forever.

*1–2 Kings
1–2 Chronicles* Eventually the nation of God’s people divided. The northern nation was called Israel, the southern was called Judah. Bigger and stronger nations began attacking them. God sent prophets — people who spoke on God’s behalf — to warn them about the consequences of disobedience and unfaithfulness. The kings and the people mostly ignored the prophets and rejected God.

2 Kings 17 Israel (capital city: Samaria) was defeated first. Many of the people were exiled to the conquering nation, never to return home. Others were left behind and began to lose the central core of their faith and beliefs.

2 Kings 24–25 Judah (capital city: Jerusalem) held on for another 150 years, but eventually they were conquered too. The sacred Temple was destroyed and most people were exiled to the conquering nation. They cried out for justice and rescue.

*Nehemiah
Ezra
2 Chronicles 33
Jeremiah 43
Zechariah 6* Generations later, some exiles were allowed to return home. They began to rebuild the city walls and the Temple. But life was difficult. The people cried out to God. God promised that someday a Messiah would come to rescue his people, restore the Temple, and establish a Kingdom that would never end.

*Between the
Old & New
Testaments* For 400 years, powers kept shifting. The Jewish people kept waiting and hoping for the promised Messiah to arrive, restore their nation, and defeat their enemies. They hoped for a strong and mighty leader who would drive out the Romans, sit on the throne as king, and welcome God back to a bigger and better Temple. They waited. And waited. And waited some more. Some wannabe Messiahs appeared, but they were all imposters.

*Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Job 38:1–7
Luke 2:14* And then Jesus was born (a more miraculous birth than the creation of all things) and the angels shouted for joy once again (just like they had at the creation of all things). The first people to welcome Jesus weren’t reigning royalty or powerful politicians — they were simple, everyday, humble shepherds, signaling that Jesus would spend his earthly life seeing, knowing, and caring for people that others often ignored or cast aside.

Luke 1:1–4 A man named Luke, who knew some of Jesus’ closest friends, decided to write down the whole story. He carefully investigated everything from the beginning and wrote a careful account so that we can be certain of the truth.

This is the story that Luke wrote — the story of Jesus, the Savior of the world.

The Intro

The New Testament tells about Jesus, his first followers, and the first churches. It starts with four books called Gospels, which is both a literary genre and a word that means “good news.” The four Gospels — Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John — focus on the life, death, resurrection, and teachings of Jesus.

Luke is one of the three synoptic Gospels (Matthew and Mark are the other two), which just means they are similar. And yet each of the three synoptics has its own distinct style, voice, and structure. And each one has a few distinct stories of their own.

For example, Luke was the only writer to tell some details of Jesus’ birth story, including the angel’s visit to Mary, the manger scene, and the shepherds’ visit to see Jesus. Only in Luke’s Gospel can you read about the lost son (or the prodigal son), Zacchaeus the tree climbing tax collector, the good Samaritan, and many

If you’ve ever heard someone say, “You can’t trust the Bible because the stories of Jesus are told differently, so obviously someone just made the whole thing up,” take a deep breath and don’t worry. There’s a reasonable explanation.

Just imagine if you and three friends were at a weekend retreat, and just a week later you each sat down to write about what happened. Your four reports would be similar in some ways, but also probably very different in other ways depending on your personalities, your unique experiences at the retreat, your main focus, and your individual writing styles.

What’s most amazing about the four Gospels is how aligned they are even with their differences. It would be more strange if they were exactly the same. That would have meant some editor went in and cleaned everything up. Instead, the books were left as they were written so that each of the author’s distinct style, voice, and focus — inspired by the Holy Spirit — shines through, and we can read about Jesus from four unique points of view.

other so-called outsiders.

And only Luke addressed his book to a specific individual, someone named Theophilus. No one knows for sure who Theophilus was, but most Bible scholars agree that he was an important and influential Greek. That is, he was a Gentile, a non-Jew. From the very first lines of his Gospel account, Luke makes it clear that Jesus is a Savior for the world, not just for the Jewish people into which Jesus was born and from which he descended.

And only Luke traced Jesus’ genealogy back not to Abraham, the father of the Israelites and the Jews, but to Adam, the first human of God’s creation as described in Genesis 1 and 2, once again making it clear that Jesus is for all people, not just a small select group.

It’s kind of surprising and beautiful that by addressing his book to just one specific human, Theophilus, and tracing Jesus’ lineage back to another specific human, Adam, Luke delivers a message that is actually for all humans. The message is this: Jesus is the very good King whose coming was promised long ago, who was miraculously born on earth in human form, who experienced all the things that all humans do, whose sacrificial death on the cross paid the penalty for sin and broke the curse of sin, whose resurrection from death made a way for us to come home to the Father and receive new life through his Holy Spirit, and who is with us always as our Rescuer and Redeemer, our Savior and Lord, our Creator and King.

Luke carefully investigated everything from the beginning and then wrote a careful account for the honorable Theophilus (which means “friend of God”) so that Theophilus could be certain of the truth of everything he’d been taught. Luke didn’t know that we’d be reading his words thousands of years later. But God knew. And he inspired Luke to write a book that would still teach, move, shape, and guide us today, and that would help us (also “friends of God”) be certain of the truth of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world.

Ways to Read

Reading the Bible doesn't have to be daunting or dull. In fact, spending time in God's Word should be interesting and life-giving even if the stories and teachings are unfamiliar or unclear at first.

Here are some reading strategies for digging into Scripture. Try them out as you read Luke and other parts of the Bible.

COPY IT

It's as easy as it sounds. Just pick a few verses or passages to copy out in your journal. This slows you down, helping you notice each and every word. You'll see things when copying that you won't see when just reading to yourself.

MARK IT

Use the icon emojis on page 9 to mark the margins of your Bible as you read. This will help you notice themes and patterns in the stories. If you notice other themes, create new icons for those and add them to the master list.

CHART IT

When one story has parallel characters and events (like Jairus and the bleeding woman, ch. 8), or when two stories are near to each other and have some parallels (like Jesus helping a Roman soldier and a Jewish widow, ch. 7), you could make a chart or lists comparing similar and different details.

SHOW IT

Take a story or teaching of Jesus and make it visual. Doodle, draw, or design the words. Allow yourself to read, think, and then see the meaning.

DESCRIBE IT

With two or more people, read the story one verse at a time. Stop and describe it. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What's happening off to the sides? Describe it to each other. Continue with the next verse until you get to the end of the story. Check out the Reel Luke questions on page 16 for more ideas about how to do this. Or with another person, retell the story in first person, as people who were there, adding emotions and observations that don't change the story but do bring it to life in new ways.

INVERT IT

Take Jesus' words and invert them into their opposite. Notice how harshly wrong they sound. Sometimes it's easiest to see the rightness and goodness of something by seeing what its opposite would be.

SPEAK IT

Reading silently is easy and quick for many people. But it can lead to lazy reading. Sometimes read the verses out loud by yourself or with others. Just listen. Close your eyes if someone else is reading. Hear carefully what the words say and what the Spirit is teaching.

PRAY IT

Take a passage and turn it into a prayer. In Luke 8:21, Jesus said, "My mother and brothers are all those who hear God's word and obey it." You could pray this as, "Dear God, help me to not just hear your word and then move on and forget it. Help me to hear it, understand it, believe it, and then live it obediently. Amen."

OTHER READING STRATEGIES

List other reading strategies that you, your friends, or your leaders recommend.

Reel Questions

In many ways the Bible is a book with cinematic scope. It's one large dramatic story made up of many smaller stories — sort of like reels — that show real events and real people. We must learn to see and experience those stories to get their full effect and learn their deeper meaning. The “reel” questions below can help bring the stories to life in fresh ways by recovering — or discovering for the first time — their vivid gritty reality and their timeless underlying truth.

REEL SETTING (place)

Where did this story happen? (Describe the setting — in a house, on a road, by a lake, in a city, etc.)

What do you think that place looked like? smelled like? sounded like?

Do you think the setting matters to this story? Why?

What about the place in this story feels familiar? What feels strange?

REEL CHARACTERS (people)

Make a list of all the people in this story and give a one-word description of each (include “crowd” if there is one). Why did you choose that word?

What does Jesus say and do in this story? List all the things. Does anything surprise you? Why?

Which person (besides Jesus) is most interesting to you? Why?

What details about the people do you wish were included or explained in the story? Why?

Why do you think [choose a specific character or the crowd] spoke or acted the way they did?

Reel Characters cont'd

What are some different things that person (from previous question) could have said or done? How would that have changed the story?

What do you think the onlookers were thinking and feeling? Why?

How do you think the main characters might have changed after this story? Why?

How do you think the crowd or onlookers might have changed after this story? Why?

REEL PLOT (events)

List all the events that are actually included in the story. (Read carefully.)

List events that are assumed or implied in the story. (Read deeply.)

What do you think are the two or three most important moments in this story? Why?

If this story were a film, when would the music be scary or tense? When would it be joyful or upbeat? Why?

What do you think maybe happened right before this story? What do you think maybe happened right after this story?

Does the biblical story before or after this one matter to this story? How? Why do you think that?

What are some different ways things could have happened, progressed, or ended in this story?

If this story were happening today in your school or town, what are ways Jesus might have acted or explained things for your context? (e.g., maybe he would have used a different phrase than “fishers of men” to explain what his followers would do)

What would you call this story if it were a full-length book or movie? Why?

REAL FAITH (discipleship)

What's a way people could misunderstand or misuse this story? (e.g., "Jesus will calm all the 'storms' in my life," or "Jesus will heal my grandma if I just believe enough.")

Why do you think this story is in the Bible? Why would God want us to read and learn from it?

What are you learning about Jesus (or his Father or the Spirit) from this story? Why does that matter to you?

What are you learning about following Jesus (living for Jesus and living like Jesus) from this story?

After reading this story, what are some questions you have about Jesus and following him?

The Gospel of Jesus Christ as written by Luke

Daily Readings & Devos

FYI

Theophilus means “friend of God.” Acts was also written for him. See Acts 1:1.

Aaron was the first priest of the Israelites and the brother of Moses (page 24) who led the Hebrew people out of slavery in Egypt.

The Temple was in the capital city, Jerusalem, and was the center of Jewish religion. God’s presence was believed to be in the center of the Temple in the Holy of Holies. People traveled to the Temple to offer sacrifices for their sins.

Elijah, an Old Testament prophet, was revered by the Jewish people. You can read about him in 2 Kings.

King David, one of the first Israelite kings, wrote many of the Psalms. His story is told in 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles. God promised that someday one of David’s descendants would reign as king forever.

Nazareth was Jesus’ hometown in Galilee, north of Bethlehem (where Jesus was born) and Jerusalem, the capital city (where Jesus was crucified). It wasn’t considered a prestigious or important.

The **Holy Spirit** is one person of what Christians call the Trinity — God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:1-38

There are four Gospels in the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) that tell the story of Jesus. Each one starts differently.

Matthew starts with a long list of Jesus’ ancestors (a genealogy) and the birth of Jesus.

Mark starts right in with stories about Jesus as an adult.

John starts with poetry about creation and God’s plans, then moves to stories about grown-up Jesus.

Luke starts with a personal note to someone named Theophilus. No one knows for sure who Theophilus was, but some think he was a nobleman who’d asked Luke to research and write about Jesus so that people could “be certain of the truth” (1:4).

The other Gospels mention John the Baptist, Jesus’ cousin who announced Jesus’ identity and mission to the crowds. But only Luke tells about John the Baptist’s miraculous birth.

The same angel visited Zechariah (John the Baptist’s father) and Mary (Jesus’ mother). The angel’s messages were similar. So were Zechariah’s and Mary’s spoken responses. But the scenes played out very differently, maybe because Zechariah and Mary had different unspoken thoughts and motivations. Maybe Luke paired their stories together so that we’d ask ourselves how we’d respond if we’d been in the story — like Zechariah or like Mary.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

Notice what the angel first said to Zechariah and then to Mary. Why do you think he started his messages differently?

Do you think the angel’s words, “Don’t be afraid,” had the same purpose and meaning for Zechariah and Mary? Why?

Why do you think the angel’s response was so different to Zechariah and Mary?

What do you think about verses 1-4? Why do you think Luke started his Gospel account with these words?

Whose questions, responses, and thoughts do you relate to more in these verses — Zechariah’s or Mary’s? Why?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

The distance from **Nazareth to the Hill Country** was between 80 and 100 miles.

David (see page 20).

Prophets spoke God’s truth to the people. The Old Testament ends with a promise that someday a powerful prophet would come again to save God’s people (Malachi 4:5), referring to Jesus himself.

Abraham’s story is told in Genesis 12-25. God made a covenant with Abraham: “This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you” (Genesis 17:7). Abraham’s grandson Jacob (also called Israel) had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel.

Holy Spirit (see page 20).

Luke 1:39-80

Some people wonder why the angel visited Zechariah instead of Elizabeth. After all, Elizabeth was the one who would carry a child in her body for the next nine months. It seems only fair that she be the one to hear directly from God.

As it turns out, something just as amazing and supernatural happened to Elizabeth, but in a totally unexpected way.

When Mary visited Elizabeth, Mary herself was just newly pregnant. No one would have known her condition by looking at her. But when Mary entered Elizabeth’s house and spoke words of greeting, Elizabeth’s baby — unborn, inside her body — knew exactly who was there: the mother of the Lord.

Elizabeth didn’t get an angel visit. She got a mother-of-Jesus-plus-preborn-Jesus visit. It doesn’t get better than that.

The scene between Elizabeth and Mary is beautiful. Only Mary and Elizabeth would have known what happened that day, but somehow the story was passed on to people who then passed it on to Luke who decided to include it in his Gospel so that today, we can all listen in to the moment when two unlikely mothers (one too old to have a baby, and the other one a virgin) celebrated and rejoiced together.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

The angel visited Mary when Elizabeth was six months pregnant (1:26). Then Mary visited Elizabeth and stayed with her for three months (1:56). There’s a good chance Mary was there when John the Baptist was born. What do you think that time and experience might have been like for Mary?

Think of a time when you clearly sensed and experienced God’s work in your life, whether in ordinary or extraordinary circumstances. Try to put a praise response into words, like Mary and Zechariah did. It can be any form — poetic, narrative, long, short.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Rome invaded the region where Jesus lived about 60 years before his birth. They installed their own rulers and government.

Seven hundred years before Jesus’ birth, the prophet Micah said, “But you, O **Bethlehem**, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel will come from you, one whose origins are from the distant past” (Micah 5:2).

Messiah is the Hebrew word for Anointed One. **Christ** is the Greek word. Old Testament prophets often spoke of the coming Messiah who would rescue and restore Israel.

Leviticus 12 lists various **purification offerings** required after childbirth.

God called **Moses** to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. See Exodus 1–14.

Asher was one of Jacob’s 12 sons.

Galilee was the northern region where Jesus lived and taught.

Passover was an annual Jewish festival celebrating the Hebrew people’s escape from slavery in Egypt, specifically the night when the angel of death “passed over” the homes of God’s people.

Luke 2

Many things happen in this chapter of Luke.

First, the least likely people— humble shepherds — are the first to hear about and see Jesus.

Then two elderly people who’d been waiting their entire lives for the promised Messiah are the first to recognize Jesus’ true identity when his parents brought him to the Temple at 40 days old — before he could hold up his head or roll over by himself.

Then when Jesus was 12 years old, he started exercising his independence and stayed back in Jerusalem — without letting his parents know first.

Some of these things are typical of all humans — being born, having to grow up and learn how to do All The Things, figuring out how parent-kid relationships work as a person gets older.

And some of these things are entirely supernatural — angels announcing someone’s birth, being recognized and identified as God’s Messiah.

There are many different scenes in this chapter: the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem; angels visiting shepherds; shepherds visiting Jesus; Simeon seeing Jesus; Anna seeing and hearing about Jesus; Jesus staying behind in Jerusalem; Jesus’ parents searching for him; Jesus’ parents finding him. Each one could be its own chapter, story, or short film.

They’re all real. Try to see them and learn from them.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

Spend time “seeing” the scenes from this chapter and talking about them. You can also think about some of these things:

2:1-7 What do you think it was like for Joseph and Mary on the night Jesus was born, weary after long travels and unable to find a place to rest?

2:8-20 Why do you think shepherds were the first people God chose to see Jesus?

2:25-38 Make a list of things the Bible says about both Simeon and Anna. What do you notice? What can you learn from their lives and actions?

2:41-52 Jesus went through the growing-up stage that everyone goes through — having his own interests, wanting to make his own decisions, trying to understand and communicate with his parents. Why do you think Luke included this story?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Herod, Philip, and Lysanias were appointed by the Roman government to rule over different areas of Palestine.

Once a year, the **high priest** entered the most sacred part of the Temple, the Holy of Holies, and offered a sacrifice on the Day of Atonement. In the book of Hebrews, Jesus is called our great high priest. At his death, the curtain to the Holy of Holies was torn in two to show that Jesus had made a way for all people to be with God.

Isaiah was a prophet in the 8th century B.C. who delivered God’s messages to the kings and people of Judah, the southern kingdom (see *The Prequel* for more about the divided kingdom).

Abraham (see page 22).

Luke 3

At first glance, this chapter of Luke seems to be about just two things: John the Baptist (first half) and then a long list of names that are hard to pronounce (second half).

Tucked in between those two things is one short paragraph about Jesus being baptized. It sort of seems like the proportions are all wrong, like it should mostly be about Jesus and not so much about John the Baptist and all those names.

But Luke writes intentionally, so the proportions must be right.

Here’s one possibility: maybe before telling the story of Jesus being baptized, Luke wanted his readers to know more about the person who was baptizing him. He ties John’s life and teachings back to the Old Testament prophecies about the promised Messiah, directly connecting him to Jesus. And Luke includes teachings of John that line up perfectly with things Jesus said, like this: “Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. Don’t just say it or assume it.” The man who baptized Jesus was absolutely positive that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised King, God himself come to earth in flesh.

And maybe after telling the story of Jesus being baptized, Luke wanted his readers to see that Jesus was a real historical person with a legitimate ancestry that went all the way back to the very first human, showing that Jesus didn’t love and offer to rescue just a small select group of people but anyone and everyone who recognizes his true identity and gives themselves to him.

You don’t have to read all those names. And you don’t have to know all their stories. But you do need to see and know that Jesus is fully human even while he is fully God.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

John’s message was the same as Jesus’: *repent of your sins and turn to God* (3:3). Jesus said this many times (Matthew 3:11, 4:17, 21:32; Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3). How would you explain these words? Do they line up with how you understand the good news or the gospel?

The word “repent” means more than admitting or apologizing. It means turning away from. How have you personally repented of sin in your life? What other ways is God calling you to repent?

3:21-22 What do you notice in this short scene? What do you learn about God from it?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Synagogues were local places of community gatherings, religious teaching, and worship, similar to churches today.

In the New Testament, the word **scriptures** refers to the Hebrew scriptures, what we now call the Old Testament. They were written on **scrolls** of either parchment (animal skin) or papyrus (plant fibers) that were rolled up on wooden rods.

You can read the story of **Elijah** and a widow in 1 Kings 17 and the story of **Elisha** and **Naaman** in 2 Kings 5. In both those stories, God’s prophets healed foreigners who weren’t Israelites.

Simon was another name for Peter, one of Jesus’ closest friends and first disciples.

Jesus often taught and preached about the **Good News of the Kingdom** — claiming that he was the long awaited promised Messiah who would usher in God’s Kingdom.

Luke 4

Chapter 4 picks up where 3:22 ended. After Jesus’ baptism — a powerful scene where God is revealed as Father, Son, and Spirit — Jesus heads into one of the most challenging scenes of his life until his crucifixion. He faced off with the devil who tempted him in all the most powerful ways: with food (Jesus was hungry), earthly power (Jesus had willingly been born into a poor family living in an occupied land), and spiritual power (Jesus had willingly given up his divine privileges and been born as a human being).

The devil didn’t just target Jesus in his most vulnerable ways. He did it in the most deceptive way possible — by twisting God’s Word to sound oh-so-close to true, which is really the most dangerous kind of lie possible.

Obvious lies don’t have much power. They’re easy to spot.

Subtle lies — ones that are so close to truth that their edges get fuzzy and confusing — those are the ones that tempt and trap people.

The devil knew that. He challenged Jesus’ identity and twisted God’s words to try and topple God’s plans.

But Jesus knew who he was, knew the truth, and knew his Father intimately. That’s the reason he was able to withstand everything the devil threw at him.

We should pay attention.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

4:1-13 The devil tempted Jesus using “if” statements that challenged Jesus’ identity (are you really who you think you are?), God the Father’s identity (can you really trust him?), and the devil’s own identity (are you really sure that I’m not the one you should follow and listen to?). The devil said:

“If you are the Son of God ...” (4:3, 4:9)
“If you will worship me ... “ (4:7)

What “if” statements does the devil and/or the world throw at you to try and draw you away from Jesus? How do you fight against those statements and the lies that go with them?

Check out the “Identity in Christ” list included on page 72. Ask God to remind you and reassure you of who you truly are in his eyes.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Leprosy referred to many different skin diseases in the ancient world. Because of fears about contracting or spreading leprosy, there were many religious laws and cultural boundaries that people with leprosy were expected to follow.

The **Law of Moses** refers to the words and instructions God gave to Moses after his people were rescued from slavery in Egypt. It includes the 10 Commandments and the other religious laws found in the first five books of the Old Testament. These books are known as the Torah in Jewish tradition. Sometimes they're also called the Pentateuch.

Pharisees were religious leaders determined to protect and preserve the Jewish faith. They were first organized 150–200 years before Jesus was born.

Tax collectors were Jewish men who worked on behalf of the Roman government. Most people looked down on them, considering them sinners and betrayers.

Luke 5

Luke 5 includes stories about Jesus interacting with some of the most unlikely and unliked people: fishermen, a man with an advanced case of leprosy, a paralyzed man, and a group of tax collectors.

Jesus didn't just interact with these people and then move on. He spent time with them. He invited some of them to be his closest friends. He looked deep into the paralyzed man's heart and saw what he really wanted and needed. And against all the odds and all the rules, he actually reached out and touched the man with leprosy, which was totally not OK according to both culture and tradition.

But Jesus didn't live according to culture or tradition. He lived according to God's laws and God's heart. He lived according to Love.

Where other people would overlook lowly fishermen, Jesus looked carefully and saw people who would help share his message with the world.

Where other people would avoid or stigmatize a man with leprosy, Jesus drew near and reached out to touch him before healing him.

Where other people would hate tax collectors and view them only as cheats who'd betrayed their family and friends, Jesus viewed them with compassion as people who could be conformed into his likeness if they were shown mercy.

Jesus did everything wrong according to the world's standards when he did everything right according to his Father's heart.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

5:1-11 Jesus used fishing imagery to explain to Peter, James, and John what kind of life he was calling them to (“now you’ll be fishing for people!”). Think about what it means to follow and live for Jesus. What kind of imagery makes sense to you based on your own life and experiences?

5:12-15 Imagine being shunned from society, like this man had been, and then being welcomed by Jesus. What words or images would describe how he might have felt?

5:17-26 Why do you think Jesus forgave the paralyzed man before healing him? How do you think the man felt about that?

5:27-31 Jesus said, "I have come to call those who know they are sinners and need to repent." Think about these words. How do they describe you? Why did you decide to repent and follow Jesus?

Imagine yourself being face-to-face with Jesus like these people were. Celebrate his real presence in your life.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Sabbath lasted from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. One of God’s instructions to the Israelites was to “remember the Sabbath and keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8–11, Deuteronomy 5:12–15). The people weren’t supposed to work on that day. But what qualified as work? Over the generations, religious leaders developed a long and detailed list of what people should and shouldn’t do on the Sabbath. Jesus did many miracles on the Sabbath, showing that it is always obedient to love others and do good, no matter what day it is. Some people think Christians should still observe Sabbath. Others think Christians experience a new kind of Sabbath when their relationship with God is restored through Jesus (see Colossians 2:16–17).

The story of **David eating sacred loaves** is in 1 Samuel 21.

Synagogue (see page 28).

Disciples referred to anyone who followed Jesus and lived by his teachings.

Apostles referred specifically to the disciples Jesus chose and appointed to preach the good news of his life, death, resurrection, and Kingdom.

Prophets (see page 22).

Luke 6

Many people — even those who don’t believe in God — think Jesus was a great teacher. People who’ve given their lives to Jesus, love Jesus, trust Jesus, and follow Jesus agree that he for sure was (and still is) a great teacher, *and so much more*. He is the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the Redeemer, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, God-in-flesh who came to earth to show us God and rescue us from sin.

Luke 6 includes some of Jesus’ most beautiful and powerful teachings about our relationship with God, our relationship with others, and the life we are called to live as his followers.

When you read Jesus’ words, keep in mind that they were spoken 2,000 years ago, in a very different time, place, and culture than ours. Most things spoken and written that long ago make no sense and have no relevance for today. But not Jesus’ words. They still make sense. They still matter. And they are still true.

Two thousand years later, we still understand about trees and their fruit (even if we’ve never actually grown one ourselves).

Two thousand years later, we still understand about houses and buildings and foundations (even if we’ve never actually built one ourselves).

The things Jesus said in this chapter may not have been spoken to us in real time. But they transcend time and still speak to us today. That’s the miracle and power of God’s Word and Jesus’ words.

.....
Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

Choose either the image of a deeply rooted and fruitful tree or the image of a solid and strongly built home. Sketch or doodle different elements of either image and then label those things as different parts of following and living for Jesus. For example, tree roots could be reading the Bible, praying, etc. Tree trunk could be loving God. Tree fruit could be a humble attitude, helping someone in need, etc.

.....
Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

A **Roman centurion** was an officer who led a group of 100 soldiers. Though most Jews despised the occupying Romans, Jesus showed them the same kindness and compassion that he did to everyone.

Pharisee (see page 30).

The **Simon** in Luke 7:36-50 is not Simon Peter, one of Jesus' disciples.

Because people wore sandals back then and the roads were dusty, hosts provided water for guests to **wash their feet** before entering the house.

Luke 7

Luke's Gospel account is very intentional about showing Jesus as the Messiah, Savior, and Lord of everyone, not just a small select group of people. That would have been difficult for people back then to understand.

In this chapter, Jesus honored and helped a Roman officer — Romans were the occupying enemy.

Jesus showed compassion and power to a childless widow — childless widows had no prestige or power back then.

Jesus taught large crowds that included tax collectors — tax collectors were considered lowlife traitors and cheats.

Jesus showed kindness and gentleness to a sinful woman — the kind of woman people mocked and treated with contempt.

Over and over again, Jesus shocked and surprised people, both the people who were watching and listening ("Why is he spending time with *that person??*") and the people who were on the receiving end of his kindness and love ("Why is he paying attention to *me??*").

We should learn to know Jesus better and better every day that we follow him, but we should never become so accustomed to him that we stop being amazed, awed, and maybe even surprised by the lavish way he loved and cared for everyone he met.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

7:1-17 Make a list of all the related details in these two stories. We've started you off. The details might be similar or different. After making the lists, look at them carefully. What do the differences and similarities show you about Jesus?

Luke 7:1-10	Luke 7:11-17
Man Roman soldier	Woman Jewish widow

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Good news or gospel comes from the Greek word **euangelion** (pronounced you-on-GEL-ee-on, with a hard “g” like in “get”). In the ancient world, when a king or other ruler arrived, a messenger would travel throughout the region announcing the good news of the arrival. The good news about Jesus is that the long awaited reigning and rescuing King had at last arrived.

Parables are short stories that teach a lesson using common images and ideas. Some people think that parables were intended to be easy to understand but hard to accept, that is, the ideas and images were clear, but sometimes the lesson was hard to swallow, for example that we are called to love all people.

The Sea of Galilee
(sometimes just called “the lake” in the Bible) hasn’t changed much since Jesus’ time. It is 13 miles long and 8 miles wide, below sea level, surrounded by hills. Jesus and his disciples traveled back and forth across the lake often. Because of the sea’s low level and the surrounding hills, that area often experienced harsh storms.

Luke 8:1-25

Besides being an expert teacher, Jesus was also an expert storyteller. He often told parables (see the FYI at left) that were packed with truth. Even though Jesus' parables are more than 2,000 years old, they still make sense and are still true today. We still understand about planting seeds (even if we've never planted a seed ourselves) and we still understand about lamps and lights. Jesus' stories are timeless.

Jesus also spoke simple phrases or sentences that delivered a mighty punch, often directly connected to his surroundings. When someone once told Jesus that his mother and brothers wanted to talk with him, he replied: “My mother and my brothers are all those who hear God’s word and obey it.” His response wasn’t just about the immediate situation — they were about spiritual truth. *Anyone who wants to be part of Jesus’ family must listen to God’s Word and obey it.*

And besides telling simple (but profound) stories, and dropping short (but powerful) phrases, Jesus did the unthinkable: he commanded creation, and creation obeyed.

All of these things appear in the first half of Luke 8 – two brilliant parables, one powerful statement, and one shocking miracle that together reveal Jesus’ true identity, eternal truth, and powerful plans.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

8:4-15 Think about the four different seeds. What are some ways you can become a person with deep spiritual roots that don't get crowded out by the "cares and riches and pleasures of this life"?

8:21 Scripture is clear that God loves everyone in the world enough to send his son to die for them. But here Jesus puts a conditional framework on who is part of God's family. Write or draw your thoughts about those how those are both true.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Synagogue (see page 28).

In the ancient world, there were many traditions and religious laws about blood and **bleeding** disorders and diseases. Someone with a bleeding disease was often kept apart from other people so that no one would come in contact with blood and either contract a disease or become ceremonially unclean. The Old Testament included many ceremonial laws about bleeding conditions and illnesses. The woman with a bleeding disease was risking everything to be so close to so many people.

Luke 8:26-56

The second half of Luke tells two long stories that include three astonishing miracles. In one story, Jesus drove out evil. In the other, he destroyed illness and then defeated death.

There is nothing that Jesus cannot do. He is the victorious, reigning King who has power over everything. So why doesn't Jesus cure and fix everything in our lives today, even when we sincerely ask him to, like he did for the people in these stories?

Certainly Jesus *can* do anything for anyone at any time he wants. But during his earthly life he intentionally performed many public miracles for a few reasons: first to display his true identity (the Almighty God), and second to give a glimpse of what new creation will be like (no sickness, no sorrow, no evil, no pain, no suffering, no division, no hatred, and more).

Today we have the Bible to show us who Jesus really is and what new creation will be like. Jesus isn't physically present on earth to heal everyone who seeks him and asks him. Instead, his spirit is present in the hearts of his followers, performing an ongoing miracle of making them into new people, which is the most amazing miracle of all.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

8:26-39 Why do you think the people responded this way to Jesus' miracle (34-37)? Why do you think Jesus responded this way to the man he'd healed (38-39)?

8:40-56 Read the story carefully and make a list of all the connected story details (they might be similar or different — we started you out). What do these differences/similarities reveal about Jesus?

man
Jairus

woman
no name

This is the only time Jesus named someone "daughter." Why do you think he did that?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Good news (see page 36).

The story of **John the Baptist’s beheading** is in Matthew 14 and Mark 6.

Elijah (see page 20).

Ancient prophets (see page 22).

Messiah (see page 24).

Jesus sometimes called himself the **Son of Man**, a title that appears in the Old Testament. In the book of Daniel (7:13-14) Son of Man refers to a future ruler from heaven who will reign over all the world and whose Kingdom will never end.

Moses (see page 24).

Jerusalem was the capital city, located in Judea. The Temple was in Jerusalem. Many people made annual visits to the Temple, especially to celebrate the Passover.

Luke 9

What do you think it costs to follow Jesus? Some people think it costs nothing — just say “yes” to Jesus’ love and forgiveness, the end.

Some people think it costs a little bit — say “yes” to Jesus’ love and forgiveness, then once a week go to church or Bible study and think about God, the end.

Some people think it costs just a little bit more than that — say “yes” to Jesus’ love and forgiveness, go to church or Bible study once a week and think about God, also try to pray and read the Bible during the week, the end.

Or something like that.

Jesus sets the record straight in 8:23-24. It cost Jesus his very life to save us. *And it costs our very lives to follow him.* Not actual death on a cross, but a different kind of dying. Dying to self. Turning from our selfish ways. Turning to his good ways. Being transformed into a new person. Living new life through the power of his Spirit.

In one sense, new life in Jesus is free: he paid with his life to cover the cost of our sins and to buy our freedom. We can’t do anything to earn or buy new life with him.

But in another sense, new life in Jesus costs everything. And those two things are both possible — new life with Jesus is both free and costly. And certainly if new life with Jesus is as wonderful and amazing as the Bible says it is, we shouldn’t be surprised to hear that it also comes at great cost.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

9:10-18 Why do you think Jesus didn’t just miraculously distribute food directly to all the people but instead had the disciples hand it out to the people?

9:21-27 In what ways have you experienced God’s free gift of forgiveness? In what ways has following Jesus been costly for you?

9:24 What are some ways you try to “hang on to your life”?

9:24 What are some ways that followers of Jesus can “give up their life” for his sake?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Burlap and ashes were signs of repentance and mourning.

Tyre and Sidon were the farthest north cities in the region where Jesus lived and taught. They were pagan cities where people worshipped false gods.

Law of Moses (see page 30).

Samaria was between Galilee and Judea. Because of the ancient history of God’s people, there was no love lost between Jews and Samaritans. Many Jews would intentionally travel around Samaria rather than through it in order to avoid Samaritans.

Jerusalem is 3,000 feet above sea level. Jericho is almost 900 feet below sea level. The two cities are just 18 miles apart, but 4,000 feet difference in elevation. The road between them was treacherous and dangerous.

The greatest commandment is from Deuteronomy 6:4-6 and was known to devout Jews as the Shema, which is the Hebrew word for listen (Deuteronomy 6:4). All Jewish people would have known these words and recited them faithfully.

Priests and Levites (or temple assistants) were respected in the Jewish community.

Luke 10

Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan has worked its way into popular language, even for people who don’t know and follow Jesus. Maybe you’ve heard or read about someone helping a stranger in need — that person is often referred to as a Good Samaritan, with no understanding of the original story.

There was no love lost between Jews and Samaritans. They all descended from the same family tree, but hundreds of years before Jesus, there’d been a split in the family and over time, Jews viewed Samaritans with contempt because some had turned away from traditional religious beliefs and practices.

By the time Jesus came along, some Jews had such a low view of Samaritans that they’d actually journey the long way around Samaria instead of through it.

But not Jesus. He talked to Samaritans. He welcomed Samaritans. He healed Samaritans. And in this parable, he made a Samaritan the hero of the story.

The man Jesus was talking to might have been OK with a story in which a Jewish person humbly and kindly helped out a Samaritan. But Jesus flipped things totally inside out and told a story in which a Samaritan — a despised Samaritan — humbly and kindly helped out a Jewish person that two other Jewish people had ignored.

This is a picture of how Jesus calls us to love others. But he first calls us to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. That always comes first.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

10:25-41 What do you think it means to love and obey God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind (or your head, heart, and hands)? What are some examples of how this looks in everyday life?

Head (thoughts & beliefs)	Heart (attitudes & desires)	Hands (actions)

Why do you think Jesus answered the man’s question with a story?

Parables were easy to understand but often difficult to accept and believe. What might have been difficult to accept and believe about this parable?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

The Greek word for **Satan** means “the adversary.”

Jonah was a prophet sent by God to speak truth to **Ninevah**, capital of Assyria, enemy of God’s people. Jonah first disobeyed God. When he did finally go to Ninevah, he wished God would be less patient and compassionate to people Jonah didn’t love.

Son of Man (see page 40).

The **Queen of Sheba** brought expensive gifts to King Solomon, the son of King David. That story is in 1 Kings 10 and 2 Chronicles 9.

Jesus often taught that people must **repent** and turn to God. Repent means “change direction” or turn away from something.

Pharisees (see page 30).

Abel’s story is told in Genesis 4. He was the second son of Adam and Eve, younger brother to Cain who murdered him in a fit of jealousy.

Zechariah, Old Testament prophet, warned the people of Judah about turning their backs on God. The wicked king ordered his leaders to stone Zechariah to death in the Temple courtyard. That story is in 2 Chronicles 24.

Luke 11

In Luke 11, Jesus taught important things to different groups of people. He taught his closest disciples how to pray (11:1-13). He taught a crowd about his true identity and about the importance of hearing and obeying the Word of God (11:14-36). He taught religious leaders and experts in religious law the importance of integrity and the dangers of hypocrisy.

You might think that Jesus’ teaching about prayer would be full of big words and super spirituality. But it’s one of the most clear and simple of all his teachings.

His model prayer does these things:

- honors his Father
- honors his Father’s purposes and plans
- asks for basic daily needs
- asks for deepest spiritual needs

And then he told a story to illustrate more truth about prayer.

Be careful about reading something into verse 9 that isn’t actually there. In isolation, that verse *could* sound like Jesus is promising that God will give people anything and everything they ask for. But we know that’s not true.

Verse 13 helps explain verse 9. It’s important to read the Bible as it was written and planned — in larger chunks that include complete stories, complete teachings, and larger context.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

11:1-4 Jesus’ sample prayer is very short and direct. But praying longer and more complex prayers is OK. Jesus himself prayed for hours the night he was betrayed. And on the occasions Jesus went away by himself to pray, there’s no reason to think he just recited this sample prayer.

Why do you think the way Jesus taught his closest friends to pray was so simple and so short?

Write a personal prayer here that follows the same pattern outlined on the previous page.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Son of Man (see page 40).

Luke 12

Material possessions aren’t inherently bad, but they can lead to all kinds of bad things if people chase them, worship them, cling to them, and think they will give their lives meaning and purpose.

Though Jesus didn’t have many of his own, he never said it was bad to have material possessions. But he warned about how loving and desiring possessions can lead to worry and corruption.

Sometimes the things Jesus said about material possessions (and other topics) can sound over-the-top because he often used hyperbole, which is just a fancy name for exaggerated speech.

Sometimes the things Jesus said about material possessions (and other topics) can feel convicting because he sees into the hearts and minds of people and intentionally speaks words that hit close to home.

When you read Jesus’ words in Luke 12, pay attention to his audience and purpose. Sometimes he’s talking to a crowd of people and responding to a specific question someone posed to him. Sometimes he’s talking to just his closest friends and preparing them for a specific mission and task.

Everything Jesus taught in the Bible is true and timeless, but we must carefully and wisely discern what his words mean for us in today’s world. Ask God to open your mind and soften your heart as you read the words in this chapter.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

12:13-34 Think about what the world says and shows about material possessions versus what Jesus says and models. List some things below.

the world	Jesus

Think about your own relationship with material possessions: do you desire them, cling to them, look to them for comfort? If so, why?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the ancestors of the Jewish people. God made a covenant with Abraham, promising to give him many descendants and a land of his own, and to bless all nations through him. God renewed the same covenant with Abraham’s son, Isaac, and Isaac’s son, Jacob. Their stories are told in the book of Genesis.

Sabbath (see page 22).

Synagogue (see page 28).

Prophets (see page 22).

Pharisees (see page 30).

Luke 13

For some people, repent is a loaded word. They might think it sounds judgmental, super religious, outdated, or irrelevant. But repent is a repeated command in the Bible that we should understand and pay attention to. Jesus himself often told people to “repent and turn to God” or “repent and believe the good news.”

Repent doesn’t mean saying you’re sorry (though that might be included). The original word means to turn away from something — in this case, a life of selfishness and sin. Turning away from something goes hand in hand with turning toward something — in this case, new life with God.

Think about it this way: a person can’t turn toward Jesus without also turning away from something. We’re not called to just add Jesus into the current mix of our lives. We’re called to entirely reorient our whole lives to him, his truth, and his ways.

When someone starts following Jesus and gives their life to him, they must repent. There’s no other way to become a child of God. When you read the story of the lost son in Luke 15, you’ll see that the younger son couldn’t go home to God until he first turned away from and left behind his rebellious life.

Repenting doesn’t mean turning away from everything you love, enjoy, and care about. It does mean turning away from being your own god, making your own decisions about what’s right and wrong, and living for your own desires and purposes.

Repentance is a big step, one that leads to real life.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

13:3 When you started following Jesus, what were some things you turned away from? What things do you still need to turn away from? How will you do that?

13:10-17 Try to see and hear this story in your mind (the people, the place, the actions, the interactions, the reactions). Why do you think Luke included this story? What do you learn about Jesus from it?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Sabbath (see page 22).
Pharisees (see page 30).

Luke 14

We often hear or say that God’s love for us is unconditional, and that’s true. He loves humans enough to send his own Son to die for them and make a way for them to have real life with him. If there were conditions on God’s love, none of us would be loved because none of us is deserving.

But according to Jesus’ teaching in Luke 14, it does seem like there are conditions to following Jesus.

One condition is that you must love Jesus more than anything else. He is the one true Lord and King, deserving of all our worship, adoration, and faithfulness. Nothing must come before him.

Another condition is that you must “carry your own cross” which means willingly dying to yourself each day and living for Jesus. That means setting aside our own selfish desires and demands for self-fulfillment and instead embracing the fullness of God’s love, Jesus’ example, and the Spirit’s guiding presence in our lives.

Those conditions are costly. That’s why Jesus said we should consider the costs before deciding to follow him. It’s foolish to jump into anything — especially something as important as life with Jesus — without understanding what it means, what it requires, and what it will cost.

But remember this: the best things *are* costly, so costly that you can’t put a price on them. Jesus paid the price for our salvation, which we couldn’t do. Now we’re called to consider and pay the cost to follow him, which leads to the only life worth living.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

14:7-14 Think of someone you know and admire who displays genuine humility. What can you learn from that person’s life? In what ways do you need to grow in humility?

14:25-33 Take time to silently reflect on what it cost Jesus to save us and offer us new life. What is new life with him worth? Write or draw your thoughts here.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

Tax collectors (see page 30).

Pharisees (see page 30).

Luke 15

The full teaching starts with sheep, then moves to coins, and in a grand finale, concludes with people. The third episode – about the father and sons – is the longest and has more details, scenes, and characters than the first two episodes.

The younger son started out that way, but eventually had a change of heart. The elder ended up that way, and maybe had always been that way: lost, but acting and pretending like he was found. Just listen to how he responded to his father: *“All these years I’ve slaved for you ...”* (that’s how he really felt about being his father’s son) *“... and you’ve never once thrown me a party like the one you’re throwing for my rotten younger brother ...”* (that’s what he really wanted — a party, stuff, recognition, rather than the joy and wonder of being his father’s beloved son).

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

Write down everything you notice about how each of the characters acted, spoke, and responded to each other. What do you learn?

The woman with silver coins

The younger son

The older son

The servants

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Pharisees (see page 30).
Law of Moses (see page 30).
Good news (see page 36).
*Because Abraham was considered the father of the Jewish people, he was sometimes called **Father Abraham** (see page 22).*

Luke 16

Jesus told two long parables in Luke 16, both about the dangers of loving money more than God and more than people.

The setting of the first parable is familiar — an earthly business. After telling the story, Jesus clearly revealed the lesson: “No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

The lesson is true for not just money but for anything that we serve and love more than God.

The setting of the second parable starts familiar — the mansion of a wealthy man. But then it shifts to a strange and unknown place that isn’t meant to describe what the afterlife looks like, but to describe how important our earthly actions and decisions are. The rich man had everything he wanted while he lived on earth, but because he wasn’t kind or generous to a poor man he saw every day, his life after death was more miserable than the poor man’s had been while on earth. Their fortunes were reversed.

The rich man’s sin wasn’t being rich. His sin was having everything he wanted and sharing nothing with those in need.

It’s a lesson Jesus taught several times in Luke: money and material possessions easily corrupt us because we naturally cling to them selfishly.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

16:1-13 Is there something in this parable that you need to hear and learn? What and why?

16:19-31 Is there something in this parable that you need to hear and learn? What and why?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Millstones were large stones used to grind grain into flour.

Apostles (see page 32).

Leprosy (see page 30).

Pharisees (see page 30).

Samaritan (see page 42).

Son of Man (see page 40).

Noah's story is found in Genesis 6:9–9:29. Because God's very good creation had been completely corrupted by human sin, God cleansed the world with a flood and recreated it, saving Noah and his family.

The city of **Sodom** was known for its wickedness. You can read about it in Genesis 18 and 19.

Bible scholars have different views about **Luke 17:20-37**. Some think Jesus was talking about the coming destruction of Jerusalem which happened about 40 years after Jesus' earthly life. Others think he was talking about the end of time.

Luke 17

In Luke 17, tucked between two teachings about forgiveness and God's Kingdom, is a short story about 10 people with leprosy, a disfiguring and debilitating disease.

Lepers lived on the outskirts of society, cast aside so they wouldn't come in contact with other people and make them unclean or impure. Having the disease was bad enough. Facing the cultural and social backlash made it that much worse.

The 10 people with leprosy never specifically asked Jesus to heal them. They just asked for mercy (check out Luke 18:35-42 where another person also asked for mercy but then added a request for healing).

Jesus never specifically told the 10 people with leprosy that he would heal them. He just said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.” They did, and they were healed *while they went*. Not before they went. In other words, they went just as Jesus told them to, trusting that he was going to do something for them.

Only one came back to say thank you. Luke includes this important detail: “This man was a Samaritan.” Once again, Luke makes a point of highlighting how Jesus cares for everyone, in this case someone with two strikes against him: having leprosy and being a Samaritan.

Jesus doesn't play favorites. His love is for anyone who chooses to receive it and to follow him.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

What are ways Jesus has helped you, comforted you, guided you, and loved you that you have never intentionally or specifically thanked him for? These could be one-time things or recurring things. Write (or draw) and think about those things. Take time today to thank God for them. Tell someone else about at least one of them.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Righteousness means being and living according to God's good design. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection makes it possible for people to be made right with God. He washes away the stain of sin, remakes people's hearts, and gives his Holy Spirit to help his followers love, follow, and obey him. Here are some verses about righteousness:

- Romans 3:22
- Romans 6:13-18
- Romans 8:10
- 1 Corinthians 1:30
- 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Ephesians 4:24
- Philippians 1:11
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- 1 Peter 3:14
- 2 Peter 3:13
- 1 John 3:7-10

Temple (see page 20).

Pharisee (see page 30).

*When the blind beggar called Jesus the **Son of David**, he acknowledged Jesus' royal and Messianic ancestry.*

*When Jesus called Zacchaeus a **Son of Abraham**, he meant Zacchaeus was displaying the kind of thoughts, actions, and attitudes that God's chosen covenant people (descendants of Abraham) were supposed to embody.*

Son of Man (see page 40).

Luke 18-19:10

The Bible's chapter breaks aren't part of the original books. They were added in the Middle Ages to make it easier for people to find specific stories and teachings.

Even though the story of Zacchaeus was placed in chapter 19, it goes with stories in chapter 18 that have similar themes and complement each other.

18:9-14 is a parable about a Pharisee and a tax collector in which the tax collector, not the religious person, displayed sincere humility and faith.

18:18-27 is a story about a very rich man who walked away from Jesus because he loved his money more than the Lord. Jesus said, "It's very difficult for rich people to enter the Kingdom of God."

And then 19:1-10 is the story about a very rich tax collector who displayed humility and repentance and received salvation from Jesus, meaning he was now part of the Kingdom of God.

Zacchaeus's story shows an actual tax collector acting like the one in the earlier parable, and it shows a rich person entering the Kingdom of God only because of the power and presence of Jesus. Zacchaeus's story is evidence of what Jesus said in 18:27: "What is impossible for people is possible with God."

The story of Zacchaeus has much to teach us about the person and power of Jesus, but it also has much to teach us about how important it is to read the Bible carefully, in context, in large sections.

.....
Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

19:1-10 People often focus on the tree episode in this story. But there's a long period of time that passes between Zacchaeus climbing out of the tree (verse 6) and then making his declaration of new belief and new action (verse 8). What do you think Jesus and Zacchaeus talked about during that stretch of time?

What do you think prompted Zacchaeus to make such a radical change in his priorities and actions?

Zacchaeus's words in verse 8 are basically a statement of repentance (turning away from self and sin) and surrendered obedience (believing, trusting, and living for God). Consider carefully the dialogue in verses 8-10. What do you notice about the order of the statements? What does this reveal about Jesus' invitation and offer of salvation?

.....
Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Jerusalem (see page 40).

The Old Testament prophet Zechariah wrote these words:

“Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey — riding on a donkey’s colt.”

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowd shouted praises taken from Psalm 118:26 and 148:1.

When Jesus cleared the Temple, he quoted words of Old Testament prophets found in Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11.

Luke 19:11-48

Imagine what it must have been like for Jesus when he headed to Jerusalem, the capital city, for what he knew would be the last week before his crucifixion. The disciples maybe thought he was entering the city to claim his rights as Messiah and King (which might be why he told the parable that’s in verses 11-27).

He was welcomed into the city as if he were, in fact, a king. People shouted, “Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the LORD!”

But the religious leaders didn’t join in the celebration. And Jesus knew that he wasn’t the kind of King the people were expecting.

He was the kind of King who would first cruelly suffer and die for his people: this was a much lesser king than they hoped for.

He was also the kind of King who wouldn’t just reign over a localized earthly kingdom, but would reign over the entire cosmos: this was a much greater king than they could comprehend.

Try to imagine all that was going through Jesus’ heart and mind in those moments. On the way, he first wept with sadness because the people didn’t really understand who he was and what would soon happen. And when he arrived, he raged with anger because some people were misusing the holy Temple for human purposes.

Jesus experienced all the highs and lows that earthly life throws at every human.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

Think about the range of emotions Jesus experienced as he prepared to enter Jerusalem (verses 28-40), saw Jerusalem from a distance (verses 41-44), and then entered the Temple (verses 45-46). Write or draw what that might have been like for him.

How do you navigate the extreme highs and lows of daily life? How is your faith part of that experience?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Caesar ruled the Roman empire. During the time of Jesus, this included the northern border of Africa (the edge of what's known today as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt), the western part of today's Middle East (including Israel, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, parts of Saudi Arabia, and Iraq), and the southern portion of today's European countries (including Greece, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Croatia, Bosnia, Slovenia, Italy, Switzerland, France, Austria, Belgium, part of Germany, part of Hungary, and part of Romania).

The **Sadducees** and Pharisees were part of the Sanhedrin, a group of religious and judicial leaders. The Sadducees were the majority party. They did not believe in the resurrection of the body, the immortality of the soul, or spirits and angels.

Moses (see page 24).

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (see page 48).

Messiah (see page 24).

David (see page 20).

Luke 20

Many people tried to trap Jesus into saying something they could use against him. They posed trick questions about his authority, his power, the future, and the afterlife. They were desperate to make him stumble and fail.

But in the end, it was they who stumbled and failed because it is impossible to trap Truth with lies or to trick Light with darkness.

Many people do something similar today. They try to twist Jesus' words to make him say something he didn't. They revise his actions and teachings to make him someone different than he was, either someone easier to accept (who doesn't demand so much from his followers) or someone easier to ignore and avoid (who isn't relevant or relatable).

Both of those are disastrous.

Jesus can't be changed (though people try) and he can't be avoided (though people do). Everyone must reckon with the Savior of the world and determine what they think about his teachings and decide what they believe about him.

And if someone gives their life to Christ and becomes his follower, they must then keep learning to know his life and teachings so well that they themselves won't be trapped or tricked into believing lies or near-truths about him. Remember that near-truths are often more dangerous than obvious lies. Stay alert. Stay awake. Keep listening. Keep learning. Cling tightly to Jesus. Lean on the Holy Spirit's guidance and wisdom.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

What do you think about the different ways Jesus responded to people in this chapter? What does that reveal about Jesus?

20:20-26 This conversation isn't a modern-day lesson on taxation. It's a theological argument about God's relationship to humanity. Roman coins bore the imprint of the Roman ruler, Caesar. Humans bear the imprint of the only true reigning cosmic ruler, God. With that in mind, what do you think about this episode, and especially Jesus' words?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Temple (see page 20).

The Mount of Olives is just outside the city of Jerusalem.

Luke 21

People have been trying to predict the end of the world for as long as there’s been a world. They invoke fancy math, strange symbols, and other mysterious “knowledge” they claim to possess. And they’ve all been wrong.

Most Bible scholars think that Jesus was probably talking about the fall of Jerusalem in this passage, which happened about 40 years later. But people have been so consumed with trying to crack an apocalyptic code that they’ve maybe missed what bookmarks it.

On the front end is the very short story of a poor widow who gave a lavish gift, smaller than most other gifts. On the back end is a very short statement that every day Jesus went to the Temple to teach, and at night went back to the Mount of Olives, a quiet and sacred place where he rested and prayed.

While some people get all tangled and sidetracked by dates and signs and predictions, they miss out on the more important and beautiful examples of the poor widow’s humble and lavish generosity and Jesus’ own faithful devotion to God’s truth and presence.

Don’t miss the bookends of chapter 21. The drama in the middle of the chapter is important to read and think about. But the bookends, short as they are, contain deep and profound truth that should change that way we think and live, here and now.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

Why do you think many people are interested and intrigued (and maybe sidetracked) by predictions and theories about the end of the world?

21:1–4 Why do you think Luke included this very short story? What do you think God wants us to see and and learn from it?

21:37–38 Why do you think Luke included this very short description of how Jesus spent his final days before he was crucified? What does it reveal about Jesus? What does it show us about our own lives of discipleship and following Christ?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

The **Festival of Unleavened Bread or Passover** celebrated a time just before God’s people escaped from slavery in Egypt. They marked their homes with the blood of a sacrificed lamb, the **Passover lamb**, as a sign that the angel of death, which was bringing destruction to the Egyptian’s, should pass over their homes.

In the Old Testament, God established covenants with people, including Abraham. God remained faithful to the covenant, but the people did not. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus established a **new covenant** between God and humanity in which people are redeemed and saved through God’s grace and Jesus’ one-time sacrifice rather than the ancient system of repeated animal sacrifices.

Son of Man (see page 40).

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about the **servant’s ear** being cut off. Only Luke told about Jesus healing the servant. Some Bible scholars think Luke included this detail because he was a physician (see Colossians 4:14).

Luke 22

How would you expect Jesus — the Son of God, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the creator of the universe, the Savior of the world — to spend his final day before his brutal crucifixion? He knew what was coming the next day. It was no surprise to him. So his final words and actions the day prior weren’t by chance. They were intentional.

He spent his final day like he spent all his other days — being with people and being with his Father. Specifically, he spent time with his closest friends, sharing a meal, teaching, encouraging, challenging, and loving them. And he spent time with his Father, praying, pleading, wrestling, surrendering, and obeying.

Among his closest friends was one who’d already betrayed him, one who would in a few hours deny ever having known him, several who soon would fall asleep when he needed them the most, and all of whom argued during that final meal about who would be the greatest among them — all while Jesus sat there with them, preparing to die for them, having taught them that those who wanted to be the greatest must actually live as though they were the least.

After three years with Jesus, they still didn’t fully understand who he was, why he came to earth, why he had to die and was willing to die, and what kind of life he was calling them to live.

He wanted his disciples to follow his example — to set aside pride, prestige, power, and self promotion in order to live lives of humble service, faithful obedience, wholehearted surrender, and total trust in the one true God who loves us fiercely and undeservedly.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

Why do you think Judas rejected all he’d learned, seen, and experienced in order to betray Jesus? Do you think he’d ever trusted and believed in Jesus? Why or why not?

Why do you think Jesus didn’t call out Judas and condemn him in front of the other disciples?

Imagine what this day must have been like for Jesus. Besides the few words recorded in verse 42, what else do you think he talked to his Father about?

Take time today to cry out to God about whatever might be heavy on your heart. Remember that Jesus felt and prayed similarly.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

The **High Council** was the Sanhedrin (see page 62).

Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea, part of the foreign occupying power. Jewish leaders retained some control, but they were not allowed to issue a death penalty. Only Pilate could do that.

Herod Antipas ruled Galilee from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39. He was appointed by Caesar Augustus (the first Roman emperor).

Barabbas was probably a revolutionary — someone who fought against the Roman occupying forces with zealous Jewish loyalty. Ironically, many Jewish people had hoped for a Messiah who would be a political and military revolutionary like Barabbas.

Cyrene was a city in northern Africa.

Golgotha is an Aramaic word (that's the language Jesus likely spoke) that means **the Skull**.

Luke 23

Many people have tried to portray Jesus’ crucifixion, some with poetry and others with story, some with music and others with drama, some with art and others with cinematography, some with dance and others with documentation.

But nothing can show the reality of what happened that day. Crucifixion is a horrible form of public execution that can’t be described or depicted.

But many have tried, perhaps because they sense how shocking the cross is, both because of its gruesome reality and because of its glorious generosity. What a ghastly display of torturous murder. And at the same time, what a gracious display of immeasurable love.

How can we make sense of the cross? How can we understand the depth of its power? We will never fully grasp the price that Jesus the King paid for utterly helpless humanity. But we can accept and embrace the loving forgiveness he displayed for the world.

Romans 4:25 says Jesus was handed over to die because of our sin. Second Corinthians 5:21 says Jesus, who never sinned, was made to be the offering for our sin. First Peter 2:24 says Jesus carried our sins in his body on the cross. Through the whole biblical story, it’s clear that Jesus died for us in two ways — on our behalf and in our place. He was both our sacrifice and our substitute. He did for us what we could not do for ourselves, and offered us what we do not deserve.

Almost 2000 years ago, Jesus breathed his last breath so we could breathe forgiveness.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

Today, reflect on Jesus’ willing, sacrificial, and substitutionary death for the world. You can do this in whatever way you feel led. Don’t avoid the realities of Jesus’ death. But don’t get lost in their horrors, because remember: Jesus lives, reigns, rescues, and redeems. The cross is real. But it does not have the last word.

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

FYI

Ancient Jewish burial practices included anointing the body with **spices** and perfume and wrapping it in burial cloths.

Jesus’ **tomb** was likely carved into a rocky hillside. It would have had a large and heavy stone covering the entrance that was rolled open and shut like a doorway.

Luke 24

Less than 40 hours after Jesus suffered a cruel death and breathed his last breath, his tomb was empty because he was alive. It was the most earth-shattering, world-changing, reality-reversing event of all human history.

Jesus’ death provides a way for humans to be forgiven. And his resurrection provides a way for humans to live new life under the loving Lordship of Christ, their Savior and King.

Luke’s account of Jesus’ earthly life ends with these final words to his disciples:

“There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.”
“I will send my Holy Spirit who will fill you with power from heaven.”

Repentance was always a centerpiece of Jesus’ teaching. Turning toward him means turning away from self. Receiving new life from him means relinquishing the old life. Living with him and for him requires dying to self.

The Holy Spirit is always a centerpiece of life with Jesus. Everyone who belongs to Jesus has his very Spirit living within them (check out Romans 8:1–17). The Spirit isn’t a bonus add-on for just a special few. The Spirit is Christ-in-you. According to Luke 24:49, Jesus the **Son** would send the **Holy Spirit** just as the **Father** promised, revealing the three-in-oneness of the one true God we love, worship, follow, trust, and obey. You can read that story in the book of Acts, which is the sequel to the book of Luke.

Something I want to learn, be, or do today:

REFLECT & RESPOND

24:1–12 Why do you think Luke (and the other Gospel writers) were so careful and intentional about highlighting the role of women at the resurrection in a time and culture where women were not considered to be credible witnesses?

24:13–27 To help people understand who he was and everything that had happened, Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, parts of what we now call the Old Testament. You can read a flyover summary of the Old Testament on pages 10–11. What parts of the Old Testament are you familiar with? How can you read and learn more about God as he is revealed in the Old Testament? (We’re big fans of BibleProject videos and resources. Be sure to check them out.)

What’s your current understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit? What more would you like to understand and experience?

Something Jesus is teaching me, showing me about himself, or changing in me:

Identity in Christ

Put one of the numbers next to each statement.

1 - I didn't know this was true

2 - I don't believe this yet

3 - I struggle to believe this

4 - I believe this with my mind

5 - I believe this with my mind and my heart

☐

I am created by God.

Genesis 1:26-27 | Psalm 139 | Job 33:4 | Ephesians 2:10

☐

I am God's child.

John 1:12 | Romans 8:14-16 | Galatians 3:26 | 1 John 3:1

☐

I am loved by God.

John 15:9 | Romans 8:35-39 | Ephesians 2:4-5 | 1 John 3:1, 4:16

☐

I am forgiven and washed clean.

Acts 3:19 | 1 Corinthians 6:11 | Ephesians 1:7 | 1 John 1:19

☐

I have been reborn and raised into new life with Jesus.

John 3:16 | 1 Peter 1:3, 23 | Colossians 3:1

☐

My old self is crucified with Christ.

Luke 14:27 | Galatians 2:20 | Romans 6:2-4 | Romans 6:7

☐

I am being transformed into a new person.

Colossians 2:10 | 2 Corinthians 5:15-17 | Romans 6:4, 12:2

☐

I am an essential member of the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:12, 27 | Romans 13:4

☐

I am called to holiness.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 | Colossians 3:12 | 1 Peter 1:15-16 | 2 Timothy 1:9

☐

I am empowered by the Holy Spirit to live obediently.

John 14:26 | Romans 8:5-6 | Romans 8:11-14 | Romans 8:26-27

☐

I am God's heir along with Christ.

Matthew 25:34 | Romans 8:17 | Colossians 1:12 | Titus 3:7

☐

I am of the light, not the darkness.

John 8:12 | Ephesians 5:8 | 1 John 1:5-7 | 1 Thessalonians 5:5

☐

God has a vision and plan for my life.

Psalm 139:16 | Romans 8:38 | 1 Corinthians 2:9 | Philippians 1:6

☐

I am set free from sin.

John 8:36 | Romans 6:22 | Romans 8:1-2 | 2 Corinthians 3:17 | Galatians 5:13

☐

I am not condemned.

John 3:18 | John 5:24 | Romans 8:1 | Romans 8:34

☐

I am a fruit-bearer for Christ.

Psalm 1 | John 15:1-8 | Galatians 5:22-23 | Colossians 1:10

Small Stories: Learning to Witness

In the book of Luke, one of the last things Jesus said to his disciples before leaving earth was this: “You are witnesses of all these things” (Luke 24:48). In other words, Jesus’ disciples carried the responsibility of telling others about him. That’s what a witness does — testifies to the truth. We usually use the word when talking about a courtroom, where a witness testifies about things that really happened.

Jesus told his disciples to be witnesses, or to testify, about what they’d seen, heard, experienced, and learned from him. Actually, he said, “You *are* witnesses.” It was a statement about present reality and personal identity. After healing a demon-possessed man earlier in Luke, Jesus said something similar to him: “Go home and tell your family everything God has done for you” (Luke 8:39).

Anyone who loves and follows Jesus is a witness for him and about him. Being a witness means putting truth into words. Being a witness to Jesus’ presence and power in our lives means telling other people what we’ve experienced and learned in the past and what we’re experiencing and learning in the present.

Peter, one of Jesus’ closest friends and first disciples, wrote this to Christians all across the ancient world: “If someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way” (1 Peter 3:15–16a).

Paul, one of the first missionaries who traveled across the ancient world telling others about Jesus, wrote this to a group of Christians in Rome: “For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16).

Being a witness might mean telling the whole, big, beautiful story of King Jesus and the new life he offers those who follow and surrender to him.

But it can also mean talking about the small, everyday ways that Jesus meets, comforts, guides, and changes his followers. Those small stories are sometimes the most powerful words another person will hear. They are also some of the most powerful words that witnesses themselves will ever speak because they will hear their own words as they say them, and hearing those words will help the speaker understand more deeply the power and truth of what they’ve experienced and learned.

Think about some of the different witnesses in the book of Luke:

- Elizabeth witnessed about meeting Jesus before he was even born.
- Mary witnessed about the power of the Holy Spirit in her life.
- The shepherds witnessed about all they’d seen and heard at the manger.
- Anna and Simeon witnessed about meeting the promised Messiah.
- A bleeding woman witnessed about being healed by Jesus.
- The many different crowds witnessed about Jesus’ miracles and teachings, and that news then spread far and wide.

None of those people preached a long sermon or told a full-length story. Mostly, they just spoke about one specific thing they’d seen, heard, experienced, or learned.

Being this kind of witness isn’t about walking up to a stranger and saying, “Pay attention because I’m going to tell you about Jesus.” Instead, it usually happens in the context of conversations with people you already know.

Talking about Jesus should be as natural and comfortable as talking about anything else. But it takes courage, some guidance, and some practice.

Telling small stories is one way to witness. Small stories are focused on just one thing rather than a whole lifetime. They include more details than something like a cardboard testimony, but don't take any longer to actually say out loud. They go beyond the *what* to include the *when*, *why*, and *how*.

Here are some examples of small stories (or tiny testimonies) from real people:

When I was 13, I was diagnosed with some mental health issues that made me feel afraid and alone, like I was somehow failing at life.

I learned about Jesus and started following him when I was 16. My mental health diagnosis didn't change, but everything is different now because I know I'm not alone — Jesus is with me.

Because I'm short, people often think I'm younger than I really am. They treat me like I don't belong or sometimes ignore me totally.

Through that, Jesus has been showing me how important it is to notice people and get to know them for who they really are so they feel seen and included.

When I was in middle school I struggled with an eating disorder because I believed lies about myself and I wanted to feel in control of something.

Now Jesus is helping me give him control of my life each day. And his love encourages me to honor and care for the body he created and gave me.

I used to believe that my grades defined me because everyone else in my family is super smart and does really good in school.

God is teaching me that grades don't define me as long as I try my hardest. His love for me is what determines my true identity.

Talking about Jesus in this way involves two parts. First is the difficulty or struggle. Second is the way Jesus steps into the difficulty or struggle. It could have a past tense element ("Jesus did such-and-such") but should also include something ongoing and active ("Jesus is showing me" or "Jesus is teaching me" or "Jesus is helping me").

On the next two pages are some prompts and templates to help you start learning to share small stories about Jesus' power and presence in your life. These are just a guide. You don't have to follow them exactly. Make the wording and style your own because after all, it's your story, no one else's.

The main thing is to say out loud how God is working in your life.

When you do that, it will be a gift to other people around you. It will help them know you better, and it will help them become more aware of how God is also working in their own lives. *"God did that for you? Hearing that helps me realize that he's done something kind of like that for me, too!"*

Sharing small stories about Jesus is also a gift to yourself. When you hear your own voice speak about God's work in your own life, it reminds you of what's really true. You thought it and knew it before, but when you speak it, it becomes true in a new way. It can also make you more alert, awake, and aware of other ways he's moving in your life.

After working through the next few pages, take time to sit with a friend or two and share what you've written. (Share wisely and appropriately — some things should remain private.) It's not enough to just think about or write down small stories about your life with Jesus. You must also actually say them out loud. Speak them to someone else. Then ask that person to share their story with you. Listen to them carefully, with your full attention.

And then do it some more. Because talking about Jesus is the most important kind of talking we can do. The world — and God's people — need more of it.

A: List some difficult circumstances or situations (past or present):

Choose one thing from list A and use this template to create a small story:

When I was [say age or grade at the time], [describe the circumstance or situation]. I [say how you felt or responded and why].

Through that, God [describe what he's teaching you and how that's changed your perspective].

B: List some untrue things you do believe or have believed about yourself:

Choose one thing from list B and use this template to create a small story:

I used to believe [state the negative or false identity] because [explain why you believed that and how that affected you].

God is teaching me [say what new truth you're learning about yourself and your identity] by [describe how he is doing that].

C: List some un-Christlike behaviors or attitudes you struggle with:

Choose one thing from list C and use this template to create a small story:

I struggle with [say the controlling habit or attitude] because [say why this happens].

Jesus is helping me [say what he is teaching or helping you overcome] by [describe how he is doing that].

Extra Stuff

BibleProject videos about Luke: Search YouTube “BibleProject Luke”

Audio Bible: *Streetlights Bible App* (streetlights.com)

Weekly mini devos on Instagram: [@yl_discipleship](https://www.instagram.com/yl_discipleship)

Bible Reading Plans on the Bible App: *Young Life Bible App* homepage.



Be sure to follow the Young Life page. All our reading plans are linked there. Click each one and select “Start Plan” to save them into your personal library. When you reopen the app, to find the page again search for Young Life, click the Pages tab at top, then select Young Life from the list.

Words & Ways Mini Podcast: featuring short thoughts on favorite Jesus stories.



Episodes 1-30 feature New Testament stories about Jesus.

Episodes 31-45 feature Old Testament stories that lead to Jesus.