

# LUKE/ACTS

FOR BEGINNERS

MIKE MAZZALONGO

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

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# Luke/Acts for Beginners

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**Mike Mazzalongo**

This series will review Luke's two-volume historical narrative concerning Jesus' life and ministry as well as the beginning and spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire as he experienced it.



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**Teacher Guide created by  
David Laton, D.Min.  
2020**

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# Overall Teaching Strategy

It is recommended that teachers use a combination of informal lecture and guided discussion to present these lessons. There are discussion questions associated with each lesson that teachers may use and/or supplement with their own questions.

It is recommended that teachers have students view the associated video or read the text for the lesson. This helps students come to the class ready to discuss the lesson and to formulate questions of their own. Teachers should begin the class with a review of key points from the video/text before starting the discussion.

Begin each lesson with appropriate introductory statements that help students focus on the lesson. Teachers should also provide a brief summary of the previous lesson and an overview of key points of the new lesson. This helps students see the ongoing narrative of scripture.

Conclude the lesson by summarizing or having students summarize the information from their notes. It is also helpful to ask questions from the lesson to determine that students grasp the concepts. Asking questions in this manner serves as an assessment to ensure objectives are met.

Challenge students with a call to action by applying this information to their lives in order to help them grow spiritually and help others to do so as well. This can be accomplished by asking students how this information relates to their spiritual development at this time and moving forward.

For more information on teaching adults, please visit:

**<https://bibletalk.tv/101/teaching>**

A student workbook is also available for this series:

**<https://bibletalk.tv/workbooks/luke-acts>**

# Lesson #1 – Introduction

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The focus of this lesson is to introduce the gospel of Luke by looking at it in relation to the other gospels and elements of the gospel of Luke itself. This lesson further forms a foundation for the following lessons in the series and the series on the Book of Acts. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand how the Gospel of Luke relates to the other gospels of the New Testament.
- **Feel:** Value the insights into the life and teachings of Jesus as provided in the Gospel of Luke.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke that help us grow spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 1 - Introduction)
- Lesson Notes
- Advanced Student Notes

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 - Gospel of Luke

- 1.1 - Audiences for the Gospels
- 1.2 - Luke's description of history
- 1.3 - Luke's relationship with Paul
- 1.4 - Luke's ministry
- 1.5 - Overview of Luke's gospel

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### **1. Explain how the four distinct gospels in the New Testament, written to various audiences, have value to readers today.**

Although each gospel gives an account of the life and teachings of Jesus written to a specific audience, anyone reading the gospels today can learn by looking at the different accounts. It gives broader and fuller insights by looking at the events from different perspectives. Although the writers may not have things in the same chronological order, they record the events without contradictions. This adds an element of proof to the truthfulness of these accounts.

### **2. Which gospel account appeals most to you and why?**

There are indicators of different learning styles, cultural variances, and readability evident in each of the gospels. For example, some like the fast pace of Mark's gospel. Some like the relationship to the Old Testament from Matthew's account. Some like the general applicability found in John's account.

### **3. What unique characteristic of Luke stands out to you and why?**

Some will like the method and structure of his writing. Some will like the faithfulness he exhibited as he ministered to Paul and was devoted to Jesus. Some will see value in how Luke put emphasis on service over personal fame and fortune available to him as a professional at the time he lived.

### **4. How does the Gospel of Luke help a non-believer or someone seeking a relationship with Jesus further understand the life and teachings of the Lord?**

Luke gives a very detailed view of Jesus. This adds to the truthfulness of the content. Events and characters in this gospel are verifiable historically in secular accounts as well as their appearance in scripture.



**5. How can you, as a student of Luke's gospel, use this material to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for responses that indicate an acceptance of Luke's teachings. Other indicators may include responses that emphasize that the scope and depth of the information provide clarity of who Jesus was and what He taught.

# Lesson #2 – The Beginning

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The focus of this lesson is to look at the purpose and structure of the gospel of Luke as an introduction to the life and teachings of Jesus. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Comprehend the purpose and structure of the Gospel of Luke.
- **Feel:** Value the unique insights into the teachings and life of Jesus as presented in the Gospel of Luke.
- **Do:** Develop the ability to tell the story of Jesus.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 2 – The Beginning)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 2

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.1 - Introduction

#### 1.1.1 - Why

#### 1.1.2 - How

#### 1.1.3 - Who

### 1.2 - Birth of John the Baptist and Jesus

### 1.3 - Ministry begins

### 1.4 - Lessons learned

## **Discussion Questions**

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### **1. What is unique about Luke as an inspired writer of one of the gospels?**

Desired response: Luke was not an apostle yet was chosen by the Holy Spirit to offer an account of the life and teachings of Jesus.

### **2. Why would Luke provide the detail in events surrounding the birth of John the Baptist and the birth of Jesus?**

Luke has the unique, analytical perspective of a historian. He uses this view to provide details as a foundation to the life and teachings of Jesus.

**3. Read the accounts of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus from each of the gospels. What unique information is presented in Luke's gospel, not found in the other gospels?**

The intent of this question is two-fold. First, it is to acquaint students with the facts surrounding the birth of John and Jesus. Secondly, it is to see what Luke considers important from his perspective as a historian.

**4. Part of the lessons learned from the Gospel of Luke is how he tells the story of Jesus. How can you use this pattern to tell your story of Jesus?**

This question is designed to have students think about their conversion to Jesus and how He changed and continues to change their lives. Some Christians, especially new Christians, feel intimidated in sharing the story of Jesus because of their lack of in-depth knowledge of scripture. It is important for them to know that it is not necessary to have in-depth knowledge in order to tell the story of who Jesus is and how He changes lives. A good exercise to help in this is to have students write or present a short paragraph of their own conversion story. The value of this is that it helps them share the story of Jesus. The teacher can model this by telling his or her story of conversion to Jesus and how it changed their lives.



**5. How can you use this information to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for responses that indicate an acceptance of concepts taught in this presentation and other resources. Other indicators may include responses that provide an understanding of the purpose and structure of the Gospel of Luke itself.

# Lesson #3 – Jesus in Galilee

## Public Ministry Begins - Part 1

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The focus of this lesson is the early public ministry of Jesus as found in Luke 4:1 – 6:16. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

### Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the early public ministry of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the teachings of Jesus as he begins his ministry.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke to help students grow spiritually.

### Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 3 – Jesus in Galilee – Part 1)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 3

### Body of the Lesson

1.0 - Jesus Begins his public Ministry – 4:14-44

1.1 - Jesus teaches in Nazareth

1.1.1 - Jesus performs miracles – 4:31-44

1.1.2 - Jesus chooses disciples – 5:1-6:16

1.2 - Lessons

1.2.1 - Beware of spiritual complacency

1.2.2 - True confirmation of God's presence

1.2.3 - Jesus continues to call people today

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### **1. Put yourself in the place of Jesus as He began His public ministry. What would you consider important as a place to start teaching?**

Look for responses such as who He was, why He was there, and what was most important for others to learn. The intent of this question is to have students think about what Jesus was doing as He began His ministry. By doing so, they will gain insight into how to tell others about Jesus in a logical way.

### **2. As Jesus continues His early ministry He travels to Capernaum. Provide a short summary of the events described in the passages from:**

- Luke 4:23-30
- Luke 4:31-44

### **3. What characteristics did the apostles possess that would make them valuable as apostles for Jesus?**

We don't see much about the character of many of them, especially in the early days of Jesus' ministry. Many responses will single out the personality traits of Peter such as his leadership, passion, habit of speaking out quickly and taking quick action. Some of the apostles were even sworn enemies of each other (Matthew the tax collector and Simon the Zealot). Except for Judas Iscariot, these men were brought together as an unstoppable force in spreading the gospel and Kingdom of God. It was not their power, but the power of God working through them. That is why Jesus selected as His apostles, men that would be considered very ordinary, even despised in the community. They were not from any of the religious or community leaders.

### **4. Note the statement in Luke 6:12. Jesus, as the Son of God, prays before selecting the apostles. Why would He pray at this time and what can we learn from His example?**

Desired response: We don't know the content of the prayer, but it is likely that given the importance of the selection, Jesus would have prayed for wisdom and guidance for these 12 men. This is what He prayed for on other occasions (John 17). We can learn from this that we too must go to our Father in prayer as we deal with situations in this life. Our prayers should include prayers for wisdom and guidance as we make decisions.



**5. Why would Jesus select ordinary men as His apostles and not known leaders or people with power?**

Answers will vary but it is important to realize that the entire life and teachings of Jesus were not what was expected by the Jewish people. Most of the people misunderstood scriptures about the Messiah and the spiritual nature of God's Kingdom. As a result, most of the leaders rejected Jesus. The lesson for us is to understand who Jesus truly was and what was the nature of His Kingdom. We must also realize that the gospel is for everyone.

It is also important to know that all throughout man's relationship with God, it is the humble or those who learn humility that best serve God. Those not able to show or learn humility do not seek to serve God.

**6. What is meant by the expression, "spiritual complacency" and why is it dangerous?**

Complacency means to be satisfied with the status quo or how things are currently. This can lead to a sense of mental atrophy where we either don't recognize a need to grow and change, or we refuse to accept this as a need. As for spiritual complacency, it is a condition where a person does not recognize the need for salvation and therefore will not seek after it.

**7. Read Luke 5:21-24 and 6:6-11. Both events depict miraculous healings by Jesus. What is significant about these two events?**

Desired response: These clearly point to the Deity of Jesus. In Luke 5:21-24 it shows His Deity by being able to forgive (remove) sins. In 6:6-11 it shows His Deity by His authority over the Law given by God to Moses and the customs brought about by the Jewish leaders. Jesus, as He did in the Sermon on the Mount gave clarity and insight into the will of God the Father. This proof of Deity and the lowering of the importance of customs over the Law would later be the basis for the Jewish leaders' desire to seek His death.

**8. Why would anyone who witnessed the miracles performed by Jesus continue to reject Him?**

It is difficult to understand why someone would reject Jesus with such obvious proof of who He was. Perhaps it was because He did not fit the pattern of what they expected. Perhaps, as recorded in other gospels, they were jealous of Him or fearful of the loss of their own status.

A lesson for us is that even though we read about the life and teachings of Jesus, and see the change He makes in lives, many still reject Jesus and will until He returns. But those that believe and obey Jesus will continue to teach Him and show Him in their lives. This is the call to faithfulness that disciples of Jesus continue to answer.

**9. As you continue to know more about Jesus and His teachings, what will you do to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Him?**

Look for responses that indicate an acceptance of concepts taught in this presentation and other resources. Look for responses that show a commitment to learn more and grow spiritually. In the event students offer generalities, challenge them to make it more specific. For example, instead of saying “I’ll read my Bible more often” or “I’ll pray more” challenge them to start now and set a regular time for study and dedicated prayer. Also encourage them to begin telling the story of Jesus to others now. In doing this they will gain more knowledge of the Lord and confidence to fulfill their role as disciples.

# Lesson #4 – Jesus in Galilee

## Public Ministry Begins - Part 2

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The focus of this lesson is the continuation and expansion of the public ministry of Jesus as He teaches in the northern part of Israel. This lesson also points to the deity and compassion of Jesus as he continues to forgive sins and heal. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

Given the scope and complexity of this material, it is recommended that teachers consider breaking the lesson into two sections. Section one is general information (Luke 6:17-49; 7:1-17); Section 2 begins with a summary of John's mission (Luke 7:18-50; 8:1-3).

### Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the early public ministry of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the teachings of Jesus as he begins his ministry.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke to help us grow spiritually.

### Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 4 – Jesus in Galilee – Part 2)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 4

## Body of the Lesson

### Section 1

- 1.0 - General information (6:17 – 49)
  - 1.1 - Continuation of Luke’s narrative
  - 1.2 - Similarity to Matthew’s gospel
  - 1.3 - The location of His teaching
- 2.0 - Jesus’ impacts the community
  - 2.1 - The Centurion’s servant (7:2-10)
  - 2.2 - The Widow’s son resurrected (7:11-17)

### Section 2

- 3.0 - Summary of John’s ministry (7:18-34)
  - 3.1 - John’s question and Jesus’ response
  - 3.2 - Jesus’ continuation of John’s ministry (vs. 28)
- 4.0 - The Women (7-36-8:3)
  - 4.1 - The sinful woman
  - 4.2 - The ministering women
- 5.0 - Lessons
  - 5.1 - Effectiveness of prayers of the righteous.
  - 5.2 - Power of faith

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

**1. The Sermon on the Mount as recorded in Matthew 5 – 7, and Luke’s version in Luke 6 vary slightly in detail. What are the similarities of the Beatitudes as presented in both?**

Answers will vary but have students note that these are similar. Matthew provides greater detail but the similarities point to the inspiration of scripture. By reading all the gospels we gain greater insights into the teachings of Jesus.

**2. Summarize the healing of the Centurion's servant. What stands out as significant to you about this event?**

Answers will vary but look for responses that include the response of Jesus to faith, no matter where it comes from or who exhibits it. In this case, the faith is shown by a Gentile soldier from an oppressive government.

**3. Summarize the resurrection of the widow's son. What stands out as significant to you about this event?**

Answers will vary but look for responses that point to the compassion of Jesus and His power over life and death.

**4. Why would John ask his question about Jesus in Luke 7:18-34?**

We find John in prison waiting for his death. It is not unusual for him to want to make certain that what he believes is in fact truth. His question does not spring from a lack of faith but more of a validation of who Jesus is. It also gives us an opportunity to learn from Jesus Himself the purpose of John's ministry and how Jesus will be taking over as the long-awaited Messiah.

**5. Luke records interactions with women as his narrative continues. What is significant about the interaction with the sinful woman in Luke 7:36-50?**

It continues to show the compassion of Jesus and insights into his mission of bringing redemption. He recognizes the need of the woman for forgiveness and her repentance. This event is just one of many where Jesus demonstrated His saving ministry, especially to those despised by the self-righteousness of others.

**6. Provide other examples you may recall from scriptures of Jesus showing compassion to women by His healing and forgiveness of sins.**

The intent of this question is to show the consistency of Jesus' actions towards all, especially those in need of His forgiveness. It could also be effective to alter the question by asking for any events in current history or in the lives of those in the class of Jesus' compassion.

Here are a few examples:

- The Samaritan woman – John 4
- The woman caught in adultery – John 8:1-11
- The woman suffering from bleeding – Luke 8:43-48

**7. As Luke continues with his narrative in chapter 8, he makes a general statement about Jesus continuing in His ministry and several women ministering to Him and the disciples. What is significant about providing the details of the ministering women?**

Answers will vary but look for the inclusion of all in the mission of Jesus. Jesus' mission of salvation has two areas of focus. One is the salvation of humanity in general as shown by his general teaching. The other is the personal relationship He provides to each of us as we come to know Him and accept Him. This is demonstrated by the detail Luke and the other gospel writers show in the one-on-one interactions and detailed responses of those impacted by Him. It further points to the dedication of Jesus' disciples as they do what is necessary to further the cause of Christ. We also share in that ministry today as we continue as disciples of Jesus.





**8. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for responses that indicate an acceptance of concepts taught in this presentation and other resources. Encourage students to deepen their knowledge of Jesus and to grow in their faith. It should also encourage us to develop a greater desire to teach others of Jesus, especially those in whom we see in the greatest need for Him.

# Lesson #5 – Jesus in Galilee

## Public Ministry Begins - Part 3

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The focus of this lesson continues to be on the early teaching ministry of Jesus. Note that this lesson does not dwell on events or teachings covered sufficiently in other gospels but looks instead to unique or expanded teachings in Luke. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

Given the scope and complexity of this material, it is recommended that teachers consider breaking the lesson into two sections. Section one covers Jesus' use of parables, miracles, and the ministry of/to the apostles. Section two covers other events and teaching and lessons.

### Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the early public ministry of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the teachings of Jesus as he begins his ministry.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke to help us grow spiritually.

### Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 5 – Jesus in Galilee – Part 3)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 5

## Body of the Lesson

### Section 1

- 1.1 - Jesus' use of parables (Luke 8:4-16)
  - 1.1.1 - Parable of the Sower
  - 1.1.2 - Parable of the lamp
- 1.2 - Miracles (Luke 8:22-50)
  - 1.2.1 - Jesus stills the sea
  - 1.2.2 - Curing a demon possessed man
  - 1.2.3 - Healing the woman with the hemorrhage and Jairus' daughter
- 1.3 - Ministry of/to the twelve (Luke 9:1-50)
  - 1.3.1 - The Apostles sent out
  - 1.3.2 - The result of the apostles' ministry

### Section 2

- 2.1 - Other events/teachings
  - 2.1.1 - The cost of discipleship
  - 2.1.2 - The transfiguration
  - 2.1.3 - Healing a demon possessed boy
  - 2.1.4 - Who is the greatest
- 2.2 - Lessons
  - 2.2.1 - Where is your faith
  - 2.2.2 - Jesus is never late

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

**1. Summarize the types of soils from the Parable of the Sower and answer the following questions.**

- Who is represented by the sower? Desired response: Each of us as we carry the message of Jesus.
- What is represented by the seed? Desired response: The teachings of Jesus, or, the word of God.
- What is represented by the soil? Desired response: Those in the world that we teach about Jesus.

**2. What does Jesus mean by his statement in Luke 8:10 regarding why he used parables to teach?**

If someone is truly seeking the teachings of Jesus, then they would be receptive to what He was saying. Their receptiveness would allow for understanding. Those desiring to follow Jesus and specifically, His apostles were granted insight into what Jesus was teaching because of their receptiveness.

### 3. What is the relationship between the Parable of the Lamp in Luke 8:16-18, Jesus' explanation of His use of parables in Luke 8:9-15.

As Jesus concludes the Parable of the Lamp, He admonishes them to take care of how you hear. The use of "how" in this passage seems to point out the importance of their desire to understand. However, it is also important that one does something with what is taught. In the context of Jesus' teachings, when we learn of Him and what He desires, we should be showing this to others and not keeping it to ourselves. In truth, it should be difficult not to show it. Hence, the use of illustrations in the parable of hiding the light.

**Note:** This might be a good time to ask a follow-up question regarding the sending of the apostles in Luke 9, "What is the relationship to the Parable of the Lamp and to the sending out of the 12? Desired response: After teaching the apostles of the importance of not hiding the light of Jesus, He gives them the charge to teach of and for Him. He also empowers them with the ability to do miracles, thus validating before the people that Jesus is the Messiah. It was not the Apostles' power, but the power of Jesus working through them.

### 4. What is represented by the miracles by Jesus Luke 8:22-56?

Desired response: It further proves His Deity and power over creation, His power over evil and His compassion.

### 5. Read the passage about the healing of the woman with hemorrhaging in Luke 8:40-48. How does her faith compare to yours?

Responses will vary but look for answers about the power of faith. This woman's faith was remarkable. Many times we feel we need tremendous faith in order to draw upon the power of our Lord. This is the opposite of reality. In this event, the woman's faith was that if she only touched his garment she would be healed. Jesus recognized her small faith and healed her.

**6. It would seem that because Jesus delayed going to heal Jarius' daughter that He was too late. What lesson can we learn about this seeming delay?**

Our Lord controls time, not us. Whether the girl was alive or dead had no impact on Jesus' ability to heal her or answer the prayers of her parents. We learn from this that our faith is in our Lord. As His disciples, He promises to answer our prayers. He will do so according to His will and His timeline. This is where our faith must be shown.

One other note, it is possible to those involved with the events of the woman suffering from hemorrhaging and Jarius' daughter, that due to the position of Jarius, his was the greater need. But to Jesus, both were important. The humility and faith of the woman demanded that Jesus response to her needs.

**7. What are the similarities between the message and use of miracles by Jesus and that of the Apostles as He sends them out?**

An apostle is a type of messenger that would carry to others the teachings of their master. In Luke 9:2 we read "He sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal." This is very similar to what Jesus was Himself doing.

**8. Why would Jesus tell His apostles to not take anything with them on their mission?  
How does that relate to our mission today to teach Jesus?**

This was a way of teaching them to have faith. Today, we carry the simple message of Jesus and must learn to rely on His power working through us for our success.

**9. What is the relationship between Herod's response to the teachings of Jesus and the use of parables by Jesus?**

Herod is a good example of what Jesus stated about hearing but not understanding. Herod no doubt heard of Jesus and His teachings but completely misunderstood who Jesus was and the message He preached.

**10. What are some lessons we can learn from the feeding of the 5,000?**

Responses will vary but look for answers such as Jesus will meet our needs. We must use what we have to serve Jesus. The power is with Jesus and not with us.

**11. How can we as disciples of Jesus give up everything to follow Him?**

We dedicate whatever we have whether physical, intellectual, emotional or spiritual to answer our charge as disciples to obey Jesus.

**12. What was the importance of the Transfiguration in Luke 9:28-45?**

It clearly shows the Deity of Jesus.

**13. Why did Jesus teach the lesson on humility using a child as an illustration?**

Jesus, ever the master teacher, was continuing to prepare His apostles for what was to come. The apostles may have been feeling a bit overconfident in their position. Jesus used the child to illustrate that being first in the Kingdom requires humility. A child in the culture of that time would not be one with great power. Even today, children are dependent on others for their care. Children possess potential for greatness but must go through a period of development. To the apostles, greatness was found in one's ability to do great things. This is ironic since they were standing in the presence of the Son of God who had all power and yet taught and demonstrated humility. This would be a lesson they would learn as the events of the life and death of Jesus unfolded.

**14. How does a growing faith in Jesus help us deal with the storms of life?**

Answers will vary. Encourage students to learn to go to God in prayer to help develop faith and the wisdom to deal with events in our lives. Just as Jesus physically calmed the storm, He will help us deal with storms in our lives.



**15. Read again the event of healing Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:40-56). Why do people sometimes feel Jesus does not care or does not answer prayers?**

We want prayers answered our way and in our timeline. Naturally we want negative events in our lives changed but we must always remember that we are the servants and our Lord is the Master. The timing and answer to prayers are according to His will. We can take solace in knowing that He promises to answer prayers for those that are His disciples.

**16. How can you use the information from this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for specific responses about how we can develop our faith and learn to rely on Jesus. We must also look for opportunities to teach others about Him with the knowledge that not all will be receptive or remain faithful. Our role is to sow the seed of the knowledge of Jesus. We must also remember that it is God's power working through us, not our own power.

# Lesson #6 – Jesus Facing Jerusalem – Part 1

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The focus of this lesson is to review the teaching and events in Jesus' ministry as he travels south to Jerusalem. Of note in this lesson, we see a gradual moving from teaching larger groups to a more narrowed focus on the apostles and key disciples. Later Jesus will narrow His focus to the 12 as His ministry draws closer to a conclusion. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

Given the scope and complexity of this material, it is recommended that teachers consider breaking the lesson into two sections. Section one covers the ministry training (Luke 8:4-50; 9:1-50). Section two covers additional events.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the events and teachings of Jesus as he travels to Jerusalem.
- **Feel:** Recognize the relationship between the events and teachings of Jesus and our role as disciples today.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke to help us grow spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 6 – Jesus Facing Jerusalem – Part 1)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 6

## Body of the Lesson

Section 1 - Ministry training (Luke 9:51-10:24)

- 1.1 - Departure
- 1.2 - Exacting discipleship
- 1.3 - Sending the 70
- 1.4 - Results of the ministry
- 1.5 - Jesus' prayer

Section 2 - Additional events

- 2.1 - Parable of the Good Samaritan
- 2.2 - Mary and Martha
- 2.3 - Instructions on prayer
- 2.4 - Attack and warning of the Pharisees

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### **1. What is the significance of the use of the word “ascension” in place of crucifixion and resurrection as Luke begins his transition in recording Jesus’ turning to Jerusalem?**

Perhaps Luke is drawing the distinction from a beginning to an ending. He might be taking a long view where he would consider the ascension as the culminating event of the turning to Jerusalem rather than the interim phases of the death and resurrection. Students should realize that the death and resurrection were critical to the mission of Jesus, but the ascension into heaven marked not only the ending of His earthly mission, but the beginning of His role as our intercessor to the Father.

### **2. In lesson 5 we noted that Jesus had to remind His apostles of the importance of humility due to their success on the mission He sent them on. How does this relate to the desire of James and John to rain fire on the Samaritans because they didn’t want Jesus stopping in their village?**

James and John were among those given miraculous power by Jesus on the mission. Now they wanted to misuse that power. They had not fully embraced the lessons on humility. Note that the apostles stated, “Lord, do you want **us to command...**” This clearly shows they misunderstood that power was the Lord’s, and not theirs. Jesus rebukes them and moved on. This emphasizes the humble spirit of our Lord, especially compared to the prideful spirit of James and John. Jesus was again teaching not only by word, but by example. God has given us the great gift of teaching others about Him. It is important that we go humbly remembering that we are simply the messengers and must not make the message about ourselves.

### **3. Read Luke 9:57-62. How does the content of this passage relate to us today?**

In our eagerness and desire to follow our Lord we make a commitment, perhaps not truly understanding that our commitment is an all-encompassing one. We are putting aside our own desires to follow our Master's will. Everything we have, desire, and do should now be dedicated to His service. We develop the ability to do so as we spiritually mature.

### **4. Jesus sends disciples out on a second mission trip. This time He sent 70, paired in twos. What are the similarities and differences from the first mission trip involving the apostles?**

A major similarity was that they were not to take with them any of their personal belongings or means to provide for themselves. The differences were that Jesus gives them more detail as to their actions. Note that these disciples did not include the apostles. This group would be the ones making up the larger body of disciples that also followed Jesus. This may be simply because of the scope of the area and number of people to teach that required Jesus to use more disciples.

However, it may also be that this would symbolize to them that they also had a role in the upcoming Kingdom of spreading the Gospel. We will learn in Acts how the church spread following the death of Steven. In the beginning of the persecution, the apostles remained in Jerusalem and the other Christians were driven out. It is possible that as this occurred, they would remember how Jesus previously sent out the 70 on a limited mission.

### **5. Which is more important following the return of the 70 from the limited mission? Was it that they experienced the power of God over demons and dangers, or was it that their names were written in heaven? Why?**

Certainly, it was that their names were written in heaven. The events of the mission were wonderful but life eternal with our Lord is the goal of all Christians.

## **6. How do we resemble the disciples sent out by Jesus on this second mission?**

Look for responses that relate to our role today of proclaiming the good news of our Lord to all. Like them, we go without the apostles being directly with us. We go out with the teachings of Jesus, the knowledge from the New Testament and the Spirit of God with us. The focus is not on ourselves or our power and abilities, but on the Lord and His message.

## **7. What is significant about our Lord's prayer from Luke 10:21-22?**

Jesus rejoices in the demonstration of God's power to the disciples. Of special note is the inclusion of all three of the Godhead (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) in this event (verse 22).

This prayer resembles our Lord's prayer in found in John 17 as he prays for His disciples.

## **8. Read Luke 10:25-37. What brought about this teaching and what are the main points Jesus wishes us to learn?**

Note that the use of "Lawyer" in this society is not like we use it today. This person would be one who ensured the Jews strictly followed the teachings of the Jewish rulers and Law of Moses. They did not defend someone as much as prosecute those not following the law.

This lawyer wished to test (another word for examine) our Lord to see if he could lessen His stature as the Messiah. The lawyer was not satisfied with the response Jesus gave so he questioned Him on a point and this led to the parable. The lesson from the parable is that we are to be compassionate to all, even those we might not desire to help.

It may not be a major point, but when we try to raise our stature before God, we are humbled by Him instead. The lawyer tried to justify himself before Jesus and failed miserably. Truly, as the proverb states, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Proverbs 16:18).

**9. Read Luke 10:38-42. How do we balance our physical service to others as Christians and our spiritual service as we learn and teach about Jesus?**

Taking physical care of others is an important ministry for Christians. Since the very beginning, Christians have been involved in doing good works for others in a wide range of activities. However, learning about Jesus and teaching others so that souls are nourished is more important. We can and must do both. This would be a practical demonstration of the teachings of Jesus as he sent out the disciples on their mission and instructed them to not take anything with them and only accept the gracious hospitality of others. Their role was to spread the good news of Jesus, not to worry or be concerned about their physical needs.

**10. In Luke 11:1-13 we read what has become known as “The Lord’s Prayer” where Jesus emphasizes persistence in prayer. Why is it important to be persistent in our prayers?**

By being persistent we demonstrate a greater level of faith. We must learn that as servants of the Master we serve according to our Lord’s will, and not our own. Yet it is the Lord’s will that we come to Him in prayer and He promises to answer. The answer will also be according to our Lord’s will. Take special note of the statement in verse 13. Our Lord promises that the answer to the prayer will be far greater than even what we dared hope for. The use of good in this statement can mean not only something we would like, but also what is best for us. God takes an eternal view and knows our needs whereas we often take a short term or temporary view only seeing the need for the moment.

**11. Why were the Scribes and Pharisees so opposed to Jesus?**

Answers will vary. Some were jealous. Perhaps some feared Him knowing that if they had not led the people as they should, they would be held accountable. It may also be possible that over time their self-righteousness (pride) so weakened them spiritually that they now had become tools of Satan rather than shepherds of God’s flock. Either way, we see that instead of being willing to learn of Jesus and acknowledge His Deity, they now began to plot how to destroy Him.

A point to note here. We think Satan and those that work for him are all powerful. The reality is that he is not. Had Satan truly known the outcome of our Lord's sacrifice he would have done everything he could to prevent it rather than allow it to go forward.

**12. Read James 3:1. How does the warning in James relate to the woes stated by Jesus in Luke 11:37-54?**

James is teaching that those who teach God's word will be held to a higher standard since many times they influence whether one responds to God's will and how well one grows spiritually. The Scribes and Pharisees were the appointed spiritual leaders of the Jewish community. They were supposed to teach God's word yet they were not shepherding God's people or using their influence to glorify God. As a result, Jesus was holding them personally accountable for the peoples' misunderstanding of scripture and their ignorance of God's true will. Instead, they had manipulated God's word and imposed their will in place of God's will. They glorified self rather than God.

A clear warning to us is that we must make every effort to ensure that we are holding to God's teaching with our teaching and lives. Some teach in a formal way while all of us should be teaching by the example of our lives.

**13. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for responses that show we must humbly submit to our Lord and carry our His message in our everyday lives. As we do so we not only fulfill our role as disciples but bring glory to our Lord.

# Lesson #7 – Jesus Facing Jerusalem – Part 2

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The focus of this lesson is the continuation of Jesus' teaching and events as He travels to Jerusalem. The passages that support this lesson are from Luke 12:1-14:6. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

Given the scope and complexity of this material, it is recommended that teachers consider breaking the lesson into two sections. Section one covers select teaching and reassuring statements. Section two covers additional teaching.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the events and teachings of Jesus as he travels to Jerusalem.
- **Feel:** Recognize the relationship between the events and teachings of Jesus and our role as disciples today.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke to help us grow spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 7 – Jesus Facing Jerusalem – Part 2)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 7

## Body of the Lesson

### Section 1 – Reassuring and Teaching (Luke 12:1-13:17)

- 1.1 - Jesus' promises
- 1.2 - Parable about bigger barns
- 1.3 - The Beatitudes
- 1.4 - Be ready
- 1.5 - Healing on the Sabbath

### Section 2 – Further Teaching (Luke 13:18-14:6)

- 2.1 - Parable of the Mustard Seed and Leaven
- 2.2 - The narrow gate
- 2.3 - Lamenting over Jerusalem
- 2.4 - Healing on the Sabbath
- 2.5 - Lesson application



## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### **1. Why was it necessary for Jesus to give such strong reassurances to His apostles and disciples?**

Jesus knew what they would be facing as they went into the world to fulfill their mission. It would cost them their very lives. It is normal to want reassurances to know that what you are doing is worth the cost, and that there will be success. Recall that even John the Baptist expressed concerns related to the authenticity of Jesus as the Messiah (Luke 8:18-20).

### **2. How can we draw reassurances today from the statements made by Jesus to His disciples?**

We too are disciples fulfilling the same mission. We also face opposition as we dedicate our lives to the mission of the gospel. The promises He made were not only to those of His time but extends to all disciples until our Lord's return. As additional reading, note John 17:20-24. In the midst of this remarkable prayer on the eve of His arrest, Jesus included us in His prayer to the Father.

### **3. What is the key point of the Parable about Bigger Barns from Luke 12:13-21 (also known as the Parable of the Rich Fool) and how does that relate to us today?**

The key point of this parable is the danger of greed and pride. Greed is a condition where one is never satisfied with what they have or position they hold. The greedy person wants more and more. Pride is based in focusing on oneself. Note the several times the man used the personal pronoun, "I". He had been blessed with an abundant harvest and certainly could use additional barns for storage. But his motivation was for his own personal gain (greed and focus on self). The man with the abundant harvest and barns did not truly own what he had been blessed with, or even his life.

In Genesis 12:1-2 God makes the covenant with Abram (later named Abraham) that He was going to bless him. Note the second part of that blessing in verse 2, "so that you will be a blessing". God has always required we do something with the blessings He gives us.

Today we are blessed, also for a reason. God has blessed us with the opportunity to be reconciled back to Him through Jesus (John 14:6). We are not to hide this blessing away and be satisfied with our own position with God. To do so has the opposite effect of destroying that relationship because we are deliberately disobeying the Father's will. Note that we have been blessed with what Paul describes as a treasure in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7). It is a precious treasure that grows and is preserved by sharing it. Most of all, as Paul states, "to show the surpassing power" belongs to God and not us.

**4. Read Luke 12:22-34. This passage is Luke's version of what Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7. How does Jesus' statement in verse 34 relate to the Parable About Bigger Barns and our role as disciples?**

In verse 34 Jesus provides us with the true focus of our efforts. We are living and serving our Lord and not ourselves. When we do the work assigned to us as Christians and dedicate it to the Father's glory, we are increasing our reward in heaven. Unlike rewards in this life, these are eternal.

A point of note: The true reward is not given in things. Be careful because if that is our focus then we are in danger of the sins of greed and pride. As we mature spiritually we realize that what we hope to achieve with our service is the Father's glory. He will reward His faithful servants and punish the unfaithful (Matthew 25:14-30).

**5. How does being ready relate to our role as disciples (Luke 12:35-13:9)?**

We don't know when the Lord will return but we know He will as He has promised. Being ready shows our faith in His promises. Beyond that, however, there is the idea of being ready to serve and teach others. Every day there are opportunities to obey our Lord. We must be aware and ready to meet these opportunities.

**6. Why was doing good on the Sabbath a continued point of contention between Jesus, His disciples and the Jewish leadership?**

The Jewish leaders had imposed over 600 interpretations and rules in addition to those put forth by the Law of Moses. These sometimes were in direct conflict with God's intentions. By placing rules on activities related to the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders were able to maintain control and power over the population. It is possible that in the beginning of trying to understand and implement the Law of Moses, the leaders had good intentions. But over time, just as Jesus warned in His parable of the man needing bigger and more barns, they had succumbed to the sins of greed and pride by their quest for personal recognition and power.

## **7. How does Jesus' teachings about doing good on the Sabbath relate to us?**

Although we do not recognize the Jewish requirement to observe the Sabbath, we must be careful that we do not impose man-made rules as we teach about Jesus and living the Christian lifestyle. We need to change but this should be in keeping with the requirements and intentions set forth by Jesus. We are under a law of grace (John 1:17). It grants us tremendous freedom to live as God desires. In doing so we focus on doing the good that opportunities present us rather than focusing on rule keeping. Rules are important, but the reason and good behind them is more important. Christianity is more about being Christlike than rule keeping.

## **8. What is the key point from the Parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven?**

Our Lord's Kingdom will start small and grow to cover the entire world. We see that growth in scripture as well as in our world. In scripture it started with one, Jesus Christ, grew to 12 and then to thousands. Today it has grown to millions of believers.

**9. Although the growth of the Kingdom is worldwide, why did Jesus give the warning of the Narrow Door in Luke 11:22-30?**

To enter the Kingdom, one must do so as the Master requires and not as we desire. Part of this choosing is also to the choice to remain faithful.

**10. How can you use this information to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for responses that show we must humbly submit to our Lord and carry His message. As we do so we not only fulfill our role as disciples but bring glory to our Lord which has an impact on those around us.

# Lesson #8 – Jesus Facing Jerusalem – Part 3

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The focus of this lesson is to continue studying the teachings and events in the life of Jesus as he travels to Jerusalem. Focus in this lesson is what Jesus teaches regarding the Kingdom and other topics to prepare His disciples for His coming crucifixion and their role in the Kingdom. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the events and teachings of Jesus as He travels to Jerusalem.
- **Feel:** Recognize the relationship between the events and teachings of Jesus and our role as disciples today.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke to help us grow spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 8 – Jesus Facing Jerusalem – Part 3)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 8

## Body of the Lesson

1.1 - Parable of the Dinner Guests (Luke 14:7-11)

1.2 - Parable of the Dinner (Luke 14:16-24)

1.3 - Test of Discipleship (Luke 14:25-35)

1.4 - Lost and Found Parables (Luke 15:1-32) (How is this related to the Kingdom?)

1.5 - The Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-18)

1.6 - Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-17:10)

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

**1. This section of Luke's gospel presents a series of seemingly mixed lessons. What do you see as a commonality among these parables? Provide specific examples from the parables presented in this lesson.**

Answers will vary but there are some commonalities. There is the compassion of God for those considered outcasts as He makes a way possible for us to enter His Kingdom or to be welcomed upon our return. There is the admonition to hold true to God's will rather than man's view of it. We see significant teachings against those who would put their self-righteousness before true righteousness found in following God's will.

**2. What attitudes and actions might we express to someone that would prevent them from accepting the gospel or feeling welcome upon returning to the Kingdom? How can we change those to be encouraging?**

Even though we feel we are welcoming and encouraging, we may inadvertently project attitudes and actions that turn others away. We must look at ourselves to ensure we are not doing this as a regular practice. We must pray that we become the loving, compassionate and humble servants that welcome others to our Lord. This is the image Jesus shows and so, as His disciples, we must also.

### **3. How does a faithful disciple give up all his possessions to follow Jesus?**

Although answers may vary, there are two desired responses for this:

(1) We dedicate all we have to the service of God. If necessary, this includes literally giving up our possessions if they prevent us from being faithful and to bring others to come to know our Lord.

(2) We trust in our Lord for our salvation, not in our own possessions, including our own will, strength and knowledge.

### **4. As Jesus closes His series of parables He focuses on love, faith and humility. How do the parables support this focus and what should our response be to someone in relationship to their desire to enter or return to the Kingdom of God?**

- Love:
- Faith:
- Humility:

Look for specific examples from the parables. For example, God's love is shown in the desire for all to be saved is shown in the parable of the dinner. The love of God is clearly shown through the Parable of the Prodigal Son as he welcomes the returning younger brother. This is in sharp contrast to the attitudes and actions of the older brother. A key to the response of the father in this parable is the faith and humility of the younger brother as he makes the decision to return home. Faith is shown by those who follow God's will rather than try to dilute it to suit their own desires. This is shown in the Parable of the Unjust Steward.



## **5. How can you use this information as you grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for responses that indicate an acceptance of concepts taught in this presentation and other resources. Also look for responses that show the understanding of our relationship with others as we help them enter the Kingdom of God or welcome them upon their return. Encourage specific rather than general responses. For example, ask students to think of someone they know that needs to hear the Gospel or to be encouraged to return to our Lord. Ask them what specific actions they could take to bring this about. It may be that they lack confidence or knowledge. If so, ask a follow up question about how they can still take the Gospel to them.

# Lesson #9 – Jesus Facing Jerusalem – Part 4

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The focus of this lesson is on the teachings and events concerning Jesus as He travels to Jerusalem. During this class we will see how Jesus continues teaching His disciples about the Kingdom, their role and the purpose of His life. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the events and teachings of Jesus as He travels to Jerusalem.
- **Feel:** Recognize the relationship between the events and teachings of Jesus and our role as disciples today.
- **Do:** Apply the teachings of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke to help us grow spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 9 – Jesus Facing Jerusalem – Part 4)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 9

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - Healing the Lepers (Luke 17:12-19)
- 1.2 - The Second Coming Foretold (Luke 17:20-37)
- 1.3 - A Parable about prayer (Luke 18:1-17)
- 1.4 - The rich young ruler (Luke 18:18-30)

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What would a modern-day version of leprosy look like and how should we react to it?**

The intent of this message is for students to recognize that there are many socially unacceptable people we encounter in our lives each day. It might be someone with AIDS, someone physically or mentally handicapped, someone from a minority race or gender, someone less educated, someone who is poor or any other social variance.

We should react to it as Jesus did. He saw a need and responded to it. No matter who a person is, where they are from or their situation, they need our Lord's spiritual healing. Our role as disciples is to carry the gospel to all the world, regardless of the differences in situations.

## **2. What is the relationship between the one leper that thanked our Lord and James 2:18?**

This man showed his faith by acknowledging the source of his healing. The others were certainly grateful, but one took the extra step. In like manner, we are certainly grateful for our spiritual healing. We must acknowledge that it comes through Jesus and thus demonstrates our faith. James makes the point that true faith involves putting that faith into action.

### **3. The second coming of Jesus is what Christians look and should be ready for. Why would Jesus tell us to not be concerned about signs but rather to always be ready for it?**

We have the tendency to wait until the last minute to do something. This is especially true if we perceive what we need to do as something we would rather not do. Man has looked for signs in many places, usually the wrong place when seeking the right time to make a decision, even not recognizing something right before them. This was what the Jews were guilty of and what we should avoid. Jesus is teaching us that the signs are already there, and we must not delay. Furthermore, we have no control over the length for our lives. It will be too late if we simply wait to respond to our Lord by looking for signs.

Additionally, looking for “signs” is not acting in faith. It is relying instead on our own wisdom. Satan will do what he can to blind us to the need to obey now. He will instill in us a sense of complacency by leading us to believe that all is well and we have plenty of time to make our decision for Christ.

### **4. Why is our attitude regarding prayer more important than the actual words or process?**

We recognize the need for prayer but sometimes don't know the right thing to say or how to say it. Sometimes a simple prayer of “help me Father” is sufficient. Our Lord invites us to come to Him with our needs. Jesus teaches us to do so with perseverance (sticking to it), humility (recognizing our need and God's ability to meet that need), and innocence (no pretext or hidden agenda).

## **5. What does Luke 18:2-8 teach us about persistence in prayer?**

In this parable the widow needed relief from her opponent. It wasn't so much about how often she prayed but God not delaying to help those who are His. God promises to answer prayers for those who are His. If He wills to answer the prayers of others, then that is indeed an act of grace and worthy of continued praise to Him. But there is no promise that He will answer the prayer of one who is not His child. When we read of Paul's conversion in Acts 9 and Cornelius' conversion in Acts 10, we see that they were both praying to God. In both cases, the first response by God to their prayer was for them becoming children of God.

## **6. What stands out to you in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector found in Luke 18:9-14?**

Answers will vary but the main intent of this parable is to teach that we must come to God with humility. The Pharisee came to God in righteousness. He's communicating that he did not need God. The tax collector, by contrast, was so humble he could not even lift his eyes toward God. He was showing his deep need for God. As a result, God rewarded his prayer.

When we come to God, we need to express true humility. One way we can do this is to make glorifying God part of our prayer. We ask God for something in our prayer and must show that we want the answer so that God continues to be glorified by His answer. Consider that if we truly are the servant, then what "right" do we have to ask the Master for anything? Yet, God invites us to come to Him with our needs. However, we must not be like the Pharisee and make demands of God, rather we should humbly come to God in love and devotion, thanking Him for His graciousness. In all things, we give God the glory!

**7. In Luke 18:15-17 Jesus uses a child to illustrate the attitude we must demonstrate as we come to Him. What characteristics of a child should we demonstrate?**

Answers will vary. Responses will include the endearing characteristics of children such as innocence, faith, humility, joy, openness, forgiveness, compassion and all the other characteristics that are part of who Jesus was. If we are to be like Christ (Christian) then we must also learn and demonstrate the characteristics of Christ.

**8. Why did Jesus tell the rich young man in Luke 18:18-27 to give up all he had before he could become a disciple of Jesus?**

The rich young man relied too much on his personal wealth, position and power. Jesus knew the young man's heart. We are like that in many ways. We sometimes want to do our Lord's will and follow Him, but on our terms and not having to give up what we have in life. We should remember that our Lord emptied Himself for us. We must be willing to do the same. Hanging on to the things in our life is not showing faith in our Lord. Turning our lives over to our Lord is not a "one-time" event. It is a way of life. As we grow, we will learn how to do this and become naturally more willing to do so.

**9. How can you use the information in this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for specific answers showing commitment to our Lord. Encourage students to make that commitment by turning over to the Lord whatever is hindering them in their obedience and service. Encourage them to learn the characteristics of Jesus and make these a greater part of who they are so they can continue to grow spiritually.

# Lesson #10 – Jesus Enters Jerusalem

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The focus of this lesson is on the teachings and actions of Jesus as He arrives at Jerusalem. Of note is His determination to fulfill His role as our Savior. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

Due to the complexity and scope of this material, teachers should consider teaching it in two sections. Section 1 covers Jesus' teachings and actions at His initial arrival to Jerusalem (Luke 18:31-19:27). Section 2 covers Jesus' teachings and actions in Jerusalem (Acts 19:28 – 48).

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** State the lesson and importance of key events as Jesus enters Jerusalem.
- **Feel:** Recognize the determination of Jesus to fulfill His role as our Savior.
- **Do:** Grow spiritually by following the teachings of Jesus and help others learn of Him.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 10 – Jesus Enters Jerusalem – Part 1)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 10

## Body of the Lesson

Section 1 - Jesus' teachings and actions at His arrival to Jerusalem (Luke 18:31-19:27)

- 1.1 - Jesus foretells His death
- 1.2 - Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus
- 1.3 - Zacchaeus converted
- 1.4 - Parable of the 10 Minas

Section 2 - Jesus' teachings and actions in Jerusalem (Luke 19:27 – 48)

- 2.1 - The triumphal Entry
- 2.2 - Weeping over Jerusalem
- 2.3 - Cleansing the Temple



## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### 1. What would be some practical reasons Jesus would warn His apostles of His upcoming death and resurrection as they arrive at Jerusalem?

He is entering the final period of His earthly ministry and opportunity to teach the apostles before His death and resurrection. He must now bring their focus to what and why these events will happen. Jesus has been letting them know all along the cost of discipleship. He has warned them that it would require total commitment to Him. He knows that their faith will be severely tested during this time. He may also want them to not get caught up in all the events of the upcoming Passover period.

### 2. Summarize the prophecies related to Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem. What is the significance of Jesus fulfilling these prophecies?

- Luke 18:31-35
- Zechariah 9:9
- Psalms 118:22-23
- Psalms 41:9 Psalms 22:7-8
- Psalms 16:9-10
- Isaiah 53:5

By fulfilling these prophecies, He is the Messiah as foretold. His disciples may not necessarily understand that in the moment but will recall these as they go forward in their ministry.

### **3. What is the significance of Bartimaeus' healing?**

It once again shows the compassion of Jesus to those demonstrating faith. Bartimaeus was persistent in his plea (prayer) to Jesus to cure his blindness. Furthermore, this shows Jesus' Deity once again. Ultimately, as stated in verse 43, God is glorified by the actions of Jesus.

### **4. What is a lesson we can learn from the conversion of Zacchaeus?**

There are many possible answers. If not stated by the students remind them of the following. As Jesus enters the region of Jerusalem, and later as He enters the city the crowds will be waiting for Him. They welcomed the Messiah at that time, although later He would be rejected. Nevertheless, it shows that Jesus is the savior of humanity, but more importantly, Jesus must be our personal savior. Jesus demonstrated this many times in His one-on-one interactions with those seeking Him. Here we find a man, like Matthew, that was despised by the Jews. Jesus may even have felt some kinship in that rejection knowing the rejection He had already received and that awaited Him. Zacchaeus' true repentance is shown in his statement of returning not just what he had unjustly taken from others, but to restore it fourfold. Unlike the Rich Young Ruler in the previous lesson, Zacchaeus was willing to give all to follow Jesus. Jesus would never refuse one who shows that level of commitment and faith. Therein lies a valuable lesson for us as well.

**5. Summarize the Parable of the 10 Minas from Luke 19:11-27 and answer the following questions?**

**Why would Jesus use this period to teach this?**

Responses will vary but it seems that since this is directed at the Jewish leadership, they had misused the responsibilities and opportunities they had to teach and lead the Jewish nation to God.

**What talents do you recognize in your life and how can you use these for our Lord's service?**

**How can we grow our talents to be of greater service to our Lord?**

**How can we develop talents that we might not fully possess now?**

**6. Summarize the events of the Triumphal Entry from Luke 19:28-44 and state the importance of it.**

Answers will vary but look for responses that focus on Jesus fulfilling prophecies. Also recognize that the people knew who He was, yet they still allowed Jesus to be taken by the Jewish leaders and put to death.

## **7. Why would Jesus feel deep sorrow for Jerusalem?**

Jerusalem has always played an important role in God's interaction with man. The Jews had become so blinded by their view of themselves that they failed to see that the Messiah they had longed for was in their midst. This blindness would not only lead them to reject Jesus, but later they would even reject God Himself during the trial of Jesus. This rejection, in spite of all God had done for His people and was wanting to do through Jesus. As a result, God would reject them. The final rejection by God would be seen approximately 40 years later when Jerusalem and its temple along with all the genealogical records would be destroyed by an invading Roman army.

## **8. What do you see as significant in the cleansing of the Temple from Luke 19:45-48?**

Jesus is exercising His authority. He boldly drives out those that fail to see the reason and sacredness of the Temple. It was an act of purification as He now took His place as a teacher of the Jewish people. He could not tolerate blatant disregard shown at the very seat of God's earthly throne. We would say today, "Enough is enough!"

**9. How can you use the information from this lesson to help you grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for specific responses related to greater commitment to our Lord because of our love for Him because of what He has done for us, and recognition as His role as our Savior. We learn of these events and their significance and then teach them to others as we reveal the person of Jesus and His true identity as the Son of God to them.

# Lesson #11 – Jesus Enters Jerusalem – Part 2

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The focus of this lesson is on the teachings and actions of Jesus as He arrives in Jerusalem. Of note is His determination to fulfill His role as our Savior. The portion of Luke covered in this lesson is from Luke 20:1 – 21:38. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** State the lesson and importance of key events as Jesus enters Jerusalem.
- **Feel:** Recognize the determination of Jesus to fulfill His role as our Savior.
- **Do:** Grow spiritually by following the teachings of Jesus and help others learn of Him.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 11 – Jesus Enters Jerusalem – Part 2)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 11

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - Confrontation
- 1.2 - Parable of the vine growers
- 1.3 - Tribute to Caesar
- 1.4 - The resurrection
- 1.5 - Warning against the Scribes
- 1.6 - Signs of the end

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

**1. As Jesus is teaching in the Temple, He is confronted by representatives of the Jewish leadership. What would be their reasons for confronting Him and what lesson can we learn from their actions?**

Consider adding the following information to students' responses if not stated. Jesus had just driven out the money changers who were turning the experience of worship into a money-making effort rather than truly supporting the worshipers. This was sanctioned by the Jewish leadership, perhaps even becoming a personal source of income for them. Additionally, the Jewish leaders determined who could teach in the Temple and synagogues. They certainly would not have approved of Jesus in this role. These confrontations continue to point out that the Jewish leaders rejected Jesus as the Messiah.

We can learn from this that our motives for worship and helping others to worship should not be for personal gain. Our ministry efforts are to glorify God and help others do so as well. Although we must ensure that what is taught is according to God's word, we should help others, as well as ourselves become teachers rather than put restrictions in the way of reaching this goal.

**2. What is the application of the Parable of the Vine-Growers and the Jewish leaders? How can we apply it to ourselves today?**

The Jewish leadership, especially religious leadership, were charged to teach and guide others to learn and apply God's law. Jesus consistently called them out for not only missing the mark in their application but also drawing the people away from God as well. As a result, they would be judged harshly by God. He is also showing once again His awareness of His oncoming death and resurrection.

Today, we must ensure that we are faithfully and consistently teaching God's word and not the traditions of men. We put our Lord forward, not ourselves. In James 3:1 we read that God will hold teachers to a higher level of judgment due to their influence on other believers' spiritual growth.

**3. What was behind the attempt to trap Jesus in a contradiction, even a statement of treason by asking Him the question about paying tribute (taxes) to Caesar? How does a Christian today balance the requirement to obey laws that may be against God's will?**

If Jesus answered no to paying taxes, then they could charge Him with treason. If He said yes, then they could accuse Him of not being faithful to the Jewish people.

As citizens of our respective nations, we have a responsibility to obey laws that do not contradict God's will. But our ultimate faithfulness and responsibility is to obey God's will. In situations where there is a conflict between man's laws and God's laws, we must choose to obey God. There are ways we can work to change laws. For example, we can try to have people in leadership positions who seek to do God's will. Just because a law is in effect, it might not be something we must obey. For example, although some laws allow abortion, it does not mean one has to have an abortion or support the law itself. We must live peaceably while working to change laws that go against God's will.

**4. Why is belief in the physical resurrection of Jesus important to our faith today?**

Without the resurrection, Jesus would have been just another man pretending to be the Messiah. The miracles and teachings were vital, but the culmination of His ministry by His resurrection shows how He overcame death and proved He was the Christ (Romans 1:4).



**5. Summarize Luke 20:41-44. What do you see as significant about this question?**

Jesus is telling them that He is the Messiah promised by God come through the lineage of David.

**6. In Luke 20:45-47 Jesus gives a stern warning against the Jewish leaders (Scribes and Pharisees). Read also Luke 17:7-10. What is a possible relationship between these two passages and how does this apply to us today?**

We have been given insights into God's word and the responsibility to teach it to others. This is a great blessing for us. But we do not obey for our personal benefit but to glorify God and lead others to Him. Our Lord is the Master and we are the servants. It might be easy to slip into the trap of seeing ourselves as elevated in some way above others. This is a trap of pride set by Satan. Even in our best efforts and successes, we are only serving as our Lord asks of us.

**7. Read Luke 21:1-4. What can we learn from the example of the poor widow?**

Desired response: We must give all to our Lord. In doing so we glorify God, who in turn blesses us.

## **8. Summarize the key events Jesus tells of in Luke 21:5-36.**

**Answer the following questions:**

### **Why was the Temple important to the Jews?**

It was the seat of Jewish worship and authority. It was built as the throne of God in man's presence but many of the associated activities around the temple, such as the money changers, had diluted its holiness.

### **Why would God allow the Temple to be destroyed?**

Its role would no longer be needed once the Kingdom was established. Finally, in AD 70, the Temple was destroyed as Jesus had foretold.

Nations have been at war with other nations throughout man's history.

How does this tie in with Jesus' prophecy concerning signs of the end?

It is a misapplication to read this as the end of time when Jesus returns.

It is intended as an end of the Jewish nation as God's people.

Given this is the end of their way of life, it would seem as an end of time.

### **In verses 25-28 Jesus does give insights into the end of the world. What must we learn from this?**

We must always be ready for our Lord's return. As His children we should draw comfort by His return rather than fear it.

**9. How can you use the information from this lesson to help you grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for specific responses related to greater commitment to our Lord because of our love for Him because of what He has done for us, and recognition as His role as our savior. We can learn of these events and their significance and teach them to others as we teach them about our Lord.

# Lesson #12 – The Consummation – Part 2

The focus of this lesson is on the events from the preparation of the Passover to Jesus' second appearance before Pilate. The span of Luke's gospel covered in this lesson is from Luke 22:1 – 23:25. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

Due to the scope and complexity of this lesson, teachers should consider presenting this in two sections.

Section 1 – Jesus' final hours with the Apostles.

Section 2 – The Passion – Part 1.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the events of the Passover period and state their importance for Christians today.
- **Feel:** Recognize the relationship between the original requirements of the Passover from Exodus and the role Jesus plays in being the sacrificial lamb.
- **Do:** Express determination to remain faithful to Jesus.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 12 – The Consummation – Part 1)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 12

## Body of the Lesson

Section 1 – Jesus' final hours with the Apostles (Luke 22:1 – 62)

- 1.1 - Preparing for the Passover
- 1.2 - The Lord's Supper
- 1.3 - Who is the greatest

Section 2 – The Passion – Part 1 (Luke 22:39-23:25)

- 2.1 - Gethsemane
- 2.2 - Betrayal and arrest
- 2.3 - Peter's denial
- 2.4 - Jesus before Caiaphas and the Council
- 2.5 - Jesus before Pilate - 1
- 2.6 - Jesus before Herod
- 2.7 - Jesus before Pilate - 2

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### **1. Summarize the events of Exodus 12. How does the sacrifice of Jesus during the Passover period of His time mirror the events of the original Passover from Exodus 12?**

At the original Passover, God commanded the faithful Hebrews to sacrifice a lamb and place its blood over the door frame. Those that did this escaped the death of the first born brought about as punishment to Egypt. As a result, those individuals in homes protected by the blood of the lamb were spared death and freed from Egyptian captivity. The lamb was innocent and an acceptable sacrifice for God.

At the Passover celebration in Jesus’ time we see Him offered as the sacrificial lamb for the sins of the world, and those of that follow God’s direction as a result are delivered from the bondage (slavery) of sin and become God’s people. We come into contact with that blood through our baptism (Romans 6).

### **2. Summarize Luke 22:1-13 and state what you see as a significant lesson from this passage.**

Answers will vary. Luke records the time of the year and time of our Lord’s ministry. Luke also records the instructions from Jesus regarding the preparation of the Passover meal. The timing of the event is important since it clearly relates back symbolically to the original Passover from Exodus 12. The detail of Jesus’ instructions show He was in control of events.

**3. Summarize the events of the institution of the Lord's Supper from Luke 22:14-23 and state what you see as a significant lesson from this passage.**

The institution of the Lord's Supper was symbolic in that it showed the ending of our Lord's teaching ministry on earth. He is changing the remembrance from the original Passover lamb to His upcoming sacrifice. It also documents for eternity the final fall of Judas from one of His closest to the one who betrayed. All of this is in keeping with prophecy that began all the way back in Genesis 3:15 and has been working throughout man's history. Once again, it shows Jesus was firmly in control of these events.

**4. Read Luke 22:24-30. What was the reaction by Jesus regarding the argument among the apostles about who was the greatest? How does this apply to us today?**

Jesus' reaction was to teach them once again a lesson about humility. It is ironic that these apostles are arguing about greatness when they are in the presence of the Son of God. In His statement Jesus is basically saying that they must be above the earthly view of greatness and embrace the spiritual application of greatness. Greatness is assigned by God to those who serve, beginning with the greatest servant, our Savior, Jesus.

There are many possible lessons for us today. We must learn humility and stay focused on serving our Lord. As stated in Mary's song of praise from Luke 1:52, "He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;"

**5. Summarize the events of Gethsemane from Luke 22:39-46.**

**How does this show our Lord's love for us and determination to fulfill His mission?**

Our Lord goes before God the Father in prayer. During His prayer He confirms that He is determined to fulfill His mission. His statement confirming this is, "not my will, but yours be done."

As Jesus ends His prayer, He awakens the apostles and alerts them to the arrival of His betrayer and captors.

**6. Summarize the events of the arrest of Jesus from Luke 22:47-53.**

**What is significant about this passage?**

Judas leads the crowd to arrest Jesus. He identifies Jesus with a kiss. Jesus heals the servant of the high priest. Jesus surrenders to the crowd.

Although it is a large crowd that comes to arrest Him, Jesus demonstrates that He is in control. They did not capture Him, He surrendered to them. In the original Passover, the lamb slaughtered for the Hebrew people was not a willing sacrifice. But in the sacrifice of Jesus as our Passover lamb, He willingly and lovingly gave His life for our sins.

**7. Read Peter's denial in Luke 22:54-62. Answer the following questions:**

**Why would Peter deny our Lord when just before he had pledged to die for Him?**

Answers will vary. Perhaps he was overcome with fear, doubt and struggling with faith. His vision of the Messiah was shattered.

**What was Peter's reaction when he realized he had denied our Lord?**

He wept bitterly realizing his failure to remain faithful.

**How can we identify with Peter's denial?**

We often pledge our love and loyalty to our Lord only to fall prey to our fears, doubts and lack of faith. Like Peter, it should drive us to deep sorrow and repentance.

**What is the promise of 1 John 1:1-10?**

The blood of Christ continues to cleanse us as we live faithfully. When God sees His faithful children, He sees His Son, Jesus.



**8. Summarize the events of the trial of Jesus from Luke 22-63 – 23:25.**

- Jesus before Caiaphas and the Council
- Jesus before Pilate - 1
- Jesus before Herod
- Jesus before Pilate – 2

**9. As you look at the totality of the events of the trial of Jesus, what stands out as significant to you?**

Answers will vary but look for such things as the control of Jesus, the willingness to suffer shame and torture. It is also important to note that the charges and trial were baseless, even illegal according to Jewish law.

**10. How can you use the information from this lesson to help you grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Look for specific responses related to greater commitment to our Lord because of our love for him because of what He has done for us, and recognition as His role as our savior. We can learn of these events and their significance and teach them to others as we teach them about our Lord.

# Lesson #13 – The Consummation – Part 2

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The focus of this lesson is on the final events in Jesus' passion of the cross and the conclusion of Luke's gospel. The span of Luke's gospel covered in this lesson is from Luke 23:26 – 24:53. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

Due to the scope and complexity of this lesson, teachers should consider presenting this in two sections. Section 1 – The passion, Part 2. Section 2 – Final events.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the final events of the earthly ministry of Jesus and state their importance for Christians today.
- **Feel:** Recognize the importance of the sacrifice of Jesus as our Savior.
- **Do:** Express determination to remain faithful to Jesus.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 13 – The Consummation – Part 2)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 13

## Body of the Lesson

Section 1 – The Passion, Part 2 – Luke 23:26-49

- 1.1 - The torture and the cross
- 1.2 - The crucifixion
- 1.3 - The reactions to the crucifixion

Section 2 – Final events – Luke 23:50 – 24:53

- 2.1 - The burial
- 2.2 - The resurrection
- 2.3 - Jesus' appearances
- 2.4 - The ascension

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### 1. Describe the role that Simon of Cyrene and the women mourning have as Jesus makes His way to the crucifixion.

Answers will vary. On the surface it seems that these two events are minor or insignificant, yet Luke chose to include them in His narrative. Regarding Simon, it is possible that Luke includes him in the narrative to show that Jesus was indeed human and suffering the physical devastation of the torture. Jesus, because of the physical, and perhaps emotional torture was exhausted and unable to continue. As for the women, Luke includes not only their mention, but Jesus’ response to them. Here He is once again showing that although He is enduring the physical torture, He remains in control. He offers a prophecy of the ultimate destruction of Jerusalem and its inhabitants that eventually occurred in AD 70 as He described it thus fulfilling His prophesy.

### 2. What is significant about Jesus’ statement from Luke 23:34? How do it impact us today?

The intent of this question is to underscore how Jesus lived His teachings. Throughout His ministry, He taught about the importance of forgiveness. Now, as He faces His death, He is praying for those bringing about these events. Although they would have to answer for their actions, they are but actors in the spiritual war between God and Satan.

Today we also are involved in continual spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18). We must not become willing actors in support of Satan’s schemes. The teachings of Jesus and His example apply to us as well. We must be willing to forgive others, whether they ask or deserve forgiveness or not (Luke 17:1-4).

### **3. Describe the reactions of various individuals and groups during the crucifixion of Jesus.**

- The people (Luke 23:35a; Luke 23:48)
- The Jewish rulers (Luke 23:35b)
- The Roman soldiers (Luke 23:36-38)
- The two thieves (Luke 23:39-45)
- The Centurion (Luke 23:44-47)
- The believers and disciples (Luke 23:49)

### **4. If you were in the crowd observing the events of the crucifixion, what would have been your response? Why?**

The intent of this question is to bring a deeper understanding of the personal sacrifice of Jesus for each of us. It is easy to think we would have reacted in support of Jesus but notice that even His closest followers abandoned Him at this time.

### **5. What is significant about the soldiers guarding the tomb where Jesus was buried?**

This shows the importance placed by the Jewish leaders on discrediting Jesus. They knew His teachings of the resurrection, so their effort was to not allow anyone to steal the body and claim that He had risen.

**6. Summarize the events of the resurrection of Jesus and state its importance to God's plan for man's reconciliation.**

The resurrection shows God's power over death. Without the resurrection we would have nothing, and Satan would have won. Had Jesus not risen then He would have simply been another man, but the worst sort of man because He misled people into believing Him. Yet the empty tomb proves who He was and what He did for us.

**7. Describe your reaction if you had been among those that saw Jesus after His resurrection.**

Once again, the intent of this question is to personalize the events. Answers will range from disbelief to overwhelming joy.

**8. Read Luke's final statement in Luke 24:53 as he describes the ascension of Jesus and the return of the disciples, and then answer these two questions:**

**How does this differ from the disciples' reactions during Jesus' passion and death?**

Before, they were confused, afraid, and guilty. They fled from the One they promised to follow to their deaths only to see them fail miserably in their weak faith. Now, their faith was realized by the promises kept by our Lord. Before, hope waned, now hope was strong.

**How does this relate to us today as we come to know who Jesus is, what He did, and the hope we have through Him?**

This concluding statement shows that they were now understanding the mission of Jesus. As a result, they could do nothing but seek to praise God as best they knew how. This should be our reaction as well as we grow to understand how God seeks to reestablish our relationship with Him and help us remain faithful. We should always have the overwhelming desire to praise Him in every way.

# Lesson #14 – The Ministry of Peter: Peter's First Sermon

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The focus of this lesson is to introduce the book of Acts and the beginning of Peter's ministry. The span of text from scripture covers Acts 1:1 through Acts 2:47. Of special note is a call to action where students commit to practicing the actions of the early Christians in our world today. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize actions leading to the beginning of the Church.
- **Feel:** Defend the importance of the actions leading to the beginning of the Church.
- **Do:** Practice the actions of the early disciples as they begin their spiritual journey.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners –  
(Lesson 14 – The Ministry of Peter – Peter's First Sermon)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 14

## Body of the Lesson

Section 1 – Actions leading to Peter's first sermon (Acts 1:1-26)

- 1.1 - Empowerment of the Holy Spirit
- 1.2 - Indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- 1.3 - The upper room
- 1.4 - The Day of Pentecost

Section 2 – Peter's sermon (Acts 2:1-2:47)

- 2.1 - The coming of the Holy Spirit
- 2.2 - Reactions to the sermon
- 2.3 - A call to action

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### 1. Summarize the events of Acts 1.

**How did this period set the stage for the actions of the Day of Pentecost?**

The intent of this question is to establish the background for the events of Pentecost. Several actions set the stage for Pentecost: The apostles and disciples were together. There was an expectation of events. A replacement was made for Judas, so the Apostles were at full strength as Jesus intended. Peter takes the lead in the events in the upper room.

### 2. Review Acts 1:6-8 and answer the following questions:

**Why did Jesus not answer the apostles’ question about when He would establish his Kingdom of Israel?**

The apostles apparently were still expecting a physical Kingdom. Rather than reteach the lesson of the spiritual nature of the Kingdom, our Lord pointed them to the expectation of the events of Pentecost. The focus was on their role in this Kingdom, not the timing of its beginning.

**Explain how the Book of Acts answers the directive from Jesus to His disciples.**

Acts is a historical account of the beginning of God’s Kingdom on earth (the Church) and how it spread into all the world as Jesus directed. It transitions from the narrative of Jesus’ biographical and teaching information found in the gospels to the story of the young church as it grew and spread into all the world.

## **How were the apostles to spread the Kingdom geographically and how does this apply to us today as we seek to spread the Kingdom?**

They were to start in their immediate area and move out systematically until ultimately reaching into all the world. Acts is outlined in just this fashion. We see the beginning of the church and then, by the end of Luke's narrative, they had covered all the known world, and perhaps beyond.

**A point of note:** Jesus did not specify that the apostles themselves would be the ones doing this. As we learn later in Acts 9 following the persecution and death of Stephen, Christians were driven out of Jerusalem while the apostles remained there. The Christians that were driven out of Jerusalem took the gospel with them to other places. In practice, since they learned of our Lord's and the apostles' teachings (Acts 2:42), the disciples by proxy were going into all the world.

Today we can do the same. We often think of missions as a "foreign" effort while overlooking our local area or region. In our immediate area (our Jerusalem) we begin to spread the gospel to those in our neighborhood, workplace, school, etc. We then introduce the gospel to our city and region. Ultimately, we go into all the world. With today's communication technology, we can do all of this simultaneously.

### **3. Give an example from scripture showing the difference between the empowerment and indwelling of the Holy Spirit and why would God make this distinction?**

Peter's sermon clearly shows an example of the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The empowerment of the Holy Spirit is when individuals were enabled to act in a certain way or perform miraculous actions for the purpose of establishing their position, authority and credibility in establishing the church and the disciples' new faith. The empowerment was given to the apostles and they passed it on to a number of disciples and was not passed on beyond what God or the apostles granted.

Peter's statement in Acts 2:38 shows the promise of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is part of our gifts from God as we are added to the Church. This indwelling helps us grow spiritually as disciples. The indwelling is given to all who obey the gospel in repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38).



#### **4. Why was it important for the apostles to replace Judas?**

As stated by Peter, our Lord originally selected 12 men as His apostles. Twelve was not a random number, it represented the 12 tribes of Israel as a model. The apostles felt they should continue not only in the teachings of Jesus, but His actions as well.

#### **5. What was the advantage of the Church beginning on the Day of Pentecost?**

There would be many Jewish people in the city thus providing a ready and knowledgeable audience. Converts from this group would ultimately be the ones to carry the gospel to other locations following the pattern Jesus directed in Acts 1:8.

## 6. Read Acts 2:13-42. What was the witness of the following?

### **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit demonstrated God's power by giving the apostles the miraculous ability to speak in the languages of those present without previous knowledge or training in that language. This gave everyone simultaneous understanding of Peter's words.

### **The Gospel**

The simple message in Peter's sermon was that Jesus died as a sinless sacrifice for our sins and was resurrected by God according to prophecy. This simple message resulted in acceptance of guilt by many of those listening. It was the beginning of the plan God had to reconcile man to Himself. Those receiving the words of Peter (i.e. believed as true) were moved to respond as Peter directed in Acts 2:38 (repented and baptized in water).

### **The Church**

Those who accepted what Peter directed were added to the Body of Christ (Church). The church then became a moving force in the city and ultimately the world. The church met the needs of individual Christians for spiritual growth, as well as their physical and social needs.

**7. Read Acts 2:41. What is significant about Luke's use of the word, "receiving" and how does that apply to us?**

Receiving indicates more than simply hearing. It means they internalized what Peter said and were convicted by the message. In the crowd that day were many thousands of people. All heard Peter's sermon but only those receiving were added to the Church.

In the same way, we often hear the teachings of the apostles and others in God's word. However, if we are not convicted by what is taught then we are simply hearing and not receiving.

**8. What were the 5 actions of the early Church as outlined in Acts 2:42-47 and what specific actions can we, as individuals as well as congregations and a community of believers do for each of the activities listed in Acts 2:42-47?**

The intent of this question is to determine that students have in fact "received" the teachings from this lesson and have not merely heard the teaching.

Look for responses that show specific activities we can do related to evangelism, education, fellowship, worship, and service. If general responses are given, follow-up with requests for specific actions and how they can be implemented. Conclude this discussion with a charge for students to commit to implementing these responses.

# Lesson #15 – Peter's Post Pentecost Ministry

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The focus of this lesson is the teaching and ministry of Peter and the other apostles immediately following the Day of Pentecost. The span of this lesson is from Acts 3:1 – 4:37. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Comprehend the events following the Day of Pentecost and their importance.
- **Feel:** Value the teachings of Peter as he continued to develop the growth of the new Church.
- **Do:** Internalize the teachings of Peter as we grow spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 15 – Peter’s Post Pentecost Ministry)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 15

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - Healing the blind and crippled man
- 1.2 - Response of the Jewish people and leaders
- 1.3 - Peter’s second sermon
- 1.4 - Peter and John arrested
- 1.5 - The trial before the Jewish leaders
- 1.6 - The Church flourishes

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. Summarize the healing of the crippled and blind man and speculate on its importance.**

The intent of this question is to transition focus from the initial sermon and activities to those soon following. Understanding this event establishes the foundation of the remaining points in this lesson.

## **2. What are some items of note in the healing of the blind and crippled man?**

- He was crippled and blind from birth and was well known as such by the Jewish community.
- He expressed no faith in Peter and John's abilities, nor did Peter ask for a statement of faith. He did not even ask for healing. Of note here, it is apparent that the man had accepted his situation as hopeless and was making the best of it.
- Peter heals in the name of Jesus thus showing that the power to heal was from the Lord and not himself.
- The man was immediately and completely healed.

### **3. Contrast the reaction of the Jewish people to that of the Jewish leaders?**

The people were in awe at this display of power and shared in the healed man's rejoicing. This, perhaps, set the stage for the further growth of the Church.

The Jewish leaders saw this event as a threat to them and had Peter and John arrested in order to stop them.

### **4. What are some significant differences in Peter's first sermon in Acts 2 and his sermon on Solomon's Portico? What can we learn from this?**

Peter was very direct in his first sermon showing how the Jews rejected Jesus and had Him crucified. In the second sermon he takes a less direct approach explaining why they might have taken the actions they did and that God still holds out hope for their redemption.

We learn from this that our Lord wishes all to come to Him, no matter their past actions or present situation. We also learn that we too must put forth the offer of redemption to all helping them understand their need to respond positively to God's invitation.

### **5. Why would the Jewish leaders be so eager to stop Peter and John from preaching, healing and growing the church in Jerusalem?**

The Jewish leaders were guilty of bringing about the arrest and death of Jesus. To allow the apostles to continue teaching and healing would be seen by the people as proof of their complicity as well as confirmation of who Jesus was. This would be a severe threat to their power and existence.

## 6. What were some significant points in Peter's response during His trial?

- Of major significance is that the Holy Spirit guided Peter's response. (See Luke 12:11-12).
- Peter acknowledges the miracles were done by the power and authority of Jesus.
- Peter accuses the rulers of the responsibility for the death of Jesus.
- Peter shows how the events of Jesus' death were prophesied (Psalms 118:22)
- Peter establishes that salvation is only through Jesus.

## 7. What was the impact on the Church following this event and what can we learn from that?

The Church continued to grow as more people were converted to Christ. That is the secret of growth of the Church; to preach Jesus and convert others to Him. We will see all through Acts as well as secular history that Christians would face terrible persecution yet the Church would nevertheless continue to grow.

**8. Compare Peter's statement in Acts 14:19-21 and Paul's statement in Romans 8:31 and Philippians 4:13.**

In all three of these verses we see that with our Lord's power we can accomplish the mission set before us. Nothing will stop the Lord's church. Note also the Lord's response in Matthew 16:18 to Peter's statement regarding Jesus as the Son of God.

**9. In Acts 4:8-12 Peter makes a simple statement that completely summarizes the gospel. How can we learn to do the same?**

First, realize that we do not have to have a deep knowledge or theological degree to begin teaching about Jesus. We must trust the Holy Spirit to help us learn and grow and share the gospel.

We should become knowledgeable of who Jesus was, what and why He did what He did, and the result for all. We should focus on brevity so as to not overwhelm the listener but rather provide a basis for further understanding and exploration. We are not trying to overwhelm with the weight of our knowledge but simply preach Jesus and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2).



## 10. What specific actions can we take to continue the growth of the Church?

The intent of this question is to provide a call to action in applying the concepts. Note that although our Lord honors our faith, He does not require a strong or complete faith in order for His power to work. As we demonstrate our faith, the Holy Spirit will help us grow stronger.

# Lesson #16 – Persecution of Peter and Apostles

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The focus of this lesson is the continued actions and teachings of the apostles following Pentecost. The span of this lesson is from Acts 5:1 – 42. Of special note is the faithfulness of the apostles and early disciples as the persecution of the Church begins. Teachers and students should review the relevant materials before class.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Comprehend the events following the Day of Pentecost and their importance.
- **Feel:** Value the teachings of Peter and the apostles as they continued to grow the new Church.
- **Do:** Internalize the teachings of Peter as we mature spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 16 – The Post Pentecost Ministry of Peter)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 16

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - Ananias and Sapphira
- 1.2 - Growth of the Church
- 1.3 - Persecution
- 1.4 - Lessons

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

**1. How did the actions of Joseph and the others to provide for other Christians' needs demonstrate their faith?**

It demonstrates their faith and commitment. These early Christians were willing to do whatever it took to care for others. They demonstrated what our Lord taught in Luke 12:33 about treasures in heaven.

**2. Summarize the events of the death of Ananias and Sapphira and answer the following questions.**

**Why were Ananias and Sapphira punished so quickly and severely?**

Their action was not something that happened in the moment. It was a planned event with the opportunity to have done the right thing as opposed to deliberate sin. When Peter confronted Sapphira, she made the deliberate decision to continue with the lie.

**How does this event relate to our lives today?**

God will forgive when we repent (1 John 1:5-10). One can see that this corresponds to our ultimate judgement when the Lord returns. As long as we are alive, we have choices and must strive to obey. Our Lord promises to forgive when we repent but if we do not repent, especially of deliberate sin, then we too will face judgment.

**What was the reaction of the Christians as they became aware of this event?**

The situation changed from joy to fear (Acts 5:11). There are two applications of fear that are seen in this event. One is a sense of fear that would cause one to flee. The other is a sense of fear shown through respect. It is likely that the second application is seen here as the Church continued to grow.

**3. Explain how the Jewish leaders continued to oppose the apostles and the Church, and the effect of this attitude.**

Luke gives insight into the attitude of the Jewish leaders as they experience jealousy and the fear of losing their position and power. They demonstrated their discomfort by trying to stop the apostles by placing them in prison. It had the opposite effect of strengthening their resolve to obey the Lord.

As a result, the Church continued to grow.

**4. Read Luke 20:1-2 and Acts 4:7. How are these two statements related and how do they underscore Peter's response to the Jewish leaders in Acts 5:29?**

Jesus was clearly acting in His capacity as the Messiah. He was cleansing the corruption from the Temple. Later, Peter would claim this same authority but in the name of Jesus. By this time Peter and the other Apostles were completely committed to following our Lord as demonstrated by their actions in the face of persecution.

**5. What is significant about Gamaliel's advice to the Sanhedrin?**

It is possible that Gamaliel was beginning to see the truth of what Peter and the others were teaching and demonstrating. He was taking the pragmatic view of wait and see. This had the effect of giving the apostles freedom to continue in their actions.

## **6. Why did the apostles react as they did when punished, and what does this teach us?**

The apostles realized even more that they were teaching and acting as our Lord directed them. This was fulfilling our Lord's words regarding their upcoming persecution as they continued to obey Him.

We too must be willing to obey the teachings and directions of Jesus no matter the cost. We must take an eternal view rather than a temporary one of events that take place in our lives. We strive to obey and trust our Lord.

## **7. How can you use the information in this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

The intent of this question is to determine commitment to following Jesus no matter the cost. Look for specific responses that show that commitment. This is especially important for new Christians as they face doubts about their choice to become disciples of Jesus. They need the reassurance that their faith will be rewarded.

# Lesson #17 – Persecution of the Church – Part 1

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The focus of this lesson is the faithfulness of the early Christians as persecution began. This lesson also provides insight into how the Apostles dealt with day-to-day issues as the church continued to grow. The span of this lesson is from Acts 6:1 – 7:60.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the events from Acts 6 and 7 and state their impact on the Church today.
- **Feel:** Value the example of faithfulness to our Lord as demonstrated by early Christians.
- **Do:** Resolve to keep our focus on serving our Lord.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 17 – Persecution of the Church – Part 1)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 17

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - Choosing the Seven
- 1.2 - Persecution begins
- 1.3 - Lessons

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. Why would Luke include in his narrative the event of choosing seven men to assist with feeding widows in the church and how does this apply to us today?**

It is easy to overlook the daily activities in the overall narrative of the growth of the Church. By giving this insight we see that there were practical issues that came about. This also helps us see that we each have responsibilities and skills with which we can serve the Church. The Apostles established a practical way to overcome the issue and stop a situation that could impact the unity of the Church and thus slow the spiritual growth of individuals and the numerical growth of the body.

Today, we also face issues within our congregations. We have established, from the example of the apostles in Acts 6 and Paul's teachings on Church leadership, a method for organization. We have men appointed as shepherds responsible for each congregation. These men oversee and participate in teaching and guiding the congregation. We also have men appointed as deacons to serve over specific programs. Along with these we have men and women participating in all efforts within the Church as it reaches out to the community. Collectively this effort ensures that God's word continues to be taught and souls won for Christ.

A problem was identified, a solution was presented and it resulted in the continuing growth of the Church as well as the encouragement of its members. Today, we also experience situations as we work and grow together and should use this same model. We must identify what is actually the issue/problem and implement viable solutions. We must then monitor the implementation and results to ensure that the issue is resolved. In this way we are able to stop an issue from interfering with our mission as the Lord's Church. We must never let a situation continue to the point where it causes disunity. If we did that, Satan would have won in his efforts to harm the Church and prevent souls from coming to our Lord.

## **2. What was unique about Stephen and why was he singled out for persecution?**

Stephen was one of the seven original men selected to serve. Additionally, he was among the first on record to receive spiritual gifts from the apostles. Apparently, these gifts included the ability to teach since this is how he is introduced. This would be consistent with the requirement that they be full of the Spirit and wisdom.

Stephen was not only active in the day-to-day activities of the Church, but also served in the ministry of spreading the gospel. This brought him to the attention of the Hellenistic Jews. In attacking Stephen, the Jews hoped to stop the growth efforts of the Church and discourage others from joining being added to their number. The Jews had already tried to stop the apostles with no success. So now they see others like Stephen continuing to teach others.

Stephen represented what is known as the multiplication effect. Instead of one person teaching one person, a person would teach several others and those several others would in turn teach several others. The result was the quick and wide-spread growth of the Church. Later, Paul would instruct Timothy in the same method (1 Timothy 2:2). This is how the gospel was preached to all the known world within the lifetime of the apostles.

## **3. What actions in Stephen's trial and death were similar to our Lord's trial and death?**

Stephen's trial was not a legal trial, nor was his death justified. False witnesses were brought to testify concerning his threat to the Temple and the Law of Moses. This is also what happened in the trial of Jesus. The result was an illegal death penalty. Even in carrying out His death the Jews violated the Law. Ironically, all of these illegal actions should have resulted in their death rather than Stephen's (Deuteronomy 17).

It is also noteworthy that Stephen's final words were asking God to forgive those persecuting him. This statement was similar to what our Lord said from the cross.



#### **4. Why would Satan attack Christians and what is our defense?**

Satan knows he cannot directly defeat our Lord, so he chooses to attack those most precious to Him. He knows our weakness and uses them against us. In doing so he accomplishes three key strategies:

- He prevents someone from obeying the gospel
- He weakens our faith
- He weakens our influence

We can defend against these by keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus and remain busy in our service as faithful Christians.

#### **5. Give examples of how to use these strategies (eyes focused on Jesus and busy in ministry) in order to grow spiritually and help others come to Christ.**

Look for specific responses explaining how we can grow spiritually, remain faithful and motivate others to believe.

# Lesson #18 – Persecution of the Church – Part 2

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The focus of this lesson is the faithfulness of the early Christians as persecution continues. This lesson also provides an introduction to Saul and his conversion. The span of this lesson is from Acts 8:1 – 9:43.

Given the complexity and scope of this lesson, teachers are encouraged to present this material in two sessions.

Session 1 - Persecution and scattering,  
Section 2 – Saul’s conversion.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the events from Acts 8 and 9, and state their impact on the Church today.
- **Feel:** Value the example of faithfulness demonstrated by the early Christians.
- **Do:** Resolve to keep our focus on serving the Lord.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 18 – Persecution of the Church – Part 2)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 18

## Body of the Lesson

Section 1 – Persecution and scattering

- 1.1 - Saul’s persecution
- 1.2 - Philip in Samaria
- 1.3 - Simon the Magician
- 1.4 - Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

Section 2 – Saul’s conversion

- 2.1 - Saul’s conversion
- 2.2 - Saul begins his ministry
- 2.3 - Saul joins the disciples in Jerusalem
- 2.4 - Peter’s ministry continues

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### 1. Summarize the actions of Acts 8:1-3 and answer the following questions:

#### **What would make someone like Saul be an enthusiastic persecutor of Christians?**

Saul was passionate about the Jewish faith. He considered anyone, especially Jews, going against the Jewish religion as traitors to God and the faith, and worthy of punishment.

#### **What is significant about the church being scattered about the region and the apostles remaining in Jerusalem?**

The early Christians were living in a protective bubble with the apostles and fellow believers together for protection and encouragement. The persecution they began to face and the dispersion resulting from it would be a test of their faith and commitment. To their credit and through the power of the Holy Spirit, they not only were faithful in this early period, but as the verse 4 states, they took their faith with them. The Jewish leaders would have thought they were winning the battle against Christianity when in fact they caused the spreading of it in greater ways.

Jesus gave the command to the apostles in Acts 1:8 to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. Jesus did not say how this would come about. It would have taken a greater amount of time if the apostles themselves had been the ones going out. But sending a much greater group and scattering them throughout the region supported the multiplication method rather than the addition effect. The apostles remaining in Jerusalem were unified in their efforts and would be able to write the dispersed Christians and continue teaching from Jerusalem.

## **2. Summarize the two events involving Philip in Acts 8.**

**What is significant about these two events?**

The first is Philip's actions in Samaria. This had previously been an area Jews would have avoided yet Philip takes the gospel there. The Samaritans had been used by Jesus several times in His parables in positive ways and He had had positive interactions with them. Their knowledge of who Jesus was would have made them very receptive to Philip's preaching. An element of significance to this is that the gospel now left Jerusalem and Judea to go into the third region for evangelistic effort as directed by Jesus (Acts 1:8).

The second was Philip's interaction with the Ethiopian official (eunuch). In this event we see Philip being directly sent by the Holy Spirit to teach. Philip teaches the official about Jesus, baptizes him and is then transported away. Another element of significance is that this Ethiopian, now a convert to Jesus, represented a third generation of converts. It was the Ethiopian that first took the gospel to a far region of the earth (ends of the earth – Acts 1:8).

### **3. Compare the event of Simon the Sorcerer (magician) and Ananias and Sapphira. What can we learn from this?**

In the event of Simon, he immediately repented of his error when told by Peter of his sin. By contrast, Ananias and Sapphira plotted their sin and compounded their lie. Although it is not directly stated, we can infer by the absence of punishment that Simon was forgiven and restored. Ananias and Sapphira paid with their lives.

Of note in this event is that Luke clearly shows in verse 18 that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were only given to others by the apostles. Those given gifts by the Apostles could not pass them on to others.

There are many lessons we can learn from this. As young Christians it is difficult to put aside what we've been a part of in our earlier lives. However, when we truly repent, God forgives us (1 John 1:5-1). As more mature Christians, we must patiently and lovingly teach less mature disciples and help them in their spiritual growth. For example, we frequently teach those coming out of denominationalism that have learned error and false teaching their entire lives. It is very difficult to "unlearn" something, even when we see it as religious error.

### **4. Summarize the conversion of Saul from Acts 1:19 and answer the following questions:**

#### **Why was Saul headed to Damascus?**

He was carrying out a mandate to arrest and imprison the Christians there.

#### **What made Saul the perfect choice for Jesus to use?**

Although his knowledge was misdirected, he none-the-less had a significant depth of knowledge of God and the Law of Moses. This would be very valuable as he taught Jews and Gentiles alike. Saul also possessed the passionate spirit that would keep him faithful in the most trying of times, even to his ultimate death.

### **Why would Saul need to be baptized?**

Saul, like everyone else needed to act upon his confession of faith. He obviously believed who Jesus was and repented of his former life (see verse 11 “he is praying” and waiting for Ananias to teach him). Also, like everyone, he needed to begin expressing his faith through baptism. It was after baptism that he received salvation. Later Saul, then Paul will summarize this event with this emphasis and would teach the need for baptism in his letters. Paul could not teach us to do something that he himself did not do.

**Of special note**, Paul would later teach in 2 Corinthians 4:7, “But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.” (ESV) Although Saul had a special interaction with Jesus, he still needed to be taught about salvation by a man, Ananias. This has not changed. The only way the gospel will be spread is through the teachings and actions of disciples. This places a wonderful opportunity as well as a serious responsibility on us.

### **Why were the early Christians reluctant to accept Saul? What is important about the actions of Barnabas in Saul’s ultimate acceptance by Christians who doubted his sincerity?**

Saul made the transition from one persecuting the church to one now championing the cause of Christ. However, even though he was saying and doing the right thing, there was a natural fear and distrust of him among the Christians. Barnabas played a key role in bringing about Paul’s acceptance by them. He stood by Saul and relayed what had happened. Since Barnabas was not involved directly in the conversion of Saul, it is apparent that this knowledge was given to him by the Holy Spirit.

### **From verse 31, what was the result of Saul’s conversion?**

The church throughout the region was encouraged and grew. Yet again, we see how God uses each of us in His way when we commit to Him.

## **5. What was significant about Peter continuing in his ministry?**

Peter continued to travel in the region and convert others to Jesus. He did not let the persecution he and the others experienced stop his faithful service. Through his preaching and use of miracles he was able to show that Jesus was the Messiah. As a result, many Jews were converted and the church continued to grow.

## **6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

The intent of this question is to have learners provide specific responses of how we can remain faithful to our call to teach Jesus to others no matter the situation we find ourselves in. God will use all of us when we dedicate ourselves to him.

# Lesson #19 – Peter Preaches to the Gentiles

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The focus of this lesson is Peter opening the gospel to gentiles. Our specific focus will include the role Cornelius played in this effort, the reaction of the Jewish Christian community, Peter’s arrest and delivery, and how all of this applies to Christians today. The span of this lesson is from Acts 10:1 – 12:25.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Comprehend the events of bringing the gospel to Gentiles and its importance.
- **Feel:** Appreciate the preaching of the gospel to all people.
- **Do:** Continue to provide the gospel to all people as part of our role as disciples of Jesus.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 19 – Peter Preaches to the Gentiles)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 19

## Body of the Lesson

### Section 1 – Cornelius

- 1.1 - The person and actions of Cornelius
- 1.2 - Peter charged to go to Cornelius
- 1.3 - Peter teaches Cornelius
- 1.4 - The response of the Gentiles
- 1.5 - Peter reports to the Church in Jerusalem

### Section 2 – The Church at Antioch and Peter’s arrest and deliverance

- 2.1 - The Church at Antioch
- 2.2 - Peter’s arrest and delivery

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.



**1. Explain why Cornelius was a good choice as the first gentile convert.**

Cornelius was a seeker. He sought a relationship with God as evidenced by his praying and charitable deeds among the Jews, he could be described as the fertile ground Jesus spoke of in the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4-8). Cornelius had the wherewithal and influence to help the gospel continue to be spread. As a Roman centurion, Cornelius had great influence in the community among both believers and non-believers.

**2. Summarize the events of Cornelius' vision and state the impact on us today.**

God uses individuals that He chooses. We tend to think that a person will not likely respond to God's invitation, so we avoid teaching them the gospel. It may well be that the Holy Spirit is bringing the seeker and teacher together as He did with Cornelius and Peter. The spirit continues to work in this way today.

### **3. Summarize the events of Peter's vision and state the impact on us today.**

Peter's vision and God's words to him clearly show that the time had come to teach the gospel to all the world. In the early Christian's view, they were still Jews and "all the earth" simply applied to Jews who lived everywhere on the earth. Furthermore, it was our Lord telling Peter that the restrictive laws concerning diet, special days and associations were coming to an end. Even with Paul's conversion and Jesus' statement to Ananias that Paul would be the messenger to gentiles, it was still a long time before this was accepted. Peter would struggle with that himself for a time (Galatians 2:11-21). Later, this issue would impact greatly on the Christian Community and lead to the Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15.

Because Peter obeyed our Lord's charge, today everyone has the opportunity to be saved.

### **4. What lessons can we take from Peter's meeting with Cornelius?**

When they first met, Peter stated that he was just a man and for Cornelius not to give him special honors. Both men clearly demonstrated the humble spirit that our Lord treasures. Even though Peter had a special charge to go to Cornelius, he was just the messenger. He rightfully gave God the glory and claimed none for himself. When we teach others, we must remember that it is the message that is important and not the messenger. We should always shift the focus from ourselves to the Lord.

Note also that Cornelius brought together all his entire household to hear Peter. Again, we can learn from this that even though it is important for each of us individually to respond to the gospel, we also have a responsibility to others, especially to our family and friends. It might be difficult to teach them, but we must make the effort. One can also learn that we might not know all we need to know to teach others, but we can bring others to someone who can teach them if we cannot.

## **5. What was the result of Peter's preaching and how does that apply to us?**

The response was that Cornelius and his household obeyed the gospel and were baptized. We too must make that same decision when we hear the gospel. If we have obeyed, then we strive to remain faithful as disciples.

Of note is the gifting from the Holy Spirit on the gentiles to enable them to speak in tongues just as had occurred on the Day of Pentecost. This was done to convince them, and Peter that this event was sanctioned by God. This would also be important when Peter reported to the apostles and brethren in Jerusalem, and later during the Jerusalem Council.

## **6. Defend the perspective of the brethren that felt Peter should not have offered the gospel to the gentiles and explain why is this inaccurate.**

God made the promise of a savior to Abram (later Abraham) in Genesis 12:1-2. All through history God had recognized and specially blessed the faithful Jews. It is logical that they would feel that before one could become a follower of Jesus, he or she must become a Jew. For males, this would mean circumcision. For all, it would mean observing all the Jewish customs and the Law.

As Peter learned during this event, and as he communicated to the brethren in Jerusalem, this was not God's will. Further, when Peter explained to them all that had happened they fell silent and glorified God. Luke concludes this narrative with the statement, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life" (Acts 11:18).

## **7. What was significant about Barnabas and Saul with the Church in Antioch?**

We clearly see here that the Church spreading throughout the “ends of the earth” as Jesus directed. This expansion began with the persecution of Christians in Jerusalem and elsewhere. This event was part of the transition from Peter’s ministry to Paul’s. Antioch would eventually become the unofficial headquarters of Paul’s ministry. This Church was influential in spreading the gospel in the first century. Their ministry included preaching and teaching the gospel along with fellowship and charity. This is consistent with the immediate actions of the original Church following Pentecost Sunday.

## **8. Summarize the arrest and delivery of Peter and how this applies to us.**

As God’s messengers of the gospel who strive to live faithful lives, we will most certainly face opposition. Peter experienced extreme opposition to his ministry efforts yet never waivered in his faith. We learn that we too will face opposition but can and must remain faithful. God will deliver us in the end, perhaps not in physical ways in this life, but certainly when He returns to initiate the next life.

Of note is that Luke uses this as a transition from Peter’s ministry to Paul’s. Luke concludes this event in verse 17 by stating, “Then he departed and went to another place.” This is the last major focus on Peter. Luke then shifts to Barnabas and Saul in verse 25.

**9. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

The intent of this question is to gain a commitment from students to be messengers of the gospel to all.

We must recognize that the gospel is indeed open to everyone. We must also recognize that God has specifically charged us with taking the gospel to all. Clearly, God could send angels or special individuals, or even Himself to convert but He chooses to give us that opportunity and responsibility. It is also another way to build our faith and see God's power at work.

# Lesson #20 – The Ministry of Paul

## Paul's First Missionary Journey

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The focus of this lesson is on the beginning of Luke's narrative about the ministry of the Apostle Paul. This lesson includes Paul's commission and actions on his first missionary journey and what we learn from it. The span of this lesson from scriptures is Acts 13:1 – 15:35.

### Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Summarize the events of Paul's first missionary journey and its impact.
- **Feel:** Value the importance of continuing to teach the gospel as we are gifted and able.
- **Do:** Act upon our gifts to meet the opportunities to teach the gospel.

### Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 20 – The Ministry of Paul – Paul's First Missionary Journey)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 20

### Body of the Lesson

Section 1 – Paul's first missionary journey

1.1 - A call to ministry

1.2 - The first missionary journey

Section 2 – The Jerusalem Council

2.1 - The issue

2.2 - The solution

2.3 - A call to action

### Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. Summarize the three stages of Paul's call to ministry and discuss how this applies to us.**

As disciples of Jesus we are committed to learning and obeying His teachings. Among these is the direction to make disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to observe (obey) all that He commanded (Matthew 28:18-20). As Paul became a disciple, he recognized this charge and responded to it. We learn from his example how to do this ourselves. Paul follows the pattern of recognizing his calling, being set apart for the work, and being commended or charged to go forward. Today we must respond by becoming aware of how our abilities can be used for our Lord's service and focusing on putting these gifts into practice. Paul would teach about how each of us contributes to the Lord's service (1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12).

## **2. Why did Paul go to the Jewish synagogues first when traveling to a location and what was the result? What does this teach us as we begin to teach others?**

Paul expected to receive a ready and willing audience among the Jews. He would be able to discuss with them that Jesus was the Messiah. The Jews would understand their history and prophecies. Paul received mixed receptions. Sometimes he was welcomed and several believed. At other times, Paul was rejected and would move on.

We see also that Paul began to realize quickly that he would be moving to teach the Gentiles (see Acts 13:44-52).

Frequently a new convert will try to teach family and friends about their conversion and teach them about Jesus. The expectation is that since family and friends know them they would be willing to listen to them. Sadly, all too often the opposite happens. The message and messenger are rejected. Rather than becoming discouraged, we should recognize the potential of this situation and continue to teach as we can and live as examples of Christ in an effort to eventually win them over. We should also continually look for opportunities to teach others.

### **3. Summarize the events of the Jerusalem Council and what we can learn from it when dealing with issues in the Church today.**

The Jerusalem Council was brought about because of the belief that before Gentiles could become Christians they had to first convert to Judaism. This erroneous belief had the effect of causing disunity among believers and discouragement among Gentiles and others who were responding to the gospel. The apostles and other leaders in the Church recognized the danger of this and set out to resolve the issue. The result was that the Church resolved the issue, unity was restored and the Church continued to grow.

Of special note: In Matthew 16 and 18 Jesus stated that what the apostles decided here on earth would be recognized by God as binding. The apostles, elders and others present agreed with the solution offered by James. This then became the basis for continuing to teach about God's plan for reconciliation, and validated the simplicity of the gospel. No one has to do anything except what has been outlined in God's word. We must believe in our Lord, repent of our sins, submit to baptism and seek to live a faithful life as Jesus teaches.





# Lesson #21 – Paul's Second Missionary Journey

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The focus of this lesson is the second missionary journey of Paul as he establishes and ministers to congregations of the Lord's Church. Of special note is the interaction between Paul and his associates. The span of this lesson is from Acts 15:36-18:22.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Comprehend the events of Paul's second missionary journey and their importance.
- **Feel:** Value the teachings of Paul as he continued to establish and encourage congregations.
- **Do:** Internalize the teachings of Paul as we grow spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 21 – Paul's Second Missionary Journey)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 21

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - The dispute
- 1.2 - Timothy recruited
- 1.3 - The Spirit's guidance
- 1.4 - Cities and regions visited

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a "right or wrong" response.

## **1. Summarize the dispute with Paul and Barnabas and what we can learn from it.**

Paul and Barnabas disagreed about John Mark going with them on their next missionary journey. As a result, Barnabas takes John Mark with him and Paul takes Silas. Although this is described as a disagreement, it did not prevent their continued efforts at spreading the gospel. A disagreement does not necessarily mean that all the work had to stop. It simply means that there were different views of how to continue. The resolution was not only equitable between Paul and Barnabas, but it now meant that two well qualified mission teams were working to spread the gospel. This represented a doubling of effectiveness and the multiplication effect was in place. As Acts 15:40 states, the Church grew and was strengthened. It is natural that we will have different views of how to fulfill our role in the Church. It does not mean that the work needs to come to an end, or does it mean we cannot continue to work together as fellow Christians. Our focus is on obeying and serving, not personal issues. We resolve the issues in a way that God can be glorified.

## **2. Why was it important that Timothy be circumcised before he started working with Paul on mission efforts and what does that mean for us today?**

Although Timothy was already a Christian and circumcision had been deemed unnecessary as a result of the decisions at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), they would be ministering to Jews in synagogues as they traveled. Timothy would not be allowed access without going through this.

It demonstrates the need to remove barriers so that we can reach out to those needing the gospel. It also demonstrates that Timothy was willing to do what was needed in order to teach the gospel.

### **3. What was significant in Paul's reaction to the vision he had from the Holy Spirit to not travel as he had planned?**

Paul had a plan to spread the gospel in the eastern regions, however, God wanted him to go in a different direction. Paul's response shows his submission to God's will rather than his own desires.

As we serve and spread the gospel, we must ensure that we are following God's will in every way we can. Although we will not receive divine intervention in our efforts, we can learn from Paul's example and follow the teachings of scripture as to where and what to do. We can stay receptive to what scripture says and to the needs of those with whom we come into contact. In this way God will reveal His will for our efforts.

### **4. Summarize the events of the various cities and regions from Paul's second mission trip and describe the pattern of events in each area. Also describe the significant events in each.**

Responses will vary but look for how the gospel was spread and the results on lives and the Church. The pattern we see in Paul's efforts is:

- Arrival and preaching
- Some believe, others do not
- The believers receive more teaching but the non-believers cause problems
- Paul is forced to leave to go to another location

**5. How can you use this information to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

It is natural that there will be disagreements among Christians as we work to obey and serve our Lord. We must not let these disagreements shift our focus. Our role is to make disciples for Jesus by baptizing them and teaching them to obey all He taught (Matthew 28:18-20). We must not become discouraged when we are not as successful as we wish. We are to sow the seed of the gospel and allow God to give the increase. It is for His glory that we work.

# Lesson #22 – Paul's Third Missionary Journey

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The focus of this lesson is the third missionary journey of Paul as he establishes and ministers to congregations of the Lord's Church. Of special note is the events of Paul and his associates as they ministered to the congregations he had previously established. The span of this lesson is from Acts 18:23 – 21:14.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Comprehend the events of Paul's third missionary journey and their importance.
- **Feel:** Value the teachings of Paul as he continued to establish and strengthen congregations.
- **Do:** Internalize the teachings of Paul as we grow spiritually.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 22 – Paul's Third Missionary Journey)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 22

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 Paul revisits churches
- 1.2 Apollos at Ephesus
- 1.3 Paul in Ephesus
- 1.4 Paul in Troas
- 1.5 Paul's farewell to Ephesus
- 1.6 The Journey to Jerusalem

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a "right or wrong" response.

**1. Why would it be important for Paul to revisit the congregations he had previously established? What can we learn from this today as we welcome new Christians?**

These congregations were made up of young Christians. They did not have the New Testament as we have today, nor would they likely possess deep knowledge of the Old Law since they were primarily Gentiles. Being young in their faith and knowledge, they needed the continued teaching and encouragement as they grew spiritually. Today we should remember this principle with new converts. There is much for them to learn and experience. If we do not provide a nurturing environment, they will be very susceptible to Satan's attacks to weaken their faith and Christian influence.

**2. Summarize who Apollos was and why he did not need rebaptism after learning more of Jesus, and what we can learn from this.**

Apollos was a gifted Jew converted to Jesus with significant influence in the area of Ephesus. He used his skills to teach others about Jesus. However, Apollos was not fully versed in the teachings of Jesus and needed further instruction. He understood who Jesus was but not His complete teachings. Luke records that he was teaching what he knew. Two Christians, Priscilla and Aquila, took him aside and taught him more completely what he needed to know. Apollos probably received John's baptism while it was still enforced. His error was that he continued to teach the need for John's baptism after it was replaced with Jesus' baptism (Acts 2:38). This was made clear to him through the teaching of Priscilla and Aquila.

We can learn from this that even though we might not know the complete teachings of Jesus we can begin to teach others. But as we continue, we also need to learn as much as we can to ensure that we are teaching the complete truth. If we see that someone needs further teaching, we do not publicly humiliate or embarrass them, but take them aside to instruct them more perfectly.

There are those who have been baptized for the remission of their sins as described in Acts 2 and demonstrated in other conversions in Acts, yet for some reason they

continue in their current religious organization. If we know of someone in this situation then we should lovingly and gently teach them the complete truth of God's word, including the need to associate with Christians following as much as possible the way of our Lord. If they come out of a denomination, then it is not always necessary to rebaptize them. The result of these actions was that Apollos was able to teach even more powerfully and continued the growth of the Church.

Of special note here is a great lesson on humility. Apollos demonstrated tremendous humility in allowing himself to be taught by those of lesser position and training than himself. All through scriptures we see that those who would be great servants for our Lord either began in a humble situation or learned humility before they reached their full potential in our Lord's service.

### **3. Contrast the rebaptism of the 12 disciples in Acts 19:1-7 with the situation with Apollos.**

It is apparent that Apollos did not need to be rebaptized. One does not have to completely understand all the nuances of baptism, even fully understand the gifting of the Holy Spirit in order to receive the salvation that is given to those who are baptized. One must know of their need for salvation only found through Christ and expressed through baptism representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:1-5).

As for the 12 disciples, they needed rebaptism because they apparently had not embraced the teachings of Jesus but rather continued in the teachings of John. Of special note is their lack of knowledge of the Holy Spirit. This is an integral part of our baptism into Christ (Acts 2:38) as we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. These men had not and therefore needed rebaptism in order to receive the Holy Spirit. Paul rebaptized them and transferred the empowerment of the Holy Spirit as well as the indwelling of the Holy Spirit validating the appropriateness of this action. Again, as with Apollos, as important as baptism is for our salvation, the Holy Spirit will ensure we know that we need baptism, or rebaptism. If there is a doubt, as with these 12 disciples, then rebaptism is appropriate. A major consideration is whether they have been baptized for the remission of their sins and that the baptism was done by full emersion.



#### **4. Summarize the events of Paul's actions in the various congregations and regions from Acts 19 through 21:1-14.**

Look for general information about Paul's and the early Christian's actions and the impact. Look also at what these actions mean for us today.

Paul focused much of his teaching in this period on strengthening and encouraging the early Church. He also spent time developing and appointing leaders that would carry on this effort after he was gone. In his authority as an apostle, Paul established an organizational structure of elders and deacons to administer and carry out the work of the Church in its respective community. We follow that same pattern today in planting and organizing local congregations.

#### **5. How can you use this information to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Much of the New Testament was written by Paul in the form of letters to these early congregations he helped establish. As these new Christians began to grow spiritually, they needed further teaching to keep them faithful. They made mistakes, they fell back into previous beliefs, they even turned away from our Lord. Paul wrote to teach them, correct and encourage them. Today we see times when we experience the same issues as the early Christians. By studying Paul's teachings, as well as all of scripture, we will be encouraged, corrected and learn more of God's will for us as His faithful children.

# Lesson #23

## Paul's Arrest and Imprisonment – Part 1

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The focus of this lesson is Paul's faithfulness to his ministry in the face of persecution and what we can learn from these experiences. Of special note are the events of his obedience to the Holy Spirit as he continued his ministry.

The span of this lesson is from Acts 21:15 – 23:11.

### Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** The events leading to Paul's arrest and imprisonment and what this means to us.
- **Feel:** Value the importance of faithfulness to our calling as disciples of Jesus.
- **Do:** Seek opportunities to share the gospel no matter the situation in our lives.

### Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 23 – Paul's Arrest and Imprisonment – Part 1)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 23

### Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - Paul at Jerusalem
- 1.2 - Paul's arrest and imprisonment
- 1.3 - Paul's defense before the Jews
- 1.4 - Paul before the Jewish Council

### Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a "right or wrong" response.

**1. Summarize the pattern Paul follows as he reports to Jerusalem.  
What implications are there for our mission efforts today?**

- The church sends
- He fulfills his ministry (plants churches)
- The sending church oversees the effort

The intent of this question is to establish that we should plan our activities to make the most of the resources we have available. Furthermore, we can all be part of efforts to evangelize whether directly or indirectly. As with any plan or effort, there should be follow-up to ensure that goals are met and continue the mission as planned. Note also that although Paul was very successful, the focus remained on serving and glorifying our Lord.

**2. Why was it difficult for the early Christians to move away from the teachings of Moses and embrace Christianity as a separate religion from Judaism? What is the importance of this for us?**

God had promised the Messiah through Abraham's lineage. He fulfilled this promise through Jesus. The early Christians still considered themselves as Jews with a better understanding of who the Messiah was. They were willing to accept the Gentiles as converts to Jesus, but many still felt the Gentiles should first convert to Judaism to fulfill part of what Moses directed, especially circumcision. It is difficult to abandon teachings we've held for a long time. The Jews were taught from birth so it would be even more difficult to change or let go these teachings.

Today we reach people from all forms of religion or non-religious lifestyles. We must be patient with them and help them learn our Lord's will for their lives. Although they may commit to repenting, it is not easy to turn loose of our past beliefs and actions. This is especially true for those who might be coming out of addictive influences. In these cases someone might need medical or psychological intervention. We must remember that all of us must continue the effort to stay faithful since we all have sin in our lives from which to repent. Humility is a key part of our influence on others.

### **3. What must one know in order to convert to Jesus? Why does this matter?**

The intent of this question is to help with the understanding that one does not need a broad depth of knowledge in order to submit to our Lord's invitation to become a disciple. This does not mean we remain at that level of understanding. Jesus takes us where we are and guides us to where we need to be. We must remember that this is a lifetime commitment that requires continued effort and faith.

We must know who Jesus is as the Son of God, express our faith (even a budding faith), a commitment to change our lives to follow Jesus, and demonstrate our obedience through baptism (Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1-5). Following this initial beginning of our spiritual growth, we then commit to faithfulness and applying our Lord's teachings in our lives.

The importance of this underscores the power of God in our lives and not what we do ourselves (Ephesians 2:8). We cannot save ourselves through knowledge or efforts. We are saved by God's grace and acting upon our faith.

### **4. Compare the events of Paul's arrest and imprisonment in Jerusalem with those of Jesus's arrest and trial. What is the implication for us?**

Paul was falsely accused of some of the same charges as Jesus. They charged Paul with violating the Law of Moses by bringing outsiders into the Temple. The false accusers stirred up the crowd to the point that Paul was unable to reason with them. Those falsely accusing Paul followed him continually looking for a reason to charge him to destroy his effectiveness.

Jesus also faced false accusers who stirred up the crowds. No amount of reasoning with them would be effective. Jesus gathered many followers wherever he travelled. He was also followed by those seeking excuses to charge Him and destroy His effectiveness.

In both cases, the accusers were unable to find truth in their charges yet they were able to bring about Jesus' and Paul's arrest. Satan will try to weaken a Christian's faith and influence today. He will work within the Christian to do this as well as externally from false accusers. If we strive to remain faithful in all we do, we will be attacked by Satan, but the charges will be false. Even when we do sin, we quickly repent when we recognize our failure. This renews our relationship with the Father.

## **5. What can we learn from Paul's defense before the Jews?**

The intent of this question is to show the consistency between Luke's record of events in Acts.

Paul gives us details of his conversion. This further validates Luke's record of events. It also shows the power of God to change lives. Paul used the rights he has as a Roman citizen. This is a good example for us to follow as citizens of our respective nations. We live within the laws of our land to further our ministry as we are able.

We must continue in our faithfulness to serve our Lord no matter the obstacles, even our own safety if necessary. We don't make these decisions foolishly, but still answer our calling from Jesus to take the gospel to all.

## **6. What can we learn from Paul's defense before the Jewish Council?**

Paul remained faithful in the face of continued persecution. It is interesting to note how Paul played the Sadducees and Pharisees against each other. In doing so he demonstrated his ability to show the weakness of his accusers' beliefs that were contrary to God's word.

## **7. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

We must be aware that we will be attacked by Satan as we grow spiritually. But we must remain faithful to our Lord no matter what. In knowing that Satan will attack us, we can be armed in defense (Ephesians 6:10-18).

We frequently grow impatient with our efforts because we might not see the results immediately. We should learn that we serve God and live according to His timeline. This is especially true as we share the gospel. Not everyone is ready to receive God's word or to grow in their faith as we might want. Our requirement is to sow the seed of the Kingdom and give God the glory for growth (Luke 8:4-15).

# Lesson #24

## Paul's Arrest and Imprisonment – Part 2

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The focus of this lesson is on Paul's arrest and imprisonment. Of special note is his continued faithfulness in the face of persecution and what we can learn from this. The span of this lesson is from Acts 23:12-25:12.

### Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** The events leading to Paul's arrest and imprisonment and what this means to us.
- **Feel:** Value the importance of faithfulness to our calling as disciples of Jesus.
- **Do:** Seek opportunities to share the gospel no matter the situation in our lives.

### Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 24 – Paul's Arrest and Imprisonment – Part 2)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 24

### Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - The conspiracy
- 1.2 - Paul before Felix
- 1.3 - Trial before Festus

### Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. Read Acts 9:15:16 and Acts 23:11.**

**How do these passages relate to Paul's actions and what can we learn?**

Paul recognized his commission from our Lord to teach Gentiles and leaders. He also recognized that he would eventually be and teach in Rome. Paul demonstrated tremendous faithfulness in obeying our Lord, especially in the face of persecution that would eventually lead to his death. But Paul stated several times in his letters that he was ready to give his life for the cause of Christ. This is an example for us. We may not ever have to give our lives physically or be tortured as Paul was, but we are asked to give our lives completely and remain faithful to our charge to teach the gospel.

## **2. Summarize the events of Acts 23:12-22.**

**What was behind the desire of the Jews to stop Paul?**

Paul was highly respected and known in the Jewish community. He had tremendous influence with Jews and gentiles. The Jewish leaders felt that if they could stop Paul then the spreading of the gospel would be stopped also. They saw Paul as a threat to their way of life and power, and, he was.

### **3. What is important about Paul's knowledge and use of Roman Law?**

Paul used his citizenship to protect himself as well as spread the gospel. He had been told in a vision to go to Rome. By invoking his right of appeal then he would be taken to Rome under protection. Our Lord didn't tell him how to go to Rome, so Paul used what was available to him. In similar ways, our Lord does not tell us how to spread the gospel so we must be aware of opportunities and methods available to us.

### **4. Summarize Paul's appearance before Felix in Acts 24:1-27 and state its relevance to us.**

Felix was the governor of the region. The Jews would need his approval to put Paul to death, just as they had done with Jesus. The Jews brought about a combination of false or exaggerated charges that were insignificant to the Romans. As such, the Jewish leaders were in the role of unwilling participants in God's plan to spread the gospel into all the world. Paul recognized this by acknowledging the influence of Felix and making a bold presentation of his conversion to Christianity. Felix responded by continuing to protect Paul and allowing him the liberty to continue with his ministry.

Of note is that during Paul's ongoing imprisonment he wrote the letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon.



**5. Summarize Paul's appearance before Festus in Acts 25:1-12 and state its relevance to us.**

Yet again Paul demonstrates his knowledge of his rights under Roman law and uses this knowledge to further the gospel. Festus brings Paul to Caesarea to speak. This location was close enough to Jerusalem yet offered continued protection for Paul to freely speak. During his trial before Festus, Paul appeals to Caesar, thus continuing to fulfill his ministry.

A point of note: It is speculation, but recall that Cornelius was a Roman Centurion at Caesarea. It is very likely that he could have been among the guard that protected Paul.

**6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Paul clearly demonstrates his faithfulness and serves as an example for us. Paul not only teaches faithfulness as a core characteristic of Christianity but also demonstrates this virtue. We must also remain faithful no matter the opposition. In our faithfulness we must look for opportunities to fulfill our role as teachers of our Lord's message of salvation. We do both of these in word and deed.

# Lesson #25

## Paul's Arrest and Imprisonment – Part 3

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The focus of this lesson is on Paul's arrest and imprisonment. Of special note is his continued faithfulness in the face of persecution and what we can learn.

The span of this lesson is from Acts 25:13 – 26:32.

### Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** The events leading to Paul's arrest and imprisonment and what this means to us.
- **Feel:** Value the importance of faithfulness in our calling as disciples of Jesus.
- **Do:** Seek opportunities to share the gospel no matter what the situation is in our lives.

### Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 25 – Paul's Arrest and Imprisonment – Part 3)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 25

### Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - Festus and Agrippa
- 1.2 - Paul before Agrippa
- 1.3 - Lessons

### Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What are some possible reasons and benefits of Paul speaking before several Roman officials?**

Paul was following the direction of our Lord to present the gospel before the Jews, Gentiles, Kings and Rulers. Paul made maximum use of these opportunities to do just that. The meetings were usually public and well attended by Jews and Gentiles alike (Acts 25:23). It would be of great interest. Paul, although in captivity, held a captive audience himself.

The benefit would be that many would hear and respond favorably to the gospel. It is recorded that even members of Caesar's household were converted to our Lord. It is highly probable that soldiers and other officials would convert, or at least reduce their persecution. The definite outcome is that the Church continued to grow, and God continued to be glorified.

## **2. What stands out as notable in Paul's appearance before Agrippa?**

Answers will vary. Of note is the comment by Festus in verse 25. Festus states that he found nothing worthy of death, but that Paul had appealed to the Emperor, as was his right. Also of note is that Festus is not telling everything that happened in Paul's case.

### **3. What is notable about Paul's speech before Agrippa?**

Answers will vary. Paul, once again, has the opportunity to describe his conversion. He begins with his position as a Jew and moves onto the events of his encounter on the road to Damascus and its outcome. Paul relates how he went from doing what the Jewish leaders wanted him to do, to now being falsely accused by these same leaders.

Of note here is a side lesson for us. People usually become seekers of our Lord for several reasons. These include becoming aware of a need, a significant emotional event, or someone brings them to an awareness of the need to change. The need for a significant emotional event is very evident in Paul's case. The deeper and longer beliefs are held then the more likely it will take a significant event, usually a negative one to bring someone to the Lord. Our role includes being there to help the person make this transition.

### **4. What is significant about Agrippa's response to Paul in Acts 26:28-32?**

Answers will vary. Agrippa may have made his statement in a sarcastic way, but Paul seized upon it to encourage him and the others present to make the decision to convert to our Lord. Although there is no indication that Agrippa or the others ever converted, it non-the-less put the decision on them. Agrippa also makes the statement that Paul is innocent and should be set free except for his appeal to Caesar. This sets the stage for the final period of Paul's ministry.

Sadly, many people take a "wait and see" attitude in making these kinds of decisions. If someone of influence does not make that decision, then they will likely also not convert. This is all too often true of parents and their children. A child is not likely to convert if parents do not or do not encourage a child to convert. Paul addresses this directly in Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:21. God has clearly placed the responsibility of spiritual leadership of the family on the fathers.

**5. What can you learn from this lesson that helps you with your spiritual growth and the spiritual growth of others?**

Answers will vary. Look for insights into allowing God to work in our lives. We often want immediate results from our efforts but that is not usually the case. Even with the masterful teachings of Jesus Himself, Peter, Paul and others did not all respond immediately. Our role is to obey our Lord by being ready and able to teach God's word. As Paul would say later, "God will give the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:6).

Another good lesson to share is the witness of how Jesus has affected us personally. We know our own conversion story. Be careful here, however. The story is about God's power and not about us. Using our personal conversion is a good place to start but we need to quickly transition to what our Lord can do for the ones we are speaking to.

# Lesson #26 – Paul's Journey to Rome

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The focus of this lesson is on Paul's final journey to Rome. Of special note is his continued faithfulness in the face of persecution and what we can learn. Include in your conclusion encouragement for students to remain faithful as we serve our Lord and give glory to God. The span of this lesson is from Acts 26:1 – 28:31.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** The events leading to Paul's journey to Rome and what it means to us.
- **Feel:** Value the importance of faithfulness to our calling as disciples of Jesus.
- **Do:** Seek opportunities to share the gospel no matter the situation in our lives.

## Support

- Text – Luke and Acts for Beginners, Mike Mazzalongo (2018)
- Video – Luke and Acts for Beginners – (Lesson 26 – Paul's Journey to Rome)
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 26

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 - The journey to Rome begins
  - 1.1.1 - Departure from Caesarea.
  - 1.1.2 - Paul's warning
- 1.2 - The journey
  - 1.2.1 - The storm
  - 1.2.2 - Paul's exhortation
  - 1.2.3 - Rescue
- 1.3 - Paul's stay in Malta
- 1.4 - Paul in Rome
- 1.5 - Epilogue

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a "right or wrong" response.

## **1. Why is it important for Luke to provide details such as time, location, names and event?**

This allows his narrative to be researched and proven correct. It is a form of internal validity that offers readers insights into the truthfulness of his account. It has the same value to us today as we face challenges to the accuracy of scripture.

## **2. Summarize the events of Paul's warning, the storm, and the rescue from Acts 27:1-44. What can we learn from this?**

Although Paul and the other experienced travelers knew of the danger, it was decided to travel on. A storm comes, just as Paul expected and the travelers were in peril. Paul tells the travelers that none will be lost. Finally, after many days of travel in peril, they are shipwrecked but are rescued on Malta.

Paul knows that he will be in Rome so he has confidence that none will be lost. His exhortation lays the foundation for those on the ship to see the power of God. Although they would face more dangers, they would survive. After being shipwrecked on Malta, Paul uses this opportunity to further the gospel in that place.

This episode demonstrates that God is in charge. Recall from Luke 8:22 that the disciples were in a boat with Jesus when a storm came up. Jesus calms the storm and teaches a lesson on faith. This is Paul's opportunity to teach the travelers and us about faith. God always remains in control through life's storms. We may face danger, even death, but we continue to trust in God.

### **3. Summarize the events on Malta and what we learn from this example.**

Paul uses every opportunity to teach God's word. Through miracles and teaching, many believe Paul's message and are converted to Jesus. This is consistent with Paul's normal efforts and his exhortation to be ready to teach always (in season and out – 2 Timothy 4:2).

We will also find ourselves in storms and danger but must always be ready. We don't know that God hasn't placed us in a situation because those who are experiencing storms in their lives can be taught about Jesus. God places the responsibility to carry the good news of salvation in our hands (2 Corinthians 4:7). He will bring the seeker and the teacher together so that His will is carried out. That's the message behind Romans 8:28. God does the calling and we help the seeker answer.

### **4. Summarize the events of Paul's time in Rome.**

Paul and the rest arrive safely to Rome where Paul is placed in house arrest. Paul uses this time and situation to continue his ministry. He calls the Jewish leaders together. They accept Paul's teachings and bring yet others to listen to him. As a result, some believe while others still resist. This is the normal pattern for Paul and the reactions of those hearing God's word. Note Luke's statement in Acts 28:27 that the hearers had become dull. It is true that no matter who teaches the truth of God's word, there are those who cannot or will not respond as God wills. Paul then shifts his focus to teaching Gentiles. He doesn't close the door to his Jewish brethren, he simply shifts the emphasis. Paul used his time to teach all that would listen. He also wrote the prison letters (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon). All of this shows clearly the path put before him by our Lord beginning in Acts 9 when Paul was converted. He would indeed follow God's will.



## 5. What do you see as the primary lesson from the Book of Acts?

Answers will vary. Look for responses that indicate that God has a plan and we must follow it. No matter who we are or in what situation we find ourselves, God will use us. We must accept God's will ourselves and then teach others and help others do the same.

The characters in Acts clearly demonstrate their faithfulness and serve as an example for us. They not only teach faithfulness as a core characteristic of Christians but demonstrate it through their actions in good times and hard times. We must also remain faithful no matter the opposition or situation. In our faithfulness we must look for opportunities to fulfill our role as teachers of our Lord's message of salvation. We do that in word and deed.

**In all things we give God the glory as we live as faithful servants.**