
Luke

Key Verse

Luke 19:10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. (NKJV)

Focus on Humanity of Jesus

The gospel of Luke presents Jesus as the Son of man, emphasizing His humanity. Luke was a physician (**Col 4:14**) who recorded details about Jesus' humanity including:

- His birth, circumcision, and childhood (**Luke 2**)
- His age at baptism and genealogy (**Luke 3**)
- His weeping over Jerusalem (**Luke 19**)
- His sweating of blood in agony (**Luke 22**)
- His comforting the women who wept for Him (**Luke 23**)
- His eating after His resurrection (**Luke 24**)

Luke examined firsthand accounts of Jesus' life to produce an accurate gospel for Theophilus (identity unknown) (**Luke 1:1-4**).

Themes

Jesus as Savior, universal good news, the poor and outcast, prayer, joy

Genealogy Compared to Matthew

The gospels contain two genealogies of Jesus. **Matthew 1** records Jesus' kingly genealogy through Joseph (Jesus' stepfather). **Luke 3** records Jesus' human genealogy through Mary (Jesus' mother). This is consistent with Matthew presenting Jesus as the King of the Jews and Luke presenting Jesus as the Son of man (His humanity). (Note: **Luke 3:23** says Joseph was only thought to be in this genealogy. Heli was Mary's father and Joseph's father-in-law.)

Author

Luke (author of Luke and Acts) may have been a Gentile and the only non-Jewish author in the New Testament. In **Colossians 4:14**, Luke is listed among the Gentile names instead of Jewish ones.

Personal Reflection and Application

What does it mean to be lost? We've heard of people losing their income, a loved one, or their health, but the ultimate loss is loss of soul.

Luke 9:25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?

- When you are lost, you are a loss to yourself. You have no peace or joy of God.
- When you are lost, you are a loss to your loved ones. You can't provide for them spiritually.
- When you are lost, you are a loss to God. You are not able to have fellowship with Him. He desperately wants you, but will not save you against your will.

Small Group Conversation Guide

Blessings

- Do you do as God directs even if it doesn't make sense to you ([Luke 5:3-5](#))?
- When God blesses you, do you share the blessing with others ([Luke 5:7](#))?
- Do you see blessings from God's point of view ([Luke 5:10-11](#))?

Gratitude

In the story of the leper ([Luke 17:11-19](#)), leprosy pictures sin as separation from God. The lepers stood afar off and cried. He tested their faith. They had to obey the test of truth. Only one leper did the right thing.

- How often do you express gratitude for what He has done for you?
- What can we do to remember to express our gratitude?

Leadership Principles from Luke

See Potential

Notice when Jesus' parents made the purification offering for Mary that they couldn't afford to offer a lamb ([Luke 2:22-24](#)). From its beginning, Jesus' life identified Him with the poor. If you are a leader from humble beginnings, take heart, you are in good company. Do you look past the humble beginnings of others and see their potential as Jesus sees them?

Listen and Ask

The difference between good and great leaders is their ability to **listen** and **ask** questions. Read [Luke 2:46](#) to see an example.

Your Key

The key to Jesus' development of wisdom and favor with God was His relationship with His Father ([Luke 2:49-52](#)). Your key to development of wisdom and favor with God is your relationship with Jesus, the Word of God. What is the state of your relationship with Jesus?

Humble Example

Notice that Jesus did not push to the front of the line to be baptized nor did He schedule a private audience with John for the baptism ([Luke 3:21](#)). All the people were baptized, then Jesus was baptized. He chose to humble Himself and make Himself of no reputation ([Php 2:5-11](#)).

As a leader, how can your humble attitude be an encouragement to those under your care?

God-given Purpose

When Jesus stood up to read in the synagogue, what did He read ([Luke 4:16-21](#))? What did Jesus say His God-given purpose was? Reflect on your God-given purpose.

Pray Before Deciding

When you must make a decision, what is the first thing you do? Before choosing His disciples, Jesus spent the night in prayer ([Luke 6:12-13](#)). Some of us jump into analysis before praying or perhaps offer a cursory prayer. How many of us spend a substantial amount of time in prayer before we make a decision? What can you do to incorporate prayer as your first step in decision making?

Be Wary of World-colored Glasses

Read [Luke 7:36-50](#). This story reminds us to be wary of our “world-colored” glasses when forming an opinion of others. What thoughts come to mind when you see someone like the woman in the story seek Christ? Do you question Christ’s willingness to forgive her? Do you judge her? What would it take to see her as Christ sees her?

Diverse Team

In the first few verses of [Luke 8](#), we find Jesus “on tour” with many of His followers. Even though He was God in the flesh, He surrounded Himself with a diverse “team” unified around a common goal and believing in the mission. As a leader, have you built a diverse team? What are you doing to unify them around a common goal? How do you build belief in your mission?

Stretch, Then Refresh

Jesus sent out His 12 disciples to preach to their world. He equipped them and gave them the power and authority to cast out demons, make decisions, and be His representatives. [Luke 9:6](#) says the 12 disciples “departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.” Interestingly, when they returned, Jesus “took them and went aside privately into a deserted place...” ([Luke 9:10](#)). This is a great reminder that, as a leader, you have to stretch and refresh. He stretched the 12 to do something they had never done, then He brought them in for private training, encouragement, and rejuvenation.

As a leader, how are you intentionally helping your followers stretch their gifts and talents? Do you limit their personal growth by not giving them challenging opportunities? Follow Jesus’ example. Stretch your followers. Then make sure you provide times to refresh and restore them.

Internship

Jesus developed His disciples by placing them in internships ([Luke 10:1-2](#)). Consider your followers. Are there some who would benefit from an internship opportunity? This may include taking on responsibility for some part of your ministry or you may arrange for internships within another leader’s area of responsibility.

Nurture Your Fig Tree

Reflect on the parable of the fig tree in [Luke 13:6-9](#). Place yourself in the position of the keeper of the vineyard. The fig tree is a person or ministry under your care. Consider the Lord as the “certain man” who is pointing out the fig tree’s lack of productivity. To what lengths will you go to nurture that person or ministry to encourage the result that God seeks?

Faithful in Small Things

Leaders get excited about progress. They enjoy being out front challenging the process. What do you do when you must fulfill small, seemingly menial tasks? Do you perform them with the same vigor and passion as you do “larger” tasks? Jesus says in [Luke 16:10](#), “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.” Don’t let the small things discourage you. Do them with excellence. Your Heavenly Father who sees the small things will reward you with more!

Listen or Look for Faults?

Consider the nature of the people in the crowds around Jesus as He shared the parables in [Luke 15](#).

- **Publicans:** social outcasts of their day, notoriously dishonest, gathered more taxes than Rome required
- **Sinners:** those who everyone knew had “missed the mark” regarding righteousness
- **Pharisees:** zealots who were outwardly religious, strived to impress others, condemned others, avoided even touching sinners
- **Scribes:** spent time copying scriptures, others accepted them as experts, their attitudes were similar to those of the Pharisees

The Publicans and sinners came to **listen** to Jesus. The Pharisees and scribes came to **find fault** with Jesus. When you hear God’s Word or read it, do you seek to listen to Jesus or do you look for fault with God’s Word? Are you critical toward others? Do you judge before you know the whole story? As a leader, are you willing to give those who have failed a second chance? God wants us to be both wise and compassionate. True leaders achieve a balance.

Bad News, Good News

If you were absolutely certain that you would succeed, in what way would you serve the Lord? If you are hesitating because of doubt or fear, you are leaning on yourself too much. The **bad news** is your strength can never be sufficient. The **good news** is things which are impossible for you are possible for God ([Luke 18:27](#)). Pray that God makes it clear if your heart’s yearning is aligned with His plans for you. Promise Him that you will lean on Him.

Have You Asked?

When Jesus met the blind man, He didn’t heal him immediately ([Luke 18:35-43](#)). He asked the man to say what he wanted. God wants us to talk to Him about our needs. James tells us we do not have because we do not ask ([Jas 4:2](#)). Are you regularly talking to God about your needs? Do you praise Him for how He answers you (even if He says, no)?

Beware of Flattery

Consider the leadership principle in [Luke 19:28-44](#). The crowd that was praising Jesus on His way into Jerusalem is the same crowd who wanted to kill Him a few hours later. Be aware, those who deify may also crucify. Be cautious of people who flatter you at the expense of others.

Focus on Leadership

Remember, when it comes to leadership, it’s not about you. In His last hours, Jesus advised His disciples that their **focus** should not be on where they fit into a hierarchy or what place of honor they deserved ([Luke 22:24-26](#)). That’s the way of the world, but is not His way. When it comes to leadership, it should be about others and how He wants you to serve.

Drink the Bitter Cup

When you pray, do you take God's desires into account? Consider how Jesus approached the Father in prayer ([Luke 22:41-44](#)). Notice the answer He received. Though the Father did not remove the cup from Jesus, He did send an angel to strengthen Him for the difficult task ahead. Your cup will never be as difficult as the one Jesus had; however, there will be times when God will require you to drink the bitter cup to fulfill His plan for your life. As Jesus did, pay attention to what God provides for the challenge and keep earnestly praying for strength to do His will.

Forgive Them

One frequent test of your leadership is how you deal with performance failures of those you lead. Are you able to forgive, correct, and help them move forward? Read [Luke 23:24](#). If Jesus forgave those who put Him on the cross, how difficult would it be for you to forgive those who upset your plans or disappoint you?

Wait for an Invitation

Read [Luke 24:27-32](#). First notice, that Jesus did not invite Himself to abide with them. He waited for an **invitation**. Pushing your thoughts on others often causes resistance. Wait. Be alert for an invitation to speak. Next, notice that even before the travelers realized who had opened the Scriptures to them, their hearts burned from the words. Be ready to share the gospel when you do get an invitation.

Something to Find in Each Chapter

As you read through the book, it may help to have something to find in each group of chapters.

Try these:

01. Why Zacharias was made mute	02. What Simeon said when he held Jesus in his arms
03. What people heard when Jesus was baptized	04. How Satan tempted Jesus in three ways
05. What Peter said after the miraculous catch of fish	06. Why Jesus was criticized for healing the man's hand
07. What surprised Jesus about the faith of the centurion	08. Who Jesus claimed was in his true family
09. How the apostles packed for their missions trip	10. Why Martha was not sitting and listening to Jesus
11. What Jesus said to the woman who blessed Mary	12. What God gives people who seek the kingdom of God
13. Why the ruler was hypocritical to criticize a healing	14. What Jesus required of people to be His disciples
15. What happens in heaven when one sinner repents	16. What the rich man remembered about his life
17. What percentage of the lepers thanked Jesus	18. How the Pharisee and tax collector prayed differently
19. How the nobleman rewarded his faithful servants	20. What happens if "the stone" (Christ) is rejected
21. How God evaluates giving based upon percentage	22. Why Jesus asked the disciples to pray
23. What Jesus promised one of the crucified thieves	24. Which Hebrew Scriptures prophesied of Jesus