

# The Book of Luke

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Unless otherwise noted, the ESV; capitalized will be used throughout.

We are going to compare how the gospel writers recorded John's baptism of Jesus.

The Literal Standard Version<sup>1</sup> is used below:

John Baptizes Jesus (in all 4 gospels)	
Scripture	Text/Commentary
Matt. 3:13 Then Jesus comes from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be immersed by him,...	<p>Matthew mentions the geography. Jesus was raised in the Galilee region. Traveling to Jordan would have been a fairly long trip which probably involved taking a boat across the Sea of Galilee.</p> <p>There is a lot more going on here than idle curiosity, "I wonder what John is doing?"</p>
Matt. 3:14 ...but John was forbidding Him, saying, "I have need to be immersed by You—and You come to me?"	<p>There is some reticence on the part of John when it comes to baptizing Jesus. This suggests that John understood that his baptism was seen as a ritual of cleansing (see Luke 11:38), associated with the coming King (John 1:23). For this reason, John believes that he should be baptized by Jesus, and not the other way around. Therefore, John did not fully appreciate what his baptism of Jesus actually meant.</p>
Matt. 3:15 But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit [it] now, for thus it is fitting to us to fulfill all righteousness," then he permits Him.	<p>Despite John's reticence, Jesus urges John to baptize Him. This baptism would have been unique. Even though Jesus has been on this earth for 30 years and has interacted previously with some of the great scholars of the Temple, this marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry.</p> <p>Jesus tells John that he will need to baptize Him, which fulfills all righteousness. Let me suggest that the baptism of Jesus was Jesus ending His private life and entering into a public ministry, as per the plan of God. In short, this baptism indicated that Jesus was entering into the plan of God. Jesus' public actions over the next few years would bring Him to the cross. Obviously, Jesus did not deserve to be crucified; but His public ministry would lead to the cross.</p> <p>By His sinless life and by going to the cross, Jesus would fulfill all righteousness.</p>

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<sup>1</sup> This is a 2020 translation which claims to be *strictly literal and in modern English*.

## John Baptizes Jesus (in all 4 gospels)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Matt. 3:16 And having been immersed, Jesus immediately went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him,...	John baptized Jesus. When He came up out of the waters, the heavens opened. I believe that Matthew alone says that the heavens were opened <i>to Him (to Jesus)</i> . I would understand this to mean that Jesus had full access to God the Holy Spirit for His public ministry.
Matt. 3:17a ...and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming on Him,...	<p>People there observe the Spirit descend upon Jesus in the form of a dove, coming out of heaven. Some of you may have had the rare experience of a bird landing on your shoulder, and perhaps, this is sort of what this looked like to the disciples of John. Matthew focuses on Jesus seeing this take place.</p> <p>The Holy Spirit is specifically said to come upon Him, suggesting the Holy Spirit's empowerment of Jesus.</p>
Matt. 3:17b ...and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delighted."	God speaks aloud so that He could be heard by the people there. This is a very rare occurrence. The only other time I can recall God speaking and being heard by a large number of people was in the book of Exodus when God gave the Ten Commandments to the Hebrews at Mount Sinai.
The Ten Commandments condemn all mankind; but Jesus saves us from our sins. How fitting that these are the two times when God spoke aloud to His people. God first condemns all mankind (as all of sinned); but then He offers up His Son to save us.	
Jesus, through His entire life, enjoyed the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. However, this publically associates the Lord with the Holy Spirit.	
Mark 1:9 And it came to pass in those days, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was immersed by John in the Jordan;...	<p>Mark immediately records the action. Arriving to where John is teaching, Jesus is baptized by him.</p> <p>Jesus comes out of Nazareth (only Mark mentions this). This would suggest that Jesus is living and working in Nazareth, where He was raised. Jesus would be prepared for His ministry by the Word of God, which is taught in the synagogue in Nazareth. However, He has not revealed to anyone, up to this point, that He is the Messiah.</p>

## John Baptizes Jesus (in all 4 gospels)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Mark 1:10 ...and immediately coming up from the water, He saw the heavens dividing, and the Spirit coming down on Him as a dove;...	In the book of Mark, it is Jesus who emerges from His baptism, only to see the heavens open Himself, and the Holy Spirit light upon him, as if a dove. So we see this from the point of view of Jesus.
Mark 1:11 ...and a voice came out of the heavens, "You are My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delighted."	The voice coming out of the heavens speaks directly to Jesus at this time. Since these are God's manifestations, I think we can reasonably suppose that all of the people there heard one thing (" <b>This is My beloved Son...</b> ") and that Jesus heard something different (" <b>You are My beloved Son...</b> "). Or, perhaps unbelievers heard, <i>this is My beloved Son</i> ; and believers heard, <i>You are My beloved Son</i> .
Luke 3:21 And it came to pass, in all the people being immersed, Jesus also being immersed, and praying, Heaven was opened,...	Interestingly enough, Luke gives the shortest record of this event. People are being immersed by John; then Jesus is immersed by him, and while praying, apparently.  Heaven is <i>opened up</i> , a phrase explained by v. 22:
Luke 3:22 ...and the Holy Spirit came down in a bodily appearance, as if a dove, on Him, and a voice came out of Heaven, saying, "You are My Son, the Beloved, in You I delighted."	Luke records the Holy Spirit descending upon the Lord as a dove; and Luke records what God the Father said directly to His Son.  Seeing the Holy Spirit, represented by a dove, coming and landing upon the Lord is a sign for the people there. There is no reason to think that Jesus did not have the Holy Spirit before.
John 1:29 On the next day John sees Jesus coming to him and says, "Behold, the Lamb of God, Who is taking away the sin of the world;..."	John, during his ministry at the Jordan River, sees Jesus coming from a distance. John knows that this is Jesus, and he tells the people, "This is the Man I have been telling you about. He is the Lamb of God, and He will take away the sins of the world."

## John Baptizes Jesus (in all 4 gospels)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
John 1:30–31 ...this is He concerning Whom I said, After me comes a man who has come before me,...	Notice these very important words of John: “He was before me.” Remember who was born first? John was. We studied this in Luke 2, where John’s mother was pregnant about 6 months before Mary was. Furthermore, John’s public ministry began before the public ministry of Jesus. Here, John recognizes the eternal nature of the Lord’s Deity. This is how Jesus came before John.
John 1:31 ...and I did not know Him, but that He might be revealed to Israel, because of this I came immersing in water.”	Interestingly enough, John also says, “I did not know Him.” This is more difficult to interpret. Did they never meet in Jerusalem for one of the festive gatherings? Or did John not fully appreciate Who Jesus was until most recently? This latter explanation makes more sense to me.
John 1:32 And John testified, saying, “I have seen the Spirit coming down out of Heaven as a dove, and [that] One remained on Him;...	Notice the stark difference of John’s gospel here from the previous 3. John the herald (not the same as the gospel writer John) testifies as to what he saw with his own eyes. John also appears to have heard something different than Jesus heard and from what the people there heard.
John 1:33 ...and I did not know Him, but He who sent me to immerse in water, He said to me, On whomsoever you may see the Spirit coming down, and remaining on Him, this is He who is immersing in the Holy Spirit;...	<p>For a second time, John testifies, “I did not know Him.” Again, I think that this means that John did not fully appreciate just Who Jesus the Messiah is.</p> <p>There are times in the Christian life when you hear a doctrine on several occasions, but, at some point you hear it and fully understand it, as you are able to put all of the pieces together. John the Herald is now beginning to appreciate Who Jesus is.</p> <p>John the Herald tells us one more thing, that we do not get in the other gospels. John was told that the Son of God would be the One upon Whom he saw the Holy Spirit come down upon and remain on Him. So, the descending of the Holy Spirit like a dove upon Jesus appears to be for John’s benefit. It further confirmed Who Jesus is.</p> <p>Using other phraseology here, John tells us the John the Herald baptizes with water, but Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit.</p>

## John Baptizes Jesus (in all 4 gospels)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
John 1:34 ...and I have seen, and have testified, that this is the Son of God.”	<p>John testifies as to Who Jesus is. John is testifying to the true identify of Jesus; which is apparently something which he did not fully appreciate until this time.</p> <p>Jesus will testify as to His identity as the Messiah not too far in the future from this incident.</p>

John, as he often does, has the most interesting or the most unusual view of the event.

On a personal note, when choosing a gospel to exegete, I made a decision to pursue the book of Luke rather than the book of John (I exegeted the first chapter of both of them to help make that decision). What drew me to John was his unique perspective and the fact that he was isolated for a time on the Isle of Patmos, which is what gave him the space and breathing room to write (which may not have been John's natural inclination). I also knew that John's Greek was much easier than Luke's.

However, I eventually chose Luke because his gospel leads naturally to the book of Acts; he provides a great deal of historical background; his Greek is more complex, but then, more interesting; and there is a tremendous emphasis placed upon the teaching of Jesus more than on the acts of Jesus.

Given my age, I don't know if I will have the opportunity to fully explore a second gospel.

### Lessons 102–103: Luke 3:23

### Who is the son of Heli?

The second half of Luke 3 begins the genetic line of Jesus, working backwards from Jesus all the way to Adam (the genealogy in Matthew begins with Abraham and moves forward to Jesus).

Dividing up the genealogy which follows is somewhat difficult (that is, how many names should be placed in each verse or in each passage?). What Dr. Peter Pett does is interesting. He divides up the genealogy into many sets of seven names. I eventually opted for dividing up the names into groups of 14 in my own chapter-by-chapter study ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Unlike Pett, I chose to not include Jesus in the first list of 14, but began with Joseph's name instead. In any case, Jesus is a part of this genealogy and Joseph is not (I will explain that as we go further in this study).

In this weekly e-mailed study, I will stick with the ESV text, which divides everything up verse by verse (which is what we would expect; although chapter and verse divisions were not a part of the original text).



Luke actually presents Mary's genealogical line; so even though Joseph will be named as if he in this line. However, this is actually the line of Mary that Luke records. Although Mary's name does not appear anywhere in this line, it is still her line. I will explain how we are able to read this into the text (it is tricky but you will understand it).

This genealogy is fascinating, because the number of names between Jesus and Nathan (the first person that I *know* in this line, except for Jesus and Joseph) is about the same length as a combination of the two lines which come after (David to Abraham and then Terah to Adam). I have studied these second two lines historically—I have spent much of my Christian life doing that. And yet, the names in this genealogical line that I will never study in any depth—that list is just as long. This half chapter is the only place where we find the names of the men beginning with Heli (Mary's father; Jesus' grandfather<sup>2</sup>) and going back to Nathan.

It is also fascinating the detail and the records which were kept on these men who were, insofar as we know, nothing special. Is there a David among them or an Abraham? Or a Noah? We don't really know. My initial instinct with this first list of names is to say, *no*. But I must quickly add, I really don't know. There was no Scripture recorded during that period of time.

Luke 3:23a **Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age,...**

This marks the beginning of our Lord's public ministry, when He is about 30 years old. It is a reasonable assumption that Jesus being baptized by John began the Lord's public ministry. However, before we begin to study His earthly ministry (which is the bulk of the book of Luke), we will look at His genealogical past.

At first, it appears as though this genealogical line is thrown illogically into the second half of Luke 3, almost as an afterthought; but this placement is very logical. A bird's eye view helps us to understand this:

A Bird's Eye View of Luke 1–4	
Chapter	Brief Description
Luke 1	The Birth of John the Herald
Luke 2	The Birth of Jesus the Messiah
Luke 3A	The Ministry of John the Herald
Luke 3B	The Genealogy of Jesus
Luke 4A	The Temptation of Jesus

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<sup>2</sup> Not to worry; I will justify this statement.

## A Bird's Eye View of Luke 1–4

Chapter	Brief Description
Luke 4B	Jesus Begins His Public Ministry
<p>Logically, we could have placed the genealogy at the beginning of Luke 2, but that would have ruined the flow of Luke 1 to Luke 2. Placed here, after the baptism of Jesus and before the Lord begins His public ministry makes perfect sense.</p> <hr/> <p>Luke is saying, <i>this is Who the man Jesus is; these are His origins.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Before beginning with the genealogy, Luke will tie this Jesus in the genealogy to the Jesus Who was baptized by John and Who will begin His ministry to the people of Israel.</p> <hr/>	

Luke 3:23a **Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age,...** (NKJV)

Several times, I have suggested that this takes place around A.D. 25. This is because the Lord was born 4–6 B.C. The calendar which we have accepted originally wanted to place the birth of our Lord at 1 B.C. (or at A.D. 1), but there was a miscalculation. So, many years after this calendar had been accepted and placed into general use, it was determined that it missed its intended mark by a few years.

Luke 3:23a **Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age,...** (NKJV)

There are actually a couple of things happening in this verse which most readers would be unaware of. First, v. 23 begins with the kai conjunction (which properly ties it to the previous verse and previous section). This tells us that Luke, the human author, consciously added the Lord's genealogy here. Luke as the author and editor found this to be the right place to consider the Lord's genealogy.

The subject of this verse is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular nominative of autos (αὐτός) [pronounced *ow-TOSS*], which means, *he*. Strong's #846. Although this is often interpreted as being a reflexive pronoun, it is not necessarily one; and there is a reflexive pronoun in the Greek, but which is *not* used here. I know that it seems weird that I say that, but I mention this, because many translators treat this as a reflexive pronoun. The reflexive pronoun is heautou (ἐαυτοῦ) [pronounced *heh-ow-TO*], which is clearly not what we have here. Translations are split about half and half, between those who see this as a reflexive pronoun and those who do not.

V. 23 using autos as a reflexive pronoun:

Len Gane Paraphrase	<b>And Jesus, himself, starting [his ministry] was about thirty years old...</b>
A. Campbell's Living Oracles	<b>Now Jesus was himself about thirty years in subjection,...</b>

God's Truth (Tyndale)	And Jesus himself was about thirty years of age when he began,...
Israeli Authorized Version	And Y'shuw`a himself began to be about thirty years of age,...

V. 23 using autos as a simple pronoun:

Bible in Basic English	And Jesus at this time was about thirty years old,...
Bible in Worldwide English	Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work.
American English Bible	Well, Jesus came into his power when he was about thirty years old,...
Christian Community (1988)	When Jesus made his appearance, he had reached the age of thirty years.

The main verb is the imperfect active indicative of *to be*. What we have here are two nominatives (*autos* and *Jesus*), connected by the verb *to be*. Literally, this reads, *He is Jesus*; or *[The] Same is Jesus...*

What we have here in the Greek is different from the NKJV (and many other translations). The most literal translation, so far, is: *The Same [one] is Jesus,...* That is, Luke is tying Jesus, the man just baptized by John, to the Jesus of the genealogy which is to follow. He is One and the same Person.

The word *began* is the present middle participle of *archomai* (ἄρχομαι) [pronounced *AR-khom-ahee*], which means, *beginning; being the first [to do something], the one commencing (in order of time)*. Strong's #756.

The words *his ministry* are not found in the Greek, but reasonably implied.

Other translations read:

Analytical Literal Translation	And Jesus Himself was about thirty years old when He began <i>[His public ministry]</i> ,...
Complete Apostles' Bible	Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age,...
Updated Bible Version 2.1	And Jesus was about thirty years of age.
Voice in the Wilderness	And Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age,...
World English Bible	Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years old,...

Even though, most of these are considered very literal translations, they did not translate these first words as literally as they could have. The most common way to translate two nominatives, *X* and *Y*, where there is the verb *to be*, is, *X is Y*.

A more literal rendering would be: **And the Same is Jesus, having begun [His ministry], [being] about 30 years [of age],...** The bracketed words are added to smooth out the translation; they are not found in the original Greek text.

The intent of the Greek is to tie Jesus in the previous verse to the Jesus of this new section. This same Jesus is the One in the previous passage—the Man just baptized by John the Herald and the man at the beginning of this genealogy are the same man. This verse specifically looks back to what has come before. Luke is writing, **now, this same [man] is Jesus [Whom I have been writing about]; He began [His ministry] when He was about 30 years [of age]**. But, to be clear, the words *His ministry* or *His teaching* do not occur in the text of this verse.

How do we get those words, *His ministry*? This comes out from the present middle participle of *archomai* (ἄρχομαι) [pronounced *AR-khom-ahee*], which means, *beginning; being the first [to do something], the one commencing (in order of time)*. Strong's #756. This same Jesus is beginning something; so many translations have inserted, at this point, *His ministry, His teaching*. Interestingly enough, this was not inserted by the KJV (which has a powerful influence on Bible translations, even to this day). The other interpretation is, *Jesus...is beginning [at] about 30 years of age*. Even though *what* He is beginning is open to interpretation, given what comes first (His baptism) and what comes after (His teaching, which makes up the bulk of the book of Luke), we may reasonably insert the words *His teaching, His ministry*.

Luke 3:23a **And He [even] He was Jesus, beginning, about years thirty,...** (Kukis slavishly literal translation) or...

Luke 3:23a **And the Same [One] is Jesus, beginning, about thirty years [old]...** (Kukis moderately literal translation)

What is Jesus beginning at this point? His public ministry. What we will study from this point forward (that is, *after* we complete His genealogy) is His public ministry, which is the time frame of the Lord's life that we are most familiar with.

We know that Jesus, for nearly all of His life, has studied the Scriptures (these would have been the Old Testament Scriptures, as there was no New Testament at this time), and is prepared to launch His ministry. Jesus, in His humanity, did not automatically know everything that He needed to know. Spiritual knowledge was developed in his soul over this period of 30 years. In other words, Jesus learned Bible doctrine as a child and as a young adult. We are told this in Luke 2:40 **And the Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor [= grace] of God was upon Him.** Also Luke 2:52 **And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.** This *must* refer to Jesus' humanity.

God's knowledge never increases. God does not learn something new every day. Let's say that we do something out of the ordinary; do you think that God then looks down and

remarks, “Well, I’ll be doggoned; I did not see that coming!”? God knows every single decision that we will make. He knew this in eternity past.

Jesus is God, but in His humanity, Jesus did not access the perfect, complete knowledge which God possessed. This is the doctrine of kenosis, where Jesus, in His humanity, voluntarily restricted the assets which He had as God. It would be quite a theological discussion to determine whether Jesus ever accessed His divine attributes. I would lean towards our Lord *never* accessing His Divine nature throughout His entire life to His death during the crucifixion—however, this is not a theological position which I have fully developed. Obviously, at specific times when He is glorified, the physical representation of this could have been done by God the Father and not by Himself as God the Son.

For the Doctrine of Kenosis, see lesson #069 or Luke 2.

<a href="#">Luke Lessons #1–100 (html)</a>	<a href="#">Luke Lessons #1–100 (pdf)</a>	<a href="#">Luke Lessons #1–100 (wpd)</a>
<a href="#">Luke 2—HTML</a>	<a href="#">Luke 2—PDF</a>	<a href="#">Luke 2—WPD</a>

So far, in the genealogy, we have covered a third of a verse.

Luke 3:23a **And the Same [One] is Jesus, beginning, about thirty years [old]...** (Kukis moderately literal translation)

Let’s move to v. 23b:

Luke 3:23b **...being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph,...**

Unlike v. 23a, 23b is translated quite literally.

*Joseph means let him add.*

Jesus is not said here to be the Son of Joseph, but He is *supposed* to be the Son of Joseph, meaning that others simply assumed that relationship between Joseph and Jesus. Given that Luke carefully documents that Jesus is not the actual Son of Joseph in the previous chapters, this is exactly in line with that.

At this point in time, and throughout most of the Lord’s public ministry, people who knew Jesus, met Him or knew of Him did not fully appreciate the virgin birth; and would have simply assumed that Joseph is the father. People did not come up to Jesus, at various intervals of His ministry, and say, “So, You are not really the Son of Joseph?” This doctrine is fundamental to Christology; but not necessarily one which was explained or discussed during the Lord’s public ministry. Jesus did not, in the middle of a teaching session, look at those in His periphery, and remark, “By the way, do you know that I was born of a virgin!”

Luke, who probably never met Jesus in person, understood very well the importance of the virgin birth. Matthew, who tied Jesus very carefully to the Old Testament, also understood the importance of the virgin birth.

It is likely that very few people truly appreciated the virgin birth of the Lord until *after* His death, burial and resurrection. Remember, understanding in the Christian life is a process; it does not happen all at once. You yourself did not believe in Jesus, and then, 2 seconds later, understood everything that you should know about Jesus. It is a process. I was saved in 1972 and am writing this in 2020; yet I am still learning.

Luke 3:23b ...being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph,...

There are two verbs in this phrase. The first is the present participle of Strong's #1510: *ôn/ousa/on* (ὢν/οὔσα/ὢν) [pronounced *own/OO-sah/on*], which means, *being, be, is, are; come; have*. Strong's #5607 (some specific verb forms have their own Strong's # at times).

The second verb is actually the main verb, even though it appears to be incidental to this phrase. It is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, imperfect passive indicative of *nomizô* (νομίζω) [pronounced *nom-IHD-zoh*]. It means, *to suppose, to think; to do by law (usage); to deem, to regard*. Strong's #3543.

Here is how many translators dealt with v. 23a-b:

Complete Jewish Bible	Yeshua was about thirty years old when he began his public ministry. It was supposed that he was a son of Yosef...
Israeli Authorized Version	And Y'shuw`a himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was regarded legally) the son of Yosef,...
An Understandable Version	And Jesus was about thirty years old when He began to teach. (It was assumed that) He was the son of Joseph,...
The Expanded Bible	<b>The Family History of Jesus</b> When Jesus began his ministry, he was about thirty years old. People thought that Jesus was Joseph's son... [ <sup>c</sup> they were unaware of the virginal conception].
Far Above All Translation	Now Jesus himself was about thirty years <i>old</i> , beginning <i>his ministry</i> , being, as was reckoned by law, <i>the son-in-law</i> of Joseph,...

This is the only place in this genealogy where we have the words, *the son of* (in the Greek, this is actually one word). No matter how your English translation reads, the words *the son of* occurs nowhere else in this line or in any subsequent verse.

Interestingly enough, the only place where we find the actual word *son* in the Lukian genealogy, is the only place where there is not an actual father-son relationship being stated.



Before we go any further into this genealogy, we need to consider Greek names and Hebrew names.

We have proper names in the Old Testament which do not exactly match their counterparts in the New Testament (depending upon the translation which you use). There are reasons for this.

When we translate from the Greek to the English, we try to find an English word that means the same thing. When we transliterate from the Greek to the English, we try to find a word that sounds the same.

### Greek and Hebrew Names in Genealogies

1. The Greek and Hebrew both have different alphabets; and these alphabets are both different from the English. There is no one-to-one correspondence between each and every letter in these 3 alphabets.
2. Even though we can find similar sounds in the Greek, Hebrew and English and match some of these up with their corresponding letters, there is not an easy letter-for-letter transliteration from any of these languages into the other.
3. For instance, there is no *j* in the Greek or the Hebrew, despite the many English Bible names which begin with a *J*, such as *Jacob*, *Judah*, *Joshua*, *Jesus*.
  - 1) The Greek name which we transliterate as *Judah* is louda (Ι'ουδά) [pronounced ee-oo-DAH].
  - 2) In the Hebrew, this is, Y<sup>e</sup>hûwdâh (יהודה) [pronounced yahoo-DAW].
  - 3) For most of you, when you read your Bibles, you do not see the names louda or Y<sup>e</sup>hûwdâh; you see *Judah*.
  - 4) In the Greek, *Jacob* is lakôb (Ι'ακώβ) [pronounced ee-ak-OBE].
  - 5) In the Hebrew, *Jacob* is Ya'ăqôb (יעקב) [pronounced yah-ğuh-KOH<sup>B</sup>V].
4. Some common names in the Hebrew end up with some significant differences when transliterated into the Greek; so that our English transliteration potentially gives us two very different-looking names. Most English Bibles try to retain some consistency and either use the English transliteration of the Hebrew (or the English transliteration of the Greek) consistently.
5. Here are some areas in which these two languages do not synch up:
  - 1) The *h* sound in the Greek is a rough breathing which occurs almost exclusively at the beginning of a word. It is not found in the middle of a word or at the end of a word (if memory serves, there are a few exceptions to this).
  - 2) So, from the Hebrew, we transliterate Shêm (שם) [pronounced shame] as *Shem*. The same name in the Greek is Sêm (Σήμ) [pronounced same], transliterated, *Sem* (as there is no *sh* sound in the Greek). Most Bibles transliterate this man's name as *Shem*, whether in the Old or New Testament, even though this is not a correct transliteration from the Greek.
  - 3) Similarly, there is no *h* at the end of a Greek word. The Hebrew name Nôach (נח) [pronounced NOH-ahkh], we know as *Noah*. The Greek noun Nôe (Νῶε) [pronounced NO-eh] is properly translated *Noe*; however, most English Bibles are going to have *Noah* in both testaments.



## Greek and Hebrew Names in Genealogies

- 4) Very often, when a name which ends with an *h* from the Hebrew; that same name is transliterated (from Hebrew to Greek) with an *s* at the end in the Greek.
  - (1) Let's look at the well-known name *Elijah*: the Hebrew is 'êlîyâh (הֵילִיָּא) [pronounced *ay-lee-YAW*] (there is another spelling as well). Strong's #452 BDB #45. *Elijah* is the most common transliteration from the Hebrew.
  - (2) The Greek version cannot have *Elijah*, as there is no *h* at the end of a Greek word. So, their transliteration is, instead, Hêlias (ἡλίας) [pronounced *hay-LEE-ass*], which is variously transliterated, *Elijah*, *Elias*; *Helias*. Strong's #2243.
  - (3) Transliterating from Hebrew to English, the most direct transliteration would be *Eliyah*; and from the Greek, the most direct transliteration would be, *Helias*. You may not even realize that this is the same name, if you view the closest English transliterations. However, most Bibles try to be consistent, so we usually read *Elijah* in the English translation of both Old and New Testaments (even though that is *not* the proper transliteration from the Greek).
  - (4) There are others like *Judah/Judas*, *Uriah/Urias*, etc.
6. The meanings are not always the same in the Greek as in the Hebrew. The more famous names will have the same meanings; the less famous names sometimes will not.
  - 1) In the Greek, *Judah* means, *he shall be praised*. In the Hebrew this means, *to praise, to be praised*. These are quite close in meaning.
  - 2) In the Greek, *Jacob* means, *heel-catcher or supplanter*. In the Hebrew, it means, *supplanter; insidious, deceitful*. The similarity of obvious.

Most translations try to maintain some sort of consistency, so that when you study one person in the Old Testament, you are not confused by a different name for him in the New.

Back to the genealogy:

Luke 3:23c ...**the son of Heli**,... [I continue to use the ESV; capitalized in this study, so the words *son of* will continue to be used, even though the word *son* is not actually found here.]

Even though the names in this line are not declined (many proper nouns are not declined), there is a definite article before each name, indicating the declension of the proper noun. These proper nouns are in the ablative (because each of them is preceded by a definite article in the ablative case), meaning *of* \_\_\_\_.

Whereas *Joseph* is *supposed* to be Jesus' father, that language is not used of any of the names which follow. Since this line does not match the line of Jesus in Matthew, we know that we must, therefore, be viewing the line of Mary. Jesus is the actual son of Mary and

Jesus is a descendant (or *son*) of Heli. Again, the definite article is in the ablative case, so we understand this to read, *Jesus...of Heli*. Since Jesus is not said to be the actual son of Joseph, but there are no such qualifier placed upon Heli, Jesus would be his son (or, more accurately, descendant). It is reasonable to suppose that Mary's father is named *Heli*, since Jesus is said to be his son (or, *descendant*).

The genealogical line of any person is actually two lines: the line of one's father and the line of one's mother. Since we have a whole different set of names in Matthew, which is clearly Joseph's line, by process of elimination (and by the wording), this is Mary's line.

It would be reasonable to suppose that Jesus (not Joseph) is *of Heli*. Or, as is inserted by the ESV (and many other translations), *the son of Heli*.

There are not many translations which get this, and so, most of them sound as if Joseph is the son of Heli; but he is not. The translations which follow actually translate this part of v. 23 incorrectly.

Christian Community (1988)	When Jesus made his appearance, he had reached the age of thirty years. He was known as the son of Joseph, whose father and forefathers were: Heli,...
Free Bible Version	Jesus was around thirty when he began his public ministry. People presumed he was the son of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Heli,...
God's Truth (Tyndale)	And Jesus himself was about thirty years of age when he began, being as men supposed the son of Joseph: which Joseph was the son of Heli:...
The Heritage Bible	And Jesus himself was beginning to be about thirty years, being, as was supposed, <sup>23</sup> the son of Joseph, who was of Heli,...
	<sup>23</sup> 3:23 as was supposed, nomizo, to do or be by the law. We have translated this word supposed, that which you would suppose since by law that is what is normally done; here its meaning is by law, because by law Jesus was the son of Joseph; but we have used supposed in order to be consistent with its use in all of its other 14 places where it clearly is suppose.
Complete Jewish Bible	Yeshua was about thirty years old when he began his public ministry. It was supposed that he was a son of Yosef who was of Eli,... [Take note of the more accurate transliterations of the names <i>Jesus</i> and <i>Joseph</i> in the CJB.]
The Expanded Bible	<p>The Family History of Jesus</p> <p>When Jesus began his ministry, he was about thirty years old. People thought that Jesus was Joseph's son [<sup>c</sup> they were unaware of the virginal conception].</p> <p>Joseph was the son of Heli [<sup>c</sup> "son" in Hebrew can mean "descendant," so there may be gaps in the genealogy].</p>

If I have named the Bible which you use most often, you may be confused by this passage, simply because the translation you use is misleading at this point. These versions, which are generally good translations; are offered as examples which fail at this point.

There are a number of translations which could be understood to go either way. That is, maybe it is Jesus Who is *of Heli* and maybe is it Joseph who is *of Heli*.

20 <sup>th</sup> Century New Testament	When beginning his work, Jesus was about thirty years old. He was regarded as the son of Joseph, whose ancestors were--Eli, Mattith, Levi, Melchiah, Janna, Joseph,... [I have included v. 24 for context; obviously, this could be taken in two different ways]
Len Gane Paraphrase	And Jesus, himself, starting [his ministry] was about thirty years old and was (as was commonly thought) the son of Joseph, who was [the son] of Heli,...

There are only a handful of translations which try to give us the actual sense of what is being said in this line. It is *Jesus*, and not Joseph, Who is the son of Heli. The translation below either make this point clear, or they are ambiguous enough so that it could go either way.

Wilbur Pickering's New T.	<b>Mary's genealogy</b> <sup>16</sup> (Beginning His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (so it was supposed) a son of Joseph, Jesus Himself <sup>17</sup> was of Eli, <sup>18</sup> ... [Pickering's footnotes at this point are quite extensive, and, therefore, not included here; however, they may be found in Luke 3 ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).]
Far Above All Translation	Now Jesus himself was about thirty years <i>old</i> , beginning <i>his ministry</i> , being, as was reckoned by law, <i>the son-in-law</i> of Joseph, <i>who was the son-in-law</i> of Heli,...
Modern Literal Version	And he was approximately thirty years <i>old</i> , <i>when beginning to teach</i> , (as it was supposed, the son of Joseph). <i>Although</i> Jesus, himself was a descendant from Heli,...

Both Pickering and the MLV give us perhaps the best translation/interpretation of this passage.

At the point of Heli, we begin to follow the line of Mary. Examining the genealogy of the mother is a very rare thing in ancient history. In fact, it is so unusual, this the line takes some work to figure out that it is Mary's that we are reading.

Luke 3:23 *Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,...* [I continue to use the ESV; capitalized throughout; the ESV is ambiguous at this point.]

We are not quite finished with this verse.

#### Lesson 104: Luke 3 via Matt. 1:1–2, 6, 16, 10–12      Line of Joseph/Coniah Curse

We left off last time with v. 23, and the subject matter was, *whose line is this?* Let's take the ESV and add a few additional words to it:

Luke 3:23 **Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, [Jesus is] the [actual] son [or, descendant] of Heli,...** [the ESV, capitalized; with some supplementary text designed to clarify the relationships]

Jesus is not the biological son of Joseph; however, He is the biological son grandson of Heli, who would have been Mary's father.

Heli's name is only found here in this verse.

There are two genealogical lines for the Lord: here and in Matt. 1; and these lines are different. So, how do we determine which is Joseph's and which is Mary's? Joseph would be Jesus' legal father, but not His biological father. Mary would be Jesus' biological mother. Therefore, those in one line are directly related to the humanity of Jesus; and those in the other line are Jesus' legal, but not biological, ancestors.

Let's approach this in another way. The way that this is written is *Jesus was assumed to be the son of Joseph, the son of Heli*. There are two ways in which this can be interpreted. Either Jesus is the son (descendant) of Heli or Joseph is. This can be understood either way in the Greek. Although usually, the closest noun would be taken, this is not a hard-and-fast rule. Generally speaking, if Jesus is the son of Joseph, then He is automatically the son (descendant) of Joseph's father. But the line differs from a normal genealogical line from the very beginning....Jesus is the **supposed son of Joseph**. So Jesus is not the son of Joseph nor is He the grandson of Joseph's father.

When we come to the name *Heli*, there is no phrase *as was supposed*. We have a binary choice here: Jesus is of Heli or Joseph is of Heli. One of those things must be true; and the other false. Since there is no Heli in the line of Joseph (given in Matt. 1)<sup>3</sup>, then Jesus must be the son or descendant of Heli. Therefore, Heli would be Mary's father (possibly grandfather, but I would suggest father).

Let's take this in points:

#### Reasons why Luke 3 the line of Jesus through Mary

1. There are two lines which lead to Jesus—the line of His mother and the line of

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<sup>3</sup> Although there are a few names which are the same, there is no way that these lines could be assumed to be identical.

## Reasons why Luke 3 the line of Jesus through Mary

- His (supposed) father. Since the line to his legal father is found in Matthew, then this line must be that of His natural mother. Matt. 1:1–17 Luke 3:23–38
2. Joseph is the legal father of Jesus; but Mary is Jesus' actual mother. Matt. 1:16–21, 25 Luke 1:30–35 2:5–7 3:23
  3. Either Joseph is the son of Heil or Jesus is the son of Heli—an option from the Greek text itself. Since Joseph is the son of Jacob (Matt. 1:16), and because there is no Heli in the line of Joseph in Matt. 1, by process of elimination, Jesus (not Joseph) is the actual son (or, descendant) of Heli.
  4. If Jesus is the actual son (descendant) of Heli (there are no qualifiers in the Greek), then this would mean that Mary is the daughter of Heli and Jesus is her biological Son.
  5. Jesus is fully human and fully divine, so His humanity or human nature comes through Mary. Rom. 5:12, 14 1Cor. 15:21 1Tim. 2:14–15
    - 1) This is why Jesus is called, simultaneously, the Son of Man and the Son of God.
    - 2) Son of Man: Matt. 11:19 12:40 16:13 Mark 8:31 14:62 Luke 6:5 18:31
    - 3) Son of God: Matt. 4:3 14:33 16:16 27:54 Mark 1:1 Luke 1:35
  6. As an aside, because Jesus is born without a human father, He does not inherit the sin nature; nor is Adam's original sin imputed to Him. Every child, male or female, inherits his (or her) sin nature from his (or her) father. Heb. 4:15 9:28
  7. The gospel of Matthew very much focuses upon Jesus as the fulfillment of many prophecies; the book of Luke focuses upon the Man Jesus (He is often called the *Son of Man* in the book of Luke). So, we would expect the genealogical line which reveals the fulfillment of Old Testament promises to be found in Matthew; and the genealogical line which emphasizes His human nature to be found in Luke.
    - 1) Although both Joseph and Mary are spoken of in Matt. 1, it is clearly Joseph who is focused upon. Many things are seen from his point of view in this first chapter. Matt. 1:19–24
    - 2) Similarly, Luke 1–2 focus upon Mary and her experiences, even though Joseph is mentioned.
    - 3) For these reasons, we would expect to find the line of Joseph to be found in Matthew and the line of Mary in Luke.

Now, this may seem as if I am beating a dead horse here, but the issues here are directly related to a fundamental understanding of the Person of Jesus Christ.

Knowing all of these things, many translations should have done a better job indicating that the genealogical line found in Luke 3 is the line of Jesus through Mary, as I have done below:

Luke 3:23 Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, [Jesus is] the [actual] son [or, descendant] of Heli,... [the ESV, capitalized; with some supplementary text]

*Heli means, elevation, ascending; climbing up.*

With that, we have complete one entire verse of the Lukian genealogy.

We have been studying Luke 3:23, making many references to the line of Christ in the book of Matthew. The genealogical line in Matthew is unequivocally the line of Joseph (that is, we do not have the words *as was supposed* anywhere in the Matthew record). We will take a break from the Lukian genealogy and take an abbreviated look at Matthew's record.

We begin in Matt. 1:1–2:

Matt. 1:1 **The Book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the Son of David, the son of Abraham:...** (Green's Literal Translation)

Matthew gives the highlights of the Lord's genealogy: Jesus, David, Abraham. These men are legally the Lord's ancestors through Joseph. They are also genetically the Lord's ancestors through Mary (as we will see, the line from Abraham to David is identical and intact for both Joseph and Mary. Matthew does not completely distinguish between two lines here, but we will. The line given in Matthew is Joseph's line. There will not be another way of interpreting it.

Matthew is a book of fulfilled prophecy. He continually quotes the Old Testament and relates it to the events that he records in his biography of Jesus. He focuses upon both Abraham and David in v. 1 because a number of promises were made to each man, by God; and many of these prophecies are fulfilled in the Person of Jesus Christ.

With v. 2, Matthew begins to tell us exactly how Jesus is legally a descendant of Abraham and David. However, in the book of Luke, we will see that Jesus is the actual descendent of Abraham and David.

Matt. 1:2 **Abraham fathered Isaac, and Isaac fathered Jacob, and Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers.** (Green's Literal Translation)

Everyone who is a descendant of Jacob is a true racial Jew (by genealogy). All of the sons of Jacob are specifically descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and as such, they are God's chosen people. All people descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are God's chosen people. Every person descended from the 12 sons of Jacob is considered a Jew by genetics. At this point, at the end of v. 2, we are in the line of Judah, Jacob's 4<sup>th</sup> son.

Do not panic; we are not going to cover the entire genealogical line in Matthew and then do the same in Luke. There is a very important consideration for us to consider in Matthew's genealogical record.

We proceed through a list of names, and then we come to...



Matt. 1:16 ...and Jacob [ben Matthan] fathered Joseph, the husband to be of Mary, out of whom Jesus was born, the One called Christ. (Green's literal translation)

Notice that **Jacob ben Matthan fathers Joseph**—it is hard to understand this in any way other than Jacob (son of Matthan) being Joseph's actual father (or grandfather). But notice how Jesus is placed in this line: Joseph is identified as the son of Jacob and the husband to be of Mary. It is from Mary that Jesus is born (*not* from Joseph and Mary). Jesus is clearly born of Mary, but Joseph is simply listed as the future husband of Mary (they had *not* yet consummated their marriage). There is no direct genealogical connection stated between Joseph and Jesus.

### **The Two Genealogies and the Coniah Curse:**

There is a very important difference in these two genealogies. From Abraham to David, the genealogies recorded by Matthew and Luke are the same; however Joseph's genealogy (in Matthew) picks up with Solomon and follows the royal line to Joseph; but Mary's genealogy (in Luke) picks up with Nathan (presumably Solomon's younger brother) and follows his line to Jesus.

As we view these two genealogies, bear in mind that Luke begins with Jesus and works backwards to Adam (and to God); Matthew begins with Abraham and works forward to Joseph, Jesus' step-father.

Luke 3:31b –32a ...the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse,...

Matt. 1:6 ...and Jesse fathered David the king. And David the king fathered Solomon out of her who had been the wife of Uriah,... (Green's literal translation)

This is where the two lines diverge. The book of Luke presents the line of Heli to Nathan (Heli being the Lord's genetic grandfather) and the book of Matthew presents the line as going forward from Solomon to Joseph (called the future husband of Mary in Matt. 1:16 and called the supposed father of Jesus in Luke 3:23). Joseph is never tied genetically to Jesus; Joseph is the legal father of Jesus; and throughout his life, he was presumed to be the father of Jesus (even though he wasn't).

There are two different lines leading to Jesus—the line of Abraham to Jesus, through Solomon, found in Matt. 1:1–16. This is the legal line of Jesus, going from Abraham to Joseph, who is Jesus' adopted father, but not genetic father. The line in Luke 3 is the actual line of the humanity of Jesus, which goes through Nathan, the son of David, proceeding eventually to Jesus Himself. Both of these lines are identical between Abraham and David; but Joseph and Mary are descended from different sons of David. They are 25<sup>th</sup> cousins, give or take.

In the line of David, we come down to Josiah, one of Israel's last good kings; whose son was Jehoiakim; whose son was the father of Jechoniah (1Chron. 3:16 Matt. 1:11). Jechoniah was cursed by God.



In the book of Matthew, Joseph's genealogy goes through Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah or Coniah). This line reads:

Matt. 1:10–12 ...and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of **Jechoniah** and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: **Jechoniah** was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,... (ESV)

Jeconiah was evil, as was his generation, so that God caused them all to be deported to Babylon as a national punishment (also known as the 5<sup>th</sup> stage of national discipline or the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle of discipline). For Israel to be forced out of the land, things had to get pretty bad. Very often, when a nation reaches such a stage when maximum discipline is applied by God, both the leaders and the people are in maximum reversionism (or maximum negative volition towards the plan of God). Whereas, I believe that Coniah was (or eventually became) a believer in the Revealed God, we do not know about the people of Israel. No doubt many were; but it appears that believers in Israel did not grow spiritually during Coniah's reign.

The Coniah curse is found in Jer. 22:24, which will present in a fuller context:

Jer. 22:24–27 **"As I live, declares the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet ring on my right hand, yet I would tear you off and give you into the hand of those who seek your life, into the hand of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. I will hurl you and the mother who bore you into another country, where you were not born, and there you shall die. But to the land to which they will long to return, there they shall not return."** (ESV; capitalized)

God says, if Coniah were a signet ring on His hand, that He would tear that ring off. Does this sound like the line of the Messiah?

Jer. 22:28–30 **Is this man Coniah a despised, broken pot, a vessel no one cares for? Why are he and his children hurled and cast into a land that they do not know? O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the LORD: "Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah."** (ESV, emphasis mine)

Because of the evil done by Coniah, if he were a signet ring on God's hand, God would tear him off. There is no future for the line of Coniah. God calls for this man to be childless, and that no man will succeed him in his days. None of his children will follow him in sitting on David's exalted throne. Nevertheless, Coniah's line continues, as testified to in both the Old and New Testaments. Jeconiah is the father of Shealtiel and Shealtiel fathers Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel, as some of you might know, would be the leader to return to Jerusalem, to build up the walls of the city once again.

The phrasing found here is interesting. This does not read, *Let this man be childless*; it says instead, *Write this man down as childless...* The Hebrew word for *write* is *kâthab* (כָּתַב) [pronounced *kaw-THAHB*<sup>v</sup>]. In the Qal imperative, it means, *write, write down, record [chronicle, document], direct or decree in writing, proscribe; describe*. Strong's #3789 BDB #507. Jeconiah is childless by decree or childless by record; but he is not in fact childless, as he does sire children. So, how do I explain the difference? A king may have bastard sons—sons who are genetically his through an affair (or even by a long-standing relationship), but children who are not heirs to his throne (as they are not sons of the wife of the king). As far as many are concerned, these are not his children; and they are not *recorded* anywhere as being the king's children. They will never be royalty. This is the way in which Coniah is childless; he is *decreed* in writing to be childless. He is childless in the way that is most important to a king—particularly as a king on the throne of Judah. His line would no longer yield a royal son and his line would not lead to David's Greater Son. Jeconiah's son (s) would never sit on the throne of Judah (which is the remaining southern kingdom).

If Jesus were descended from Coniah, then He could not sit upon the throne of David, as per this curse. Jeconiah had a son (or sons) but they would not sit upon the throne of Israel (actually, Judah).

Jehoiachin's reign is described in both 2Kings 24:8–16 and more briefly in...

2Chron. 36:9–10 *Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. In the spring of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, with the precious vessels of the house of the LORD, and made his **brother** Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.*

Nebuchadnezzar did not besiege Judah for a few months, but waged a campaign that apparently went on for many years. After 3 years, the removal of the people of Israel was begun (Daniel 1:1–5); and after 8 years, nearly all were removed (2Kings 24:8–12). With that, the royal family and nearly all the people of Israel were removed from the land (only the poorest remained behind—2Kings 24:14).

Whatever Coniah did was so bad, that the people were removed from the land for 70 years (obviously, the people had turned cold towards God as well, as God is not going to remove an entire people simply because their leader is evil). Coniah was the appropriate leader for the people of Jacob. Coniah was the leader that the people of Israel deserved at that time.

**Application:** I write this in October of 2020, with a presidential election on the near horizon. Always remember that, a people get the leader they deserve. It does not matter how much politicking that you do, or how many articles you splash on your fb page, the leader which God has determined, the leader who is appropriate, that is the leader that we will get. This may help to explain why we have had so few great presidents in this nation.

**Application:** The United States is a client nation to God, just as Israel was. Because of this, there is great blessing, but also great scrutiny and, sometimes, great punishment. There are dozens of memes out there portraying 2020 as an horrendous year. However, if our nation is on the downhill slide, 2020 will seem like a picnic to subsequent years. We need to turn around spiritually as a nation, if we expect to continue in the great blessing that we have enjoyed.

**Don't Ever Go To 2020** (a meme); from [Know Your Meme](#); accessed October 23, 2020.



Back to our topic, which is the Coniah curse.

Surprisingly enough, after 37 years in prison, the next Babylonia leader Evil-merodach, set Coniah free and dined with him, giving Coniah an allowance to live off of. The graciousness of Evil-merodach was no doubt representative of the graciousness of God; which suggests that Coniah had a change of heart towards the God of his people. Yet the Coniah curse still stands.

Again, the curse is: Jer. 22:24, 30 "As I live, declares the LORD, though Coniah were the signet ring on my right hand, yet I would tear you off Thus says the LORD: "Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah."

Although Coniah was not literally childless, the complete independence of nation Israel along with its kingly throne had come to an end. Coniah's genealogical line continued down to Joseph, but, because Joseph was not the real father of Jesus, Coniah's line did not lead to the Eternal King. It was cut off, so to speak, with Joseph. There were no more royal sons in the line of Coniah; in that way, he is *written off* as childless.

But there is another line of David, through his son Nathan, which leads us to Mary (that is the line that we are studying here in Luke 3), and this becomes the true royal line, culminating<sup>4</sup> in the Greater Son of David.

## Lesson 105: Luke 3:23–29

## The Line of Mary continues

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<sup>4</sup> Not to imply that Joseph and Mary lacked other children; but the royal line would end with Jesus.

We now return to the line of Mary, the line that Coniah is not a part of. There is no *Coniah curse* in Mary's line.

Luke 3:23 Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, [Jesus is] the [actual] son [or, descendant] of Heli,... [the ESV, capitalized; with some supplemental text]

Luke 3:24a ...the son of Matthat,...

There are two Matthat's in this line (vv. 24 & 29) and two men with the name Mattathias as well (vv. 25 & 26). It is possible that *Matthat* is a shortened version of *Mattathias*. There are also two Levi's in this line (vv. 24 & 29). And there are two Joseph's (vv. 24 & 30). These are all very common names taken from famous Jewish figures.

Matthat is both the son of Levi, in the genealogy of Christ and the grandfather of the Mary (assuming no gaps in the genealogy), and the great grandfather of Jesus.

His name means *gift of God*, very apropos to the Messiah genealogy.

Luke 3:24b ...the son of Levi,...

His name means *joined*.

This Levi is the son of Melchi.

Levi is the great, great grandfather of our Lord.

Levi's name is taken from the third son of the patriarch Jacob by his wife Leah, the founder of the people of Israel who bear his name. Jacob was born *Jacob*; he was given the name *Israel* by God.

Luke 3:24c ...the son of Melchi,...

*Melchi* means *my king*; apropos to the Messiah.

Melchi is the son of Janna right here in the genealogy of Jesus; and there will be another Melchi, the son of Addi in the genealogy of Jesus.

Luke 3:24 ...the son of Jannai,...

*Jannai* means *flourishing*.

Luke 3:24 ...the son of Joseph,...

*Joseph* means *let him add*.

Luke 3:24 ...the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,...

Famous well-known names abound in this line: Levi, Joseph, Amos, Nahum, Zerubbabel, Joshua, Simeon, and Judah. These ancient names were revered by the Hebrew people because of the men who originally had them.

**Illustration:** Similarly, freed Black slaves often took upon themselves the names of presidents (Washington, Jefferson, Jackson); because these names to them represented freedom from slavery to them. Many understood that their freedom and humanity was guaranteed in the Declaration of Independence and in the Bill of Rights, despite being born slaves in America. Therefore former slaves took on these names to themselves, proud of this heritage.

Including the name of Heli going back to Jannai, what this line of names means is: *ascending, a gift of God, joined [to] my king, a flourishing [gift from Y<sup>e</sup>howah]*. I included the next name in this translation of names.

Luke 3:25a ...the son of Mattathias,...

His name means *gift of Y<sup>e</sup>howah*.

Luke 3:25b ...the son of Amos,...

His name means *burden*.

Luke 3:25c ...the son of Nahum,...

His name means *consolation*.

Luke 3:25d ...the son of Esli,...

His name means *reserved of Y<sup>e</sup>howah*.

Luke 3:25e ...the son of Naggai,...

His name means *illuminating*.

Luke 3:25 ...the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,...

It is likely that vv. 23–25 or 26 cover the inter-testament period. The verses which follow, down to v. 31 would be the period of the kings from David to Coniah. There are no royal sons descended from Nathan following his line as far as Mary. David is the last man of royalty in this particular line. David had many, many sons; but only one of them (Solomon, who is not in Mary's line) would be the next king. However, David's Greater Son, will

occupy the throne. He (Jesus) is in David's line, but through Nathan (and not Solomon). This is the line which would lead to Mary.

The men named between David and Mary are only mentioned here in Scripture; and therefore, are unknown to us, apart from the meanings of their names.

So far, if we replace the names of these men with the meanings of the names, that would give us: *let him add [the] ascending gift of God joined [to] my king, flourishing; a gift of Y<sup>e</sup>howah [both] a burden [and] a consolation, reserved of Y<sup>e</sup>howah illuminating.* (I have included *Joseph, husband of Mary* in this list of name meanings. All the way from Joseph going backward to Haggai give us this marvelous sentence, which clearly points to the Messiah.

At this point, we are at the end of the Old Testament canon era. The Old Testament was completed around 400 B.C. The names found here would go back to around 400 B.C., which is the approximate close of the OT canon of Scripture.

Luke 3:26a ...the son of Maath,...

His name means *small*.

Luke 3:26b ...the son of Mattathias,...

Another man in this line with this name, meaning *gift of Y<sup>e</sup>howah*.

Luke 3:26c ...the son of Semein,...

His name means, *my report*.

Luke 3:26d ...the son of Josech,...

This name appears to be another form of *Joseph* and means, *let him add*.

It is not clear that we should understand this as another form of *Joseph*, although many translations do. Strong does not assign a separate # to this name, although it is not spelled exactly the same as Joseph. Strong's #2501.

*Joseph* was a very common name among the Jews, which is what we should expect, given the extraordinary character of the Joseph ben Jacob from the final chapters of Genesis.

Luke 3:26e ...the son of Joda,...

This was a different take to a very common name among the Jews. The spelling here is  $\iota\omega\delta\alpha$ ; so it is not clear to me whether this is another form of *Judah* or if this is a different name. The transliteration would be *Joda*. Strong does not offer a different Strong's # for this name (#2455).



If this is simply another form of *Judah*, then it means, *he shall be praised*.

This should not be shocked to find a different spelling for the same name. In the English, we have Aaron and Erin, Allen and Alan, Jacob and Jakob, etc. It was apparently James Strong's strong opinion that this is how we should understand those two names.

Luke 3:26 ...the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda,...

These are probably men from the end of the Old Testament era (around 400 B.C., the time when the Old Testament Scriptures were being completed).

Stringing the names of v. 26 together, we have: *small, the gift of Yehowah [is] my report; let him add [the Lord and] he shall be praised*.

Luke 3:27a ...the son of Joanan,...

His name means, *grace or gift of God*.

Luke 3:27b ...the son of Rhesa,...

His name means, *head*.

Luke 3:27c ...the son of Zerubbabel,...

His name means, *born at Babel (Babylon), seed of Babel*. This would be a common name given to the first generation of children born in Babylon. There was a leader who brought back many Jews into the land whose name was Zerubbabel. However, these men are very likely different men. This name is so specific and fraught with meaning that many sons born in Babylon were likely given this name.

The Zerubbabel in the line of Joseph is also a son of Shealtiel. However, the rest of the line does not match up. Trying to make these people into the same person would be just about impossible. Furthermore, it would violate the Coniah curse.

Luke 3:27d ...the son of Shealtiel,...

His name means, *I have asked of God*.

If these are the same men as named in the line of Joseph, we are left with the problem of Shealtiel's father, who here is Neri; but in the Matthew text the father is Coniah. This gives us two distinct solutions: (1) Neri is a step-father, or the mother of Shealtiel (I am having a difficult time coming up with a first option that makes sense); or (2) Zerubbabel and Shealtiel are not the men named in the Matthew text (which is the cleanest and easiest solution). It is just a happy coincidence that we have a father and a son with the same names in both lines.



It would certainly be difficult to go backwards and make sense out of these men being the same as those named in Matthew. It is not difficult to go the other way, as a man can have but one father, but he can have many sons. One son of Zerubbabel can be named in Matthew and a different son named in Luke.

The biggest problem with these men being the same is, the Coniah curse would not mean anything, as Coniah is the grandfather of Zerubbabel in Matt. 1:12. How could you change your grandfather for the line given in Luke? That is, if Zerubbabel is the same man in both lines, then he is under the Coniah curse in both lines (which would make no sense).

On the other hand, if a proud Jewish people are whisked off to another land, and they begin to have children born to them in a foreign land, then *Zerubbabel* would seem to be a very common name (again, it means, *a seed of Babel; born in Babylon*).

Luke 3:27e ...the son of Neri,...

His name means, *Jehovah is my lamp*.

Luke 3:27 ...the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,...

In this portion of the line, we have a parallel to the line found in Matthew (Zerubbabel and his father Shealtiel). However, for reasons already cited, it is unlikely that these are the same men as found in Matt. 1:12. It is just an odd parallel; or an odd coincidence.

This verse is more difficult to pull together a coherent meaning: *the grace (or gift) of God, a head, born in Babel (Babylon); I have asked of God; Jehovah is my lamp*. Maybe Zerubbabel is the ideal dividing point here.

Beginning with someone in v. 27, we are in the land of Canaan and it is around 400 B.C. The men in this list which follows are all in the land of promise. However, we know nothing about them, going back as far as Nathan.

Luke 3:28a ...the son of Melchi,...

His name means, *my king*. I believe this is the second man in this line with this name.

Luke 3:28b ...the son of Addi,...

His name means, *ornament* (an odd name for a dude).

Luke 3:28c ...the son of Cosam,...

His name means, *divining*.

Luke 3:28d ...the son of Elmadam,...

His name means, *measure*.

Luke 3:28e ...the son of Er,...

His name means, *watchful*.

Luke 3:28 ...the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,...

The Hebrew people maintained excellent genealogical records, even of men who were virtually unknown, historically speaking.

Going back to the name after Zerubbabel, we have: *I have asked of God; Jehovah is my lamp [also] my king [and] ornament; a divining measure [and] watchful*. That makes a little more sense.

Luke 3:29a ...the son of Joshua,...

His name means, *Jehovah is salvation*. This could be transliterated *Jesus* (*Joshua* is the Old Testament version of *Jesus*).

Luke 3:29b ...the son of Eliezer,...

His name means *God is his help*.

Luke 3:29c ...the son of Jorim,...

His name means *whom Jehovah has exalted*.

Luke 3:29d ...the son of Matthat,...

His name means *gift of God*.

Luke 3:29e ...the son of Levi,...

His name means *joined*.

I believe that this is a second time that this name occurs in this list.

Luke 3:29 ...the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,...

This is another list of names of people. Stringing them together, we get: *Jehovah is salvation; God is his help, whom Jehovah has exalted [as] a gift of God joined [to us]*.

So far, we have covered the generations living around 500 B.C. up to the time of Jesus. The line which we are studying is Mary's genealogy, going backward from her father.

The people who we will study in vv. 30–33 span many significant epochs in the time of Israel. This might be best seen in a chart, which I will put together at the completion of v. 34.

Luke 3:30a ...the son of Simeon,...

His name means *harkening*.

Luke 3:30b ...the son of Judah,...

This is transliterated from the Hebrew (Strong's #3063); and 10 men have this name in Scripture; as well as one plot of ground. This is a very popular name (1) because this is the name of one of the original tribes of Israel and (2) the tribe of Judah became the most identifiable tribe after the destruction of the northern kingdom. (3) Judah became the royal tribe (that is, all of the kings, after Saul died, were from the tribe of Judah (beginning with David). (4) The region where Judah lived was called *Judah*. (5) The line of Judah would be expected to have many men in it named *Judah* (in both Matthew and Luke, these are lines of Judah ben Jacob that we are studying).

Here, in the Greek, we have *Judas*, rather than *Judah*. The Greek language has no provision for ending a word with an *h*; there is no letter *h* in the Greek; however, there is the sound of an *h*, not as a separate letter, but as a *rough breathing* at the beginning of a word. In the Greek, the word *art* with a soft breathing is pronounced *art*; and the same word with a rough breathing is pronounced *hart*. This breathing is indicated in the Greek with a small apostrophe type symbol at the beginning of the word (affixed to the first letter<sup>5</sup>): ᾿α ς.

Judah means *he shall be praised*.

Luke 3:30c ...the son of Joseph,...

Joseph is also a very popular name, given the great reputation and background of the son of Jacob named Joseph. This man is, of course, not the same person as we have in the book of Genesis.

His name means, *let him add*.

Luke 3:30d ...the son of Jonam,...

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<sup>5</sup> If there are two vowels, this is affixed to the second vowel.

His name means, *Jehovah is a gracious giver*.

The name found here is actually *Jonan*.

Luke 3:30e ...the son of Eliakim,...

At least two men have this name: 1) the eldest son of Abiud or Judah, brother of Joseph, and father of Azor Matt. (1:12–13); 2) son of Melea, and father of Jonan (Luke 3:30).

Eliakim means *raising up by God*.

Luke 3:30 ...the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,...

These names strung together mean, *Listen, he shall be praised; let him add Jehovah, a gracious giver, raised up by God*. This certainly does appear to have a coherent meaning to us.

Luke 3:31a ...the son of Melea,...

Melea (or, Meleas) means *my dear friend; an object of care*.

Luke 3:31b ...the son of Menna,...

The name as found above means *soothsayer: enchanted*.

In the Westcott-Hort text, this reads *Menna*. In the Scrivener Textus Receptus this name is Mainan (Μαῖνάν) [pronounced *mahoe-NAN*]. Interestingly enough, they are both given the same Strong's #. Strong's #3104.

Luke 3:31c ...the son of Mattatha,...

Mattithjah means *givingness*.

Luke 3:31d ...the son of Nathan,...

Nathan means *gift, giver*. King David had 5 sons total by Bathsheba, one of them being Solomon (he was the second child; the first child died). The prophet Nathan braced David over his affair with Bathsheba and the killing of her husband. David recognized the wrongness of his actions and confessed this sin to God.

Nathan by his unflinching assessment of David's sin endeared himself to David. David recognized that he was not the highest authority in the land, but that God was; and Nathan was God's prophet.

As a result of this respect, David named one of his sons by Bathsheba *Nathan*. This shows wonderful grace orientation on the part of David. Many kings, when reproached by a prophet, try to destroy the prophet. David recognized how wrong he was in his actions and he respected the role of the prophet.

Nathan here is quite significant. Both Joseph and Mary are descended from King David (the next name on the list). Mary is Jesus' actual mother, by birth, by blood; but Joseph is not the Lord's genetic father. This has great theological significance in what is known as the *Coniah curse*. We have already studied the Coniah curse, but we will review it and consider one thing in this study that we did not consider before.

The Coniah curse is a reference to Jeconiah, also known as Coniah, is stated in the book of Jeremiah. Jer. 22:24–30 "As I live," says the LORD, "**though you, Coniah son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, were a signet ring on My right hand, I would tear you from it.** In fact, I will hand you over to those you dread, who want to take your life, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Chaldeans. I will hurl you and the mother who gave birth to you into another land, where neither of you were born, and there you will both die. They will never return to the land they long to return to." Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered pot, a jar no one wants? Why are he and his descendants hurled out and cast into a land they have not known? Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD! This is what the LORD says: **Record this man as childless, a man who will not be successful in his lifetime. None of his descendants will succeed in sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah.** (HCSB; emphasis mine) Jeconiah was a king in the line of David and Solomon. That line leads to Joseph, who is the legal but not biological father of Jesus (Matt. 1:11–17). Mary is the actual mother of Jesus (Luke 1:26–33); and her line comes through Nathan rather than through Solomon (Luke 3:23–31). So there is no cursed Coniah in Mary's line.

There is more to the Coniah curse, than the idea that Messiah cannot come from the line of Coniah (Jeconiah). Think of this curse as being the sin nature, which is the genetic curse passed down through the man. Every child with a father has a sin nature, that sin nature is passed down by his father, who got it from his father. That is our Coniah curse. Every person born from a human father carries this curse—the sin nature—within him.

This goes back to the original sin. When Eve sinned, she had been deceived; but when Adam sinned against God, he did so knowingly. Adam knew that he was disobeying God and that this would change his relationship with God powerfully (Adam chose his woman over God). So, there were different punishments meted out for each gender, which punishments have followed mankind down through the centuries. Eve would be the child bearer; but with that responsibility came the promise. God, in speaking to the serpent, who had deceived Eve, said, "**I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her Offspring; He [= the woman's Offspring] shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.**" (Gen. 3:15, ESV; capitalized) Throughout the Bible, the offspring (literally, seed) is always spoken of as coming from the man; but here, in this one instance, God speaks of the woman's seed. *Her Seed* is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus will deliver

the death blow to the serpent ([He will bruise your head](#)); but the serpent would bruise the heel of her Seed (that would be the cross).

So, somehow, the woman will produce the Seed Who will defeat and destroy Satan, despite being bruised by Satan. This is a forward reference to the virgin birth of our Lord, Who is the Seed of the Woman. The sin nature is removed from the equation because that is passed along to all the children by the father (because Adam sinned knowingly against God; he is, in that way, responsible). The woman has a sin nature (as we all know and can testify to<sup>6</sup>), but she does not transmit her sin nature genetically. The sin nature is passed along from only the father to his offspring (male or female).

There is a weird doctrine in Catholicism about Mary being sinless. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is a real person with a sin nature which she got from her father Heli. She was very clearly a mature believer, based upon what she says in Luke 1; but she is still like all of us: a fallen creature. Nevertheless, because there is no human father involved in the conception of Jesus, there is no sin nature which is passed along to Him. The woman does not pass along her sin nature to her sons or to her daughters. The sin nature only is passed down by a human father.

The problem with the idea that Mary is sinless is three-fold: (1) Mary had a father (Heli). Because she has a father, she has a sin nature. (2) Adam's original sin is imputed to her. Adam's original sin is imputed to every person, its natural target being the sin nature (which every person, save One, has). (3) Finally, Mary committed personal sins (as all people do). We may not know what those sins were, but that is sometimes the case with some believers named in Scripture (like John the Herald, for instance).

The idea that Mary was sinless, came from someone recognizing that Jesus is sinless, but that He has a human mother. Well, how can Jesus be sinless if He has a mother? Therefore, she must be sinless. Obviously, the big flaw in that argument, besides #1 & #2 above is, how was Mary sinless? If Jesus needed a sinless mother in order to be sinless (based upon that faulty theology), then how did Mary get born without sin? Wouldn't she have required a sinless mother (and an immaculate conception) as well, who would then require a sinless mother before her? Accepting the premise, still leads us to an untenable position.

Furthermore, all Mary adoration ignores the concept of a sin nature. We all have a sin nature which is a part of our being from birth. We do not become sinners the first time we sin; we are sinners from birth. Denying that concept denies a huge amount of Scripture.

And while I am on this topic, I should also lay to rest the notion that Mary is the mother of God. She is not! That is absurd. She is the mother of the humanity of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the *Father* (so to speak) of the Lord's Deity. The same argument applies. If Mary is somehow in some way sort of deified; and that made her the mother of God, then how did she become deified? Was she somehow born from perfect parents as well? These

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<sup>6</sup> Ask *any* man who knows a woman. Really.

false doctrines do not stand up to scrutiny. They are both illogical and unbiblical. Furthermore, we are right in the midst of studying the line of Mary, and the people we know in this line are not sinless.

There is nothing in the New Testament which ever suggests that Mary is somehow a 4<sup>th</sup> member of the Trinity; or pretty close to that, or way up there; or that we all should pray to her. Nothing like that is suggested anywhere in the New Testament. The doctrines of the Church Age are found primarily in the epistles. How many times is there any doctrinal information related to Mary in the epistles? Never! Paul, Peter and John do not write about Mary being divine, or sinless, or a intermediary? They do not tell us any such thing, because those concepts are false! Mary plays absolutely no part in the believer's life today. Nowhere in Scripture are we told to have some sort of relationship with Mary. And she is nowhere called *the mother of God*.

The concept that Mary is divine or, at the very least, way better than us, who somehow plays an active part in our lives today? This is faulty doctrine which is based upon faulty doctrine (that she has some sort of divinity within her, in order to given birth to Jesus and impart to Him His Deity).

Let me try to approach this from an analogy. Let's say that I marry an Asian woman, and we have a child, and that child has jet black hair and "Asian eyes." Would it make sense for me to say, "She gets that from me. See those almond eyes? That is from my side of the family!" That would be nonsensical. People would think I was an idiot to suggest such a thing. It is equally idiotic to somehow think that Jesus' Deity came from Mary.

I have gone pretty far afield here. We were last speaking about Nathan (which led us to Coniah and what he represents as a type; which led us then to the weird and false doctrines of Mary worship). I have recently spoken to someone about this absurd doctrine, so it happens to be on my mind.

Let's go to Nathan's father, who is David.

Luke 3:31e ...the son of David,...

His name means, *beloved*.

Now, no matter what your Bible says, the words *the son* are not found here. Literally, this reads, ...*Nathan of David*...

This is a reference to King David. David is not called a *king* in this line, because he is just a man, like any other man. The only true *king* in this line is Jesus who is David's Greater Son (Mark 12:35–37 Psalm 110:1). Because this line emphasizes the humanity of Jesus (it is Mary's line that leads to Jesus), we reference David without a title. On the other hand, the full kingly line is found in Matthew. Matt. 1:6 ...and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah,...



Luke 3:31 ...the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,...

The names of this line strung together mean, *my dear friend, an enchanted giving of a gift, the Beloved*.

I have checked and rechecked the numbers of this grouping—and it appears that we have 14 generations which begin with Abraham and end with David, two very significant figures in the Hebrew people.

There were 4 sons born to King David, by Bathsheba, who grew to adulthood.<sup>7</sup> In the Old Testament, we only know Solomon's name. From Luke 3:31, we know that Solomon's younger brother was named Nathan, no doubt named after Nathan the prophet, who braced David for his sinful behavior with Bathsheba (David took the wife of one of his soldiers, while that soldier was out on the field, a sin that David paid dearly for). Interestingly enough, when all the dust settled—and David received a *lot* of discipline for what he did—he was still with Bathsheba, and they had 4 sons, and two of those sons have a genealogy which leads to Jesus.

Interestingly enough, we know nothing about Nathan, apart from being born a son of David by Bathsheba. We know nothing about Nathan's descendants, with the exception of Mary (and we know about some of her sons by Joseph).

Luke 3:32a ...the son of Jesse,...

His name means, *extent*.

Jesse is the father of David the king.

Jesse, as the father of David, is found in the Old Testament. He had 7 sons, and the prophet Samuel came to him and told him that one of his sons would become king. Jesse then began to bring out the first 6 sons, one after another; very proud of these boys. However, Samuel rejected every one of his sons. It never occurred to Jesse that his youngest son, David, who was out with the sheep at that time, would become king. He did not recognize that there was any potential for greatness in David.

Jesse's attitude was not just a matter of overlooking David; he really saw no potential in David. So, when David went to bring sandwiches to his older brothers, and this loudmouth Philistine Goliath was bellowing at Saul's troops, David's older brothers were also dismissive of him. When David expressed an interest in what Goliath was saying—taking it to be a great national insult—his older brothers also disregarded what David had to say him (which is something that they probably learned from their father, Jesse).

Luke 3:32b ...the son of Obed,...

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<sup>7</sup> In all, there were 5 that we know of; but the first son died as an infant.

We know little about Obed's life.

He is the grandfather of king David.

His name means, *serving*.

Luke 3:32c ...the son of Boaz,...

His name means, *in him is strength*.

The book of Ruth is all about the romance between Boaz and Ruth. Ruth is a gentile woman who decided to align herself with the Hebrew people. She had married a Hebrew man, who died, and Ruth was left with her mother-in-law. Rather than cast her mother-in-law aside, the younger woman, Ruth remained with her. They both went to Israel; despite being very poor and having no resources in Israel. For a time, they survived in this way: Ruth would harvest the produce remaining in the corners of Boaz's field. The Torah required farmers to not harvest everything in their land, but to leave a portion unharvested for the poor of the land (the poor would be allowed to come to the fields and harvest this produce for themselves). This is how Ruth and Naomi survived. However, after seeing Ruth, Boaz took her as his wife in the book of Ruth.

Boaz was a kinsman of Ruth (meaning, they were related through Ruth's deceased husband). Boaz became her second husband. As a result of all this, Boaz is the great grandfather of King David. And Ruth, a gentile, is in the line of Jesus as well.

Luke 3:32d ...the son of Sala,...

His name means, *sprout*.

There was a Salah (Shelah, Shelach) who occurs much earlier in this line. He is the son of Arphaxad, and father of Eber. This is obviously not the same person.

Luke 3:32e ...the son of Nahshon,...

His name means, *diviner*.

He was an Old Testament guy who was a chief of Judah whose sister was the wife of Aaron. So he takes us back to the Exodus generation.

Luke 3:32 ...the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon,...

These name meanings string together to make: *extent serving in him is strength, a sprout, a diviner*.

Luke 3:33a ...the son of Amminadab,...

His name means, *one of the prince's people*.

In Westcott-Hort, the first name in this verse is ἀδμιν (see below). There is no ἀμιναδαβ. It is possible for these to be the same name. In another manuscript, it is Ἀδείν. They are both listed as Strong's #284 in the interlinear texts to which I refer.

Luke 3:33b ...the son of Admin,...

The primary text I use for this translation is the English Standard Version (ESV). It lists both Aminadab and Admin. Interestingly enough, I only found both names together in the Greek NT with variants. I have 4 Greek texts in my E-sword; two have *Aminadab* only; one has *Admin* only; and the Greek text with variants has them both.

There is just too much evidence that this name does not belong here. Therefore, I did not even put him in my own set of translations ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)), not even in brackets.

In the Old Testament, the text of Ruth 4:19b–22 reads: *Perez fathered Hezron, Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.*

The Hebrew text: Perez → Hezron → Ram → Aminadab → Nathshon → Salmon → Boaz → Obed → Jesse.

The Greek text: Pharez → Esrom → Aram → Amminadab → Admin? → Naasson → Salah → Booz → Obed → Issai.

I had to re-order the text from Luke, since its genealogy goes in the opposite direction of the Hebrew text. You can see how all of these names pair up, with the exception of *Admin*. Therefore, we cannot match this up the Hebrew text with the variant text. The line from Abraham to King David is very well-established by the Old Testament.

Remember when I gave reasons why the Hebrew does not transliterate directly into the Greek? These names are examples of that.

Luke 3:33c ...the son of Arni [probably, *Aram*],...

*Aram* name means, *high*.

The Westcott Hort text has ἀρνι (*Arni*). The Scrivener Textus Receptus has Aram (Ἀράμ) [pronounced *ar-AM*]. This is transliterated *Aram*, *Ram*.

Luke 3:33d ...the son of Hezron,...

His name means, *enclosed*.

### **The birth of Perez:**

Perez has a very unusual background. Judah had 3 sons, and the eldest of them married a woman, Tamar. But, because of the young man's negative volition toward God, he died the sin unto death. Judah's second son then married Tamar, as was the custom. Part of that custom would be that he raise up a son to his deceased brother; as if his deceased brother had a son by Tamar. However, he refused to do that (I believe he refused because this would have resulted in a cut to his personal inheritance<sup>8</sup>). So he died the sin unto death for that. It was customary that, if you married the wife of your deceased brother, that you would raise up the first child as the heir of his deceased brother. Therefore, this first son was to be considered his brother's son. However, the second brother did not do this (even though his wife was willing).

Judah did not appreciate what actually happened. What I mean is, he did not understand why his eldest two sons had died. He believed that it was, somehow, the fault of this woman, Tamar. So Judah promised Tamar marriage to his 3<sup>rd</sup> son, but never followed through, thinking her to be a black widow of sorts (that is my hypothesis). So, their marriage never happened. This put Tamar in a state of limbo. She was un-marriable, because she had already been married. It was very difficult for a woman to remarry in that era. Furthermore, she was expecting to marry Shelah (Judah's 3<sup>rd</sup> son), so it was as if they were married, but they were not. Tamar was betrothed to Shelah, so she was completely off the market, so to speak. So, she—a young, fertile woman—had no options, at this point. She had to simply wait on Judah to give the go-ahead for the consummation of her marriage to Shelah. Judah never did.

At some point, she realized that this was never going to happen.

Meanwhile, Judah had his own life. From time to time, Judah would check on his livestock investments and sell his wool. One time when Judah went out of town to tend to these matters, Tamar pretended to be a prostitute in a town that Judah stopped off at. Judah had sex with Tamar, the wife of two of his sons—both deceased—but he did not recognize her and he took her to be a prostitute). It was very likely that Judah was known for occasionally consorting with prostitutes, otherwise, what Tamar did here would have made very little sense.

As a result of this union between Judah and Tamar, she becomes pregnant. Judah did not know who she was when he had relations with her. However, he certainly finds out that Tamar is pregnant (not realizing that he is the father). He calls for her to be executed. As she was promised to his third son and this liaison that she had would have been

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<sup>8</sup> Much would go to this son, who would carry on his deceased brother's name.

considered adultery. If Tamar is executed, then that eliminates a whole host of problems for Judah, who still does not realize that she is the prostitute with whom he had relations.

Judah then calls for the execution of Tamar; so Tamar reveals that Judah is the father and that she has irrefutable proof.

Judah, having had relations with someone who he believed was a prostitute, had to back off of his claim that Tamar was unfit to live. If she should die for committing adultery, then he should die as well. He is just as guilty under the Law. That certainly did not appeal to Judah. His out was this: because they had relations, Judah took her in as his own wife. Then neither of them could be executed, and he could take her as a wife, as he is a near relative of her deceased husband (s). However, Judah never had relations with her again. She bore him two sons, twins. The second of the twins, he named Perez.

Perez is in the royal line of Jesus.

His name means, *a breach*.

Luke 3:33f ...*the son of Judah*,...

Judah's name means, *he shall be praised*.

### **Lessons 108–109: Luke 3:33–34b      How We Got the Book of Genesis (a theory)**

We are following Mary's genetic line. The men in v. 33 would have been living in Egypt.

Luke 3:33 ...*the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah*,... [I continue to use the ESV (capitalized) as my primary Biblical text; but not many translations have both Aminadab *and* Admin.]

We have studied Judah in the book of Genesis. Possibly the high point of his early life is, he talked his brothers out of killing Joseph (their second youngest brother) and convinced them to sell Joseph into slavery instead. We have just talked about his sordid story with Tamar, making their marriage to be one of the weirdest marriages in the Word of God.

We are following a particular line (Mary's) through a particular set of men (Abraham → Isaac → Jacob → Judah → Perez). Jacob, of course, had 12 sons, which made up the 12 tribes of Israel (actually, there were 13 tribes, as Joseph received the double portion, and his two sons became two tribes instead of just one).

Given the fact that we have Jacob and his 12 sons; and that we have a fascinating narrative in Genesis about many of them, it may be apropos to suggest the following theory:

### How we got the book of Genesis (a theory):

Judah is one of the 12 patriarchs, a son of Jacob. Although he is the 4<sup>th</sup> son born to Jacob, he became the royal line (normally, the primary and royal line and double portion would all belong to the firstborn son, who was Reuben). But Reuben, Simeon and Levi all disqualified themselves from being preeminent in one way or another.

Judah himself was a very flawed man; the incident of his consorting with prostitutes<sup>9</sup> is but one example of this.

The final portion of Genesis is devoted primarily to Joseph (Judah's much younger half-brother). There are many narratives at the end of Genesis where Joseph would be the only son of Jacob who knew all the details of those particular events. Private experiences and thoughts are recorded. Therefore, Joseph would be the logical person to recount said events (which is *most* of the final chapters of Genesis).

However, there is one chapter in Genesis known only by Judah; and there are bits and pieces of Genesis 40–50 that the 11 sons would have had firsthand knowledge of, but Joseph would not. Yet, the narrative is very well integrated, so that those with first hand knowledge change, but the narrative seamlessly progresses. In fact, this narrative in Genesis marks an important place in literature, establishing the 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient point of view (which makes up the bulk of our literature, movies and television).

I believe that the following things took place. Jacob's family would gather and give thanks to God and offer up sacrifices; and this was particularly important *after* they had moved to Egypt (a move that God allowed for). It is also important to note that, when Jacob died, his funeral was well-attended by his sons as well as by many Egyptians (this is a related piece of the puzzle).

Based upon this little evidence, this is how I see things as happening while Jacob's family was living in Egypt. Periodically, they would have celebrations to Y<sup>e</sup>howah (Jehovah). There would be animal sacrifices and a reading of the Scriptures, which would have been the book of Genesis and possibly the book of Job (which books were not written down at the time but memorized). As the patriarch of the family, Jacob would have recited the Scriptures down to his own life in history, and he would then tell about his life as well. This means that Jacob, like his father and grandfather before him, memorized most of the book of Genesis (that was their Scripture<sup>10</sup> at this time). They would have known Genesis word-for-word; although the book of Genesis had never been written down.

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<sup>9</sup> Although we have only one instance where Joseph *believed* himself to be with a prostitute, Tamar, the woman who fooled him, apparently chose that approach according to Judah's predilections.

<sup>10</sup> We do not know when the book of Job became a part of the Old Testament.

At some point, Jacob would stop speaking this book (from memory) and his eldest son, Reuben, would stand up and he would continue. Levi and Simeon may have stood up and told their brief story (which was quite ghastly); and Judah would tell about his background as well. All of these narratives are found in the book of Genesis; and it would have been logical for the person who experienced these events firsthand to be the person who stood up to say what happened. So, what we know as the first 38 chapters of Genesis would have been recited from memory by Jacob, Reuben, Simeon and/or Levi, and finally Judah.

Then, suddenly, we jump ahead in the brothers' order, going from Judah (son #4) to Joseph (son #11). Nearly all of Genesis, from chapter 39 to the end, is about Joseph. However, there are portions in the Joseph narrative that he was not a party to—that is, there are a few scenes in the final chapters of Genesis, which take place without Joseph being there. Therefore, Joseph had no direct knowledge of certain incidents which took place, which events are, nevertheless, seamlessly integrated into his own narrative. So, Joseph would tell about his life as a slave in Egypt and his rise to great authority; but when he came to one of those situations where he was not actually there, one of the older brothers (probably Reuben) would stand up and briefly tell what happened. These incidents are the interactions between the 11 sons and Jacob in Canaan, while Joseph is back in Egypt.<sup>11</sup>

What I am postulating here is, Jacob speaks, from memory, Genesis 1 down to his own life and he tells about his own life as well. All of that would have been memorized, word-for-word, by Jacob. It would have been the job of the patriarch of the family to know all of Genesis down to his own life. But, at some point in the Genesis narrative, things took place to which only Reuben, Simeon and Levi knew about (Jacob was not a party to these events). Therefore, those sons would stand up and speak. What I am suggesting that, while in Egypt, as a part of their Y<sup>e</sup>howah celebration, Jacob and many of his sons (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah and Joseph) would speak (from memory) nearly all of the book of Genesis. This is speculation on my part, but it fits in very well with Jewish history and tradition.

What this speculation does is, it gives us a good explanation as to why the final 12 or so chapters of Genesis are so well-edited. A casual reader would not notice this about the end of Genesis. In fact, almost no commentator remarks on this, probably not even realizing it (in fact, because of the editing, most theologians think that Moses wrote the book of Genesis). Many intense students of the book of Genesis have never noticed and commented on the perfect editing of the final 10 chapters. The editing of these different narratives is actually quite remarkable and perfectly chronological. No one person could have stood up and talked about the final chapters of Genesis, because no one person was a part of every event that took place. In the early years in Egypt, much of the family would stand and present these events to their audience (which probably included many Egyptians).

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<sup>11</sup> Insofar as we know, Joseph never returns to Canaan after being taken to Egypt as a slave.



This is my approach and theory of how the book of Genesis came about, and, insofar as I know, this is a unique perspective, as well as being the most accurate.<sup>12</sup> I am unaware of anyone laying out this particular theory, and offering up evidence as well.

For various members of Jacob's family to stand up at various times and pick up the narrative and to move it forward would result in the very well-edited version of Genesis which we enjoy today. The final 10–12 chapters would be spoken mostly by Joseph; however, there are sections integral to the narrative when he was not there. Therefore, Judah mostly likely stood up and filled in those gaps. Let me explain that in more detail:

Joseph, as the prime minister of Egypt, knew all about his own responsibilities; he recognized his brothers when they came to him (but he disguised his voice and he looked Egyptian). So, all of this narrative is logically known to Joseph first hand—including his feelings and his asides (which are a part of the Genesis narrative, suggesting that it came from Joseph directly). But, at some point, the sons of Jacob—sans Joseph—would leave Egypt and return to Canaan with the grain that they bought. Joseph is not there, so he has no firsthand knowledge of what happens along these trips to and from Egypt; nor does Joseph know what his brothers said to one another. When Joseph's brothers all arrive home and find that the silver they took to buy grain with was somehow placed back in their bags, that was very problematic for them and it is discussed at length in the book of Genesis. That information is integral to those chapters of Genesis and could not be left out. Joseph, of course, was not there for that.

Every one of the brothers (except for Joseph) knew about the things which took place *after* leaving Egypt; so one of them—probably Reuben or Judah—would stand up and take up the story from Egypt to Canaan. This is very artfully done in the book of Genesis, so we seem to be, as readers, hovering over the action taking place, able to hear the thoughts of Joseph at one point, but then also hearing the private conversations between Jacob and his sons which take place in Canaan. Although this appears to be 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscience which is taking place, it really is not. What is really taking place is, Joseph is telling the story from his point of view; and then Reuben (or Judah) picks up the story from there. When the sons all leave Egypt to return to Canaan, then someone from that caravan would speak. That would have been Reuben's point of view (actually, any of the 11 sons could have told this portion of the narrative).

I am very jazzed about this interpretation of how the book of Genesis organically came to be, with its strict chronological approach throughout the final 12 or so chapters.

Given the great mourning which took place when Jacob died—a mourning which extended to the Egyptians—I would also propose that these *services* (if you will) were not just attended by the ever-growing family of Judah but also by many Egyptians as well, who were on positive signals at that time towards the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

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<sup>12</sup> In my opinion, of course.

When the entire family of Judah moved to Egypt, they were very warmly received; and I believe that this also indicates widespread positive volition towards the God of Abraham among the Egyptian people. Remember, God's message has to go out to any place where there is positive volition. If there is a person interested in the True Creator, then God cannot simply ignore that person. He must bring His good news to them. The evidence that the Egyptians received the Hebrew people warmly is (1) their relationship with Joseph; (2) God brought the Hebrew family of Jacob to Egypt (which suggests blessing by association); and (3) the great mourning which took place in Egypt when Jacob died. All of this suggests close interaction between the family of Jacob and some of the people of Egypt, despite the fact that the family of Jacob were more or less segregated by area from the Egyptian people (except for Joseph, who was Egypt's prime minister).

Again, portions of this are conjecture, but I believe that there were many times when Jacob stood up and spoke the Word of God (that is, the first two-thirds of Genesis); and this would be followed by 5 of his sons standing up and telling what happened next. Because their words *were* the Words of God (the very same words which we study today), they moved the people of Egypt who were on positive signals and also attended. Egyptians would hear these words and believe the God of Genesis, and become saved by believing in the Revealed God of Genesis. I suspect that there may be even millions of Egyptians in heaven because of this.

Although some of what I have presented is conjecture, I believe that this perfectly explains how the book of Genesis was written (so, actually, it was not written, but memorized and repeated many times each year; and passed down to the next generation orally). At some point, this book was written down (we do not know by who, but it could have been Moses). Whoever wrote it down, did not simply allow the Spirit of God to move his hands and fingers; he wrote down what he had memorized after hearing these words so many times in his life.

This understanding of the origins of the book of Genesis are fully congruent with the following things:

1. This would easily explain the preservation of the book of Genesis over hundreds of years, going back to a time before writing existed.
  - 1) I would suggest to you that there was a lengthy period of time when writing was not really required. That is, people heard and remembered everything that they heard and saw.
  - 2) All contracts could have been done on a handshake deal prior to Abraham, because people simply lived for a very, very long time.
2. Most of the book of Genesis is biography; so it is most logical that those lives we find in Genesis are the ones who recorded this history.
3. This theory would explain the perfect editing of Genesis 39–50.
4. This approach would explain the great sadness felt by the Egyptians when Jacob died (recall that Jacob, for the most part, was not a very loveable person).

Somehow, Jacob became close to the Egyptian people in order for them to react as they did to the death of Jacob.

- 1) If Egyptians heard the Word of God spoken by Jacob (and by his sons), they would have been very well-disposed towards that family.
  - 2) A loss in that family would be taken very personally by Egyptians who heard these men speak the words of God.
  - 3) You may personally understand the importance and comfort gained from hearing the Word of God taught. If you understand that, then Jacob speaking these words to Egyptians would have endeared him to the Egyptians (despite his flaws).<sup>13</sup>
5. The traditions of the synagogue, which are not specifically laid out in Scripture, have various men standing up and reading the Scriptures of God. This is not done like the typical church service, where the pastor-teacher teaches from the Word of God. This would be mostly local people who would come and read the existing Scriptures. This tradition had to come from somewhere. If the family of Jacob regularly worshiped God by standing and speaking aloud *The History of Man and God* (a tradition which probably predates Jacob), then the traditions and function of the synagogue would have naturally grown out of this.
- 1) Readings from the synagogue would have been directly from the Scriptures.
  - 2) One man would read the Scriptures, sit down, and another man would read them, picking up where the first man left off.
  - 3) If the Scriptures were preserved as I have suggested, then we would have precedence for this long-lived tradition.

Luke 3:33 ...the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,... [I continue to use the ESV (capitalized) as my primary Biblical text; but not many translations have both Aminadab *and* Admin.]

Judah entered into Egypt with his son, Perez (who was a twin); and the other 3 or 4 men named in this verse were likely slaves in Egypt (we do not know exactly when the Egyptians enslaved the Hebrew people). It is likely that Hezron or Arni would have been in the first generation that was enslaved by the Egyptians.

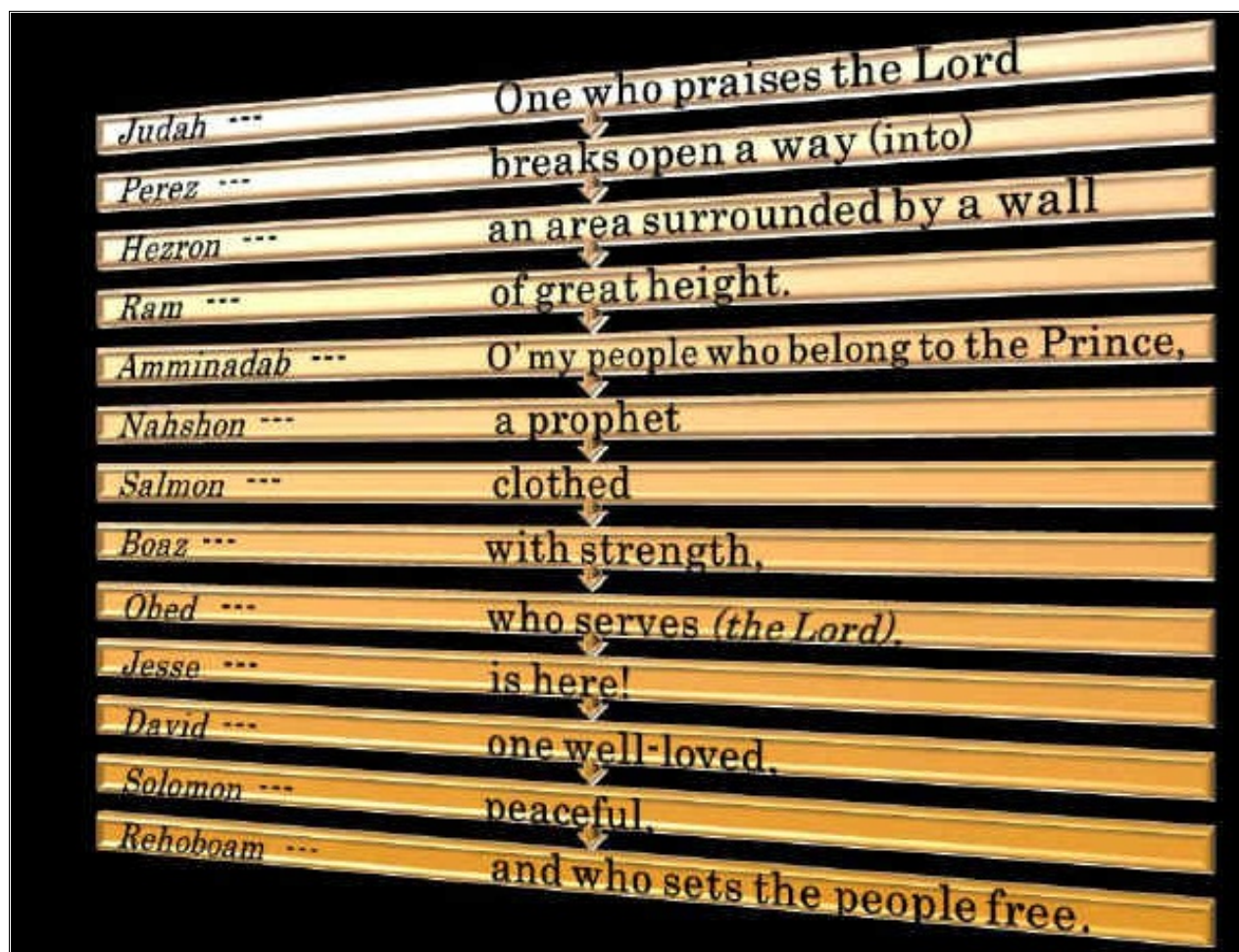
There are only two sets of twins named in the Old Testament: Jacob and Esau; Perez and his brother. They are separated by a single generation.

Judah is one of the heads of the 12 (13) tribes of Israel. Judah, his son Perez, and his father Jacob were all born in the land of Canaan. The other men in this verse were born in Egypt.

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<sup>13</sup> Let me suggest that R. B. Thieme, Jr. is an excellent example of this.

If we follow Judah's line down to David, and then to Solomon and Rehoboam (this is the line of Joseph, the legal father of Jesus), we get this:



**The Line of Judah through David, Solomon and Rehoboam** (a chart); from [Bible-codes.org](http://Bible-codes.org); accessed November 1, 2018.

Notice what it says: **One who praises the Lord breaks open a way [into] an area surrounded by a wall of great height. O my people [to] whom belong the Prince, a prophet clothed with strength, who serves [God] is here! One well-loved, peaceful, and Who sets the people free.** Pretty amazing, is it not?

Unlike the line in Matthew, which begins with Abraham and then proceeds to Jesus, the line of Mary starts with Jesus and goes all the way back to Adam.

Luke 3:34a ...the son of Jacob,...



Jacob is a twin. He was a Hebrew by race, but his twin brother, Esau, was not. Jacob, for much of his life, was a poor excuse for a believer; and as a result of his actions, he ended up having to leave the Land of Promise (something which Abraham kept Isaac from doing—see v. 34b-c). However, when he returned some 20 years later, and he had two wives, two mistresses, 11 sons, and at least 1 daughter. Despite his behavior (which was mixed), God blessed him and brought him back into the land. Furthermore, all of the Hebrew people—apart from those who chose to adopt into the Jewish family—are from the loins of Jacob. All of Jacob's sons were in the line of promise; none of Esau's were. Jacob did not have any descendants who were not racially Hebrew.

Jacob was given the name *Israel* by God; and the nation of Hebrews is identified with Jacob's God-given name. These people are identified by that name even to this day.

The name *Jacob* is used when speaking of his weaknesses or when emphasizing the grace of God. It is clear that Jacob did not deserve the great honor and blessing bestowed upon him by God. However, it is also likely that he turned things around in the final decades of his life, having received great honor from the Egyptian people when he died. The people of God moved to Egypt with Jacob as their patriarch; and the Egyptians developed a strong fondness for Jacob. There had to be a set of reasons why this happened, as Jacob was not inherently a loveable person.

It is Jacob who gives many of us hope. When we study men like Abraham or Moses or David, we marvel at their faithfulness to God. None of these men were perfect—not by a long shot—but do I want to set my life next to theirs and compare? No way! But compare my life to that of the scheming, double-dealing, self-centered Jacob? Now, there is a man I can relate to. I might not like him very much, but I must admit that I am much more like Jacob than I am like Abraham.

I know that God in Whom I have believed; and I also know the sorry person that I am as well. Jacob, like his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham, was saved because he believed in the Revealed God. I am saved because I have believed in Jesus Christ. I certainly have no claim to salvation based upon my own life or upon personal merit (no one does).

The people lived in Egypt for 400 years, before God brought them out, as per the book of Exodus. They went into Egypt as a free people, invited by Joseph and led by Jacob. However, at some point, the Hebrews were enslaved by the Egyptians. Eventually, God brought the people of God out of Egypt, freeing them from their slavery.

Luke 3:34b ...the son of Isaac,...

Isaac was the second of two sons born to Abraham. The first was Ishmael, who was the son of a mistress—a mistress chosen by Abraham's wife. Abraham's mistress was an Egyptian slave girl, and her son, Ishmael, (by Abraham) was not the promised seed. Isaac, was born 13 years later, to a much older Abraham and Sarah. He was the son of God's promise.

One of the most amazing *types* found in Scripture is when God asks Abraham to offer up his son, his only son, the son whom he loves, as a sacrifice to God. See the parallel? Abraham was willing to offer up his son and God recognized this. At the last moment, a ram was revealed, to die as a substitute, instead of Isaac. It is an amazing set of parallels, clear to us today. However, these parallels were not originally understood as such until sometime after the crucifixion. At the crucifixion, God the Father offered up His Son, the Son Whom He loved, on the cross as a substitute for us. Once some time passed and perspective on these two historical incidents took place, then Christians could see the relationship between the two events. Abraham offering his son was a *type*; this act illustrated God offering up His only Son, the Son Whom He loved. The substitution Abraham was able to offer up was also a *type*; the ram illustrated the substitution that Jesus is for us.

Although typology is mentioned in the New Testament, with some examples given, a great deal of work has been done on this subject, long after the completion of the New Testament, with some amazing parallels being drawn between Old Testament events and people matched to events surrounding the life, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. Typology extends even outside of the realm of Christology. One of the types which we recently studied was Coniah, who represents the sin nature.

## Lesson 110: Luke 3:34c

## Why God Chose Abraham

Luke 3:34c ...the son of Abraham,...

God called Abraham to come to a new land, the land of Canaan, to a land that God would give to him and to his seed. A significant portion of the book of Genesis is about the life of Abraham. His story begins in Gen. 12 and continues to Gen. 25.

### Why God chose Abraham (Part I):

Interestingly enough, Abraham lived during the time when the ancients from sons of Noah began to die. Every person having a direct genealogical connection to any of Noah's sons all died out during the life of Abraham. No longer would there be actual witnesses to the post-deluvian world (the world immediately after the flood). If so-and-so was not an actual witness, his father, grandfather, or great grandfather was. There were actual family members alive during the time of Abraham who either stepped off the Ark after the flood; or were born in that first generation after the flood. There were people alive who had actually been at Babel when the languages were confused. There were people alive who witnessed with their own eyes the separation of the peoples, when men went off in all directions from Babel (Genesis 10–11). However, given their decreasing lifespans, most of them—we are talking quite a number of generations here—died out during the life of Abraham.

I believe that the act of Abraham being chosen by God to be the father His people (the Hebrew people) is directly related to the deaths of those who witnessed the ark, the immediate postdiluvian world, and who had direct contact with Noah or his sons.

Here is what I believe that connection was, although this is conjecture on my part and not stated in the Scriptures in these same terms. At this point, there were no Scriptures. People knew the things which make up the history in the early chapters of Genesis, and this information was universally known (to those with positive volition). That is, everyone who wanted to know, knew about the creation of Adam, the restoration of the earth, the mixing of man and angels, the flood, the tower of Babel, and the separation of the peoples. If the interest was there, any man living prior to Abraham could know these things. They could actually speak to any of the 4 men who lived in the world prior to the flood. During Abraham's life, this information was universally known (that is, it was known by those who wanted to know it). There were either eyewitnesses to these events or people who knew eyewitnesses to these events (again, I am speaking of potential here—not every person would have been interested in the history of man or in God).

When Abraham died, this would all be gone—completely and totally gone. All of this history would remain, but it would be in the hands of thousands of different people, and, as we would expect, it would be distorted. Even today, we have the remnants of the early history of man, with many parallels to what we read in the early chapters of Genesis—distorted though that history might be. We have ancestor worship in parts of Asia; we have flood narratives in nearly every ancient history; we find the mixing of man with angels in virtually all of the mythologies.

Abraham had a knowledge of this period of time. He probably knew Shem and heard about the pre and postdiluvian worlds directly from Shem (Shem is Abraham's 7X great grandfather). During the life of Abraham, there was access to the true history of God and man, because there were people alive who had actually lived through it.

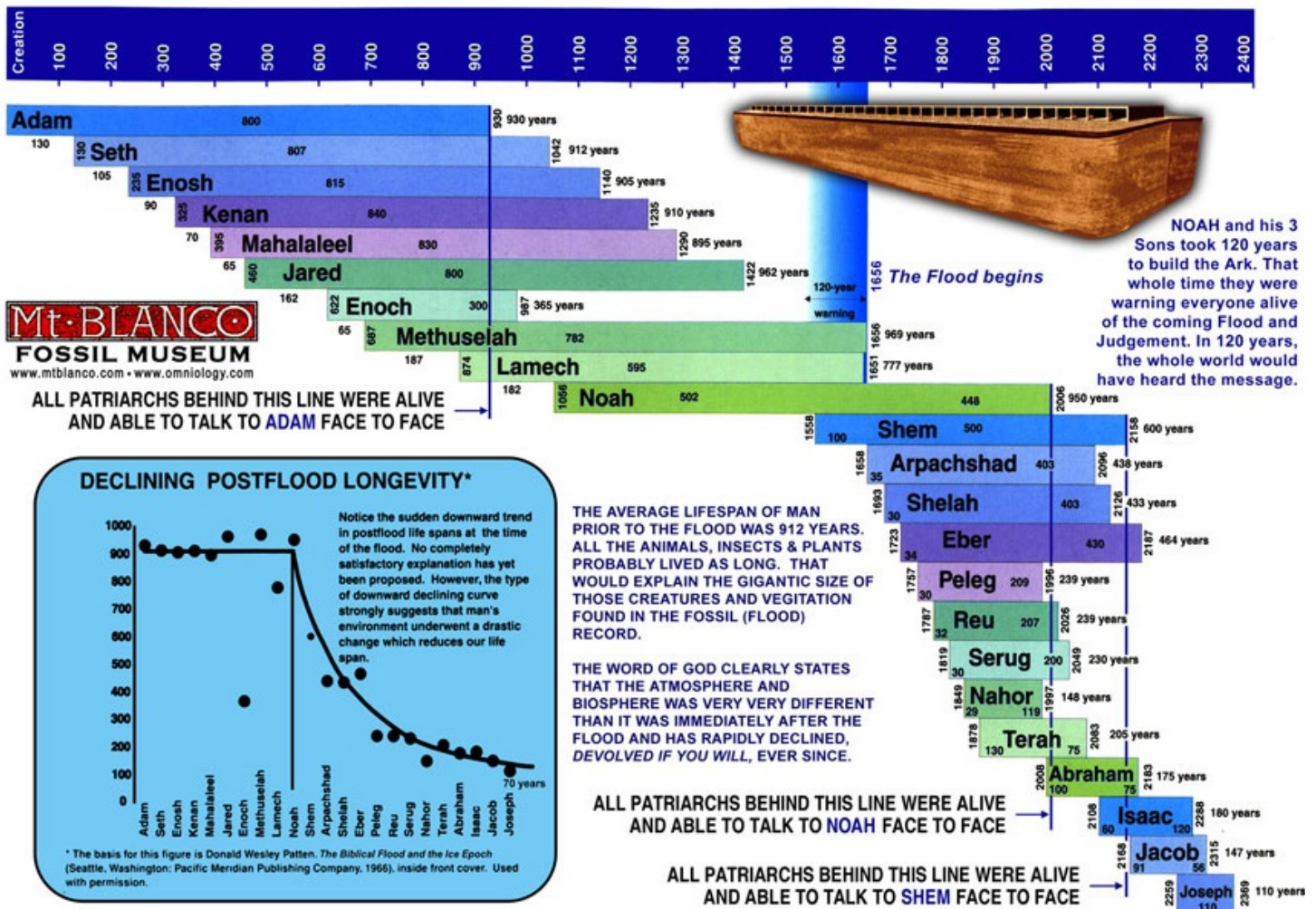
In some way, Abraham would be the definitive link between the true history of man and God and the people who would be born to him.

I went online to find a genealogical chart, and see that the makers of this chart made the very same points that I have been making—about when all the patriarchs died.

Using the numbers given in the book of Genesis, virtually every patriarch who lived before Abraham would die out during Abraham's life. I believe this to be very significant and tied directly to God's changing plan for mankind. Abraham lived in Mesopotamia. I believe that he carried in his head the entire book of Genesis up to his life; and that he brought this *book* with him to Canaan. Most of Abraham's ancestors died out during this time that Abraham was in Canaan.



**The Longevity of Man** (a chart); from [Omniology.com](http://Omniology.com); accessed October 9, 2020. This chart is originally from an online book by Walter Brown, Jr., entitled *In the Beginning*. It is found [online](#) (just click on the book) and may be ordered as well.



These notes were on the same page as the chart above.

## Notes on Longevity of Man Chart (from Omniology.com)

- 1) All ages are based on the Hebrew (masoretic) text. The Greek text (the Septuagint) and the Samaritan texts differ slightly.
- 2) The very careful and detailed use of mathematics and language in these chapters firmly links the chronology into one continuous family record. Notice that the age of each patriarch is given when the next patriarch (probably a son, but possibly a grandson) is born. Thus the time between the creation of Adam and the life of Joseph is established. The possibility of gaps in the genealogy would have no effect on this time interval.

## Notes on Longevity of Man Chart (from Omniology.com)

- 3) Noah's son Shem, who was born before the flood, almost outlived Abraham and very possibly had conversation with Isaac. [Since Isaac did not ever leave the land of Canaan, we know that he never spoke with Shem—GK.]
- 4) Each of the first nine patriarchs had "other sons and daughters." (See Gen. 5) in other words, each had at least 3 sons and 2 daughters. Statistically this implies that they all had large families--probably averaging nine or more children. If these were typical family sizes for that day, then the world population before the flood was very large--probably in the billions.
- 5) Notice that the lifespans of Adam, Methuselah, Shem, and Abraham successively overlapped.
- 6) The best estimates of the year of the flood are between 3398 and 2348 B.C.

I made some minor corrections to these notes and I inserted one corrective comment.

Notice how Abraham potentially spoke to Shem, who potentially spoke to Methuselah who potentially spoke to Adam. Abraham would have been the last person in his line who potentially spoke to Shem (who lived prior to the flood). Isaac was born in Canaan and never left Canaan, so he did not speak to 8x great grandfather Shem.

One thing not mentioned on this page was, how the length of life for the people listed in Gen. 11 began to decreased logarithmically. For most people who read these words, that means nothing. But, all life, as it grows, is related to the exponential function. All life when it dies or decays is related to the logarithmic function (which is the inverse function of an exponential function). A great deal of work was done on the concept of the exponential function in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (focusing on the value  $e$ —Euler's number). Logarithms appear to have been discovered in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when tables for logs began to be developed.<sup>14</sup> Interestingly enough, we have what amounts to a logarithmic decay function revealed by the decrease of ages of these men, 3000–4000 years before people had any idea what logarithms were. If you look at that graph with the blue background, that is a logarithmic curve. How would someone have known how to fake that?

### Why God chose Abraham (Part II):

The theological understandings of the people of the earth at this point in time had a similar sort of connection to Noah and his 3 sons. What they knew and understood about God (and Noah spoke with God) was universally known at that time. This does not mean that the people of the earth completely understood God and what He expected; but that option

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<sup>14</sup> When I began to take mathematics in college, we used tables when dealing with logarithms. After a few years of teaching mathematics in high school, we began to use calculators.

of knowledge was open to them (bear in mind, positive volition is tied to actually knowing the truth<sup>15</sup>).

My assumption is this: Abraham had a knowledge of these things and he knew about the pre and postdiluvian worlds. He could have actually spoken directly to Shem (we don't know whether or not he did), who actually lived in the antediluvian world (that is, prior to the flood). Anyone during this time period could have known all about the history of man going back to the creation of man by God. Shem, Ham and Japheth were all alive and they all lived before and after the flood.

With all of these men dying out—most of them during the lifespan of Abraham, this information needed to be recorded and standardized. By *recording*, I don't mean written down on something, but recorded in Abraham's mind. Abraham knew—possibly by personal contact with Shem—*The Early History of God and Man* (the alternate name which I have given to the book of Genesis).

When Abraham was sent to Canaan, he carried one very important item, which is not specifically alluded to—he carried in his mind the Bible up to that point in time (the first portion of Genesis and possibly the book of Job<sup>16</sup>). Abraham added to the Scriptures the various incidents which took place during his own life, incidents which he believed to be significant, and which information has been preserved now for some 4000 years.

People of this era may have chosen to distort this history, but someone could always say, "You are lying about this," and there were men who lived during the postdiluvian era (Shem, Ham and Japheth) who could potentially separate fact from fiction. However, at their deaths, this information would have been more easily subject to distortion.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, God needed to preserve this history accurately. So God chose Abraham to accomplish that purpose. On that point, I am speculating, but it makes far more sense than there being all of these oral traditions floating around, which Moses eventually read and thought about and then standardized. That is roughly the prevailing thought of theologians today, *and it is a theory (without Scriptural support) and nothing else!*

The exact reason why this had to take place at this time (when all the patriarchs were about to die) is logically deduced from the information which we have of that era. The fact of all these men dying during the lifetime of Abraham is actually given to us in Scripture, allowing man, even up to this day, to organize this information as Walter Brown, Jr. did (I don't know if he put the chart together or appropriated it from someone else).

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<sup>15</sup> This is true in any realm of knowledge.

<sup>16</sup> We have no idea when the book of Job became a part of the Old Testament Scriptures; but its events appear to predate Abraham.

<sup>17</sup> In today's world, I have known of events 4 or 10 years ago which are distorted; even though there is video evidence of what actually occurred.

*Isn't Moses said to be the author of Genesis?*, you may ask. He is not. He is called the writer of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy; but never of Genesis. It is possible that he committed the book of Genesis to writing; but it is most likely that the book of Genesis already existed in its completed form prior to Moses being born (whether as an orally transmitted book or a book committed to writing by the time of his birth, we do not know).

When Abraham arrives in Canaan, there will be no family with him, apart from his nephew Lot (and their respective wives). A significant portion of Genesis is about Abraham (actually, *Abram*) and his nephew Lot.

This information which is in Abraham's head (this is conjecture again), will become the Scriptures. He will tell all of this to his son Isaac, who will tell it to his son Jacob. When we study Genesis, we are reading an English translation from the exact words of Abraham which he spoke to his son (and grandsons).

I believe that this began the tradition of this information be spoken aloud from memory among a family during their worship of Y<sup>e</sup>howah. Abraham, the patriarch, would have said everything from the creation of man to his own life. Then Isaac would stand up and tell about his life; and, finally, Jacob would stand up and tell about his life. This is conjecture on my part, and that I cannot point to some verses in Genesis which confirm my theory, but it would very handily explain the preservation of the book of Genesis throughout the lives of Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (and Joseph). It would also explain why God chose Abraham at the time that He did.

Who, other than Abraham and his family, would have preserved these traditions? Furthermore, does it not seem the most logical for this family to have preserved their own family history (which is actually the bulk of the book of Genesis)?

Also—and I want to emphasize this—the commonly accepted notion that Moses wrote the book of Genesis is *also* a theory. It may be the most popular theory, but, it is still just a theory. In my opinion it is a theory with less Scriptural support than mine.

Now, in case the book of Genesis seems like too much memorization, let me say that if you or I chose to, we could memorize the entire book of Genesis, front to back; and we could recite it. The minds of the patriarchs, I believe, were much better than ours. Therefore, I think that, after a few hearings, they actually knew and could repeat, the information found in Genesis. If pressed, most of us could memorize the book of Genesis in a week possibly; and clearly, within the period of a year. I believe that Abraham, for much of his life, heard *The Early History of God and Man* recited, and knew it by the time he left Mesopotamia. He may not have appreciated it at the time, but this was the most important possession which he brought with him.

Knowledge is a common yet strange possession. Abraham may not have thought to include these words in the book of Genesis: *and I traveled to Canaan, yet still in possession of the knowledge of my ancestors*. I traveled from California to Texas, with a



knowledge of Euler's number and logarithmic functions. This is the first time I have shared that fact with anyone.

I believe that, from Abraham and forward, whoever was the oldest patriarch in the Hebrew line (Abraham ▶ Isaac ▶ Jacob ▶ Jacob's 12 sons), during religious ceremonies, would stand up and recite the book of Genesis up to his life, and then others present might stand up and add to this information (as I have previously suggested).

I believe that this tradition has been preserved, to some extent, in the synagogues today.

## Lesson 111: Luke 3:34–35c

## Why God Chose Abraham (the Doctrine)

We are still in the genealogical line of Mary.

Luke 3:34c ...the son of Abraham,...

Luke 3:34 ...the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,...

### Why God Chose Abraham (a doctrine)

1. Abraham lived during a unique time in human history. Although Noah died at about the time that Abraham was born, Shem was still alive. Shem lived in both the antediluvian and postdiluvian worlds. He and his brothers were eyewitnesses to the civilization which existed before the flood. If there was any question about what had happened before the flood, during the flood and after the flood, there were 3 men who were there who could testify to exactly what happened. They saw all of it with their own eyes. Despite it being a fantastical story, there were 3 witnesses to that same story.
2. No doubt, these men told their sons all that happened; and their grandsons; great grandsons, etc.
3. These men would have been like gods to the people; who could confirm or refute anything reported about the flood or the world before the flood.
4. Once these men died, all of this historical information which they lived through would have been subject to the whims of whomever told the story of what happened. There would be no existing standard by which these stories could be judged. What God did and God's relationship to this world could be easily distorted.
5. The 3 men who witnessed the actual flood and the world as it had existed before the flood would all die out during Abraham's lifetime. Their sons, grandsons, great grandsons, etc. would also all die out during Abraham's lifetime. That is all 3 witnesses, all of their sons, all of their grandsons, all of their great grandsons, etc.—would all die out in one generation.
6. God wants the events that we know in Genesis to be accurately recounted, as God is truth. He does not want a false version of the flood to be recalled; He

## Why God Chose Abraham (a doctrine)

- does not want false views of the corruption of the human race to be perpetuated.
7. I would suggest that the remembrance of these things was passed along from Shem to his sons and grandsons; and eventually, to Abraham.
  8. Logically, God would have chosen Abraham because of Abraham's adherence to the correct narrative handed down from his ancestor Shem (who, again, was still alive at this time).
  9. Nothing is more important to man on earth than the Word of God. Therefore, we should expect God to preserve it, in one way or another. I am suggesting that the Word of God was preserved in and by Abraham (that is, in his memory and by his choice).
  10. There is a theory that Moses wrote down the book of Genesis. However, despite this being the most popular theory among conservative theologians, there is actually no evidence for it. No Bible verse attributes the book of Genesis to Moses (although he is specifically credited with writing Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy).
    - 1) If Moses wrote the book of Genesis, then he either had a record or records from which to construct it or God the Holy Spirit simply told him what to write (or some combination of these two things).
    - 2) We have a record of God speaking directly to Moses when it came to writing down portions of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy; we have no record of God speaking to Moses and telling him, "This is what I want you to write for the first book of the Bible."
    - 3) If Moses wrote the book of Genesis from existing records (which did not necessarily need to be written records), then why suggest that Moses be due any sort of credit for this? If he copies the words down from an existing record, he is not actually the author, is he?
    - 4) Why would there be more than one record? Why would the very chronological view presented in the book of Genesis necessarily come from 2 or more records?
    - 5) There are very different writing styles to be found throughout the book of Genesis. The man who wrote Gen. 24 did not write Gen. 25. The way that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph recount their personal lives is very different. One can easily perceive different styles of writing, when going from one patriarch to the next. There is nothing to suggest a consistent Mosaic style of writing in the book of Genesis.
    - 6) Could Moses have recorded a document which already existed (and by document, I do not necessarily refer to something which was written). If Moses recorded a document previously written, then he is not the author but a copyist.
  11. Most of the book of Genesis (Gen. 12–50) is about Abraham, his sons, his grandsons or his great grandsons. The bulk of Genesis is the biography of a family, beginning with Abraham and including very personal stories about Isaac, Jacob, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah and Joseph. Who would be the most likely people to preserve these records? Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and Reuben,

## Why God Chose Abraham (a doctrine)

Simeon, Levi, Judah and Joseph. To suggest that someone else kept these records is absurd. There are certainly things written about these men—including their thoughts—that no one else would have been aware of. Now, if they kept the history recorded in Gen. 12–50 and if Abraham actually lived during the time of Shem and his descendants (of which, Abraham was one), who else would be the most logical person to retain a mental record of Gen. 1–11? The correct answer would be, *Abraham*.

12. Therefore, it is my assertion that Abraham, when he left the Babylon area, took with him the memorized words of Gen. 1–11. Then he added to this; and his son added to it, etc. This record became the book of Genesis—exactly the words which we study today (albeit, translated into English).
13. In whatever family worship service that Abraham led with his family, he would, as the family priest, do more than simply offer up animal sacrifices to God. He would also read the words of Gen. 1–11 and add to that whatever life he had led up to that point in time. It is logical to think that, early worship of Y<sup>e</sup>howah involved more than animal sacrifices. I suggest that there was a reading of the Word of God, as it existed in that day, along with animal sacrifices.

Logically, this family, with such a close relationship to God, would have gathered at various intervals and the patriarch of the family would speak, from memory, *The Early History of God and Man* (my name for the book of Genesis), down to his lifetime; and then his son would pick it up from there.

When in Egypt, it is very likely that Jacob, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah and Joseph all stood up to present the Word of God to their family and to any Egyptians who were positive toward doctrine and interested. Let me suggest that this would have been one of the most marvelous events to take place in human history (and it was probably repeated at least 3x a year or more—in fact, it could have been weekly).

I have previously explained why it makes sense for Jacob to have led such services in Egypt. He was not a very likeable person, even after he returned to the land of Canaan. Yet, at his death, he was a very beloved man in Egypt, by his family and by many Egyptians. How would a man ingratiate himself to a foreign nation in such a way as to become beloved? The logical answer to me is, he spoke to them the words of God. He worshiped the True God, he spoke the words of God, and he allowed Egyptians to join the services. If Jacob did this, the great sorrow of his family and of the Egyptians makes perfect sense.

I would suggest that the tradition of the synagogue was the logical outgrowth of this great recurring event.

Luke 3:34c ...the son of Abraham,...

Abraham is the first Hebrew (OT term); or, Jew (NT term).



The name *Abraham* means *father of a multitude*. He had 2 sons, one of whom was a Hebrew and the other remained a gentile.

Luke 3:34d ...the son of Terah,...

Terah was Abraham's father. Abraham was to separate from his family and move west to Canaan. He got about halfway there and stopped. It appears that his family—his father in particular—held him back from completing his assigned task (God told Abraham to separate from his family and to go west).

*Terah's* name means, *station*.

Luke 3:34e ...the son of Nahor,...

There are two Nahor's in Abraham's family. This Nahor is his paternal grandfather. The other one is his brother, if memory serves. He was snoring (asleep) when God brought salvation to Abraham.

His name means, *snorting, snoring*. It is not out of the question that some of these names were assigned to them later in life—a nickname or a play on their given name.

Luke 3:34 ...the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,...

Here we have the people of promise: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; along with Abraham's father and grandfather.

Terah and Nahor are both gentiles. Abraham is Hebrew, which is a new race of man. Prior to this, there were 3 basic races: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Luke 3:35a ...the son of Serug,...

Serug is the son of Nahor. *Serug* name means, *intertwined*.

Luke 3:35b ...the son of Reu,...

His name means, *associate you: feed you*.

Luke 3:35c ...the son of Peleg,...

His name means, *division*.

Many believe that his name here signifies the division of the languages, causing the people to spread out from one another (that is, *to become divided*). Because the languages were divided (Gen. 11), the people then separated themselves from one another.

Luke 3:35d ...the son of Eber,...

We actually do not know for certain where the designation *Hebrew* is from, although many theologians tie it to *Eber*. *Hebrew* is actually this word in the Hebrew: 'Ib<sup>e</sup>riy (יִבְרִי) [pronounced *ġ<sup>be</sup>-VREE*]. It is first used of Abraham in Gen. 14:13; but, apart from that usage, it is found multiple times in the narrative about Joseph in Egypt, where this word is specifically applied to Joseph by Egyptians (Gen. 39:14, 17 41:12). For all of Genesis and in the first 15 chapters of Exodus, this word is specifically applied to the Hebrew people in Egypt (and nearly always by Egyptians). That this designation is applied to Joseph strongly suggests that this word ultimately has an Egyptian origin (or the Egyptians appropriated a word and applied that to some groups of foreign peoples).

Some believe that Eber is from where we get the general name *Hebrew*. In the Hebrew, Eber is 'Ēber (עֵבֶר) [pronounced *ĠAY<sup>b</sup>-ver*]. His name means, *the region beyond*. This, or a very similar name was how the Egyptians referred to some of settlers from the northeast (which region included Canaan). Since there were so few Hebrew people at the time that this name is applied to them (only 70 or 75 who were descended from Jacob and their respective wives), it would be odd for the Egyptians to have a word to apply just to them. The name was originally applied to Joseph when he was the only person descended from Jacob who lived in Egypt.

Clearly, the Egyptians would not have had a specific name for a group of people this small; particularly not one which would have applied, for many years, to a single individual. However, they came from the *region beyond*, so the name *Hebrew* eventually stuck to Jacob and his descendants. Such a name was consistent with the name of their common ancestor, Eber.

For that reason, the actual origins of the name *Hebrew* are unclear, given that the designation may have gone way back to the early descendants of Eber; or it may be a name applied by the Egyptians to the Hebrew people. At some point, this became a word applied specifically to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and to their descendants. No doubt that particular designation took place while they were living in Egypt.

As an aside, the term *Jew* is a later designation. I have mostly used the word *Hebrew* when working in the Old Testament and *Jew* or *Jewish* when working in the New.

Luke 3:35e ...the son of Shelah,...

Shelah is the Great X5 grandfather of Abraham and grandson or great grandson of Shem. His name means, *sprout*.

Luke 3:35 ...the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah,...

String these names together and we get: *Intertwined an association [with] you, divided [so that in the] region beyond [they will] sprout*. This seems to be describing the intertwined family of Abraham, which moves, but is divided; yet Abraham moves to a region beyond where his family sprouted. Most of Abraham's relatives will remain behind (which is at God's insistence).

There are several instances recorded in Scripture where one might be led to understand that God is anti-family, and that believers ought to, after being saved, move away from their families. This is not the case; and, at no time, should you allow a cult-like organization to separate you from your family and friends. It is true that the people in church are people with whom you will spend eternity; but that does not mean that you dump all of your previous relationships and only develop new ones from the church. That is cultic behavior and if you get that sort of direction from the church you go to, then you should separate from that church—immediately.

On the other hand, there are times in Scripture and there are times in real life where separation from family is going to occur. That is true of many people who begin to grow up and go off to college or off to work or who get married. This as a normal process as fine; this as something socially applied by your church in order to control your behavior is something entirely different.

**Application:** My point is, sometimes God may lead you away from your family. However, if there are noted people at the church that you attend who are trying to separate you from your family and friends, then you are in the wrong church. In fact, you are not in a church; you are in a cult.

**Illustration:** I moved from where I was raised to the Houston area. I moved chiefly for work, and I considered Houston, simply because Berachah Church was there. It was the exact right move for me to make. However, at no time did anyone in Berachah Church said that I needed to be separate from my family and old friends; nor has there ever been any teaching from the pulpit which stated or implied that separation from family and friends was what every member of the church should do.

Some of the family of Abraham moved with him as far as Haran in Mesopotamia (chiefly, his father). From there, Abraham (actually, *Abram* at that time), his wife, Lot and his wife moved to Canaan.

Unrelated to the land of Canaan is this next man:

Luke 3:36a ...**the son of Cainan**,...

This name is quite significant, as we do not find it in the Old Testament. This suggests that there were records of such a one, but that his name dropped out of the Hebrew text at some point. Someone with this name occurs later in this line as well.

I can only recall two instances where there is any problem with this particular line, and this is one of them. Interestingly enough, this does not do any damage to the Hebrew time line based upon the ages of the men which are given. It may add an extra 20–40 years into the line, which is rather insignificant.

His name means, *their smith*.

Luke 3:36b ...the son of Arphaxad,...

His name means, *stronghold of Chaldees*.

Luke 3:36c ...the son of Shem,...

His name means, *name*.

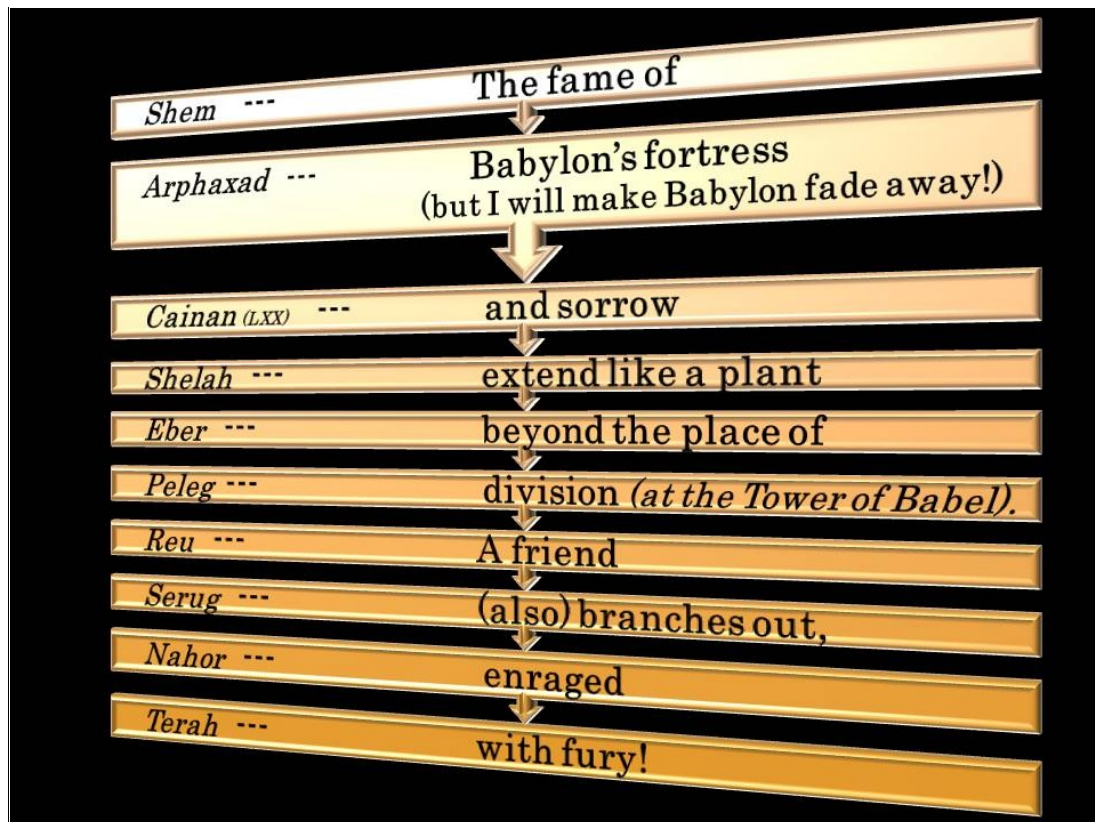
Shem, like his brothers and father, lived on both sides of the flood. Shem helped his father build the ark and gather the animals to take on the ark.

Shem is a son of Noah. Many of the men in this genealogy—Shem, Arphaxad, Cainan, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, and Serug—were alive during the time of Abraham; and they died out during his lifetime.

Luke 3:36a-c ...the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem,...

**Shem** ⇒ **Eber** ⇒ **Terah** (a genealogical chart); from [Bible Names Code](#); accessed May 24, 2019.

Notice that with this chart, the order is reversed from what we read in Luke. I have not yet experimented with the Greek meanings and keeping the names in the same order as we read in the Greek.



Notice what it says: **The fame of Babylon's fortress and sorrow [wil] extend like a plant beyond the place of division. A friend branches out, enraged with fury!** This seems to be less significant to me. But this seems to give a brief history of what took place during these 8 generations.

Luke 3:36d ...**the son of Noah**,...

His name means, *rest*.

Noah was the tenth in descent from Adam. Noah is the second father of the human family (Adam being the first). Every person alive today is descended from Noah (and, quite obviously, from Adam).

Noah and his sons were the only witnesses to the antediluvian (*before the flood*) civilization. The events which preceded the flood were quite spectacular.

All of the men named next are from the antediluvian civilization. They lived and died during that era.

Luke 3:36e ...**the son of Lamech**,...

These sets of definitions are somewhat confusing, as those listed from the Greek can differ from the Hebrew. It seems that the Hebrew meanings would be the important ones, being that these are mostly Hebrew names.

His name means, *powerful; why thus with you?; to bring low*.

Luke 3:36d-e ...*the son of Noah, the son of Lamech*,...

Noah lives on both sides of the flood; his father, Lamech, died prior to the great flood.

Luke 3:37a ...*the son of Methuselah*,...

He was the son of Enoch, grandfather of Noah. Methuselah lived longer than anyone else—969 years.

His name means, *man of the dart; when he dies, there shall be an emission*.

Luke 3:37b ...*the son of Enoch*,...

God took this Enoch into heaven without him physically dying.

His name means, *dedicated*.

Luke 3:37c ...*the son of Jared*,...

Westcott Hort has *Iaret*. Bear in mind that, despite the surfeit of English Bible names which begin with *j*, there is no *j* in the Greek or Hebrew.

His name means, *descent*.

Luke 3:37d ...*the son of Mahalaleel*,...

His name means, *praise of God*.

Luke 3:37e ...*the son of Cainan*,...

Westcott-Hort has *Kainam* (*καϊναμ*) instead.

His name means, *their smith*.

Luke 3:37 ...*the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan*,...

Bear in mind that all of these people are related to you and I. Even though I am probably descended from Japheth, these are my ancestors (and yours).

We will put these names together further on down.

## Lesson 113: Luke 3:38

## Enos to Adam; The Genealogy Gospel

Luke 3:38a ...the son of Enos,...

His name means, *mortal man*.

Luke 3:38b ...the son of Seth,...

Seth was the third son of Adam and the father of Enos. We do not have any idea exactly how many sons and daughters that Adam and Eve had.

His name means, *compensation*.

Luke 3:38c ...the son of Adam,...

Jesus is often called the *Son of Man* in the book of Luke. Perhaps this is why. This line goes all the way back to *Adam*, whose name means *man*. *Son of Man = the Son of Adam*.

*Adam* name means, *the red earth*. Adam's body was made out of the chemical elements of the earth (as ours are).

Luke 3:38 ...the son of God.

Adam here is called a son of God. He was created directly by God without sin. He was created in God's image. This is one of the fundamental places where the Bible differs from what has come to be accepted science today. We are not evolved creatures; we did not begin as half-ape, half-man, evolved from some sort of animal primate.

Adam, who would be perhaps alive 5000 or so years ago, would be indistinguishable from us, apart from looking a lot better and having a much greater mind. You may or may not be surprised to know that, when the population of man is traced out mathematically (using exponential growth curves), man's population today is far more consistent with a 5000 year old Adam than it is with man being evolved about 1 million years ago. The latter opinion of science is inconsistent with the mathematics of human growth.

This does not mean that the earth itself is only 5000 years old. The Bible implies that the creation of the earth could have occurred far, far earlier. It may be millions of years old or even billions of years old. Neither would conflict with the Biblical record. But man being on this earth a million years ago? No, that did not happen. Mathematically, that would be impossible (unless, of course, all mankind except for one couple died off about 5000 years ago).



I believe in what is known as the Gap theory—that God created the earth and the universe and that, it became a disorganized mess, and eventually it was frozen. It was apparently a playground of sorts for the fallen angels. Exactly what the relationship was between God, the elect angels, the fallen angels and the earth is unknown (apart from God being the Creator of the heavens and the earth). What we study in the first chapter of Genesis (after v. 2), is not the creation of the earth, but the restoration of the earth.

Luke 3:38 ...the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

God → Adam → Seth → Noah (a genealogical chart); from [Bible Names Code](#); accessed May 24, 2019.



This list of names is often known as the Genealogy Gospel. Beginning with Adam, we have: **Man is appointed, a mortal man of sorrow is born. The Glory of God will come down, teaching that His death will bring those in despair comfort and rest!** That is the gospel message and it is quite amazing, is it not?

Although some of these—particularly the gospel genealogy—are quite amazing, we should be careful not to find too much hidden meaning in this or that thing related to the Bible. What we need to know is generally stated outright, without having to be clever about it. However, that genealogy is pretty damned clever.

The Passion Translation (Luke 3:23–38) is used below:

Matching Names to Israel's History (Luke 3:27–34)	
Names in Mary's Genealogy	Historical Events and Epochs
Jesus, assumed to be Joseph's son, was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. Here are the names of Mary's ancestors, from her father traced all the way back to Adam: Eli,...	Jesus was born 6–4 B.C. This does not coincide with A.D. 1 because there was an error in the development of the calendar which attempted to place Jesus in the middle of human history. Mary was perhaps 18 years old or so at the Lord's birth. Eli is Mary's father.
...Matthat, Levi, Melki, Jannai, Joseph, Mattathias, Amos, Nahum, Esli, Naggai, Maath, Mattathias, Semein,...	These ancestors of Mary's stretch back to about 400 B.C., when the Old Testament canon was completed. No Scripture was written after the Old Testament was completed. However, Jewish people continued to write and record events after the OT was closed.
...Josech, Joda, Joanan, Rhesa,...	Rhesa may have returned to the land of promise; and these men lived in Canaan from 516–400 B.C. Rhesa, Joseph and possibly even Joda were born in Babylon.
...Zerubbabel, Shealtiel,...	<i>Zerubbabel</i> means <i>a seed in Babel</i> , indicating that this person was born in Babylon (586–516 B.C.). His father, Shaltiel, would have been forcibly taken into Babylon from Canaan.
...Neri, Melchi, Addi, Cosam, Elmadam, Er, Joshua, Eliezer, Jorim, Matthat, Levi, Simeon, Judah, Joseph, Jonam, Eliakim, Melea, Menna, Mattatha,...	These men lived in the land—the southern kingdom—between the time of Solomon's reign and the attack by Babylon.
...Nathan, David, Jesse, Obed,...	David lived around 1000 B.C.; Nathan was his son; Jesse was his father.
...Boaz, Salmon,...	These men would have lived in the newly conquered land of Canaan. Boaz is the husband of Ruth from the book of her name.

## Matching Names to Israel's History (Luke 3:27–34)

Names in Mary's Genealogy	Historical Events and Epochs
...Nahshon, Amminadab, Admin, Arni, Hezron, Perez, Judah,...	These men all lived in Egypt, some of them as slaves. Nahshon and Amminadab, freed from slavery, perhaps walked out of Egypt with Moses (circa 1450 B.C.).
...Jacob, Isaac, Abraham,...	These are the 3 patriarchs of the Hebrew race. A racial Jew is genetically attached to all of them. These men lived around 1000 B.C.
...Terah, Nahor, Serug, Reu,...	These men lived in the Babylon area. Terah moved west with his son Abram (Abraham). Abraham had been instructed by God to go all of the way to Canaan. They stopped about halfway there in Haran. Abraham remained there until his father passed away.
...Peleg, Eber, Shelah, Kenan, Arphaxad,...	Peleg was probably born around the time that God confused the languages at the tower of Babel.
...Shem, Noah,...	Both Noah and his son Shem lived on the earth before and after the flood.  The names between Terah and Shem would have been very significant to Abraham. He would have known all 10 generations of these men.
...Lamech, Methuselah, Enoch, Jared, Mahalaleel, Cainan, Enos, Seth,...	These men all lived on earth prior to the flood.
...and Adam, who was created by God.	Adam was created directly from the hand of God; he was created sinless and without a sin nature.

These early names in this genealogy were not backwards cavemen, but some of the most brilliant men who have ever lived. They probably all had exceptional memories and reasoning power.

Let's go back and take an abbreviated look at all of Luke 3. Sometimes, our study goes into so much detail, that it is helpful to stand back and to see a more concise version of what we have studied. The ESV; capitalized will be used below):

Luke 3:1–2 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

**Israel at the Time of Jesus** (a map); from [Conforming to Jesus](http://conformingtojesus.com); accessed July 10, 2020.

As an aside, when I use a graphic from another webpage, I am not necessarily endorsing that webpage. On the other hand, if I feature a doctrine written mostly by someone else, then I am indicating that I have a reasonable amount of trust in that person's ministry.

Luke, more than any other biographer of Jesus, sets the secular historical stage. These are the political leaders—the men with power, if you will. They are the movers and shakers, according to the popular thinking of that day. But they really were not. Meanwhile, out in the desert-wilderness, is John, son of Zechariah, and the Word of God comes to him. People so often focus upon the wrong things. A small percentage of people today know about these significant rulers from this ancient era, and mostly knowledge of them comes from the Bible. But, far more important than any of these political leaders is John, the son of Zechariah, who is out in the desert-wilderness. This is the man that we know as John the baptizer or John the Herald (he is *not* John, the gospel writer).



In modern-day churches, there are sometimes a whole lot of things going on; but what should be fundamental to every church is the Word of God. Obviously, the good news of Jesus Christ must be known and believed by most of the congregants—but even that most

fundamental doctrine is taken right out of the Word of God. The Word of God should always be front and center of any Christian church.

**Application:** At the time that I write this (January 1, 2021), the American election of 2020 still remains hotly contested, with nearly all of the media, most of Hollywood, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, along with most politicians (from both parties) all allied up on one side. For example, YouTube regularly removes videos which cite voter fraud; Facebook shadowbans posts from the few websites and media outlets which continue to speak of voter fraud (interestingly enough, a huge number of Americans have begun to get their *news* from Facebook). Nothing seems more important to many of us than this past election. The stakes for America seem monumental, as many believe that this past election was riddled with fraud. There are many who believe that this will be the end of a democratic United States; particularly if either candidate takes the oath of office. This does not mean that there will be no elections; it simply means that they will be meaningless. So, for many, the political reality of this day and time seems tremendous.

**Application:** What we learn from these first few verses of Luke 3 is, the politics, the politicians and the future political structure of the United States—they are not as important as we think they are. What is far, far more important is the Word of God; and the accurate teaching of the Word of God. In the era we are studying—the time when Jesus was an adult—the government was far more oppressive; and the political leaders were far more dangerous. Groups of people who fell into disfavor with the government might find themselves persecuted and killed in large numbers. Yet, what is important at this stage of the history of man? A very odd man who speaks to random groups of people out in the inhabited regions around the Jordan River; who proclaims himself as the herald to the King—and that King being the Living Word of God.

**Application:** We may see dramatic changes to the United States; and no matter what happens over this next month, there will be very large groups of people who will believe that this election was stolen. But what is far, far more important than that, is the teaching of the Word of God in our local churches. It is the Word of God by which we all, as believers, grow spiritually. What is happening at your local church? Are you being taught the Word of God? Is that the thrust of the church that you attend? That is far more important than the political strife occurring today (and I am fully aware of the political circumstances and what could happen to the United States as a result of the events of this coming month).

**Application:** Always more important than the historic events taking place is the teaching of the Word of God; and the spiritual growth of the individual believer from taking in the Word of God.

As we will study in this and future chapters of Luke, we will find out that the people of Israel—God's people—are accepting a religious system far removed from the Scriptures which have been delivered to them. In fact, when some of these Scriptures *come to life*, as it were—and are fulfilled, the reaction of the people is very contrary to the Word of God.



The very Son of God will come unto His Own (to the Jewish people), but they will, as a whole, reject Him (there is a significant portion who will believe on Him as well). What ought to be the center of great celebration—Jerusalem—to receive her King, is not. And what will come upon Jerusalem in particular is great disaster for rejecting the Son of God, Who is the Living Word of God. About 40 years from the time that we are studying, Jerusalem will be crushed by the Romans, for their recalcitrance. However, the fundamental reason that so many hundreds of thousands of people would die is, they refuse to believe God's truth. They continue to follow a corrupt religious system. Therefore, serious national discipline is their future.

Simultaneously, during that same period of 40 years, throughout the recently conquered Roman world, the gospel of Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Apostles will spread like wildfire. But where this good news *should have taken root*, in the ancient city of Jerusalem, it has not. The Jewish people did not universally believe in Jesus, despite how closely He lined up with their Scriptures, as the promise of their Messiah-King. Jesus presented Himself to His people; and yet, they rejected Him. As a result, the Jewish people of that era will suffer the dire consequences of their negative volition.

**Application:** Do you realize that, in some nations today, they have known nothing but war for dozens of years? There are children who grow up, and for a considerable amount of their lives, know nothing but war. Why is this happening, for instance, to the people of Syria or in other middle eastern nations? The people of these nations live in almost a daily Islamic revolution. These are Muslim countries, who have not only rejected the teachings of Jesus Christ, but they persecute the few who are in their country and believe in Him. These Muslims often seek the death or conversion of people who want nothing more than to quietly learn about Jesus. And so they suffer despotic leaders and constant strife. These are the consequence of their negative volition.

**Application:** The fundamental reason why this tiny island known as England was able to conquer perhaps a fifth of the entire world is, they brought both law and order and the gospel of Jesus Christ to the places where they went. People all over the continent of Africa worship Jesus Christ because of British Empire. On the other hand, the United States has been in the nations of Iraq and Afghanistan for the past 2 decades, with little to show for the money and blood that we have spent there. Have we brought the gospel of Jesus Christ to them? Did we at least bring them freedom of religion? We did not! As a result, these nations are not much better off than they were when we first entered into them with our armies. After spending trillions of dollars in these two nations, we did not bring them the most important thing—the message of Jesus Christ and the redemption that He offers. This is why tiny Great Britain was successful throughout the world; and we cannot tamp down what appears to be a constant struggle between various factions of Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan, despite having the greatest military in human history. The key solution which we have abandoned as a nation is the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the teaching of the Word of God. That should have been a part of our mission in these foreign lands, but it was not. And so, we have nothing to show for the time we have spent there.

What I am trying to do is to show you the parallels between the world which we are studying, circa A.D. 30, and the world that we live in today. The key is always Jesus Christ and the Word of God. Leave these things out of the picture, and we, as the most powerful nation on this planet, can do nothing right.

Let us return to our narrative:

Luke 3:3 **And he [John] went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.**

The Jordan River runs north-south in the middle of nation Israel (which was broken up into 5 regions at this time). The Jordan River goes as far up as the Galilee region—where the bulk of the Lord's public ministry would take place—and it feeds into the Dead Sea, which is a natural border for Judæa.

The *Repentance* spoken of here has nothing to do with feeling sorry for sin or feeling badly that you are a sinner. You may have feelings about that, and you may not. *Repentance* means *a change of mind*; it is not a subjective emotional reaction—that is, it is not an intense feeling of regret for being a sinner. This *change of mind*, which John is speaking of, is directed towards the religious philosophy of that day, where one earns favor with God based upon personal merit. We cannot earn God's favor. We come to God as sinners, as unworthy of Him, seeking His forgiveness. The religion of the Jews had become a man-centered, works-based religion; and John is proclaiming that they must change their mind about that.

Luke 3:4–6 **As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"**

We already studied how the gospels treat this quotation from Isaiah. Luke throws it in as somewhat of a descriptor of John's ministry; the book of John has John the Herald quoting this verse himself and applying it to himself.

John the Herald is the voice calling out from the desert-wilderness. He is acting as a herald for the Lord Jesus Christ. He goes before the Lord just as a herald would go before a king, announcing the king's presence.

Luke 3:7–8 **He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.**

Luke, at first, does not differentiate between the various groups of people who show up to hear him, many of whom choose to be baptized. This specific quotation from John sounds



particularly harsh. We find elsewhere that there were religious types showing up to check John out, perhaps with an interest in shutting him down. The Jewish people were a particularly God-centered (or, religion-centered) people. Their dedication to their system of religion was fundamental to their life and beliefs. But they had been leaning more and more towards legalism and dead works than they were towards God's mercy.

There were several groups within Judæa who had religious power, and this was quite important in a nation where YHWH worship was central to the lives of most people. Having a man unaffiliated with any of them, who has this ministry out in the desert-wilderness, is certainly a curiosity. John also appears to pose a potential threat to them, as he is not teaching the tenets of the current Jewish traditions.

Despite their difference in demeanor, both John and Jesus spoke very harshly to the religious types of that era. These words of John in particular castigate the religious types of his day (and their followers).

Luke 3:9 **Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."**

John's warning is that the people of Israel are not productive; they are not really doing God's work. This statement is rather dramatic. "If you are not producing the fruit that God expects from you, you will be cut down and thrown into judgment!" he warns.

Luke 3:10 **And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?"**

There were many who showed up to hear John who were not getting what they needed from their synagogue and Temple. They knew something was wrong, even if they were unable to put their finger on it exactly.

It is difficult when you are born into something, and you know that there is something amiss, but you do not really have anything to compare it with.

John began to provide them with an alternate way of seeing things.

Luke 3:11 **And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."**

Israel was about to go through a very transformative time. Some people would be financially ruined and far worse. John is *not* telling them, "What you need is a socialist government." (We discussed this at length in our study.) He is telling them that they will need to *voluntarily* share their own blessings with others (socialism is anything but *voluntarily sharing*<sup>18</sup>). There would come a time when those hearing John would need to share their own basic necessities with others.

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<sup>18</sup> The actual practice of socialism is that the government knows better how to spend your money than you do, so they appropriate a great deal of it.

Luke 3:12 Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"

Several groups of people come to John and pose questions to him. Both sets of people specifically mentioned here were apparently rejected by the religious types in that day, but both sets of people sought acceptance by God.

It was legitimate for a Jew to be a tax collector in that era. There is nothing in the Word of God which would forbid a Jewish person from performing that function. However, the Jewish religious class has rejected them; and many fellow Jews have rejected them. So they ask John, what should we do?

Luke 3:13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do."

John tells them, simply, do not overtax. Their jobs are legitimate; the taxes are legitimate; what is not allowed is for them to tax the people more than what their taxes are. Some tax collectors became quite rich by overcharging people on their taxes, and keeping the difference in their own pockets.

Luke 3:14a Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?"

I believe that this a detachment of Jews who are soldiers in Judæa; possibly under the authority of the governor of Judæa. They are also despised by the religious classes and by some of their fellow Jews. They also ask John, "What should we do?"

Luke 3:14b And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages."

As soldiers, they are told not to abuse their authority or their power; and to be content with their wages (so that they would not use their position to extort money from others).

Luke 3:15 As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ,...

Quite a number of people, during that time, believed that this was the era of the Messiah. I would suggest two reasons for this (1) There is actually a complex timetable laid out in the book of Daniel, which appears to take them to around A.D. 30. (2) There was the birth of the Messiah, which was a pretty big event about 30 years ago. Many of the people who saw the baby Jesus are, at this point in history, dead. But they would have enthusiastically spoken about what they saw.

Now, even though Jesus had been, as an infant, identified by several groups of people (who we studied in the first couple chapters of Luke), they apparently lost track of Him (or they passed away over the past few decades). But they would have spoken to their own families about seeing the baby Jesus. Therefore, *the people were in expectation [of the Messiah]*.

Clearly, based upon the history that we are studying, the people did lose track of Mary, Joseph and Jesus. You may remember that shortly after Jesus' birth, the family relocated, for a few years, in Egypt. When they returned to their own city, they appear to have kept a low profile (there is only a single story about Jesus between the age of 1 and 30<sup>19</sup>).

Here, according to Luke, the people are thinking about this in their right lobes (= *hearts*). That means, they were closely observing John, listening to the words that he spoke, and then comparing that to the prophecies of the Messiah that they knew.

At this point, the people in the crowd are wondering if John is the Messiah. At other times, they will ask John this question directly.

John seemed to sense what they were thinking. He may have been asked this question directly before.

Luke 3:16 ...John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but He who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of Whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Jesus is the One Who John is speaking about. John knows that he is the messenger for the Messiah; John knows that he is not the Messiah. John has no illusions about his own place in the plan of God.

John says that he is unworthy even to untie the sandals of Jesus. This means that John is grace oriented. He understands that he is a sinner in the eyes of God, and, as such—despite his commission as herald to the King—is no greater than anyone else. We are all sinners before God.

John tells those who have come to him what Messiah will do. For those who believed in the Lord, Jesus would give them the Holy Spirit; and for those who would reject Him, Jesus would bring judgment down on them (represented by *fire*).

Luke 3:17 His winnowing fork is in His hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

Throughout the Bible, there is always this separation of two sets of people. Some will be the wheat and some will be the chaff, which is the waste. The wheat is preserved by God and the chaff is placed under judgment (chaff is often burned up).

Luke 3:18 So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people.

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<sup>19</sup> Mary very likely was the one to tell Luke about Jesus, when He remained in Jerusalem as a youth, to discuss the Scriptures with the learned experts. My point being, there were not dozens of stories floating about concerning the youthful Jesus.

Many people asked John many questions; and he had a great deal to say; but not all of it is recorded in the gospels.

John also proclaimed the good news, which is the news of the coming Messiah.

We do not know the length of John's ministry. I suspect that it took place over a period of perhaps 6 months (or less). If Jesus is the Messiah and His public ministry is 3 or 4 years in length; then John, His herald, should be in front of the public for a much shorter period of time (I would not be surprised to find that his desert ministry was only 1–3 months long).

John's purpose was limited. He had things to teach those who did not believe that they were getting an accurate assessment of the Scripture through their Temple worship. People understood—or at least suspected—that there was something wrong with the religious class. Some groups of people were simply rejected by the religious class, so they had nowhere else to go. They came to John for guidance. But John's primary purpose was to inform the people of the coming of their Promised Messiah.

**Illustration:** The protestant movement, known as the Reformation, rebelled, in part, against the religious class, which was a powerful and entrenched class in the Catholic Church. The established Catholic church, at that time, taught a great many falsehoods (which they do even today<sup>20</sup>).

Vv. 19–20 take place near the end of John's public ministry:

Luke 3:19–20 **But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reprovved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.**

That Herod the tetrarch was reprovved by John is fascinating to me. Did John suddenly riff on Herod before a crowd of people? Or did John have some sort of face to face with Herod? The latter seems likely to me. The religious crowd clearly went out to see John; did Herod do that as well?

We saw in this chapter how various men stood up before John and asked, "What should I do?" I believe that Herod came out to see what all the fuss was about, heard people stand up and pose that question, so he did the same. "I am Herod, I rule over Galilee and Perea. What should I do?" He may have even spoke these words in jest, but he was not prepared to hear an actual answer from John. Most people cowed before such a cruel ruler; but John did not. John publically reprovved Herod for these things that he did. No doubt, he took this public rebuke very personally. Although this is not recorded in Scripture, I believe that this is the circumstance behind how Herod came to be reprovved by John.

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<sup>20</sup> Although the Catholic Church today is much better than it was during the Reformation, they have yet to repudiate doctrines related to Mary and to the pope.

That John was put into prison is found in the 3 other biographies (Matt. 4:12 Mark 1:14 John 3:24), but without letting us know what transpired right before that. I have given you what I believe happened above.

Vv. 19–20 are an aside. These verses take a quick look into the future. We return to the present (the present of the narrative) with v. 21. With v. 21, we are back with John the herald, baptizing people; and Jesus has come before John and John baptized Him.

Luke 3:21 *Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened,...*

John is baptizing a number of people; but then, Jesus appears before him. John baptizes Jesus (Whom he recognizes from afar<sup>21</sup>), and the heavens open up. I believe that the statement, *the heavens were opened* is defined by the next verse:

Luke 3:22 *...and the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased."* (NKJV, capitalized)

The people there see something like a dove descend upon Jesus—this was the Holy Spirit manifested in a form which could be seen. There was a voice from the sky. I can recall God speaking the Ten Commandments in the hearing of all the people; and then there is this particular statement, heard by the people watching Jesus being baptized. I cannot recall any other time when God spoke to a group of people.

At this point in Luke 3, we examine the genealogy of Jesus, starting with Jesus and going all the way back to Adam, through His true mother, Mary. All people have a genealogy on the father's side and on the mother's side. Jesus had on a true human genealogy on His mother's side. Jesus is fully man by birth; but this genealogy goes back only through Mary, as He is virgin-born (the other genealogy in the book of Matthew is the genealogy of his legal father, Joseph).

One might, in the middle of this narrative, ask, *now, just exactly Who is this Jesus again? Whose Son is He?* Luke answers such a question by presenting the genealogy of the Lord.

**The House of David** (a genealogical chart); from [RedeemingGod.com](http://RedeemingGod.com); accessed November 21, 2018. This presents both lines leading to Jesus (the legal line and the bloodline).

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<sup>21</sup> According to other gospels.

# The House of David



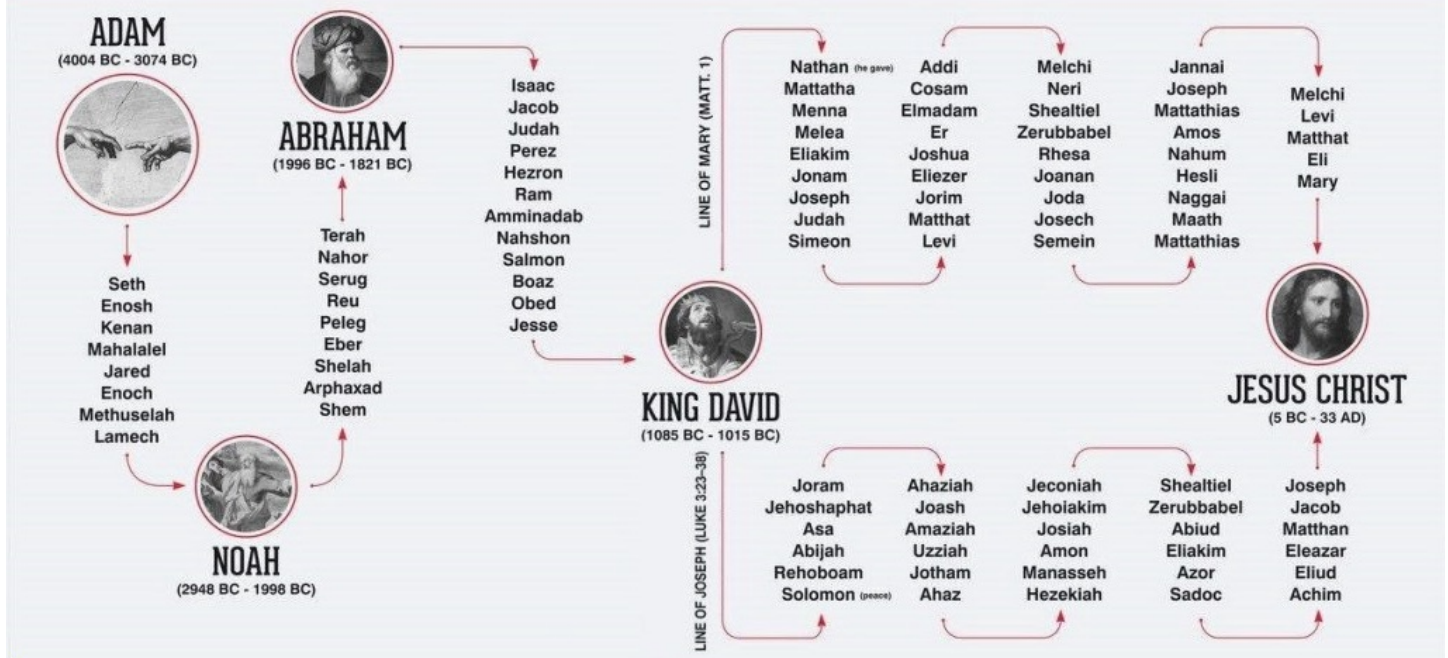
Luke presents Jesus (primarily) as the Son of Man; that is, Luke emphasizes Jesus' humanity. Therefore, Luke emphasizes Jesus' human birth and human origins. Jesus is fully and completely human; the doctrine of Kenosis tells us that He voluntarily sets aside His Deity in order to accomplish His work on earth. I believe that it is entirely possible that Jesus did not rely on His divine attributes to do anything during His life on earth (including the Transfiguration). However, I am not yet ready to defend that position.

**The Two Genealogies of Jesus** (a chart); from [Medium.com](https://medium.com/@joshua1111/the-two-genealogies-of-jesus-a-chart-111111111111); accessed May 7, 2020. I do object to the image of Jesus presented in this chart, as He did not have long hair.



# GENEALOGY of JESUS

[ FROM ADAM TO CHRIST ]



Defining the concept of Kenosis is squaring the true humanity of Jesus Christ with His Deity. How is it possible for Jesus to be truly a man and yet the God of the Universe?

## Kenosis (from Theopedia)

The term kenosis comes from the Greek word kenoô, translated "emptied" in chapter 2 of Paul's letter to the Philippians:

"Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but **emptied** Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men." (Philip. 2:6-7 NASB)

What has come to be called "Kenotic theology" attempts to understand the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity in light of the kenosis alluded to in Philippians 2:7. Its aim is to solve some of the supposed paradoxes arising from Jesus having both a divine nature and a human nature. For example, how could an all knowing God become a baby, how could God be tempted, or how could Jesus (being God) not know the time of His return?

The danger comes when it is concluded that in the incarnation, the second person of the Trinity took on human nature and gave up or lost some of the divine attributes -- so that

## Kenosis (from Theopedia)

Jesus was not fully divine. The doctrine of the two natures of Christ (known as the hypostatic union) maintains that Jesus possessed a full undiminished human nature and a full undiminished divine nature, which were not combined or confused into some new nature but were added to each other forever (yet remaining distinct) in the one person Jesus Christ.

The question regarding the kenosis comes to this -- What does it mean when Scripture says Christ "emptied" Himself? Did Jesus cease to be God during His earthly ministry? Certainly not, for deity cannot stop being deity or He would never have been true deity to begin with. Rather, the "emptying" is satisfactorily explained in the subsequent words of the verse, taking note of the two participles which grammatically modify and explain the verb: He emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. This emptying, in fact, was done as the man Christ Jesus, and neither of these ideas necessitates or implies the giving up of divine attributes.

Christianity maintains that Jesus did not "empty" himself of any of his divinity in the incarnation, although it is true that his divine attributes were veiled. When the Kenosis theory concludes that Jesus is or was less than God (as has been the case in the past), it is regarded as heresy.

From <https://www.theopedia.com/kenosis> accessed August 29, 2018; slightly edited.

Two links to outstanding studies on the Doctrine of Kenosis: [Charles Clough](#); [Robert McLaughlin](#).

We might understand that the humanity of Jesus Christ set aside His Deific nature or chose not to access it.

### Lesson 116: Luke 4:1

### Introduction to Luke 4/Jesus Being Led by the Spirit

Luke 4 picks up right where chapter 3 left off, where Jesus has made His first public appearance, before the disciples of John the baptizer. This public appearance, during which the Lord was baptized by John, began the Lord's public ministry. He would remain in front of the people of God for the next 3 or 4 years.<sup>22</sup>

It should not be lost on us the brevity of the Lord's actual public ministry; or the limited region wherein He taught. Just as we should not have any historical knowledge of many people named in the Scriptures (such as Abraham, a shepherd-traveler); it is surprising that we know, 2000 years later, about the very short ministry of a teaching prophet which took place in a very small region halfway around the world.

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<sup>22</sup> The book of John records 3 Passovers which the Lord attended.

In Luke 3, we got a pretty extensive view of the ministry of John the baptizer. At the end of that narrative, John then baptizes Jesus, *and the heavens open, and the Holy Spirit descends upon Him like a dove, and God the Father, from heaven, said, "You are My Beloved Son in Whom I am most pleased."* (Luke 3:21b–22).

Interestingly enough, we do not know how many people were there. 10? 15? Perhaps even 50 or 100—but John baptizes Jesus, and John's ministry is thus eclipsed. As John himself said, *"I must decrease and He will increase."* John's very unusual ministry out in the desert-wilderness would no longer be the focal point of dynamic spiritual happenings. What John had been promising his followers out in the desert-wilderness, had come to pass. The Messiah, Jesus, had come.

With that, Jesus began His public ministry. *Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age...* (Luke 3:23a; ESV; capitalized)

No doubt you have heard the expression, *cannot see the forest for the trees*. That is, there are so many trees all around you that you have no real appreciation or overview of the entire forest. It might be an acre; and might be 100 sq. miles; there may be mountains, it may all be flat; there may be several rivers running through it. But there are just so many trees all around you that you cannot see anything but the trees in your immediate vicinity.

This expression describes much of Luke 4. There are many complex doctrines to be found here; and there will be times that, I explain what is going on in so much detail that you lose track of the narrative and/or the context. Therefore, periodically, I will stop and regroup, and remind you of the narrative itself.

Two doctrines occur to me immediately: the doctrine of intercalation (a doctrine many Christians know nothing about) and demonology. Many great and not so great books have been written about the latter doctrine.

Jesus will proclaim His Messiahship in this chapter; but He will also prevent demons from speaking of this. There will be other times when people want to talk about Him, and He will indicate that He would rather that they didn't. What is going on here? A false modesty? Since Jesus is only on earth for a very short time, does He not want every human being to know about Him? Does Jesus not believe that, *all publicity is good publicity*? If we have something that we want others to know about, we might say to those in our periphery, *and spread the word; tell your friends, neighbors and family*. But Jesus did not do that. At no time is Jesus recorded saying, "I want you to tell 5 friends and I want each of them to tell 5 friends."

My point is, there is a lot to explain and unpack in this chapter. For those of you who have to feel as if you are moving forward in any biography of Jesus; you will feel at times in Luke 4 as if your boots are in deep mud. But, for me as it should be for you, we consider the journey as every bit important as the destination itself.

In this chapter, Jesus will face the temptations of Satan; and then He will formally begin His Galilean ministry. I have pointed this out before—the Galilean region, historically, was not known for its positive volition towards God and His plan. This is up in the northern region; and, even though there are many Jews living in this area, it is not even seen as being Israel (the region to the south, called Judæa, is more properly considered the successor to ancient Israel). However, Jesus spends the majority of his public ministry right here in the north. It is to this region that Jesus will primarily minister. He will not spend a lot of time in Judæa; He will not spend a lot of time at the Temple (He will go there on several occasions, but the majority of Jesus's ministry will occur in Galilee).

About midway through this chapter, Jesus will go to a synagogue in Nazareth and He will make the most powerful public statement that a man has ever made, clearly claiming to be the Messiah, upon Whom is the Spirit of the Lord. The response of the people is far different than we might expect—they will attempt to kill Him for blasphemy.

Throughout the remainder of the chapter, Jesus will heal and proclaim the Kingdom of God.

Right after being introduced to John's disciples as the Messiah of God—which is confirmed by Luke's genealogy—Jesus then is led into the desert-wilderness by God the Holy Spirit.

Interestingly enough, in the middle of Luke 3, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus; and here, at the beginning of Luke 4, the Spirit leads Jesus into the desert-wilderness. What makes this interesting to me is, even though the first two chapters of Luke mention the Holy Spirit; Jesus is not associated with the Holy Spirit until He is baptized by John.

This certainly suggests the question, was Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit prior to John's baptism? Let's consider this logically. Jesus has grown spiritually throughout His life. We know that because of Luke 2:40, 52. Was the Spirit a part of His life in some way prior to John's baptism. It seems logical that He must be, since He grew spiritually (by studying the Word of God). So, what occurred before the disciples of John in chapter 3 was actually for their benefit. They were able to see a physical manifestation of the power of God being given to Jesus, the man.

There is a different sort of relationship between the Spirit of God and man in the Old Testament economy. I believe that it is referred to as enduement. I do not know that I could adequately distinguish between the filling and the enduement of the Holy Spirit. However, it seems fairly clear that Jesus sending the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) is far superior (perhaps what is far superior is the fact that all believers receive the Spirit?).

In any case, Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit at the beginning of Luke 4. I believe that we are told that for our benefit, as the audience for Luke's biography of Jesus. I do not think that Jesus being led by the Spirit is something new that had never happened before.

Luke 4:1a **And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan...**

Jesus had been in the Jordan Valley being baptized by John. This is what we studied in the previous chapter.

Whereas, John has a full-blown ministry in the desert-wilderness—which ministry continues on at this point—Jesus begins His public ministry. However, His public ministry does not begin as we might think it would. There is a crowd, gathered there to see John, but Jesus does not take it over. Jesus did not look out over John's disciples and say, "You have been following John; now you will follow Me." The herald announces the King and the King is before His people; but, at a point where we might expect an inspiring inauguration speech—nothing is recorded by any of the disciples. In fact, for a short time, Jesus will disappear from the public's radar for 40 days.

Luke 4:1b ...and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness...

Jesus is said to be filled with the Spirit; and here, He is led by the Spirit. This is all true, but the information is given to us for our benefit.

I mentioned the doctrine of kenosis at the end of Luke 3. What we read here helps us to better understand how the Lord's ministry operated. Jesus did not, by means of His omniscience, decide, "Next on My agenda is going off to the desert-wilderness to be tested." Instead, He is being led there by God the Holy Spirit. As God, Jesus would have had direct access to the plan of God. He would know, this is #1 event, #2 event, etc. And he would go wherever based upon God's plan. However, as a man, Jesus has this understanding only through the doctrine in His human spirit combined with the guidance of God the Holy Spirit. Just like you and I.

Jesus was very much like us, inasmuch as, He did not know what was going to happen over the next day, week or month. Now and again, this is going to explain His words or behavior. Because Jesus voluntarily functioned within the confines of His humanity, setting aside His access to His Own Deity, exactly what the future held for Him on any given day was not known to Him. Where He was to go next was not known to Him, except when guided by God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is here in the desert-wilderness being led by God the Holy Spirit. One of the remarkable things regarding Jesus—and I rarely see any of these being emphasized—He spent a considerable amount of time alone. He took time out to get away from the crowds. I can totally relate to that.

At this point in time, there were no crowds, apart from those who were gathered to see John. Jesus was a part of that crowd; but He was then baptized by John. Interestingly enough, Jesus does not say to John, "What you did was great; now I will take it from here." and then He turns to teach the crowds. Jesus did not do that at all. Insofar as we know, He exchanged a few words with John and did nothing else. Interestingly enough, Jesus did not stand before the crowd and begin to speak (insofar as we know). John baptized Him, told the people Who He was; but I do not believe that Jesus even addressed the people there. He does not appear to have even lifted His hand in a friendly gesture, as if



to say, “Hey, how’s it going?” With no real commentary in between, we go from Jesus’ baptism out to the middle of the desert-wilderness to being led by the Spirit, even further into the uninhabited regions of Judæa.

He was being guided at this time, by God the Holy Spirit.

One of the many doctrines developed by R. B. Thieme, Jr. is, Jesus Christ test-drove the spiritual life for the believer in the Church Age. The spiritual life which you and I live was first lived by Jesus (*not* by Abraham, *not* by Moses, *not* by David). At the second birth, we are given the same resources that the Lord had. Even though He was minus a sin nature, we function without sin during the periods of time that we are filled with the Holy Spirit. This time may be 5 seconds, 5 minutes, and even, for some people at some times, 5 hours (at least until the time you have to enter into *rush* traffic).

One possible option is that Jesus had the enduement of the Spirit from birth to around age 30—thus having exactly the same spiritual assets as the Old Testament saints; but, at the beginning of His public ministry, he is filled with the Holy Spirit, having the same spiritual assets of the Church Age believers. Was there a difference between Jesus prior to His public ministry and Jesus during His public ministry? I don’t know that there was exactly; and, at this point, I don’t believe that I could quantify this difference in any way. We can differentiate between believers in the Church Age and believers in the Age of Israel; but I don’t know that I can do that with Jesus.

Luke 4:1 **And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness...**

Jesus is relying upon the Spirit of God to guide Him. We do not know the mechanics for this, exactly; apart from Jesus Christ being in fellowship and being steeped in the Word of God. However, as we moved further through this chapter, there will be some things which occur that help us to understand some of the ways that the Lord was guided in His humanity.

Jesus Christ grew spiritually in His humanity (**And the Child grew, and became strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom. And the grace of God was upon Him.** —Luke 2:40; LitV)

We do not know if Jesus knows that He is going out in the desert-wilderness in order to be tested by the devil; but that is what is about to happen. It is my opinion that He does not know what is about to happen.

Jesus, in His Deity, was omniscient; however, in His humanity, His knowledge was limited. The doctrine of Kenosis tells us that Jesus set aside the use of His divine assets, and He used only that which Church Age believers will be given. Again, He test-drove the spiritual life for us believers in the Church Age. In my opinion, He understood where the Spirit was guiding Him; but He did not know what would happen next.



We have just begun to study Luke 4. We have completed the first verse:

Luke 4:1 *And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness...*

We do not know exactly where Jesus returned to. Given that particular word (*returned*) and given what He will do in the second half of this chapter, it appears that Jesus returned to His home (or hometown) in the Galilean region.

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Luke 4:2a *...for forty days, being tempted by the devil.*

This will be the topic of the first 13 verses of this chapter; Jesus will be tested by Satan while in this state of hunger. This would represent Jesus at His weakest, humanly speaking.

What appears to be the case to me is, Jesus is tempted/tested for 40 days by Satan—we do not know how or with what; and we read about the final temptations on the 40<sup>th</sup> day. The text does not state this specifically, but idea of just 3 temptations over a period of 40 days seems rather light.

Satan is a genius; so we may trust that, having been given to go-ahead, was able to tempt the Lord for a long period of time. If you are familiar with the book of Job, and Satan appearing before God and asking to be able to take a number of liberties with Job—let me suggest that, as Jesus grew older, Satan continually petitioned to become a stumbling block in the life of the Lord. Just as God allowed some access to Job by Satan; God will grant some access to Jesus by Satan.

Interestingly enough, this appears to be the only direct interaction between Jesus and Satan. God appears to have given Satan some specific parameters to remain within, with the warning (apparently), “I will allow you to test My Son; but You may not physically harm Him; and you will have no direct contact after this time.” (This is speculation on my part.)

There will be 3 temptations recorded here and in Matthew (a parallel passage); and based upon the language, these were not the only tests; they were just the final 3 on the final day.

Luke 4:1–2a **And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil.**

This first verse + 2a gives us the setup for the first 13 verses of this chapter.

What is Jesus doing in the desert-wilderness for much of this time? He is thinking about the Word of God. He has, by this time, memorized the entire Bible. However, His mind must continue to digest and consider what He knows, and compare Scripture with Scripture. Jesus was not born knowing all of the Scriptures. He functioned in this life in a fully human way, from start to finish (fully human, but without a sin nature).

Not only must the Scriptures be learned, but they must be placed side-by-side as Jesus continues learning and growing spiritually in His humanity. When someone learns the Scriptures, there is a point at which their spiritual understanding suddenly blossoms. So many things in Scripture interlock and make so much sense.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. taught the Scriptures continually for about 15 or 20 years, and then, suddenly, everything began to fall into place. Starting in the mid-1960's, R. B. Thieme, Jr. began to have one of the most productive ministries in world history. Everything began to fit into place. So, for 10 or 15 years, Bob would teach a half a chapter or even a chapter each night. Then he would go back to that same book and chapter, and teach it again. And, at some point, the amount of spiritual information that he began to teach ballooned—almost magically. It was all there all of the time, but he began to put so much of it together and understand really what was being said.

This is going to be hard for some of you to believe and understand, but Jesus grew spiritually in His humanity. He learned the Word of God from a very early age. He continued to study it; and, at some point, it all came together as a marvelous whole.

Luke 4:2b **And He ate nothing during those days.**

In the Greek, this reads, **and He did not eat nothing...** In the English, a double negative is a positive; but in the Greek, a double negative means, that the negative is emphasized much more than a single negative.

Jesus, in His humanity, has gone for 40 days without eating. For you or I, this would be impossible. However, for Jesus, this is not impossible because His body is without sin. Recall that Adam lived for over 900 years. This is because his body, even though he had sinned, was closer to the perfect state of a physical body. As mankind continued in life, his length of life decreased, because of sin's effects on our genetics. Jesus, because He lacked a sin nature, had perfect genetics.

Personally, I am a very healthy guy. God has greatly blessed me with wonderfully good health. But there will come a time when my body begins to fail due to aging. This may occur a few days from now; or a few years from now. Obviously, at age 70, I have noticed some changes and have found there to be some restrictions as to what I am able and not

able to do (I used to be able to easily run 3 miles without stopping; now it seems to be a greater effort to run those same 3 miles—and sometimes, I find myself running and walking them). But in terms of serious aging problems, I have been blessed not to suffer those things yet. But it will happen. There is no doubt about that.

Personally, I have fasted before, in my secular life; and, if memory serves, I went for 3 or 4 days without eating. I am not sure what the physical limitations actually are, but my guess is, after about a week or so, fasting could lead to death.

Jesus, even though He has a human body just like ours, His body is not corrupted by sin. His body could not only live for a long time (indefinitely, actually); but he is able to withstand, in His human body, great physical punishment without succumbing. So, His body is able to endure 40 days of fasting. No one else, apart from Adam (and others from the antediluvian era) perhaps, could do something like this. However, there is no doubt that the Lord, in His humanity, was very hungry.

Most people do not understand what fasting is. They see it as a sacrifice for God; or as a discipline of the mind over the body. However, the true understanding of fasting is, you set aside legitimate things in life (in this case, eating) in order to pursue or accomplish spiritual goals (such as, take in the Word of God).

We are so focused on the Deity of our Lord and upon His perfection that we do not fully appreciate that, in His humanity, he grew both physically, mentally and spiritually. He was about to launch His public ministry, and Jesus was preparing Himself through knowledge of the Word of God and fellowship with His Father.

Luke 4:2c *And when they were ended, He was hungry.*

This verse is literally translated, *and completing them, He was hungry*. *Completing them* means that Jesus had come to the end of these 40 days of prayer and fasting. Jesus is about to begin His public ministry and He is preparing Himself for it.

Many believers do not understand the concept of fasting and they often see the act of fasting as the focus of that spiritual experience. We do not necessarily set aside a day or a few days and decide, *now, I am going to fast*. Fasting is not an end in itself. Fasting is *not* you testing yourself and your control over your body. Fasting is where you set time aside for spiritual matters so that you do not have time to eat. You are setting aside a normal non-sinful activity in order to engage in spiritual growth or to do something related to the plan of God.

No doubt, you have worked on a project (for work or school) and you either skipped lunch or put off your lunch for an hour or two. That would be fasting—not a spiritual fast, but it is still a fast. People for their work, have forgone meals and sleep in order to complete whatever task is set before them. They have to complete a project before they are done for the day, and everyone continues to work on it until it is complete—sometimes forgoing their dinner (or putting it off for a few hours). That is a form of fasting.

The point that I am making is, fasting is not an end to itself. Fasting is not all about skipping a meal or three; but fasting is all about what is being done during that time instead of eating (or sleeping or whatever).

R. B. Thieme, Jr. used to have as many as 9 classes a week at church, and some people attended all of them or most of them. I can guarantee you that, during any one of those classes, 50 or 100 or more people had missed a meal to be there. Some did not have time to eat before class, and were starving—but they understood that spiritual food was more important; and so they showed up to class hungry, in order to take in spiritual food. Then, after class, they went home to enjoy some physical food. That is spiritual fasting. You set aside normal human activities, which are not sinful or forbidden, and use that time in order to achieve a spiritual goal (such as, taking in doctrine for an hour or more in Bible class). Something might be very important to you and you pray for it. For me, although I pray, I don't tend to go on for very long. Typically, I might pray for a few minutes and name some specific things, and I am done. On occasion, I will speak to God for a longer period of time. But a 15 or 20 minute prayer? However, there are people who have very specific concerns and they will speak to God about these concerns, putting off a meal because they believe their concerns to be more important.

I write this in 2021 and we have witnessed the first change of presidency in the United States where it is clear that the voting was rigged; and that the person who did not actually win the election is now serving as president. I can guarantee you that many people (including myself), took this to God in prayer. Christians should be able to recognize that life in the United States has been unlike life anywhere else in the world; and that God has greatly blessed us in this. However, what has taken place is also a clear sign of discipline (along with the COVID disease). I would not be surprised if hundreds, if not thousands of people, prayed fervently to God over this, missing or putting off a meal to let their petitions be known to Him.

Personally, I don't miss many meals. I will not win any awards as a great faster; but, in the mornings, I am hungry, but I will spend 30 minutes or an hour studying and writing first, and then I take my morning meal. That is fasting. Eating is legitimate and not sinful; but I am setting it aside—momentarily—and devoting myself to exegeting a passage and then explaining that passage. That is fasting, albeit limited to a very short period of time.

Luke 4:2c **And when they were ended, He was hungry.**

Jesus felt hunger, even as we all do. His body was telling him that it needed nutrients. This is clearly the humanity of Jesus which is functioning.

Luke 4:2 **...for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, He was hungry.**

Jesus goes out in the desert-wilderness and He is fasting and being tempted by the devil. Was He tempted by Satan for the entirety of those 40 days? It is not clear; I would guess that the Lord had interactions with Satan perhaps several times each day. But what else

occurred during that 40 days? My only logical guess would be that Jesus was considering the Scriptures. Perhaps He was reading them from memory. Perhaps He was praying to God the Father. Obviously, in the desert-wilderness, if you are not eating (and, therefore, not looking for food), there are a very limited number of things that you might do. Jesus apparently concentrated on the Word of God during this time.

The text sounds as if Jesus is out in the desert-wilderness and the devil is tempting/testing Him *while* He is there, apparently fasting.

Or is Jesus there, fasting, but the testing does not occur until after 40 days?

One of the things which I learned under the ministry of R. B. Thieme, Jr. is, the action of the aorist participle precedes (or is coterminous with) the action of the main verb. There are actually 2 aorist participles in v. 2 and two main verbs. The problem I have seen with most translation is, they continue v. 1 into v. 2, which confuses the issue. In order to show this in English, a translator would have the first aorist participle followed later by the main verb, and the sentence would be ended. The second sentence would be the second aorist participle and it would be followed by the main verb. I looked over about 60 translations and, do you know how many actually followed that pattern? None. Two of them came close: the Contemporary English Version (which is know more for it paraphrasing and thought-for-thought translation) and the Douay-Rheims Bible (the Latin translation from the Greek; which Latin is then translated into English).

So, if our interest here was establishing a timeline, we would adhere to this pattern of two separate sentences in v. 2. The other approach would be to have a compound sentence, where these two sub-sentences are separated by a semi-colon:

He was tested [for] 40 days by the devil, but had not eaten anything [lit., *nothing*] in those days; and, completing them, He was hungry. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

More accurately, this would read: **Having been tested** [for] 40 days by the devil, He had not eaten nothing in those days; and **they being completed**, He was hungry. I have bolded the participles and underlined the main verbs. The action of the aorist participle (the bold text) occurs prior to (or coterminous with) the main verb (in both phrases, I have underlined the main verbs).

The first participle has Jesus being tested for 40 days. After that or coterminous with that, Jesus is *not eating nothing*. So, while being tested by the devil, Jesus is not eating. Whether these temptations continue constantly, several a day; or whether Satan shows up every few days with a new temptation, we do not know. Logically, God has limited Satan (but to what degree, we do not know).

But the testing took place over 40 days; and Jesus fasted during the testing. I would suggest to you that Jesus filled up whatever time was open to Him with prayer and the study of the Scriptures (Jesus did not need to have a physical Bible with Him; He would

have heard and remembered the words of God; so let me suggest that was thinking Scripture this entire time).

The second participle refers to the 40 days, which are completed. After these days are completed or during the time that they are coming to their completion, Jesus is hungry. Does Jesus think about this? Although this is purely conjecture, I would suggest that the temptations combined with the prayer and consideration of Scripture are so intense that, for the most part, He does not. As the 40 days come to a close, Jesus begins to realize that He is hungry. Let me suggest that this is more of a pressing concern to Him at this point.

In any case, we should understand what fasting is all about. Fasting is where you set aside normal and non-sinful activity in your life, in order to do something else—specifically to engage in spiritual activity. Although we are not told *what else* Jesus was doing, let me suggest that He was spending this time studying (or meditating upon) the Scriptures. And when I said *meditating upon*, what I mean is, He is thinking about passages which He has memorized and He considers what they mean.

Did Jesus, in His humanity, read the Scriptures, and immediately understand them? Or, did He add Scripture upon Scripture, precept upon precept, advancing spiritual and He learned more?

In order to follow the plan of God, Jesus was able to turn off or set aside His Deity. By choice, he kept His Deity and humanity separate. In some way, that had to happen. We have Him speaking sometimes from His humanity (*I thirst; the Father is greater than Me*); and sometimes He speaks from His Deity (*Before Abraham lived, I existed eternally*). It should be clear that, these sets of statements clearly proceed from His humanity or His Deity, specifically.

Jesus setting aside the attributes of Deity is known as kenosis. An illustration that occurs to me is, you are playing football with your young daughters, and you are carrying the ball, and you are running, but they grab you and pull you down. Quite obviously, if your daughters are under 10 years old, then you have the ability to smash right through them, and take that football wherever you want to, leaving those little girls lying on the field. But you don't do that; you would never do that. You withhold whatever skills, power and strength that you have, and you let them enjoy taking you down. This is how a normal father behaves. He sets aside his prowess as a football player and adjusts himself to the situation at hand (which is giving in to two pint-sized daughters who want to tackle him).

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<b>Lessons 118–119: Luke 4:1–4</b>	<b>Why Didn't Jesus Make the Stones into Bread?</b>
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Jesus is about to begin His public ministry. Let me suggest that He is, so to speak, preparing for the exam. He is clearly well-taught up to the point; and now, He spends time in concentrated study, out in the wilderness.



Another reason to take the position that Jesus is studying the Word of God that is, every time that Jesus is tempted by Satan, He has the same response. He quotes the Word of God. That suggests to me that study of the Word of God occurred prior to these temptations. Jesus does not need to have a written Bible with Him, or a book or two of commentary with Him. Although Jesus is fully a man, let me suggest that He is perfect and without sin. Therefore, He could hear a verse, once or twice, and it would be committed to His memory.

Let's consider the three temptations of this passage. Did all of the temptations occur at once? Did Satan tempt the Lord throughout the 40 days? Are these 3 instances of many? We simply do not know the answer to these questions. Even though the parallel passage in Matthew has the exact same 3 temptations, that is not proof positive that there were only 3 temptations. Luke may be referencing the book of Matthew right here. That book has 3 specific temptations, so Luke records the same 3.

If we consider the literal translation of this passage, it appears that Jesus was tempted throughout those 40 days. We have gone over the exact translation of v. 2, which seems to indicate that Satan continued tempting and testing the Lord for those full 40 days. Therefore, we will read about three temptations; but there were, very likely, far more than just those three.

Luke 4:1–2 **Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan Valley, being led by the Spirit in the desert-wilderness. He was tested for 40 days by the devil, but had not eaten anything in those days. As a result, he was quite hungry.** Kukis paraphrase

There is another topic which is generally left undiscussed and, that is, *how did Matthew or Luke know about this?* This testing probably took place before all angelic creation; but there do not appear to be any people there besides the Lord. Therefore, we may only speculate. Jesus would have had to have revealed this and I suspect that He revealed these temptations either to His disciples or directly to Matthew. Another alternative is, Matthew was given this information directly from God the Holy Spirit (which is not my position on this matter). Luke, very likely, read this in Matthew's account and recorded it here. It is quite a phenomenal thing that, the first thing that Jesus does after being baptized by John is to fast and face temptation. It does not appear that He did any teaching between these two incidents.

Before discussing this narrative any further, let me deal with a more trivial matter. Let's say that Luke is writing his gospel, and he refers back to Matthew and to this parallel passage. Why doesn't Luke say, "Matthew has already written about this, so I won't"? You may not realize this, but that is an excellent question. If Luke reads the book of Matthew, why does he repeat this series of events in his own gospel?

The writers of the biographies of Jesus did not think, *these biographies will be gathered up and placed into one big book, and that book will be distributed all over the world!* These writers did not think this because they had no idea that was going to happen to their writings. I don't believe that most of them thought of their writings as being inspired or as

*the Scriptures* (as we do). Luke was sending this information to a friend (and, I am sure he expected it to be shared with other believers). However, Luke did not necessarily think, “Well, these people have already read Matthew, so I don’t need to repeat it.” Luke did not expect for a believer to read both his and the other gospels. The person Luke was writing this to may even have been completely outside the circle of the Jewish disciples. Remember, Luke is a gentile; and Theophilus (to whom this is written), is certainly a Greek name.

Whatever the reason, Luke sees this event as being quite noteworthy; and so he includes it in his gospel. That is likely because the recipient of his gospel is not the same group as the recipient of Matthew or Mark’s gospels.

Along these same lines, recall that John writes a gospel (biography of Jesus) long after the other three have been published and sent throughout the world. We don’t know how widely that they were distributed, but my logical guess is, John was aware of the other 3 gospels before he wrote his (and he probably read them). Furthermore, by this time, it is clear to John that these writings which will make up the New Testament are widely distributed. Matthew, Mark and Luke would not have known this.

John’s gospel, however, is a different story. It is my opinion that John felt that there were some topics and incidents which needed to be explored logically. John knows what writings exist out there, and I believe he just sees a place for the things which he remembers. Therefore, when he writes his gospel, it is the least derivative of the others. His gospel narrative is the most complementary to the others. That is, if you are going to study two gospels, make one of them *the book of John*.

Luke 4:1–2 Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan Valley, being led by the Spirit in the desert-wilderness. He was tested for 40 days by the devil, but had not eaten anything in those days. As a result, he was quite hungry. Kukis paraphrase

I want to suggest something else which took place in the desert-wilderness at this time, during these 40 days. Fasting is not about *not* eating. Fasting is all about what you do *instead* of eating. Fasting is taking time from doing legitimate things and devoting that time to spiritual activity. What spiritual activity was Jesus involved in at this time? Did Satan tempt Him nonstop? Or, was Jesus doing something else? Let me suggest that Jesus had the Scriptures with Him in the desert-wilderness. Now, He may not have had the scrolls physically in His possession, but He is a man very much like Adam, born without a sin nature.

Let me suggest that Jesus was capable of things that we would find to be impossible for us. What we read about here is, He fasted for 40 days. We know that man cannot survive without food. I don’t know the time frame, whether it is a week or two, but no other man could physically endure going 40 days without food.

I believe that Jesus not only prayed, during this time, but he spent this time going over the Scriptures in His mind. I believe that Jesus was capable not only of reading and

understanding the Word of God; but also that He was capable of *remembering* all of it. I need to emphasize that this is conjecture on my part; but I believe that the mentality of created man was far greater than we could imagine today. Even after man had fallen, even after the flood, let me suggest that many people learned and could recite the book of Genesis—even the genealogies.

Today, there are people who remember every day of their lives. There are people who are unable to forget much of their lives. People put up with me and I put up with other people because our memories fade. When I recall my childhood, I recall primarily pleasant memories. However, I know in my youth, there were times when I was very unhappy. I know that intellectually, but not emotionally. My emotions from that period of time have been smoothed over.

Now, there were interactions that I had with other people which were quite bad. But, because my memories have faded over the years, all of that is in the past and mostly forgotten; and I hold no one responsible for anything that was done to me (and I hope that they feel the same way about me). As normal human beings, our life is like that. Our past fades and we are able to forgive people that we thought, at the time, we could never do. But, there are people who cannot do that. If you have ever had someone who has done you wrong, it is hard to forgive them right then and there; and it is even hard to forgive them a day later or a week later, because the memory is so fresh in your mind. A year or two or five, and that memory fades enough for you to let bygones be bygones.

Surely you have known of estranged families. It is not unusual for two sisters to have a falling out, or a father and son; and this may continue for a period of several years. However, there will come a point when, whatever set this off, fades from memory; and so family members are able to reunite (despite being at odds with one another for years).

However, do you know that there are people who cannot do this? Their memories of 5 years ago are as fresh today as they were the day that it happened. It is a bizarre mental condition (I saw a [special](#) on *60 Minutes* on this<sup>23</sup>). So, you can give these people a date—December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1992—and they can remember what happened on that specific day, what they did, what the weather was like and how they felt about it. They also know who they interacted with that day, and if it was an emotional interaction, they remember the situation and emotions as if it were yesterday. And this is with them their entire lives. For me, at this time in my life, upon walking into a room, the first thing that occurs to me is, “Why did I just walk into this room?” But the people with hyper-memory—their memories are much more cogent.

I say this because I believe that man has mental capabilities that would almost seem like super powers to us—one of those capabilities being a perfect memory. Let me suggest to you that Jesus had a perfect memory and that, by this time in His life, He knew the Scriptures thoroughly. In his mind, He could mentally google anything in the Scriptures, and instantly come up with the pertinent Scriptures and what they mean. Therefore,

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<sup>23</sup> The link is to an Australian version; but there is also a *60 Minutes* story on this same thing.

considering all of the Old Testament is what I believe that Jesus was doing in the desert-wilderness for those 40 days. In between times, He was praying and being tempted. This is speculation on my part, but I believe it to be fundamentally accurate.

In American society today, we have actually an update to the person who has a tough time forgiving an old friend or a family member for something that happened a year ago or 5 or 10 years ago. That sort of thing is common among family and friends (unfortunately). But the update is this: people think about what other ancestors did to their ancestors, and they cannot forgive that; and they are angry about that. This occurs in two specific areas today: slavery and appropriating land from the American Indians. There are some Blacks in the United States who are actually mad at present-day white people for something that took place nearly 200 years ago. Some of them are just angry; angry a lot of the time over that. Something which is less prevalent, but it does exist, is there are some Indians who are angry are white people today because their land was taken from them. As the Spanic Boys said, "It's a strange world that we live in."

There is one more thing to be discussed, and that is the doctrine of Kenosis. This is where Jesus voluntarily restricts His Divine Nature. Although there were times when Jesus was in touch with Himself as God (at least, theoretically); most of the time, it appears that He was not. How do we explain this? How does God stop being God, even for a second? Or, how is it possible, if Jesus is God, for Him to set that Essence aside for a period of time (I believe this could have been for His entire earthly life)?

The best I can do here is to propose an analogy. Your body does a massive number of things that you are unaware of, but these things are programmed by your brain. You breathe, your heart beats, your blood flows, your food is digested; and these things all take place without you actually thinking about it. At no time in the day do you say, "Okay, for the next minute, my heart will beat 50 times and for the next minute, it will beat 70 times." We can't do that. At most, we can exercise vigorously and increase our heart rate. But, even though our brains are closely involved with the beating of our hearts, this is not something that we consciously determine and will. You may be able to hold your breath until you pass out, but, your brain will take over and restore your normal breathing function after you are passed out.

So, let me suggest that the Godly qualities of Jesus—His Divine Nature—are sort of placed on auto-pilot. He may access these things from time to time, as per the Father's plan; but His Divine Functions are carried out but somehow separate from His conscious mind. Much as our physical functions occur throughout the day, every day, without our having to contribute any conscious thought to them (and there are a huge number of things which our brain seems to direct throughout the day which bypasses our volition). Throughout most of Jesus' life, He functions with the same mind and the same bodies that we have; subject to similar limitations. His lacking sin allows Him to be able to do some things which we cannot (having a complete memory; being able to go long periods of time without food); but we should also bear in mind that, these things are not necessarily better, in the strict sense.

If you or I had a perfect memory, then there would be people that we could never forgive (possibly every person we have known). The wrong which they did to us would always be fresh in our minds. We could not let go of it. I know someone who had an event take place in his past, and he could not let go of it; and eventually, he took his life as a result (combined with, in my opinion, taking psychotropic drugs at the same time).

My point being, having a perfect memory is not necessarily an asset. If our memories were perfect, we might not forgive anyone at anytime for what they have done to us. We might not ever get over love that is lost. I have lost a few girlfriends; but in retrospect, the emotion and the friendship are things which I remember without actually having the emotion affect me. There is a point at which, the highly charged emotional aspect of a lost relationship is filtered out of my conscious mind. I cannot even bring a re-experience of those emotions, if enough time has transpired.

Jesus, on the other hand, could not do this. When He heard something, He could not unhear it; nor was He capable of forgetting it. Throughout His entire life, people said mean and hateful things to Jesus—and these are people for whom Christ would die—and unlike problems we have had in interactions with other, Jesus could not simply set these things aside and forget them. I believe that these things stayed with Jesus all of His earthly life (and probably still).

Jesus has a perfect memory, not because He is God, but because He is uncorrupted humanity.

Again, I am speculating here; but I believe that these are reasonable and logical conclusions which we can make about our Lord in His humanity.

At v. 3, we look at the first temptation:

Luke 4:3a **The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God,...**

Satan is right there with Jesus, aware of His hunger, and he challenges Him. "If you truly are the Son of God..." is the first half of the devil's challenge.

This is a 1<sup>st</sup> class condition, which means that the speaker is either recognizing the truth of his own statement or is simply assuming the truth in order to make a point. I believe this to be the 1<sup>st</sup> class condition of a logical argument. A translation could convey this with the words *given*, *truly* or *really*. Those words are implied. Some translators did not use the word *if*, but the word *since*. Wilbur Pickering translated this verse: **So the devil said to Him, "Since you are Son of God, tell this stone to become bread!"** Satan understood Jesus to be the Son of God as a reality, and he began with that as his assumption.

Luke 4:3b **...command this stone to become bread."**

The devil provides a simple solution: "You are hungry and You are the Son of God; so just command this stone to become a loaf of bread. Obviously, You are able to do that." And

Jesus is. How do I know that He is capable of doing that? The first miracle that Jesus does in the book of John is turn water into wine. He is actually turning one element into another element (I know that is not the proper usage of the word *element*).<sup>24</sup>

Now, all of this is true. Jesus is the Son of God and He is able to command that stone to become bread so that He might eat it. Surely, there is no sin in that! That is Satan's argument.

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Question: *why can't Jesus just do this? He has the power, so why not exercise this power? What is the big deal?*

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### **Why Can't Jesus Simply Command the Stone to Become Bread?**

1. Is this some sort of a contest? Since Satan is the first to suggest, "Make this stone into a loaf of bread" is that why Jesus cannot do it?
2. Is there a problem that Satan suggests this? Is there a sin involved with doing this?
3. Not exactly; *not exactly* is the answer those questions.
4. However, we ought not think that this is some sort of a contest where Satan says, "Do this," and, therefore, Jesus cannot do that thing. The situation is far more subtle than that.
5. Recall that Jesus is executing the spiritual life; the same spiritual life that we will execute. He is test-driving the Christian life. So, Jesus must remain within the boundaries of that spiritual life. He cannot step outside of these boundaries. God has a plan for His life, and that plan cannot include starvation. Therefore, Jesus does not depend upon His Own Deity to resolve this situation (since we are unable to do that). Jesus, instead, depends upon God the Father.
6. We are related to God and God has given us the ability to pray to Him. Does this mean that we can pray to God when we are hungry and then, suddenly, there will be a perfectly cooked meal sitting before us?
  - 1) People confused about the Christian life think that, with enough faith, this could happen.
  - 2) So, either the problem is with our faith or God's ability, right?
  - 3) But in the modern-day Christian life, we do not pray for miracles when this is something that we are able to do ourselves.
  - 4) I may not be in the mood to cook tonite, but God has provided me with money, with food (which I purchased with that money) and everything necessary in order to cook it. How arrogant would it be of me to tell God, "Make the food for me!"
  - 5) Much of the Angelic Conflict is all about making decisions and doing things. Our daily life, which includes eating and drinking, is the result of us making decisions and us doing things.
  - 6) At the same time, we can be in a hopeless situation where we have nothing that we can depend upon except for God's grace and power; and

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<sup>24</sup> Jesus turns a compound into a mixture; and it is a completely different combination of ingredients.



## Why Can't Jesus Simply Command the Stone to Become Bread?

then, prayer for some sort of divine intervention is legitimate. I am praying about one of those things right now. I know, if it is in God's plan, He can answer my prayer. I am also aware that it may not be a part of His plan to answer my prayer.

7. Jesus cannot use His relationship with God to do a miracle simply to benefit His Own pleasure or need.
8. Jesus cannot choose to access His Own Deific nature; that would be outside of God's plan for Him.
9. Since Jesus is test-driving the Christian life, He cannot, under duress decide to turn stones into bread. We are not capable of doing this; therefore it would be wrong for Jesus to do this.
10. If Jesus did what Satan called upon Him to do, He would be telling us, "It is good and wonderful to follow the plan of God; but, there are times where you cannot do that."
11. Jesus cannot act outside of the plan of God, which is what this would be doing. God the Father has made provision for all that Jesus would need; so going *ahead of God* like this would be outside of God's plan.
12. Remember, even though Jesus has access to His omniscience, He is not accessing it either. He certainly knows that He is hungry; and He also knows that God will provide for Him when that becomes necessary. He does not know when this is going to happen or in what form it will happen; but He trusts that it will happen.
13. There will not be a situation where God forgets to feed one of His Own.
14. The NET Bible explains this far more succinctly than I have: *Jesus will live by doing God's will, and will take no shortcuts.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?luk4.htm> (footnote); accessed November 15, 2018.

I send out a Bible lesson each week. That involves a great deal of study and writing—much more than the recipients realize. My choosing to do this—whether or not anyone actually reads the lesson—is part of my divine production during my life. If I were to pray to God, "You do the lesson this week and email it out," that would be short-circuiting the plan of God. God made us so that we take part in His plan.

I do not close my eyes, start typing, and decide, that's good, and then send that lesson out. There are times when I may go back and rework a lesson 5 or 10 times. Once and awhile, the day before I sent a lesson out, I may do a wholesale change on the lesson itself. My point is, my mind is at work considering the material that I have before me, and how best to communicate what it says.

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A quarterback works out a play with his coaches; and during the big game, the coach tells him, "Now, it's time to run this play." Does the quarterback say, "Why not let Charlie Brown run this play?" Of course not! As a team member, the quarterback is called to do a job, and he goes out there and does it. He might be hurting in ways that we cannot even imagine, and yet he will get out there and execute that play flawlessly (or very nearly so). That is what he has been trained to do.

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Similarly, as believers in Jesus Christ, we have been prepared to run various plays; and some of these are mundane and some of them are rather exotic; but God expects us to do what we have been trained to do. If God steps into the picture and does thus and so, then our volition is set aside, and our purpose for being alive is set aside.

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If you are a new believer, this may be hard to understand, but, when you are functioning within the plan of God, it is a great thing. That is, it is something that you will enjoy doing, whatever it is that God has planned for you.

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If there is a sport or some sort of legitimate activity that you are good at, then you often enjoy doing that thing. This is what we are allowed when functioning within the plan of God.

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Luke 4:3 The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

Quite obviously Jesus is the Son of God and He is capable of turning the stones before Him into bread, that He might eat.

This temptation is interesting to me because Jesus has probably not performed any miracles yet to this point in His life. He is able to do this, but Satan has never seen Him do anything that is amazing, as far as miracles are concerned. But Satan knows enough that He understands Who Messiah is and how powerful Messiah is.

Is it possible that Satan is just curious; and he would like to see just what the Messiah can do? I would think that Satan's purpose is more nefarious than that. After all, if Jesus uses His Deity to do something He feels is necessary, He has stepped outside of the plan of God; *and* He has just proven that the plan of God combined with the power of the Spirit and the Word of God is not sufficient.

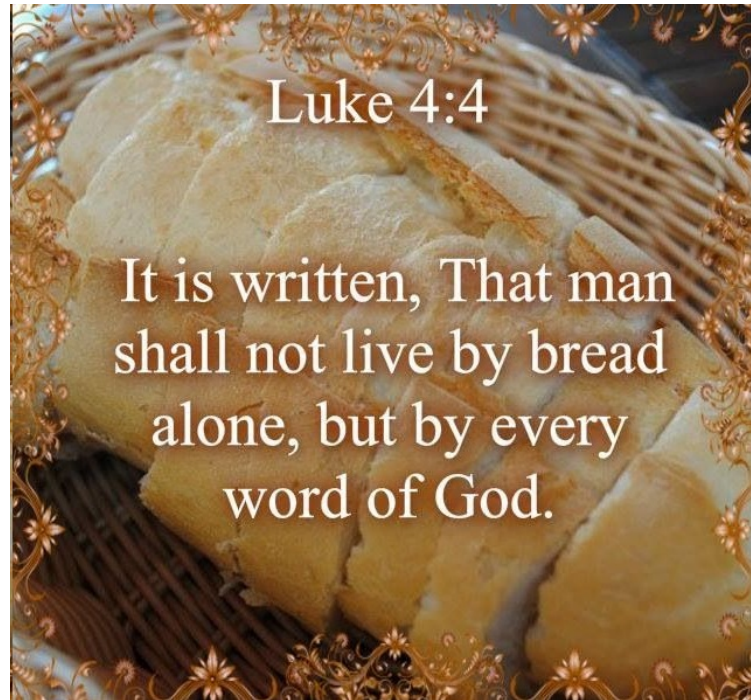
Luke 4:4a And Jesus answered him,...

Jesus speaks directly to Satan. There is no doubt that there are millions of angels watching this interaction take place.

Luke 4:4b ...**"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.' "**

**Luke 4:4b** (a graphic); from [Pinterest](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

As men, our lives are not dependent upon the food that we eat (or the clothes that we wear). All men have a spiritual side—for some, it is completely dormant—and our lives are incomplete without the spiritual side. For the unbeliever, that requires him to believe in Jesus Christ. For the believer, that requires him to listen to and obey the Word of God.



The full quotation comes from Moses, speaking to the people prior to their entering the land. And he is reminding them all of what they have learned along the way. He is also making application of some of their experiences to the reality of the spiritual experience. Deut. 8:3 **"And He [God] humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."** (ESV; capitalized) *He* refers to God the Father Who made provision for His people out in the desert-wilderness. They had no food; they had no way to grow good; and God provided them with manna each and every day, regardless of how many times that they reject Him; and regardless of their sorry mental attitudes. God is still faithful. Almost every person in Gen X<sup>25</sup> died in the desert from the sin unto death; but God fed them each and every day up to that point. That is grace!

It was not the bread that fed the people of Israel in the desert, but God and God's logistical support.

Even though the final words *but by every word of God* are in question (the Westcott Hort text does not have these words); similar words come from Deuteronomy (*but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD*); so, it is not out of the question to accept those final words in Deuteronomy to complete the thought here. Also, we find these additional words in Matt. 4:4: **But He answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "** (ESV; capitalized; my color code)

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<sup>25</sup> These are the adults who walked out of Egypt, following Moses.

Luke 4:4 Jesus answered him directly, saying, "It stands written that man cannot live by bread alone."

Taking into consideration the parallel passage in Matthew; and the quoted text in Deuteronomy 8:3, we know that, even more important than the food that He eats, is the Word of God. I have suggested that what Jesus was studying in the desert-wilderness is the Word of God. He does not need the manuscripts; he can have these words memorized; He is able to know the text perfectly by memory. Jesus is in the desert-wilderness not living on physical food but living on the Word of God.

If Jesus' response to the devil is the Word of God; if that is how Jesus directly confronted temptation, should we not consider becoming immersed in the Word of God as well?

Luke 4:4 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.' "

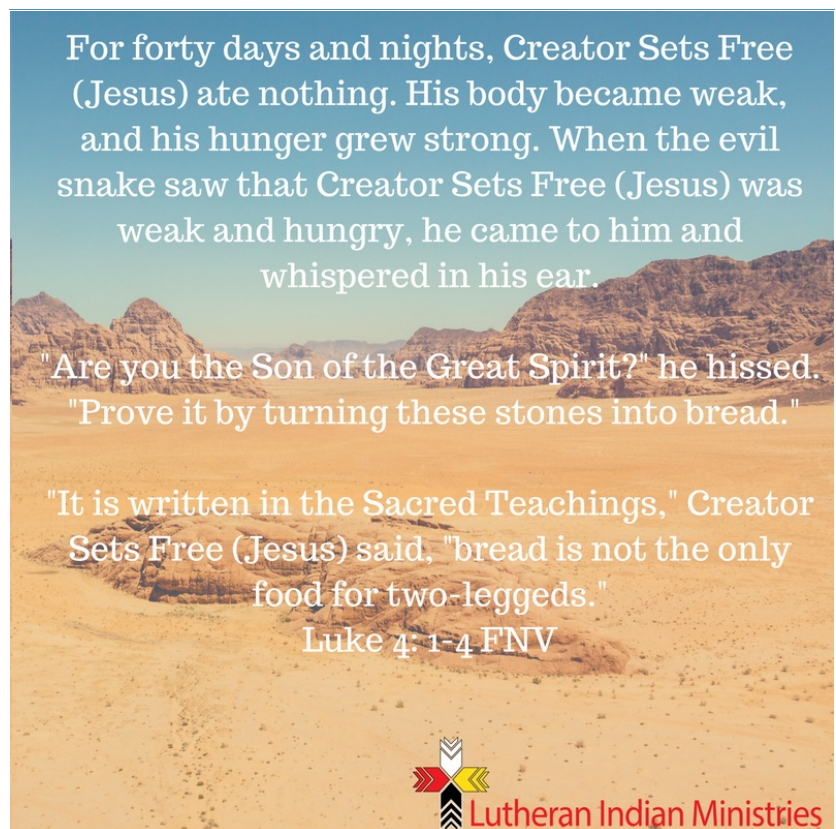
**Luke 4:1–4 (FNV)** (a graphic); from the [Lutheran Indian Ministries](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

Jesus will answer all 3 temptations with Scripture.

Let's look at another translation of the passage which Jesus refers back to.

Deut. 8:3 [Moses is speaking to the congregation of Israel; and he is reviewing their interactions with God.] "And He [God] has humbled you, and caused you to hunger, and caused you to eat the manna, which you had not known, and your fathers had not known, in order to cause you to know that man shall not live by bread alone, but man shall live by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of Jehovah." (Green's literal translation)

God gave Israel manna, when they lived out in the desert-wilderness; as a demonstration of His love and faithfulness.





Jesus knows that He can depend upon God the Father and His plan to provide Him with food. This is a specific example from the Word of God which indicates that this is true.

## Lessons 120–121: Luke 4:5–8

## Satan: “Bow down and worship me.”

We have previously studied the first temptation of Christ, where Satan suggested that He turn stones to bread, in order to satisfy His great hunger. Jesus responded to Satan by quoting Scriptures (“**Man does not live on bread alone,**” he said, “**But man [is sustained] by the Word of God.**”—quoting Deut. 8:3).

Luke 4:5a **And the devil took Him up...**

We have a variety of manuscripts upon which we base our New Testament text. I begin my studies with the Westcott Hort text, which simply reads, *and he brought Him*. However, I also examine other texts. The 1894 Scrivener Textus Receptus reads, instead: **The devil brought Him to a high mountain...**

Sometimes, when copies of the manuscripts were made, there might be some portions which were unreadable; or the copyist simply left a portion of the text out (by mistake). It is likely that all this text was in the original (as it is more common for text to drop out than for text to be added in).

The text in the parallel passage in Matthew certainly speaks of a mountain (or something akin to a mountain?). Matt. 4:8 **Again, the devil takes Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and shows Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.** (VW).

Interestingly enough, having mentioned the Matthew narrative, this temptation is the second one recorded by Luke; the third one in the book of Matthew. I do not have an explanation for this, apart from, perhaps, Luke choosing to put these in chronological order (and that is a guess on my part).

Luke 4:5b **...and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time...**

*A moment of time* is three words in the Greek. The first is the preposition en (ἐν) [pronounced *en*], which means, *in, by means of, with; among* when used with a dative/locative/instrumental case (I believe that this would be the locative case). This is followed by the feminine singular noun stigmê (στιγμή) [pronounced *sithg-MAY*], which means, *an instant, a moment of time, a point in time*. Strong’s #4743. Although this word only occurs here in the New Testament, it is paired in Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (enhanced) with a Hebrew noun which means the same thing.<sup>26</sup> This is affixed to the genitive/ablative of the masculine singular noun chronos (χρόνος) [pronounced *CHROHN-oss*], which means, *time; time as a succession of events*. Strong’s #5550. The literal

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<sup>26</sup> Compare Strong’s #G4743 with Strong’s #H6621.

translation is, *in a moment of time*. Although that is the most common translation, it is also translated, *in a flash, in an instant*.

We do not know exactly how this was done.

Some have made the assertion that this is proof that the writers of Scripture thought that the earth was flat. That is silly. We do not know how this happened in a moment of time; and we do not know how all of the kingdoms could be seen. Most of us have been in a plane, and the pilot might direct our attention to this or that thing. If flying over Denver, CO, the pilot does *not* direct our attention to the large estate of the richest man in the region, he says, instead, "We are now flying over the Rocky Mountains." Even from a plane, we cannot see the rich and/or powerful; we can only see a very large geological wonder. My point being, *what exactly was Jesus able to see and from where?*

In any case, in some way, the Lord was made aware of all the kingdoms of the earth; and this may not have been something which He previously knew in His humanity. We do not know what Jesus saw exactly. The Lord, in His omniscience, could see all the kingdoms of there world, but, as we have discussed, He does not operate in the sphere of His Deity. Given that the Lord was not encumbered with a sin nature, what was He able to see?

It is interesting that the text speaks of this as taking place in a moment of time or in an instant. I would have thought, instead, that, Satan might want to linger on these various kingdoms.

We may reasonably suppose that Satan is able to quickly travel throughout the world; perhaps he can go from New York City to Tokyo in a few seconds. He Satan has his minions scattered throughout the earth, exerting whatever influence they are allowed to exert. How this can help us understand how the Lord to see these kingdoms in an instant, I do not know.

Today, in this era, we have camera crews, and we can see things happening throughout the world all simultaneously on 5 or 10 or 20 screens at the same time. Or, a video clip can be put together where, in a second, one can be exposed to 24 different pictures. I am not saying that there is any sort of technology like that; but there may be ways that angels could make such things happen. We are rarely privy to what takes place on the angelic realm. A limited amount of information has been revealed to us (such as, the first 2 chapters of the book of Job).

Here, what we are told, leaves us with far more questions than answers.

Luke 4:5 **And the devil took Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,...**

We do not know exactly how this was accomplished. How exactly does the devil take a hold of Jesus? Is he given permission to have normal physical contact with Jesus?



Secondly, how does he show Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time? Obviously, if they are both standing over the earth, can they really see all the kingdoms of the world? Are they able to see many established kingdoms with their palaces? Or is there some other way that Satan is able to do this?

Or, am I thinking of the palaces and estates, whereas Satan was showing Jesus the amazing extent of the world? The mountains, oceans, rivers, deserts, greenery.

Perhaps you have seen Google maps, where we take a very specific place on earth (a street, a home, etc.), and we move to a vantage point far away, in just a few seconds. Perhaps Satan brings Jesus to a place where He is sort of zooming out, but taking in what a great, vast expanse the world is. If I were to make a guess, I believe that this is the sort of thing that we are talking about.

Given the Lord's genius (not His omnipotence, but His human genius), He is able to process all of this in a very short period of time. Man would have a very small picture of the world—and there is nothing to suggest that Jesus in His humanity had a perception which went beyond where He had lived. If He is somehow pulled way up over the earth, where He can take in all of Asia and Europe—simply as a massive piece of real estate—perhaps that is how it was conveyed to Him to extent of Satan's domain.

Obviously, others have their opinions:

Dr. Dan Hill suggests this: *Now you cannot see the whole earth from one mountain so this is a vision. We can thus see that Satan can induce visions in people as he does so here is the humanity of Christ.*<sup>27</sup>

H. Leo Boles: *Jesus was given a vision of the inhabited world, "all the kingdoms of the world"; he not only saw Palestine, but also the heathen world, over which Satan exercised spiritual dominion; from the lofty elevation the kingdoms or tetrarchies of Palestine and adjacent regions could be seen, and the more distant empires of the world might be suggested by the tempter. There was something supernatural in this act which enabled Jesus to see these in a "moment of time"; the suddenness of the view added much to the power of the temptation.*<sup>28</sup>

Now and again, we simply have to accept the Scriptures at face value, without having any idea as to the exact process or methodology. Satan took Jesus to a very high mountain (*why and how?*) and he showed Him the kingdoms of the world in an instant (*how?*). Now and again, we will follow a passage as far as we possibly can, but there are times when that still leaves us with many unanswered questions.

Luke 4:6a ...and said to Him,...

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<sup>27</sup> From <https://www.gracenotes.info/luke/luke.pdf> (Chapter 4); accessed January 15, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> H. Leo Boles, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*; ©1974 by Gospel Advocate Co.; E-Sword, Luke 4:5–8.

After showing Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, then Satan speaks to Him, making Him an offer.

Luke 4:6b ...*"To You I will give all this authority...*

Satan is the ruler of this world. He would give the authority of the world over to Jesus.

Satan is not the permanent ruler of the world; but he usurped the authority of man when man sinned. But perhaps his power might be more permanent, if there is no redemption for man? After all, if man cannot be redeemed, why would he have any more of a right to rulership than Satan?

It is also worth noting that this is a unique temptation. If this is a valid offer—and I assume that it is—the length of Jesus' reign would have been considerable, given His unique physical nature.

In the Old Testament, there is considerable prophecy concerning the future Messiah (David's Greater Son) reigning over the earth. Satan may or may not have known what Jesus was there to do, but Satan offers the Lord all of that right then and there. The Bible indicates that He would get it eventually; but Satan says, "It's Yours right now." Satan's offer seems to be, "Whatever You think You have planned, let me simply give it to You right now!"

On the other hand, can Jesus step outside of the plan of God in His humanity and what exactly would that look like? So far, the best explanation has been the Latin phrase *Posse Non Peccare, non Posse Peccare* (which means, *He was able to not sin* and *He was not able to sin*). In the Lord's humanity, He could choose not to sin. In His Deity, He was unable to sin.

From man's point of view, it would have been a tragic decision indeed for Jesus to accept Satan's offer.

We should not simply consider Jesus in this situation, but Satan as well. He is willing to give up everything in his power to bring God to a stalemate.

Luke 4:6c ...*and their glory,...*

The glory of this position and this power would belong to Jesus as well.

Jesus has come from very humble means, as we have studied. There is reason to assume that the glory or splendor of these kingdoms might have had some appeal. Nevertheless, I am not suggesting that Jesus is swayed by it.

Luke 4:6d ...*for it has been delivered to me,...*

Satan, when man sinned, became ruler of the world. In many places in Scripture, Satan is called the ruler of this world. He confirms this right here.

Both Adam and the woman did the bidding of Satan, giving him this authority. God originally gave Adam the authority over the world; but Adam knowingly sinned against God. Adam may not have appreciated all of the consequences of his sin, but he did do the one thing which God told him not to do. Satan deceived the woman; but Adam sinned knowingly.

Luke 4:6d ...and I give it to whom I will.

If Satan desires to give all or a portion of this authority to someone else, he has that ability to do so. If he has the authority in the first place (which he does), then he also has the ability to delegate this authority to someone else.

Elsewhere, Scripture tells us that Satan is *the ruler of this world* (John 12:31) and he is *the prince of the power of the air* (Eph. 2:2). These are the kingdoms of Satan, as God has given Satan considerable authority over the earth (which man gave up in the fall).

Luke 4:6 ...and [Satan] said to Him [Jesus], "To You I will give all this authority and their glory, for it [this authority] has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.

Satan has dominion over the earth. The earth is his to deal with (within whatever restrictions God has put upon him). So Satan can give Jesus control of all these countries and each and every kingdom; and over all of the land and water that Jesus could see from a high place.

Jesus, if He goes to the cross, will be given rulership over all mankind and over all the earth. Satan is telling Him, "You don't have to go through that pain and suffering. I can give You all of that without the pain."

Satan, at some point, knew that Jesus was going to the cross (or to a time of terrible suffering). Jesus, during His earthly ministry, will reveal that time of suffering would be by crucifixion. Satan knew Psalm 22 and he knew Isaiah 53, but I don't believe that he fully appreciated the consequences of the cross. I find myself being at two minds concerning this: (1) Satan understood, somehow, that sins would be forgiven on the basis of the cross, yet he seems to encourage and inspire Jesus' enemies; or (2) Satan did not fully appreciate what the crucifixion would mean. He did not understand what would happen when Jesus was on the cross.

I lean towards the latter explanation. That is, despite all that Satan knew (and he knows Scripture far better than we do), he did not fully appreciate what was coming. He perhaps understood that he would be given the opportunity to inflict great pain and suffering upon the Lord, but I do not think that he understood that, during this time, God the Father would lay upon His Son all of our sins.

Regarding these things, Jesus will tell Peter (and the other disciples) about His impending crucifixion, and Peter says, “**May this not happen!**” And Jesus then says to Peter, “**Satan, get behind Me!**” Did Jesus say this because Satan did not want Him going to the cross; or did Jesus say this, knowing that this *should have been* Satan’s position? Satan, although the most brilliant creature to come from the hand of God, was possibly flummoxed by some things which the Lord said. (You will notice the many qualifiers that I have scattered throughout these last few paragraphs—I am essentially thinking out loud).

This sort of approach may help us to better understand the Old Testament Scriptures. Despite all that is in the Scriptures by way of prophecy, we do not find in the Psalms or in the book of Isaiah, “The Son of God will be born to Mary in Bethlehem. He will have two natures, human and divine. Nevertheless, He will set His Deity aside and represent God on this earth as fully human. In the end, He will be crucified and pay the penalty for our sins during that process. Then God will raise Him up from the dead.” Even though, we can go to a number of Old Testament Scriptures and piece much of that together, we are able to do that because we have a full historic perspective of these events. But prior to the cross, the full meaning of this information is still hidden from Satan. He was unable, in his great genius, to put all of it together. Primarily, he did not seem to realize that, on the cross, God the Father would pour out our sins onto Jesus.

Perhaps you have heard of the elephant parable.

*From Wikipedia: It is a story of a group of blind men who have never come across an elephant before and who learn and conceptualize what the elephant is like by touching it. Each blind man feels a different part of the elephant's body, but only one part, such as the side or the tusk. They then describe the elephant based on their limited experience and their descriptions of the elephant are different from each other...The moral of the parable is that humans have a tendency to claim absolute truth based on their limited, subjective experience as they ignore other people's limited, subjective experiences which may be equally true.*<sup>29</sup>

This very much describes the prophecies of the Old Testament, where the psalmist perceives one thing; the prophet Isaiah sees another, and Ezekiel sees something else. Now, when you put all of these together, we potentially, from the Old Testament, are able to speak about the Messiah to come (I am looking at this from a pre-incarnation view). But no one was able to take all of this information and put it all together—not even Satan. Yet, in retrospect, it seems so very clear (if you know about the many Old Testament prophecies of the Lord). See the Chart of Jesus in the Old and New Testaments ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Luke 4:7a **If You, then, will worship me,...**”

This is what Satan requires. “Worship me,” he tells Jesus.

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<sup>29</sup> From [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blind\\_men\\_and\\_an\\_elephant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blind_men_and_an_elephant) accessed January 29, 2021.

There is an intervening word which I have left out (along with many other translators). That word is *enôpion* (ἐνώπιον) [pronounced *en-OH-pee-on*], and it means, *before, in front of, in the sight of, in the presence of*. I don't think that we could understand that Satan wants to watch Jesus worship in front of him; but that he wants Jesus to direct His worship towards Satan.

It would seem that, whatever Satan knows or does not know about Jesus dying for our sins, having the humanity of Jesus bow before him would be reason enough to throw the world into chaos. I believe that Satan has theorized this much.

**Application:** Considering what Satan is offering here, this helps us to distinguish an anti-establishment person from the divine establishment person. Do they want law and order; do they want controlled environments; do they want a careful balance of freedom and safety? That would be a person who favors divine establishment. Do they want to be lawless? Do they want to destroy some building? Do they want to cause chaos and damage? Do they want to do whatever they want to do? That is a person who is anti-establishment. The anti-establishment type is unable to truly articulate how they can go from damage and chaos to some better world that they believe they are ushering in. Yet, that is what they do.

Luke 4:7b ...it will all be Yours."

This may seem like a lot for Satan to give away; but if Jesus completes God's plan, that means that Satan will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Satan would do anything to avoid that. He would even give up his kingdom, earth.

If Jesus chooses not to fulfill God's plan (and I don't think that even Satan fully appreciates what that plan is at this time), then Satan might retain his reign over the earth; and he might stay his own execution.

Luke 4:7 If you, then, will worship me, it [the authority over all the earth] will all be Yours."

Satan suggests that Jesus bypass the cross (or whatever His future holds). There is great pain and suffering in the cross, and Satan is making a legitimate offer to Jesus. Satan is the ruler of this world. He tells the Lord, "Prophecy tells me that you will come to a point where you can reign over the world. Well, I am willing to give that to you right now."

Satan does not know or fully appreciate what Jesus has planned. But Satan recognizes Jesus as far more than a man and even more than a prophet. Given all that has happened, does Satan understand that Jesus is the divine Son of God? It is difficult to come to some conclusions, when our questions involve what are the actual thoughts and motivations of another creature.

Luke 4:8a And Jesus answered him,...

Despite being extremely hungry, Jesus has an immediate answer for Satan.

Luke 4:8b ...*"It is written, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God,...* (Deut. 6:13)

The first verb, found here in the perfect tense, means, *it stands written in the past with the result that it keeps on being written and meaningful for today.*

We do not worship anyone apart from the Lord our God. This immediately makes the request of Satan *a non-starter*. It does not matter what Satan has offered; it does not matter what Satan's motivation is. The only thing that matters here is, this is in opposition to the clear statement of the Word of God. Jesus can only worship God the Father.

Luke 4:8c ...*and Him only shall you serve.'* " (Deut. 6:13)

Our service is directed only to the Lord as well.

Jesus goes back to Deut. 6:3 to quote from. This is fascinating because, throughout Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, we have the words of God, spoken directly to Moses. But, instead, for a second time, Jesus goes to the words spoken by Moses to the people of Israel (prior to them entering into the land). Deut. 6:13 *It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by His name you shall swear.* (ESV; capitalized) The context of this quote is Israel entering into the Land of Promise and being warned by Moses not to worship the gods of the conquered peoples there. We are not even to worship the angels (Rev. 19:10 22:9), as they are servants just as we are.

By quoting Deuteronomy as being authoritative, Jesus is giving it the same authority as the words spoken directly by God. So, even though the verbal plenary view of Scripture is one theory of many regarding the inspiration of the Scriptures, Jesus, by quoting this verse, is extending the authority of the Bible to all portions of it.

You will notice that Jesus takes the Old Testament word *fear* and replaces it with *worship*; because the two are interrelated. The Old Testament concept of fear meant that the Lord was to be obeyed, feared and thought about. That does, in many ways, define what worship is.

Deut. 10:20 is a very similar passage.

Luke 4:8 *And Jesus answered him, "It is written, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'* " (Deut. 6:13)

Again, as Jesus did with regards to the first temptation, He responds with Scripture. Our worship is not to be towards man; and not even towards any angel; but to God alone.

God's plan involves many interactions between man and other men. We interact with dozens of people each week—in some cases, hundreds. Some of these men are very influential. For me, the teaching of R. B. Thieme, Jr. was fundamental to my spiritual growth. But, obviously, I respect him; I do not worship him. I write this in 2021. At this time, the greatest President of my lifetime is stepping down. I respect him, but I do not

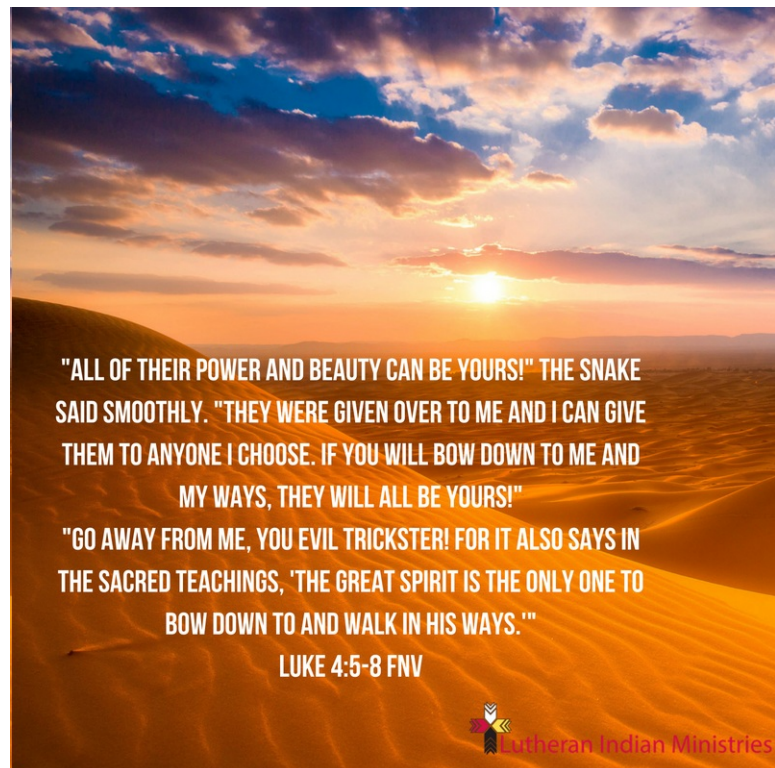


worship him. Obviously, the most important man in my life, my father, is the man for whom I have the greatest respect and appreciation; but I do not worship him. In these three examples, I am speaking of men who left the stage of my life before I was ready for them to; but I recognize behind this is the will of God. God knows the end from the beginning, and God knows that there is a perfect time associated with all of these events (of these men stepping away, so to speak, from my own life). In two cases, I understand fully and completely why it happened; and in one case, I can only speculate.

God has a perfect time for each person to exit from the stage of life; and there may be those who even, to some degree, depend upon them. God uses the people in our lives for a variety of purposes, but ultimately to His Own glory. And, ideally speaking, despite our many personal imperfections, God wants us to reflect His glory.

Luke 4:5–7 And the devil took Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and [Satan] said to Him [Jesus], "To You I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be Yours."

Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.' " (Deut. 6:13)



Because we are human, we often personalize such a passage, however unintentionally we might do that. That is, we view this as a temptation of Jesus. However, bear in mind, this all takes place as a part of the plan of God. Therefore, we might better understand this to be a demonstration, both to angels and man, of the perfect character of Jesus.<sup>30</sup>

**Luke 4:5–8 (FNV)** (a graphic); from the [Lutheran Indian Ministries](http://lutheranindianministries.org/); accessed March 26, 2021.

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<sup>30</sup> Credit Ron Medeiros from [http://makeshiftdarkroom.com/devotional/posse\\_non\\_peccare.html](http://makeshiftdarkroom.com/devotional/posse_non_peccare.html) accessed January 29, 2021.

We have come to the third and final recorded temptation of the Lord.

Luke 4:9a **And he [Satan] took Him to Jerusalem...**

The movement herein described is quite fascinating. Jesus has apparently submitted Himself to some of the actions of Satan; and I would guess that Satan has well-defined limits as to what he is allowed to do. You and I will never see Satan, even if we are so important that he believes he needs to involve himself in our lives (highly unlikely). But there are limitations. We won't be able, in this life, to be able to see him or hear him. He cannot touch us.

However, here, clearly, Satan is visible to Jesus, he is speaking to Jesus, and he is able to move Jesus from point A to point B. This movement appears to be instantaneous and there does not appear to be subject to the limitations of gravity and distance. It is reasonable to assume that all of this is done by specific permission of God the Father.

Let me add that, Jesus, in His humanity, cannot do these things by Himself. He cannot move Himself from here to there (like from a high mountain to the pinnacle of the Temple). Throughout His public ministry, He walks from place to place; or He rides in boats. He will never say to His disciples, “Listen, guys, I need to be in Jerusalem for a bit, but I am coming right back,” and then, suddenly, He is in Jerusalem. If Jesus needs to be in Jerusalem, then there is an actual journey which is required.

Angels have some pretty amazing abilities; Jesus, in His humanity, does not have these same abilities. However, in His resurrection body, that will change.

Luke 4:9b **...and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple...**

Jesus was on a high mountain; and, in the next instant (apparently), He finds himself upon the pinnacle of the Temple.

There is quite a difference of opinion as to the height of the pinnacle of the Temple. In one portion of the Bible, it appears to be amazingly high (in the hundreds of feet, if memory serves); but so many people have thought, *that is way too high; that must be a misprint*. It would look way out of proportion to the Temple itself, which is about 30' high (again, from memory).

The real question about the height of the pinnacle boils down to one of proportion. If we are expecting it to be proportional to the Temple itself, then the pinnacle might be 30–50' high. However, if this is built without consideration of proportionality, then it could be 100–200' tall.

I lean toward the extreme height as being accurate; perhaps with the idea that people from a far distance away could see the Temple's pinnacle, and know which direction to travel. However, we should bear in mind that this is Herod's Temple, so we do not know all that he modified. (Exactly what Herod did, by way of building or modifying, is another topic altogether. I rarely see Jewish histories cite or refer specifically to *Herod's Temple*.)

On the other hand, models of Herod's Temple do not have some sort of a tower; so the highest point is simple to the roof of the Temple itself.

**Model of Herod's Temple** (a photo of a model); from a [YouTube video](#); accessed January 29, 2021.



Luke 4:9c ...and said to him,...

Each time Satan has tested Jesus, Jesus has responded with Scripture. So, this time, Satan will make his challenge using Scripture.

In Matthew, the order of these temptations is different. The final two are switched. I lean towards Luke's as being in chronological order, given that he will quote Scripture to Jesus now.

Luke 4:9d ...*"If you are the Son of God,...*

Back in v. 3, Satan said the exact same thing. "If You are the Son of God," Satan says, using the first class condition. Here, he is assuming the truth of this statement in order to make an argument. This statement could be expressed, *Since You are the Son of God; or If You are the Son of God [and You are].*

Luke 4:9d ...*throw yourself down from here,*

Many translators insert the word *then*, as we commonly use *if---then...* statements in the English language. The Koine Greek does not require there to be a specific word that means, *then*.

"Listen," Satan says, "You can simply drop down to the ground (whether that drop happens to be 30' or 200'). There is no harm in that; there is no problem with that." Satan will back this claim up with Scripture.

Luke 4:9 *And he took Him to Jerusalem and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here,...*

In front of the Temple, there was possibly a tower (although I have not seen a tower in the models of Herod's Temple). If there was a tower, then there are disagreements as to its height. Some believe it to be higher than the Temple (which originally was 3 stories high); and some believe it to be much, much higher than the Temple.

It is fascinating that Satan is able to do this; to take Jesus to the pinnacle of the Temple. We know from Gen. 6 that angels, at one time, could have physical contact with man. Although that seems to have been limited today; here is an instance where that limitation does not apply. In general, there appear to be strict limitations when it comes to any sort of human contact with angels.

It is also fascinating that Satan can take Jesus to this great height. I am not aware of a way to get up there (again, this is Herod's Temple, so I don't know for certain). This seems to be, by the text, almost an instantaneous thing. Whatever angelic limitations exist were set aside for this temptation.

Luke 4:10a ...for it is written,...

This is Satan speaking to Jesus. Satan will quote Scripture in order to bolster his argument. Satan is alleging that Jesus can simply drop down from this great height.

Luke 4:10b ..."He will command His angels concerning You,..." (Psalm 91:11a)

God the Father has given the angels orders concerning Jesus. There are, no doubt, clear orders given to Satan and given to all angels, fallen and elect, concerning Jesus and concerning us. What we are reading about are temptations strictly limited to Jesus.

When these limitations are exceeded, as we had in Gen. 6, the angels and their half-human offspring are confined forever with thick chains of darkness. All they can see in their future is the Lake of Fire; but, until that time, they have no freedom of movement. It is my educated guess that, these angels being confined is an example which keeps the other fallen angels in line.

Luke 4:10c ...to guard You,'... (Psalm 91:11a)

The angels are given the responsibility of protecting Jesus. Whether this is all angels or a specific subset is not really at issue here.

It is from a passage like this that we might reasonably surmise that we each have guardian angels as well.

Luke 4:10 ...for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning You, to guard You,'... (Psalm 91:11a)

Jesus has quoted Scripture to him; so Satan quotes it back to Jesus. No one on earth knows the Bible better than the devil (other than Jesus). Satan is telling Jesus, "You can

throw Yourself to the ground, because God has given His angels the responsibility to watch over you.”

Satan is a genius creature. Satan has had centuries to learn and absorb the Scriptures (but strictly for the purpose of furthering his own ends). Jesus, in His humanity, has had fewer than 30 years to learn the Word of God (the Old Testament).

Their knowledge is different, even though we are talking about the same set of books. For Jesus, the Old Testament is the Word of God; and it is the basis of His spiritual growth (Jesus did grow spiritually in His humanity). Satan has spent centuries learning the Scriptures, but only in such a way as to benefit himself when disagreeing with God or with the Son of God.

Luke 4:11a ...and " 'On their hands they will bear You up,...' " (Psalm 91:12a)

No matter what the situation, Satan asserts to Jesus, the angels will bear You up. Since Jesus is the Son of God, Satan says, *there is nothing for You to worry about; Your safety is always assured.*

Luke 4:11b ...lest you strike Your foot against a stone.' " (Psalm 91:12b)

Satan says, “See, you won’t even hurt Your foot...the Bible says so.”

Luke 4:11 and " 'On their hands they will bear You up, lest you strike Your foot against a stone.' " (Psalm 91:12)

“You don’t need to worry,” Satan says, “You cannot even stub Your toe on a rock. The angels will see to that.”

Again, Satan is trying to get Jesus to depend upon divine provision which, Satan would like to show, is greater than what is given to other men.

No matter how important your life is in the plan of God, if you willingly jump off a 3-story building (or higher), you will suffer severe physical repercussions.

We do not know exactly how precarious the Lord’s situation is, where He is; but we know that, if He slipped or lost His grip or whatever, and fell from this place, then Satan could certainly allege that He is receiving preferential treatment (assuming that angels would save Him).

Satan is quoting Psalm 91:11–12. It appears that the writer of the psalm may be speaking of himself as a child of God; but this clearly is prophetic statement about Jesus Christ. Psalm 91:9–12 *Because You, O Jehovah, are My refuge; You make the Most High Your habitation, no evil shall happen to You, nor shall any plague come near Your tent. For He shall give His angels charge over You, to keep You in all Your ways. They shall bear You*



up in their hands, that You not dash Your foot on a stone. (Green's literal translation). This passage clearly outlines the provisions which God the Father has made for God the Son.

So, can't Jesus simply jump down from the Temple pinnacle—certain death to the average person—yet, without worry?

Besides tempting Jesus (and God), perhaps Satan is testing the limits of Jesus as well, our of curiosity. There is no reason for Satan to know exactly what Jesus will or will not do; or what God the Father will or will not do. What Satan would like to do is show that there is some sort of contradiction within the character of God.

Jesus, the Word dwelling among us (John 3:1–3, 14), has never been before. His being born into the world is a new thing in the world. Satan may have been given specific limitations with regards to his contact with Jesus (similar to what we read in the first 2 chapters of Job), but no doubt, Satan has some interest in the limitations that might be placed upon Jesus as well.

Satan is probing Jesus for some weakness or some sort of contradiction of character.

No doubt that Satan has observed Jesus throughout His entire life, but without being allowed to make any sort of contact (that would be my assumption). But here, out in the wilderness, Satan will be given at least 3 opportunities to test Jesus.

Luke 4:12a **And Jesus answered him,...**

Jesus responds to Satan's incorrect application of the Scriptures.

Luke 4:12b **..."It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.' "** (Deut. 6:16)

By quoting Moses directly, Jesus is again affirming the inspiration and authority of the entire Old Testament. In the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, there are many direct quotations from God the Father. However, Jesus chooses to quote Moses as authoritative, as these are Moses' own words.

You do not get to test God. You do not get to jump off a 2 story building, claiming, "God will catch me." God may determine that it is time for you to come home; or that you might better do His work from a wheelchair. But we are not allowed to act in this life with impunity. This does not mean that Christians must live without risk, because remaining in your house with the door locked is a risk; and stepping outside is a risk. But you do not get to simply test God, under the pretense of wondering, "I wonder what God will do if I do such and such." You may not like the answer to that question.

Luke 4:12 **And Jesus answered him, "It is said [by Moses, in the authoritative Word of God], 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.' "** (Deut. 6:16)



The general context of Deuteronomy is, Moses is running several teaching sessions for the people of Israel before they enter into the land of promise. Moses, speaking to the children of Israel, told them: *You shall fear Jehovah your God, and you shall serve Him, and you shall swear by His name. You shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples who are around you, for Jehovah your God is a jealous God in your midst, lest the anger of Jehovah your God burn against you, and He destroy you from off the face of the earth. You shall not test Jehovah your God as you tested Him in Massah.* (Deut. 6:13–16; Green’s literal translation) At Massah, the people were without water and they were angry at Moses, saying that he or God led them out into the desert to cause them all to die of thirst. On many occasions, the children of Israel tested God out in the desert; and, as a result, one entire generation died the sin unto death there.

For Jesus to throw Himself down, He would be unnecessarily testing God. We do not know how Jesus found His way back to the ground. My assumption would be that, as Satan took Jesus up to that point, so Satan returned Jesus to the ground.

Luke 4:13a *And when the devil had ended every temptation,...*

I find this statement to be quite fascinating. We do not know if Satan tested Jesus just those 3 times and that they are simply representative of Satan’s tests; or if these were the final 3 tests that Satan tried. However, we certainly know that no test given to Jesus resulted in Jesus giving in to Satan. And, by *giving in*, I mean resorting to the use of His Own Deity or to a supernatural event which would satisfy Satan’s curiosity.

If these are the only 3 tests (and Matthew only lists these), then Satan—who is a genius—came up with 3 tests which fully tested/tempted the Lord (at least, to his own satisfaction). We may hypothesize that Satan did not repeat any tests; and that these tests, although unsuccessful (in Satan’s view), told him what he needed to know at that time.

There is the possibility that God limited Satan (“I will let you test My Son three times”), but I suspect that, even if God limited Satan in this way, that still allowed Satan to gain what he wanted from this.

As mentioned earlier, the text of the narrative suggests that Satan tempted the Lord throughout the 40 days of fasting. This suggests to me that there were more than these 3 temptations.

The ultimate goal was for Jesus to be tested before the billions of angels, both fallen and elect, who observed this. This was God putting forth His Son as the Messiah—something which He reveals even more spectacularly right here. Satan was attempting to put the Lord in a position to fail these tests before all angelic creation; God allowed these tests to revealed His Son’s traits and character.

Satan would have had his own purposes; but God the Father ultimately had His Own purposes to accomplish here as well. God achieved what He wanted; Satan did not fully get what he wanted.

Let me try another approach. Let's say that we were able to test Jesus at the beginning of His ministry, to determine just Who He is. Whatever set of tests that we would come up with would not be as ingenious or as complete as these tests by the devil?

As an aside, I would like you to consider this:

**What Satan did or did not know:** Even though Satan is a great genius who knows the Scriptures in far greater detail than you or I ever will, I do not believe that he understood what would happen during the crucifixion. I don't think that Satan was working at cross-purposes with man prior to the cross—evil men trying to take Jesus to be crucified as against Satan trying to keep Jesus from the cross. I do not believe that Satan realized what would happen at the cross. It is very likely that Satan expected Jesus to be filled with mental attitude sins as a result of being crucified.

Have you ever seen a great murder mystery (like an Agatha Christie novel/movie); and the murderer is right there, right in front of you the whole time, and all the clues were there. And yet, you are still kept in suspense until the final chapter of the novel (or the last act of the movie), when you find out, who the true criminal is. And the beauty of it is, you should have known the whole time, but you did not.

Let me hypothesize that Satan, despite his great genius, despite having access to the Scriptures (the Old Testament at the point), did not fully understand what was to take place and what Jesus was going to do. Even when Jesus tells His disciples that He would be taken and crucified, I don't believe that the disciples knew or the devil understood that this is where the sins of mankind would be paid for. And yet, Satan has observed literally millions of animals being offered up for the sins of the Hebrew people throughout their history.

Let's approach this from a different angle. God knows the end from the beginning. He could have devoted one chapter in the psalms or in Isaiah describing to the last detail Who Jesus would be, how He would come to be. God could have told us exactly what would happen and exactly what all of this means. For instance, "In the year 6 B.C., when Herod the Great is still presiding over the land of Israel, the Messiah will be born to Mary; she will give birth to Him as a virgin. Her husband Joseph will contribute nothing to this birth. The Son born to Mary will be named Jesus. He will die by Roman crucifixion, but during that time of that crucifixion, God His Father will take all of the sins of the world and cause Him to pay the penalty for these sins." God knows all of this; and God could have seen to it that a prophet tell us these things (or God could have spoken these words directly to someone). But God chose *not* to do that. Even though all of the prophetic Scriptures concerning Jesus now make sense, it is only *after* Jesus lives (and dies and then is resurrected) in His first advent that we fully appreciate what the Old Testament Scriptures say about Him. The

prophecies make complete sense; the millions of animal sacrifices make sense; the Tabernacle and its furniture all make sense. Things which were abstruse before now make perfect sense.

*Why? Why do it this way?*

I believe that God the Father revealed this information to Satan at the proper time, as these things took place in time, and not before (despite the prophetic nature of the Scriptures). The truth of Who Jesus is and why He is walking among us is revealed in God's Own time. The end result is, that Jesus goes to the cross—no doubt with Satan helping to move things along, but without Satan realizing that the sins of mankind would be settled at the cross.

In other words, Satan participates in condemning himself and in setting the events in motion whereby Jesus would save mankind.

Luke 4:13b ...he departed from Him until an opportune time.

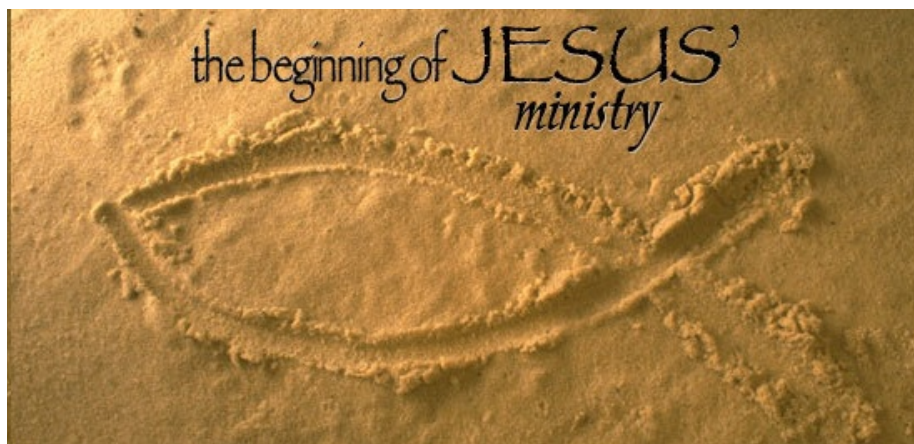
Satan and his minions have been tempting mankind for perhaps 4000 years prior to this. I do not doubt that, when given the opportunity, that Satan and his demons are so smart that, they can come up with a test to knock a regular person down first try. But, with all his great genius combined with his experience, Satan was unable to tempt the Lord.

Luke 4:13 And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

Satan was given specific limitations within which to tempt/test the Lord. Being a genius, Satan both learned what he needed to learn through these temptations; and he was given the opportunity to test the Lord.

However, Satan was unable to get Jesus to act outside of human abilities. Nor did Jesus take advantage of His Deity in order to deal with Satan. In the end, Jesus answered every temptation with the Word of God; and that was always enough. The fact that Jesus responded to every temptation of Satan with Scripture, should indicate just how important Bible doctrine is to our lives.

At this point, we have completed the temptations of Jesus.



The Beginnings of Jesus' Public Ministry (a graphic); from [Como Lake United Church](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

The next two verses read:

Luke 4:14–15 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report

about Him went out through all the surrounding country. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. ESV (capitalized)

This is a deceptively short and nondescript passage. It is easy to read through your Bible, one or two chapters a day, read these two verses, and think nothing of what you read. You think to yourself, Jesus walked around to different cities; He taught in the synagogues in those cities; and people liked what He was teaching. If you gave this passage this much thought, you are way ahead of the game. You know more than most people about this passage; but you do not really know what is happening here.

There are two ways to understand this passage (vv. 14–15): (1) it describes in two verses a ministry of the Lord that is otherwise unknown. This ministry continues for a few months or possibly as long as a year. This is a *teaching* ministry, not found in the other gospels. (2) This passage gives us an overall view of what is coming next. Vv. 14–15 give us the big picture; and vv. 16–44 focus in a number of incidents which took place during His Galilean ministry. It is not uncommon for a summary to be given before the entire narrative is developed.

I believe that option #1 is the correct way to understand what is to follow, and I offer one primary reason for this: vv. 14–15 describe a very successful teaching ministry. *He was glorified by all*. That sounds quite successful, does it not? Vv. 16–30, on the other hand, represents a colossal failure—not of Jesus' teaching but on the part of the people of Nazareth who are filled with negative volition. Jesus' teaching is always excellent; our rejection of His words reflects upon us, not upon Him.

The way Jesus' teaching is described in vv. 14–15 stands in stark contrast to what follows in vv. 16–30. For that reason, I see these as distinct events, simply listed in chronological order. That is, Jesus had a teaching ministry in the Galilee area; after which, He returned to Nazareth, where He was raised, which event is given considerable attention in this chapter.

My point of view here is that there is a considerable amount of time when Jesus taught without His disciples, which teaching ministry is not actually preserved in any of the gospels, apart from these two verses. However, this ministry was powerful and insightful to the people of Galilee.

I believe that what is being described in this passage is a ministry where Jesus taught for a few months or more the Old Testament; but without revealing Who He was to the people. He simply taught the Law of Moses; and He taught other portions of Scripture. His teaching was insightful, accurate and interesting.

Now, let's just assume I am right here in my interpretation of these two verses—that this represents, perhaps, a 6 month period of time. The logical question is, *why don't we know more about this increment of His ministry?* The reason is fairly simple: Jesus has no regular group of disciples at this point in time. The four biographers of Jesus were either Apostles (Matthew and John), closely associated with an Apostle (Mark was associated with Peter), or an historian who depended heavily on the testimony of the disciples and others in order to write his gospel (Luke). It is clear that Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Mary Magdalene began to follow Jesus at some point. There will be a point in the history of Luke when Mary (the mother) and Jesus' half brothers come to see Him—this certainly suggests that she has not been with Jesus traveling before this (Mary was like the source for Luke 1–2). We are not certain when Mary Magdalene came on board (she is thought by some to be the woman who washed Jesus' feet with her hair), but it was also likely after this period of time.

During this period of time in the Lord's ministry, He does not appear to have any followers (although many where He taught may have been quite enthusiastic about his ministry). That all changes in this chapter. So, the lack of detail about this point in the Lord's ministry fits in well with a short ministry of traveling from city to city and teaching in the synagogues of those cities.

I have listened to good, bad and so-so Bible teaching throughout much of my life. When I was first saved, I worked nights as a janitor and listened to perhaps three dozen different pastors (probably more) on Christian radio while working (this was over a period of 7 years).

When I began listening to R. B. Thieme, Jr.—which began sometime in the first year that I was saved—I did not particularly like him as a person, but I was intrigued by his teaching. Throughout the years, there were times when he would teach a passage, and it was clear to me that he understood and correctly explained that passage. I may have heard a passage read and explained before, but when he covered that passage, I fully understood and appreciated what he was teaching.

There was a marked difference between the way that Bob taught and the various pastors taught, whom I heard on the radio. My point being, the people of Galilee had heard the Scriptures read and taught before; but Jesus' teaching was particularly revelatory.

I believe that is what was taking place in the Lord's ministry: He would walk into a synagogue, read when it was His turn, and then explain just what He had read. I should add that, Jesus did not walk into a synagogue with a prepared sermon; He was assigned a passage to read (a chapter or two from whatever book was being read at the time), and He would first read it, and then explain it.

Now that we have been set up for this passage, let's look at it, phrase-by-phrase:

Luke 4:14a **And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee,...**

In the very beginning, Jesus went down to the Jordan Valley and was baptized by John the Herald.<sup>31</sup> After this, He was tempted by the devil; and, after that, Jesus began His very short public ministry. What I mean is, Jesus taught only for 3 or 4 years total. For any religious figure of any sort, this is unusually short.

I mentioned R. B. Thieme, Jr. He taught for 10 years before he really got warmed up. After 15–20 years, his ministry actually began to take shape. This is true for many teachers. Personally, I have been writing for 25 years, and I am still not happy with my output and the balance that I am trying to strike. But Jesus' entire public ministry took place in only 3 or 4 years. It is not unusual for any other person, designated as a *religious teacher*, to have a ministry 10x as long.

This very short passage before us describes a period of time of His public ministry which is virtually unknown to us and rarely commented about.

Jesus has lived in the Galilee area most of His life; principally in Nazareth. So, when it says that *He returns*, Jesus is returning to the general area where He was raised up and where He worked (presumably with or for His legal father). He had been down in the Jordan Valley; but now He has returned. He had been in the uninhabited wilderness, being tempted by Satan; but now that was over. So Jesus begins to actively teach the Word of God. I do not believe that this was accompanied by any signs or wonders (the passage speaks only of *teaching*). He had no disciples at this time. Insofar as the people were concerned, He seemed to come out of nowhere.

Much of our Lord's public ministry takes place in Galilee, which, at one time, was the northern kingdom. He was further away in Galilee from the religious hierarchy which was concentrated in Jerusalem. They would later develop a strong dislike for Jesus for a variety of reasons. However, these religious types are not a factor in His ministry at this point. He is completely unknown to the religious power structure in Jerusalem.

Luke 4:14a **And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee,...**

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<sup>31</sup> John's function as a herald is far more important than his baptizing people. I find it surprising that more commentators do not refer to him in that way.



That Jesus is empowered by the Holy Spirit is quite important. We have the same power system that Jesus employed. Now, this does not mean that we can walk into hospitals and heal the sick. Nor can we walk on water. Jesus did those things later on in His ministry in order to establish His authority as the Son of Man and as the Son of God. We do not need to establish our own authority; teaching the Word of God (or evangelizing) does that for us. We are able to establish our authority by teaching the Word of God; Jesus was going to establish more than His being a great teacher. However, at this point, He was simply moving from synagogue to synagogue, teaching whatever passage was put before Him.

Luke 4:14b ...and a report about Him went out through all the surrounding country.

People began to talk about Jesus. As many said, "Never have I heard a man speak like this," or similar such things. Many of the people had heard the Scriptures read in these synagogues, but they had a great many questions and the exposition by the rabbis of the past was not very helpful. I work with a great many sources, and what has been preserved of ancient rabbinical teaching is generally unhelpful. Sometimes it is interesting, but not much else. The people of this region had heard a lot of rabbinical teaching, and public often had the feeling that they were not really understanding what was being taught.

When the public traveled to Jerusalem, all the pharisees of their day offered to them was a considerable amount of legalism. Jesus explained the Scriptures correctly. It was as if He was shining a light into a dark place. People were beginning to understand the Scriptures, and this was an incredible thing.

There was some positive volition in Galilee and Judea. That is, there were people interested in the teaching of the Word of God (this would have been the Old Testament at this time). Jesus provided this teaching as the public had ever heard before from any previous teacher. People would come home and tell their family and friends, "You need to come to the synagogue and hear this guy!"

Now, I don't know if you have had this experience, but if you have read a passage and did not get it at all; and then someone explains it to you correctly, it is as if a light goes on in your head. "Oh, snap, that's what that means!" you might say. Except, I realize, probably no one says, *oh, snap* anymore.

Quite frankly, when I understand the thrust of this or that passage, it is a great feeling and, quite honestly, I cannot wait to share it.

Luke 4:14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about Him went out through all the surrounding country.

Jesus Christ, in His humanity, was led by God the Holy Spirit. This was the power that He depended upon. We, as believers in the Church Age, are given that exact same power. We all have the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was teaching Bible doctrine; He was teaching the Word of God. However, in this teaching, He is leaving out one incredible fact: He is the Living Word of God. He is allowing the teaching of the Word of God to stand on its own.

What I suspect is happening is this. Jesus is not choosing the Scriptures to read and teach. When He walks into a synagogue, He comes there as a reader/teacher; and He is assigned a section to read. Today, if this happened, the person in charge might say, “Kukis, today, you are going to read Jeremiah 25.” And while other men are reading aloud Jeremiah 20–24, I can either look at my Bible or find a Bible sitting in the pews somewhere and read Jeremiah 25 first, in order to get the rhythm and meter and vocabulary of it.

In the historical era that we are studying, Jesus does not get a chance to choose the Scriptures that He will read aloud; nor is He given, in advance, the scroll with that passage on it, so that He might review and read it to Himself first. He was assigned a passage, a chapter, whatever; then, when His turn came, He would stand up and read it. There was someone in charge of locating the scroll or scrolls necessary for that day’s reading, and those scrolls would be handed to the person as he came up in front to stand at the podium (or whatever) and read. Nevertheless, Jesus did not just read a passage. He read it and then He explained what He was reading (I am going to assume that reading and then saying a few things about what was read, was not out of the ordinary).

There is a passage in Isa. 36–37; and perhaps, you read through your Bible every five years and you have read this passage before. I will guarantee you that you did not know a tenth of what was going on. In fact, if you understood 10% of what is found here, you might be able to classify yourself as a spiritual genius. I listened to this passage taught twice by R. B. Thieme, Jr. in the Assyrian Crisis series and was just amazed. The second time that I heard this series, I began to appreciate that there is no modern teacher who could have taught this as Bob did. It was amazing and eye-opening.

This is what Jesus was doing. The Jewish people for years had heard these Scriptures read; and sometimes there were be a little teaching on what was read. But what Jesus was doing was extraordinary. It was so good, people went home and told their friends and relatives.

Luke 4:15a **And He taught in their synagogues,...**

This is quite fascinating. I do not know exactly how a synagogue was run in that era. It appears that many different men would stand up and read from the Scriptures (this was the Old Testament).

Perhaps rabbis stood up and explained further some details about what was being read. Here we are told that Jesus *taught*. So, no matter what protocol was, Jesus, at some point—maybe in the midst of reading or after completing His section—then explained the Scriptures and their meaning. These synagogues had so many people inside of them, and these have attended synagogues for years; but now, Jesus is bringing some fresh insights

to the table. They are hearing His words and understanding them, probably for the first time. Many people had *lights going on in their heads* as Jesus spoke.

What would seem logical is this: Jesus would stand and read the passage before the people; and then He would explain just exactly what He had just read. And the people there were quite moved by the experience, as they began to understand what it was that Jesus was reading. They knew that this was the Word of God; but never had they heard it explained correctly.

Luke 4:15a **And He taught in their synagogues,...**

Jesus is teaching here, throughout the Galilean region; but notice a word that we do not find here in this passage: euaggelizō (εὐαγγελίζω) [pronounced *yoo-ang-ghel-EED-zo*]; which means, *to announce [speak, declare, bring] the good news, to evangelize, to proclaim the gospel; to bring [declare] glad [good] tidings [news, information]*. Strong's #2097. Jesus is going throughout this region and He is teaching, *but* He is not proclaiming the good news; He is not proclaiming the gospel. We will come to this word in v. 18; and we will examine it in more detail then.

When Jesus first announces the good news, that is a game-changer in His ministry.

Luke 4:15b **...being glorified by all.**

Because people were impressed by His teaching, they would tell others about this new, young teacher in the synagogues (Jesus was about 30 years old, which would make Him a very young teacher in that era).

When it says that Jesus was glorified, this does not mean that people came and listened and then bowed down to Him. They heard the Scriptures correctly presented and explained, and this was very pleasing to the general public. They told others about this teacher. That is how He was *glorified*.

“You have to come to the synagogue. Jesus is teaching! You must hear Him.”

No one knew much else about Jesus. No one thought that He might be the Messiah; they simply believed that He was an excellent teacher.

Luke 4:15 **And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.**

I have had a parallel experience. I took the course Differential Equations, which I thought was a pretty difficult class, and it was taught by a Polack whose English was not very good; he had a thick accent. So, even though he may have understood this material, he was not very good at teaching it to people who spoke English.

The teacher required his students (which included me) to do problems on the board from the previous lesson; and then explain them. I would do a problem every day and explain

it. I had fellow students come up to me after class and thank me, telling me that this was the only time that they understood anything about what was going on in class. They had the book; they had the teacher; but it did not make any sense to them. It took someone to explain exactly what happened step-by-step in an assigned problem; and then it made sense.

In a way, this is what Jesus did. The people had the Scriptures (although they were, for the most part, confined to the synagogues) and they had the teachers (the rabbis), but none of it made complete sense to them. They understood, to some degree, Israel's unique relationship with God. They knew that these were the very Scriptures of God that were being read; but they did not really understand what was being read.

Then Jesus stood before them, read the Scriptures and explained what they meant. People would be thinking, *okay, I get it now*. They would fetch their friends and relatives and tell them, "You need to hear this new rabbi. He explained this psalm to the point where I completely understood it!" (This is what is meant by, *Jesus was glorified by all*.)

Although we primarily associate synagogues with the reading of Scripture, this indicates that He also explained the Scriptures (which suggests that others may have done some teaching as well).

That was not the response to Jesus throughout His entire ministry; but He apparently got quite a good reputation from His early teaching ministry in the synagogues. Apparently, there were many synagogues throughout the Galilee area. He traveled about, from one synagogue to the next. He possibly got to know this area through working with his step-father; or perhaps He just walked from one town to the next.

It appears to me that Jesus was a solo act at this time. Nothing is said about His disciples. I have made the assumption (which I believe to be correct), that the book of Luke is presented in chronological order, as best that he could (there are a few narrative exceptions to this).

Let me suggest that Jesus always went to the synagogues and we don't know if He was involved in a trade (as a carpenter) or not (He is called a carpenter's son). I have found myself in a variety of churches, sometimes as a result of where I was working at the time.

Whether Jesus went on some sort of a circuit or whether He worked with His father in various places, we don't know. But, at this point in time, He went to many synagogues in the Galilee region and He became known at these synagogues.

There are a great many details left out. I believe that I have supplemented this passage with the most important information.

**Luke 4:14–15 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit. News about Him went out throughout the region of Galilee. He kept on teaching truth in their synagogues and was glorified by all who heard Him teach. (Kukis paraphrase)**

In reviewing this passage and what is to follow; it appears that Jesus, for a limited time, had a teaching ministry throughout the Galilee area, where His teaching was accepted. His teaching was so remarkable that people kept telling their friends about Him. “You need to come to the synagogue and hear this guy teach!” Now, I believe that Jesus taught the Old Testament Scriptures accurately, but that He did not reveal Himself to be the Messiah. I believe this happens for the first time in the narrative which follows these verses.

What I am saying is, there is this period of time when Jesus taught in the synagogues in the Galilee area—perhaps for a few months perhaps as long as a year. I don’t believe that He had any of His 12 disciples at this point; and I suspect, there is little recorded history of this time period (which would be logical, as His disciples are not there to hear Him<sup>32</sup>). This is why this narrative is not found in Matthew, Mark or John. Jesus simply taught, and the people were amazed. Who was this Man who seemingly came out of nowhere and taught as no one had ever taught them before? Some people actually heard Jesus teach during this period of time, and it still stayed with them. Some of those people later told Luke about it. All that is preserved of this ministry are these two short verses.

This short narrative is quite fascinating to me. Jesus is not performing any miracles; He is not doing any healings; He is not traveling with an entourage. He simply goes from synagogue to synagogue, teaching the Word of God.

The reason that we do not have a fuller explanation of this period of time is, those who wrote down His biographies—His disciples—were not with Him at this time. Perhaps some of them heard Him; but likely not.

Despite His insightful and careful explanation of the Scriptural texts, no one fully appreciates that they are witnessing amazing history being made at this point.

#### **An addendum to Luke 4:14–15:**

**Luke 4:14–15 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit. News about Him went out throughout the region of Galilee. He kept on teaching truth in their synagogues and was glorified by all who heard Him teach. (Kukis paraphrase)**

Out of curiosity, I decided to see what others have said about these two verses. That led me to consider whether or not there are parallel verses in the other gospels. The first passage cited as a *parallel passage* is Matthew 4:

**Matt. 4:12–13 Now when He [Jesus] heard that John [the Herald] had been arrested, He withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth He went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali,... (ESV; capitalized)**

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<sup>32</sup> Matthew, Mark and John wrote their gospels based upon what they themselves saw and heard (Mark depended upon Peter, for what he said that he saw and heard).



It is easy to confuse these events, so let me insert the events of Luke into Matthew's narrative.

Matt. 4:12–13 **Now when He heard that John had been arrested, He withdrew into Galilee** [This is Luke 4:14–15, the passage that we have been studying]. **And leaving Nazareth** [Jesus will leave Nazareth *after* Luke 4:16–30; this is where Jesus will reveal Who He is to the people of Nazareth] **He went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali,...** (ESV; capitalized)

There is also a parallel passage in Mark, but Mark skips over a great deal of narrative:

Mark 1:14–15 **Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."**

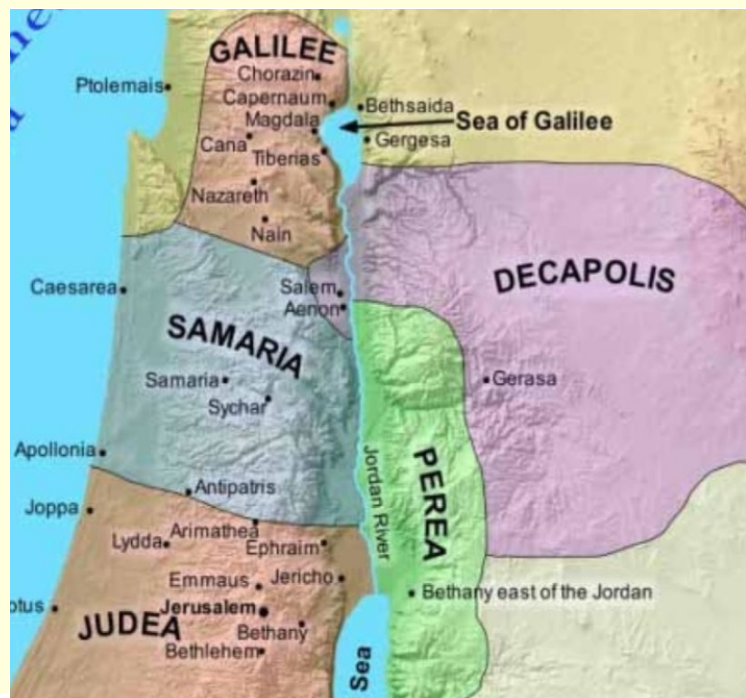
The region of Galilee is fairly large (it is all of the area surrounding the Sea of Galilee). It takes in such cities as Nazareth, Cana, Tiberias, and Capernaum. So, when Mark speaks of the ministry of Jesus in Galilee, he is taking in all of Luke 4:14–44, which includes Jesus withdrawing from Nazareth (Luke 4:30).

What is happening is, in that general period of time, John is arrested, Jesus then goes to the Galilee region; and also, Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom of God and the gospel. He will proclaim the Kingdom of God and the gospel in the Galilean region; but this will take place *after* the ministry of Jesus which we have just studied.

You will notice Mark then speaking of Jesus choosing His disciples:

Mark 1:16–17 **Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men."**

Mark 1:16–17 parallels Luke 5, where Jesus will call His disciples. Therefore, these 4 verses in Mark are parallel to almost all of Luke 4–5.





**Galilee and Nearby Areas** (a Map); from [O.quizlet.com](https://www.o.quizlet.com); accessed March 5, 2021. You can see that Galilee takes in a great many important cities (important in the ministry of the Lord).

Afterwards, the next incident happens. This is the incident which changes everything. I believe that the narrative which follows this short passage is one of the most important events in human history.

## **Lesson 126: Luke 4:16–17**

## **Jesus of Nazareth Teaches in His Hometown**

Jesus has been traveling around the Galilee area, going from synagogue to synagogue. He is teaching and people are really learning from His teaching. To this point, what Jesus teaches has depended upon the scroll that He is given. No one walked into a synagogue to read, and said, “I’d really like to read from the Psalms.” There was some sort of fixed schedule, and this schedule was followed. I don’t believe that the synagogues got together and decided on this, although it is possible that different synagogues may have been on the same schedule.

In any case, Jesus is traveling from city to city, walking into their synagogue and reading; and then He explains what He reads. The scroll He is given at this point in our passage is going to be key to what He says.

**Jesus reading the scroll in Nazareth** (a graphic); from the [New Evangelization](#)<sup>33</sup>; accessed March 26, 2021.

For the most part, I try to avoid images of the Lord, particularly when His face can be seen. We have no true idea as to how He looked apart from the following: He was probably very strong and well-built, He had short hair and a beard, and He would have had brown skin. Nearly all artwork portrays Jesus as an emaciated, long-haired, white male.

I must admit, I wonder if this is blasphemous, in fact, to have an image of the Lord, considering



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<sup>33</sup> Although this is a Catholic site, this does not mean that I approve of the many false doctrines taught by the Catholic Church. This just had the best picture.

that the Bible appears to go to great lengths to *not* describe His physical characteristics (the ones which I gave are a matter of logic and one OT passages which speaks prophetically of His beard being pulled out at the crucifixion).

Luke 4:16a **And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up.**

Jesus goes to Nazareth, which is where He was brought up as a youth. He probably worked for his step-father in this area and was reasonably well-known. He functioned as a carpenter, and Jesus would have been good at it. Carpentry takes skill, patience, and, in some cases, strength; and Jesus would have had all of these characteristics. For this reason, some people will know Who He is.

Jesus is going to do something which is quite profound at this point in His ministry. He is going to proclaim Himself the long-awaited Messiah to those who have known Him; and He will define the limits of His public ministry. So far, Jesus has not done this; He has not made it clear that He is the Messiah (this statement will require some explanation, which you will get).

Up to this point in time, Jesus has had a ministry, which is described in the previous two verses. He traveled to several synagogues (no idea as to how many), over a period of time (which is not given, but perhaps over a period of 6 months or a year). But the teaching which He will do in the next passage is unlike any which He has done before. This is because He has never read this passage aloud before in His Scripture readings.

Luke 4:16b **And as was His custom, He went...**

The word used here is *ethô* (ἔθω) [pronounced *EHTH-oh*], which means *being a custom, as is customary, as is done by habit; acting according to a convention*. So, what Jesus is doing in this passage (going into a synagogue, reading and teaching) was an habitual event. This was not the first or the second time that He did this. His custom was going into the nearest synagogue and reading and teaching. If the synagogue door was open for business, Jesus went in. He was always one of those who read.

Jesus had developed a habit or a custom by this time, which indicates that He began publically teaching long before His public ministry as we now it began. What I mean is, we are familiar with the public ministry where Jesus was with His disciples and He taught and He healed and He performed miracles—but prior to that, He simply went into a number of synagogues, read the Scriptures, and then explained to the people there what He had just read. This ministry is not spoken of in the other gospels simply because, there are no disciples at this point in His public ministry. This is not found in the book of Matthew, for instance, because Matthew was unaware of this early ministry of the Lord. He wasn't there; he never saw this.

This is the first time that Jesus read this passage and then explained it in the way that He did.

Luke 4:16c **He went to the synagogue...**

Where Jesus went was the synagogue. Now, unlike the Temple, which was not, strictly speaking, open to the public<sup>34</sup>; the synagogue was closer in nature to our churches that we attend today.

There was a great deal which took place inside the Temple, but people did not go there but a few times a year. People who went to the Temple could not observe what was happening inside of the Temple. At best, they knew the Scriptures, and the Scriptures told them what occurred in the Temple proper. Now, around the Temple, there were a variety of courtyards (I am speaking of Herod's Temple now); and people went to those public areas for worship. But Scripture kept the people out of the Temple itself.

Regarding the schedule of the synagogue, let me suggest that, synagogues provided the reading of Scripture for a longer period of time than we are used to. Many of us go to a church once a week, get a 15–20 minute sermon, some announcements and singing, and then we are out of there—often inside of an hour. Maybe there is a Sunday School, so we are in and out in 2 hours. This was not the case for the synagogue. If I were to guess and put a number on it, I suspect that the synagogues were open between 4–8 hours each Sabbath. This does not mean that everyone went into the synagogue and sat there for the time allotted. Some might attend for an hour or two; some might stay for the entire day.

If you have ever been to a Christian Black funeral for a person who was somewhat active in that church, that service can go on for many hours. I have been to a couple, and it is clear that not everyone there stays for the entire service (I think I lasted for nearly 2 hours at the last one I went to, but the funeral was at least 3 hours long). I believe that the synagogue was up and functioning for even a longer period of time.

Luke 4:16d **...on the Sabbath day,...**

This literally reads *day of the Sabbaths*. Only a few translations give the literal translation here (ALT, BLB, BV, ECB, JMNT, KJ3, Lit NT, Green's literal translation). My assumption, at this point is, this takes place during a festival, and there are several Sabbath days, or several days during which there is worship of God. However, this is not completely clear.

What Jesus did took place every time that the synagogues were open. Obviously, they would be open on Sabbath days; and it is possible that they are open during festival weeks as well (I am assuming here that some people were unable to go to Jerusalem to the Temple, so there was possibly some modified services held locally). I have no idea if the synagogues were kept open like many churches are open today (it seems to me that Catholic Churches are known for this).

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<sup>34</sup> No one other than Levites went into the Temple. In the NT, when it sounds as though people are inside of the Temple, they are in the Temple courtyard.

In any case, whenever the synagogue was open, Jesus would be there (we do not know how much He traveled about as a younger man; and how much carpentry that He did in that time period). But, if he worked out of town on occasion; or if He traveled about—and this is implied by specifying that He is in Nazareth specifically—He always went to the local synagogue.

We do not know if Jesus has read publically before at the synagogue where He grew up. It seems logical that He had; we just have no verification of that.

The previous two verses have Jesus traveling about, reading and teaching in other synagogues in the Galilean region. The beginning of His ministry was quite inauspicious.

**Application:** As an aside, in nearly all cases, you should be attending a local church. If there is no local church where the Word is being taught accurately; or even close to accurately, then you should (1) move to a place where such a church exists (I am serious about this); or (2) you should investigate the idea of setting up a church in your area where you use the recordings (or live teaching) from a well-established and well-qualified teacher. (3) The third option—and this is a very, very distant third to those other two—is you choose a pastor from the internet and listen to him (please see [the List](#)). Gathering as a group is what is taught in the New Testament. Being shepherded from afar should only be a temporary measure.

Luke 4:16e ...and He stood up to read.

It was the responsibility of various men in the synagogue to stand and read the Scriptures aloud. Let me suggest that, there was so much time afforded to the reading of Scriptures that, many people in the synagogue knew various passages by heart. They did not need to look down and read them in order to speak the words.

We stand and sing in most churches and many churches have a dozen or more songs which they sing regularly. After a bit of time, we learn all or most of the words. So it was with those who attended the synagogues regularly; they knew many passages right from the Bible.

The songs are fine; but knowing various Bible verses and principles are even more important.

Jesus stands up before the townsfolk of Nazareth and reads the Scriptures.

Luke 4:16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as was His custom, He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and He stood up to read.

Jesus was raised in Nazareth. Jesus apparently became well-known elsewhere, having traveled to many of the synagogues. He developed quite a reputation from His teaching throughout out the Galilean region. He would read and, apparently, He would teach the Word of God as well.

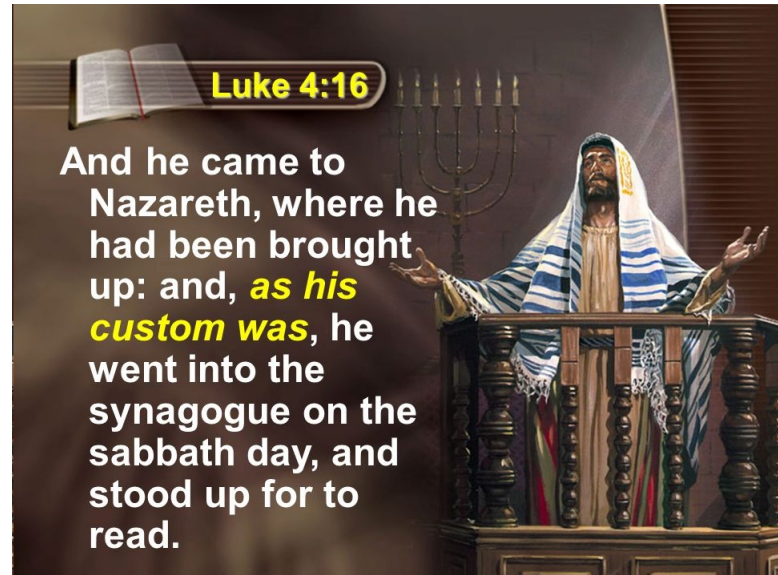


However, in Nazareth, He was not known as the new teacher who travels about teaching, being glorified by all. He is about the proper age; He has always attended this synagogue; and now it is time for Him to take an active part. Jesus is about to read in this particular synagogue, possibly for the first time (again, we don't know).

It would seem reasonable that some of the people there are aware of what Jesus has been doing (traveling about, reading and teaching in nearby synagogues).

**Luke 4:16** (a graphic); from [Slide Player](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

Luke 4:17a **And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him.**



I would reasonably assume that in every synagogue, the men would read through passages of Scripture one book at a time, from beginning to end. At this point in the cycle, the book of Isaiah was being read.

Someone—a Levite no doubt—was in charge of the scrolls which contained the Scriptures. A number of Levites preserved the scrolls, keeping them ready to be read, and ordering new ones to be written up when necessary.

I don't now if the Scribes operated within the synagogues or if they worked independently from them. In any case, they would copy and replace old and damaged manuscripts with new, fresh ones. Generally speaking, the old copies would be burned (although, it appears that some were able to get copies of those worn out scrolls for their own libraries).

This Levite would hand the appropriate scroll to the person who is going to read from it. Jesus stepped up to the podium (or whatever) that was at the front of the synagogue, and the Levite handed the scroll to Him.

The whole idea was to have scrolls which could be unrolled and read easily. If an



otherwise good reader stumbled while reading a manuscript, then it would have been checked for wear in that particular section.

**Illustration of Jesus Reading from the Book of Isaiah** (a graphic); from [Bible History](#); accessed March 18, 2021.

I love this particular illustration because we do not see the Lord's face. His hand is clearly brown, and the only physical feature that we are able to see is His beard. All of this is in agreement with the limited physical description which we have of Jesus (most of which does not come from the gospels).

Luke 4:17b **He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,...**

Jesus is up in front, having been handed the scroll. He would simply pick up and read at the proper place (wherever the last person else left off).

Although the text does not say this, Jesus opens up to Isa. 61 (the books were not divided into chapters at that time), and He begins to read...but He only reads a verse and a half (they were not divided into verses then either).

Many translators combine vv. 16 & 17, like this: **He stood up to read and the scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to Him. Having unrolled the scroll, He found the place where it was written:...**

One man after another would stand up and read; most generally picking up from where the previous man stopped. Perhaps each man read the equivalent of 1–5 chapters.

Luke 4:17 **And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,...**

My guess is, the Scriptures were read aloud, and probably an entire book would be read, but by several people. How much teaching occurred and how long they were in the synagogue on a typical day—we don't know for certain. My guess would be, men who stood up to read might read the equivalent of 1–5 chapters at a time.

We are told that Jesus unrolls the scroll to this point. Even though we don't find the words here, He certainly read these Scriptures aloud to the people who are in the synagogue (and there appears to be quite a number of people there).

What Jesus has been doing previously, and what He is doing here, presents a logical set of events. However, what Jesus does next is very unusual.

#### **Lessons 127–128: Luke 4:14–21 By Reading Isaiah, Jesus Proclaims the Gospel**

Now, let's look back at what takes us to this point in time:



Luke 4:14–15 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee. And a report went out through all the neighborhood about Him. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

This is a summation of an otherwise unknown period of time during which Jesus taught throughout Galilee in the synagogues.

Jesus does not have this internal calendar, where it says, *Tuesday, you will be in Baytown, next to the Sea of Galilee, and You will teach this passage. Then you will return home on Thursday, and go into the synagogue in your hometown.* There is no such schedule that Jesus, in His humanity, is aware of. Jesus is being led by the Holy Spirit, but that does not mean that He knows what is going to happen (and He does not access, by choice, His omniscience to look into the future). What Jesus has is the knowledge of Who He is; He has a phenomenal grasp of the Scriptures, as they existed; and He has the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 4:16–17 And He came to Nazareth where He was brought up. And as was His custom, He went in on the day of the sabbaths, into the synagogue, and He stood up to read. And the scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to Him. And unrolling the book, He found the place where it was written:... (Green's literal translation)

The passage that He will be given to read in Isaiah is quite significant. Jesus is not directing these events to happen in any specific order; but God the Father is. At this point in time, God the Father wants Jesus to reveal Who He is. It's time for that to happen. Jesus, when it becomes apparent what He is going to read, He knows what He is going to say.

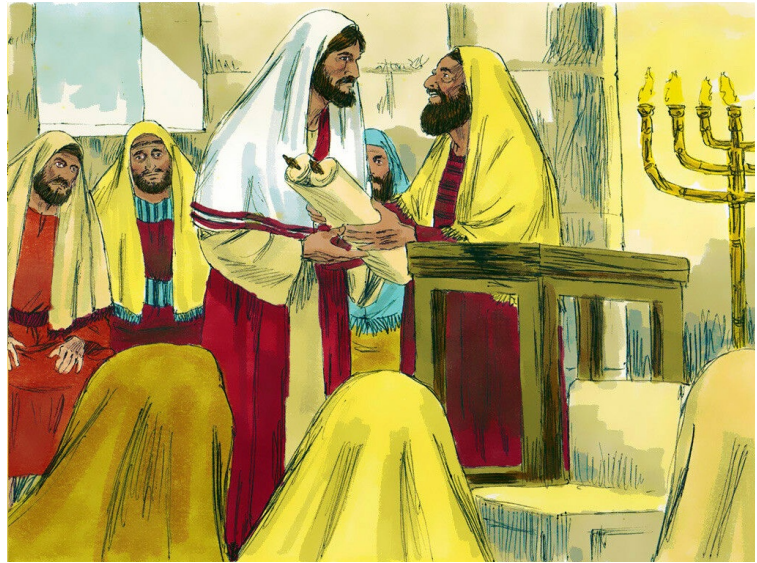
How does Jesus, in His humanity, know that it is time to reveal Himself? He will know based upon the passage that He is given to read.

Jesus has been going throughout the synagogues of Galilee teaching. Whatever passage is placed before Him, He reads and then teaches that passage. He is not telling anyone that He is the Messiah; He is not performing miracles. He does not have an entourage of 12 disciples with Him. He is simply reading and teaching the Word of God. Whatever passage is placed before Him, that is what He reads and teaches.

Luke 4:16–17 And He came to Nazareth where He was brought up. And as was His custom, He went in on the day of the sabbaths, into the synagogue, and He stood up to read. And the scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to Him. And unrolling the book, He found the place where it was written:... (Green's literal translation)

Jesus is traveling about, from synagogue to synagogue, and He stands up to read before the congregation there. After He reads, He explains what He reads. On this auspicious day, He finds Himself in Nazareth, where He was raised up.

It is possible that, by this point in time, Jesus has a reputation for being an excellent teacher. So there may even be some anticipation among some of the congregants of the Nazareth synagogue.



Jesus begins to read the words of Isaiah. Jesus knew this passage; and He also knew, *it's time; that I have been given this passage to read, means that it is time for Me to reveal Myself.*

**The scroll is offered to Jesus** (a graphic); from [Free Bible Images](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

Luke 4:18a **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me..."** (Isa. 61:1)

This is an amazing scene; one of the most dramatic in the New Testament. Jesus is reading the Scriptures, words which have been read in the synagogues for hundreds of years. We do not know how long that synagogue in Nazareth has been standing, but, at least every 5 years or so, someone has stood up and read this very passage that Jesus is reading. This prophecy is about Him. Therefore, He is about to tell the people there just exactly Who He is.

God's Spirit is upon Jesus, as we just read in v. 14. Jesus did not depend upon His Deity during His time on this earth. He depended upon the power of God the Holy Spirit. He set aside or He voluntarily emptied Himself of His Divine Nature. This is known as the doctrine of Kenosis. The word kenosis comes from the Greek verb kenoō (κενόω) [pronounced *kehn-OH-oh*], which means, *to empty, to make empty; to deprive of force, to render vain (useless, of no effect); to cause a thing to be seen to be empty (hollow or false).* Strong's #2758. His Deity is always there; and His relationship to the universe remained intact; but before man and with man, Jesus was just a man. All, or nearly all, of the Lord's activity on earth was fully as a man and nothing more. Even though He was guided and empowered by God the Holy Spirit, this empowerment was something that He was willing to share with His disciples (furthermore, the Holy Spirit belongs to every believer today).

Remember how we have read then, when baptized, the Spirit of God came upon Him in the form of a dove? Also, in this chapter, He is led by the Spirit to Galilee. Jesus reads these words from Isaiah, but these words are all about Him.

Jesus is simply traveling about, city to city; teaching in each city. What He taught depended upon the passage which was placed before Him in each synagogue.

Luke 4:18b "...because He has anointed Me...

Jesus is *appointed*, *chosen*, *anointed*, or *specified* to do a specific set of works. They will be enumerated here. *He*, in this verse, is God the Father; *Me* is a reference to Jesus the Son. It would look like this:

Luke 4:18b "...because He [God the Father] has anointed Me [God the Son]...

My guess is, when Isaiah wrote these words, he was thinking about himself and how God had anointed him to continue in his ministry as a prophet. However, God the Holy Spirit uses these exact same words to refer to Jesus, the Messiah.

This parallel understanding is found throughout the Old Testament. When David wrote Psalm 22, he was, no doubt, suffering greatly at the time (or remembering when he was suffering greatly). But Psalm 22 also describes the crucifixion as if we are there watching. In fact, as soon as we come to the realization that this chapter is about the crucifixion, then the importance of David's situation is set aside in our minds. It is not that important by comparison to the crucifixion. Obviously, to David, it was important.

Luke 4:18c "...to proclaim good news to the poor.

The good news is the gospel; that Jesus Christ died for our sins. We are poor, miserable and beggarly because before God, we have nothing to recommend us to God. We have sinned against Him thousands of times; and God is perfect. God cannot have any contact with sin; He cannot support or promote anyone whose life is ruled by sin. God cannot, without compromising His Own character, simply forgive us for our sins. There is this great chasm between God and us.

God is like a gallon of pure white paint. This paint does not remain pure if 6 ounces of my black paint (representing my sins and rebellious nature) is poured into it. Pure white paint loses its purity. I may tell God, "I am really a good guy and I will try very hard not to sin again;" but it would still be my 6 ounces of black paint thrown into His gallon of pure white paint. No matter what I promise and no matter what I do, I destroy the purity of God's whiteness.

The good news is, Jesus has bridged that chasm between man and God. We are estranged from our Creator. However, Jesus provides a way for us to connect with Him. That is good news. We are destitute because we are separated from God; nevertheless, the good news is, Jesus provides us the way to interact with God.

Luke 4:18a-c "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor.

Men are poor (or, *destitute*) because they lack God. The word *poor* is ptôchos (πτωκός) [pronounced *ptoh-KHOSS*], and it means *poor, miserable, beggarly, impotent*. This can also refer to one who is *destitute in spiritual things*. Strong's #4434.

In this verse, *to proclaim the good news* is a single verb, the present middle infinitive of euaggelizô (εὐαγγελίζω) [pronounced *yoo-ang-ghel-EED-zo*]. Euaggelizô means, 1) *to bring good news, to announce glad tidings*; 1a) *used in the OT of any kind of good news*; 1a1) *of the joyful tidings of God's kindness, in particular, of the Messianic blessings*; 1b) *in the NT used especially of the glad tidings of the coming kingdom of God, and of the salvation to be obtained in it through Christ, and of what relates to this salvation*; 1c) *glad tidings are brought to one, one has glad tidings proclaimed to him*; 1d) *to proclaim glad tidings*; 1d1) *instruct (men) concerning the things that pertain to Christian salvation*. Thayer definitions only. Strong's #2097.

Remember that we don't find this word used back in vv. 14–15, for His itinerant synagogue ministry. Jesus taught the Scriptures, as handed to Him; but He did not proclaim the good news. Through Isaiah, Jesus is about to proclaim the good news. He, Jesus, is, in fact, that good news.

The gospel is the good news; the good news is that Jesus is the Revealed God, and He has come to save man.

Luke 4:18d "He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives...

We are analogous to captives in war, without rights, without portfolio, without choice. We cannot choose to be anything in relation to our captives except as slaves. We have no rights. We cannot say, "Master, this is what I want to do."

God the Son comes to us, as slaves, as captives in war, and He proclaims freedom to us.

The concept here can be twofold: (1) the proclamation of liberty to those who are actually in enslaved or in jail; and (2) to those who are in the slave market of sin. After salvation, we are no longer subject to our sin nature (until, of course, we sin; and then we can reset our relationship with God by means of rebound).

In Israel, there was a *Year of Jubilee*, which occurred every 49 years (7x7). During this year, all of the slaves were released; they were given their freedom. It does not appear that Israel ever followed this requirement from their law, but it is there in the Law of Moses. That freedom is what Jesus promises to us.

Luke 4:18e "...and recovering of sight to the blind,...



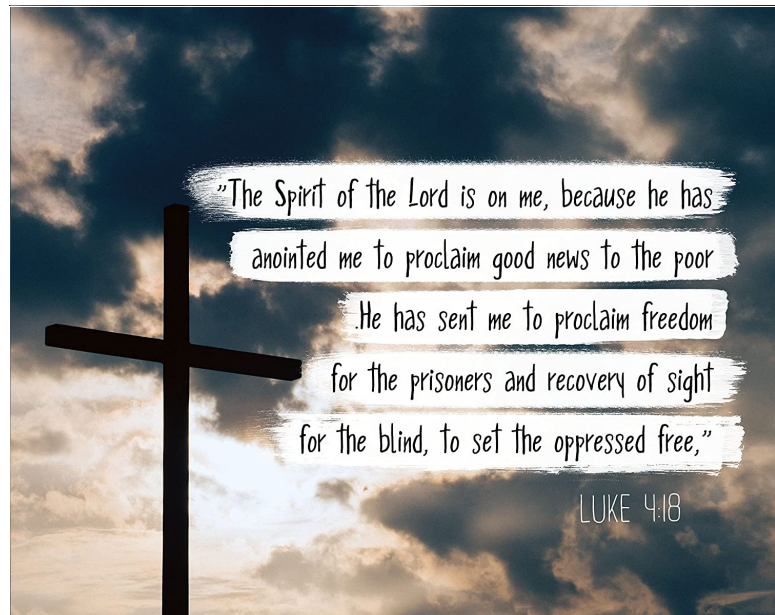
This passage works on two levels. There are those who are physically blind, and God restores sight to them. There are also those who are spiritually blind, and God gives them the ability to see truth, if they so choose. If man has positive volition towards God, God will provide them with the good news.

Luke 4:18f "...to set at liberty those who are oppressed,..."

My understanding is, these are the men whom Jesus has sent forth, who were crushed and bruised by sin; but they have received forgiveness or pardon for their transgressions. This in turn provides them with great freedom.

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,..." (Isa. 61:1)

The Holy Spirit is guiding Jesus in what to say. Jesus knows this passage; He knows what it is all about. God the Father anointed Jesus to speak the good news to the poor and to proclaim freedom to those in captivity. This is what this verse tells us.



Jesus continues reading this passage.

**Luke 4:18** (a graphic); from [Amazon](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

Luke 4:19 "...to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor [= grace]." (Isa. 61:2a)

*To proclaim* is the aorist active indicative of kêrussô (κηρύσσω) [pronounced *kay-ROOS-so*], which means, *to proclaim, to publish; to herald (as a public crier), especially divine truth (the gospel); to preach*. Strong's #2784.

What Isaiah is proclaiming is the *year* of the Lord's grace. The word translated *year* is eniautos (ἐνιαυτός) [pronounced *en-ee-ow-TOSS*], and it means, *a year, in a wider sense, a fixed definite period of time*. So, it can be specifically a year; but it can also be a period of time. Strong's #1763.

Originally, God sent Isaiah forth to proclaim these words. But now, Jesus is proclaiming these words, that He has been sent forth by God the Father to announce that this is the accepted, approved or propitious year of the Lord. In other words, Messiah has now come to them.

God has come to the people in grace. Right now, in human history, is the accepted, approved, propitious period of time. That is what Jesus just read aloud in the synagogue.

Then Jesus stops. He stops mid-verse right here. He has read very little. He has read a verse and a half; and then He suddenly stops in what appears to be right in the middle of a thought. This is not random. Jesus did not feel tired and so he did not read much. He read to that point and stopped for a reason.

Luke 4:17–19 *Someone handed the Lord a scroll of the prophet Isaiah, and He opened it and found the place where He found these words written—which words He read aloud in the synagogue: “The Spirit of the Lord has come upon Me because He has anointed Me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent Me forth to proclaim freedom and pardon to those in captivity; and to proclaim a recovery of vision to those who are blind. He will send forth those being persecuted to proclaim that right now is the acceptable time of the Lord for these things to come to pass.”* (Isa. 61:1–2a) (Kukis paraphrase)

It is important to note that Jesus did not recite the entire passage. He just stopped in the middle of it. Jesus, Who is known at this time as a Great Teacher of the Word of God, has read these few words, and then He simply stops.

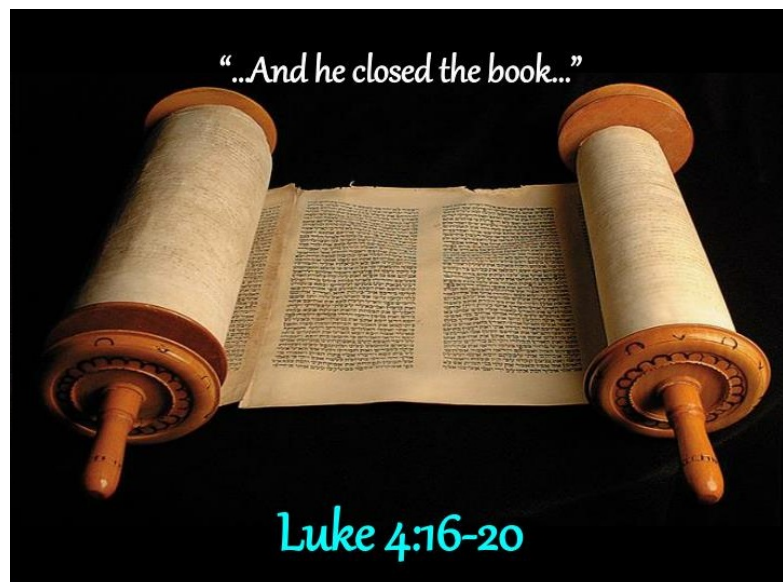
What is key at this point is the Doctrine of Intercalation, which is also known as the *Great Parenthesis*. We will discuss what this is after a few more verses.

Luke 4:20a *And he rolled up the scroll...*

Jesus has read a verse and a half. Then he re-rolls the scroll that He was reading from.

No doubt, people are looking at Him, wondering, *what’s happening right now? Isn’t this Guy supposed to be a Great Teacher? Why is He rolling up the scroll?*

**Luke 4:20a** (a graphic); from [Slide Serve](#); accessed March 26, 2021.







**Old Testament Scrolls** (a graphic); from [People of the Bible](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

Luke 4:20b **...and gave it back to the attendant....**

Jesus then hands this scroll back to the attendant, the person who would be in charge of keeping and dispensing the scrolls. Today, we simply have a singular Bible; but then, there were a great many scrolls (some books required more than one scroll). So, one person has to make certain that, when calling for the book of Isaiah, that he can find that book out of a few hundred scrolls available. He needs to know from which scroll of Isaiah that he

needs to bring out.

The attendant now has the scroll of Isaiah in his hand. He is dumbfounded. So is the congregation.

So you understand, it was typical for a reader to read a chapter or two or three—even five or more. Jesus also had a reputation for explaining what He read. In fact, He is renown for doing that. But He reads a verse and a half and gives the scroll back to the attendant.

And then Jesus does this:

Luke 4:20c **...and sat down.**

Jesus then sits down. There is no explanation given, yet, for what He just did.

No one is saying anything, but they are all thinking, *what the hell?* Jesus, Who is known by this time as being a great teacher, has stood up, read a verse and a half, and then He sat down. It took longer for Him to walk up to the podium than it did for Him to read that brief passage.

Every person in that room is wondering, *what's going on? What is Jesus doing right now? Is He doing a thing right now?*

Luke 4:20d **And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.**

Every eye in the synagogue was focused on Jesus. Every person was looking at Him. He was no longer at the front of the synagogue. He had sat down at his seat.

There is a great deal of Scripture which is strictly narrative. About three-quarters (or more) of the gospels are simply narrative, which simply tells us what people are doing and saying. The Scriptures do not always tell us *why* people do this or that.

## Why is everyone staring at Jesus?

Here, everyone is staring at Jesus. The reason would be fourfold: (1) Jesus read very little; He read a verse and a half. I don't know what the average read was, but I would assume that most read the equivalent of a chapter or two at minimum. (2) Jesus stopped right in the middle of a passage, right in the middle of a thought, and just stopped reading. That was very odd. Many of the people there knew the Scriptures; they knew this passage; and they knew that Jesus just stopped, mid-verse.<sup>35</sup> (3) Jesus, by His voice, intelligence and mannerisms, commanded authority. People were able to listen to Him and continued to listen to Him. The exception, of course, is people operating on negative volition, and they hated to hear Him. But, at this point in time, Jesus was quite popular. Remember, *He was glorified by all* in the Galilee region. (4) Finally, Jesus had become known for His excellent teaching throughout this region (vv. 14–15), but here, He has read an incomplete passage, handed the scroll back to the attendant, and then He just sat down. Where was the teaching that He was known for? Were they expecting Him to sit down and then begin teaching? Would He explain why He read so very little?

Luke 4:20 *Jesus rolled up the scroll and gave it to the attendant; then He sat down. Every eye in the synagogue was fixed upon Him.* (Kukis paraphrase)

The Lord reads a very small portion of Scripture, and then just sits down after reading halfway through a passage and He stops. Everyone in the synagogue was nonplused. Exactly what is happening right now? What is Jesus saying to them?

Luke 4:20 *And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.*

What is happening is quite dramatic. Jesus has read 1.5 verses from Isaiah. Then He rolls up the scroll and hands it back to the attendant. Because this was so unusual, for Jesus, known at this time as a wonderful teacher, to just read a verse and a half, and then sit down, without explanation. Everyone is now looking at Him. Their eyes followed Him from standing in front of the room to his seat wherever He was sitting.

From here, we see Jesus teach something that is remarkable.

Luke 4:21a *And He began to say to them,...*

I find this interesting. Jesus does not simply *speak to them*, but *He begins to speak to them*. This suggests to me that Jesus was going to explain this passage further—more than what we read right here.

We have all been in church; and we have all begun to nod off; and we might miss 2 minutes or 5 minutes of what is happening. But no one is nodding off at this point.

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<sup>35</sup> Again, in that era, there were no actual chapter or verse divisions.

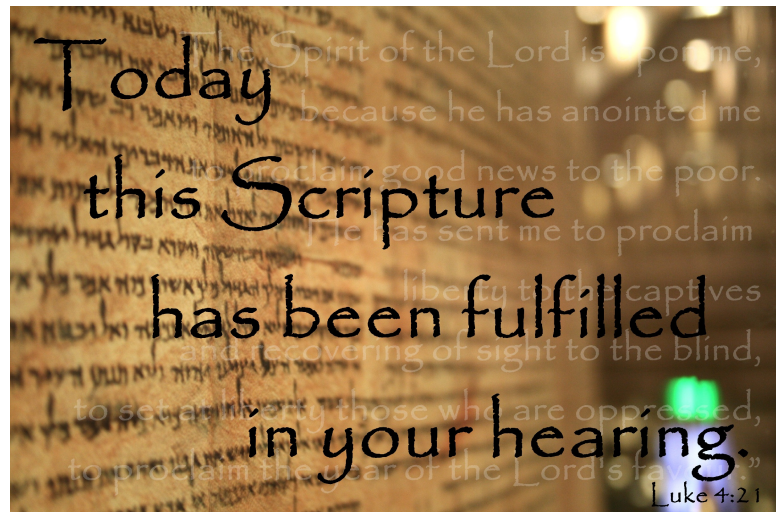
Everyone is wondering what exactly Jesus is doing. Everyone is looking right at Him. He is no longer at the front of the room; He has sat down. Still, all eyes are on Him.

Jesus begins to explain what this passage is all about:

Luke 4:21b ..."Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

We have the word *that*, which is often untranslated. This word indicates either that we are reading the gist of what was said, or it acts like quotation marks, indicating that what follows is what was said.

Jesus has just read a passage aloud which is understood by nearly all to be messianic. That is, the people there know that these words of Isaiah are all about the Messiah.



Then Jesus says, "This Scripture today has been fulfilled in your hearing." This is quite an amazing statement to make. Nothing is more important to the faith of the Hebrew people than their belief in the coming Messiah, and Jesus is saying, "That time has come; it's right now. Israel has waited for centuries to see this prophecy fulfilled, and it is fulfilled right now. I am your Messiah."

At this point, the people are taking in a lot. They know the passage that Jesus read. It is about the Messiah.

Every eye was on Him originally because He stood up, read a verse and a half and sat down again. But then He tells them, "It's time; this verse—it's happening right now."

**Luke 4:21b** (a graphic); from the [Relfectionary](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

Luke 4:21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus began to speak to them; He began to teach them what this passage said and how it is being fulfilled in their hearing.

Jesus is called upon to read the Scriptures. He steps up and reads this:

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me **to proclaim good news** to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,... (Isa. 61:1)

We have a very important verb in v. 18, in the context of this message of Jesus to the people of Nazareth. It is euaggelizô (εὐαγγελίζω) [pronounced *yoo-ang-ghel-EED-zo*]; and it means *to announce [or proclaim] the good news*. Strong's #2097. This proclamation is *very* specific. I have waited until this point to give this doctrine, as it takes in the entire context of what we have just studied (vv. 17–21)

There are several prominent theological questions which will be cleared up by the doctrine below. There were times that Jesus would not allow people to publically proclaim Him to be the Christ (the Messiah). Why was this? This doctrine will explain that.

As discussed when we first studied some of the passages below, we found that the angel spoken of below is possibly a Christophany; but probably not. It is possible that these are different angels.

### The Doctrine of Euaggelizô/Is Jesus the Savior?

1. First of all, let's take a look at the passage we are studying: Luke 4:17–21 **And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."** [He read these words] **And [then] He rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."** (Isa. 61:1–2a)
2. *To proclaim the good news* is the aorist middle infinitive of euaggelizô (εὐαγγελίζω) [pronounced *yoo-ang-ghel-EED-zo*]. It means, *to announce [speak, declare, bring] the good news, to evangelize, to proclaim the gospel; to bring [declare] glad [good] tidings [news, information]*. Strong's #2097.
3. The gospel writer who uses this word the most is Luke. He uses this word 10x in the book of Luke and 15x in the book of Acts. In the other gospels, this word occurs only once, in the book of Matthew, where Jesus quotes this same passage in Isaiah (but under different circumstances).
4. There are actually two messages of good news proclaimed by the Messiah:
  - 1) To the people of Israel, the good news is Jesus, the Messiah, coming to them and speaking to them of the Kingdom of God, which has come to them. Of course, exercising faith in Christ Jesus is necessary to be a part of the offered kingdom.

## The Doctrine of Euaggelizô/Is Jesus the Savior?

- 2) To all people, the *gospel* is the good news of Jesus Christ. This gospel tells us that Jesus Christ, the Savior/King/Messiah has come to us and He has died for our sins. When we place our faith in Him, we are saved and God establishes a permanent relationship with us.
  - 3) This is not the only good news from God to us; but these are the primary messages of the good news.
5. When Jesus goes out to the various cities of Galilee and He is teaching, we are not told that *Jesus proclaimed the gospel to the people of Galilee*; we do not read, *Jesus went to the synagogues and taught the gospel to them*. We read that He went to these synagogues, and He taught them—but nothing is said about Him teaching the gospel. As a result, He is glorified throughout this region. His fame spreads; as no one has heard a Bible teacher like Him before.
  - 1) When Jesus first began teaching (described in vv. 14–15), He is teaching the Scriptures. Whatever Scripture reading is being done, Jesus reads His section and then He explains it. In other words, at the beginning, Jesus was teaching the Law and the Prophets.
  - 2) What is Jesus not teaching during this early ministry? The gospel message, apparently.
6. Because people are confused about the doctrine of kenosis, they do not have a good understanding of Jesus being led by the Word and the Spirit. Jesus, as a man, has chosen to not access His Deity. Therefore, He does not know what is coming from day to day.
7. I do not believe that Jesus knew what He was going to say, prior to stepping into that synagogue on this day. However, the passage that came up determined what He would say. Maybe you want to think of this like a roulette wheel and the green “00” has come up (but without the chance factor). This passage came up at this point in this synagogue as a part of God’s plan. When Jesus spoke this short verse and a half, He knew it was time for Him to explain Who He was. It is this passage in the Word of God that told Him, “It’s time. Tell them.”
8. Luke 1:19 is the first place where the gospel message is first spoken of. Let’s get some context for this: Zechariah is in the Temple attending to his priestly duties; and suddenly, while he is inside the Temple, an angel appears to him. Luke 1:19–22 **And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute.** (ESV; capitalized; emphasis mine)
  - 1) The angel Gabriel brings the good news to Zechariah.
  - 2) The good news is, Zechariah and his wife Elisabeth will have a son (John the Herald), despite their advanced age and them previously having no children (Luke 1:13–14).



## The Doctrine of Euaggelizô/Is Jesus the Savior?

- 3) This may not be *the* good news; but this is *great news* to Zechariah.
- 4) Because Zechariah appears to question this experience/vision, he is made dumb. He will be unable to say anything until the child is born (as we previously studied).
9. This same angel proclaims good news (this time, *the good news*) to shepherds on the very night that Jesus is born. Luke 2:8–12 *And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."*
  - 1) This is *the good news*.
  - 2) The Savior of all mankind had just been born that very night.
  - 3) This is good news because this will bring great joy to all the people.
  - 4) Jesus is offering them life, and that more abundantly.
  - 5) The angel tells the shepherds how to find this infant.
10. John the Herald is out in the wilderness, teaching and baptizing the people. Some of them begin to discuss the following proposition: "Is John the long-awaited Messiah?" John gives his answer. Luke 3:15–18 *As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ [or, the Messiah], John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but He Who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of Whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, to clear His threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people.*
  - 1) This is not an illogical thing for the people to suppose; that maybe John is the Messiah. It is reasonable that they ask this question. Here before them is a man unlike any other, and they discuss, "Can this man (John) be the Messiah?"
  - 2) John is aware of this conversation (perhaps someone asked him the question outright). He tells them that he is only able to baptize with water, but the One Who is coming will baptize with fire (this is the final separation between believers and unbelievers; and unbelievers will be removed from the earth).
  - 3) This One to Come would baptize them with the Holy Spirit (those who believe in Jesus will receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit; which is true even today).
  - 4) John is not worthy to untie this Man's sandals.
  - 5) The very fact that this Savior will come to the people is the good news; that is the good news that John is proclaiming.
11. Jesus, when first speaking throughout the Galilean region was not yet proclaiming



## The Doctrine of Euaggelizô/Is Jesus the Savior?

the good news. He is waiting on the plan of God to do that.

12. Jesus begins to proclaim the good news here, in v. 18. Actually, what Jesus reads is from the scroll of Isaiah, and the proclamation of the good news is that which the Messiah would do. Luke 4:17–21 **And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because he has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."**
  - 1) Jesus is proclaiming the good news to the people in that synagogue, but He is allowing Isaiah to do it through his recorded words.
  - 2) Everyone in that synagogue knows that this passage is about the Messiah, the Savior. Isaiah is speaking about the Messiah.
  - 3) Jesus is essentially telling them, "This is Me. I am the Person in this passage. **Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.**"
  - 4) *That* is the especially good news. Is not simply that God has sent His Savior, but that Jesus is the long-awaited Savior. He is the good news that these people have been waiting for.
  - 5) Nearly all of the people there will reject these words spoken by Jesus; but He reads the Scripture and proclaims what it means—something that He had become very well-known for doing (Luke 4:14–15).
  - 6) Now that He has revealed this in Nazareth, why doesn't Jesus continue to do this? Because the people of Nazareth became so outraged, that they will try to kill Him. Luke 4:28–30 (we have not yet studied this passage)
13. At the end of this chapter, this verb will be used again by Jesus. Luke 4:42–44 **And when it was day, He departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought Him and came to Him, and would have kept Him from leaving them, but He said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." And He was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.**
  - 1) The people of Nazareth sought to kill Jesus when He proclaimed Himself the Savior/Messiah of Isaiah 61:1–2a.
  - 2) Jesus escaped them; and He was very careful about making this same proclamation in the future. In this same chapter, He will not allow the demons to reveal Who He is. Luke 4:41
  - 3) The idea was, He would teach the Word of God; and people would, many of them completely on their own, recognize Who He is (as Peter did with his famous confession in Matt. 16:13–17 and Mark 8:27–30).
14. There will be a proper time for Jesus to reveal Himself clearly, publically, that He is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. However, this was done in very controlled settings. When Jesus makes this clearly known to all (as He did

## The Doctrine of Euaggelizô/Is Jesus the Savior?

by riding the donkey into Jerusalem, with people singing His praises), this was just too much for the religious crowd and those who did not believe Who He was. They chose that time to kill Jesus, by manipulating the Roman legal system.

15. There would be a time and a place for the Lord to be killed; at which time, He would die for our sins. But it is God's plan for Him to have a public ministry which reveals clearly that this man is God, the Son of God; the Creator; and our Savior.
16. Even though Jesus is the Savior-Messiah sent by God, Jesus will not proclaim this very often as clearly as he does here in Luke 4.

On several occasions in the future, Jesus will be asked to clearly say that He is the Messiah of God.

John 10:22–24 At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around Him and said to Him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

Luke 22:66–67 When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led Him away to their council, and they said, "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe." ESV (capitalized)

### Lessons 130–131: Luke 4:17–21

### The Doctrine of Intercalation

**Luke 4:18a, 21b (RSV)** (a graphic); from [Holy Word](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

We have been studying this passage:

Luke 4:17–21 And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him [Jesus]. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Isa. 61:1–2) ESV (capitalized)



There is one more thing to cover: *why did Jesus stop right in the middle of this passage?* Jesus just stopped, midway through this passage, rolled up the scroll, and went back to His seat. No wonder everyone was looking at Him. But *why* did He do this? Why didn't He finish Isaiah's thought? Isaiah said what he needed to say in vv. 1–3, but Jesus only quotes half of that passage. Why?

Isaiah 61:1–3 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified. ESV (capitalized)

If you are a new believer, or have not had much Bible doctrine, this doctrine is going to seem like a bit much. I am going to do my best to simplify this doctrine of intercalation without dumbing it down.

First we need to have an overview of God's Timetable for man. I am going to skip over the first age of man, often called *the Age of the Gentiles*. It is unrelated to what Jesus said in the synagogue and why He said it.

### **God's Timetable on Earth (beginning with the Age of Israel)**

1. The Age of Israel (the *lighter* text represents what occurs chronologically, but is not a part of the Age of Israel).
  - 1) Part I: the age of the patriarchs: from Abraham to Moses. God chose Abraham back in Genesis 12 and the concentration of the Scriptures from there to the book of Exodus is on the descendants of Abraham.
  - 2) Part II: the nation Israel: from Moses to Christ. Israel, a nation made up from the descendants of Abraham, is established in the land of Canaan. The Scriptures are preserved by the people of Israel. These Scriptures speak of their Messiah to come.
  - 3) Inserted into the Age of Israel is what is called, the Dispensation of the Hypostatic Union. Some may want to label this as Part III of the Age of Israel; some may want to see this as a separate dispensation. In any case, this very short dispensation (4 years) bridges the gap between the Age of Israel and the Church Age.
  - 4) Also inserted into the Age of Israel is the Church Age. This is the Mystery Age, also designated as the *inserted* or *Intercalated* Age. It is not a part of the dispensation of Israel; it is a separate dispensation altogether. Right now, we live in the Church Age. This period of time was completely unknown to those in the Age of Israel.
  - 5) Part III: the Tribulation (this is the continuation of the Age of Israel). All of the nations around Israel gather as an alliance to destroy Israel. This

## God's Timetable on Earth (beginning with the Age of Israel)

- period of time is future.
2. The Church Age is a dispensation by itself; but placed in the midst of the Age of Israel (see 1. 4) above).
  3. The Millennium

As an aside, the Church Age is divided into two eras.

1. The Church Age:
  - 1) The precanon era. From the Day of Pentecost, A.D. 30 (the actual year is a guess) to A.D. 100 (or so; when John finishes writing his books).
  - 2) The post-canon era. From the death of John to the current era. The Church Age continues until the rapture, at which point, the Age of Israel resumes (which begins the Tribulation).

I realize that this may be hard to follow, so I will repeat this timetable, but keeping everything in order by time.

The time frame of the ages within the Age of Israel are all laid out prophetically. God begins telling Abraham about these things when He calls him. The Church Age, on the other hand, is not revealed in prophecy. No one from the Old Testament era would be able to lay out the future times and include the Church Age after studying the Old Testament.

The Age of Israel is broken down into 4 subsections. One might reasonably argue that the age of the Hypostatic Union actually begins with the public ministry of the Lord.

God's Timetable	
Date	God's Ages or Epochs
2100 B.C.—A.D. 30	<b>The Age of Israel</b>
2100—1400 B.C.	The Age of the Patriarchs (Abraham to Moses)
1400—5 B.C.	The Nation Israel (Moses to Jesus)
5 B.C.—A.D. 30	The Age of the Hypostatic Union (the life of Jesus)
[A.D. 30—2021+	<b>The Church Age; the Hidden Age, the Mystery Age]</b>
After 2021+	<b>The Age of Israel (resumes)</b>
7 years	The Tribulation
1000 years	<b>The Millennium</b>

The Church Age is intercalated or inserted into the Age of Israel. It is *not* a part of the Age of Israel but it is a result of the Jews rejecting their Messiah.

The complete **Doctrine of Intercalation**, which is 25 pages long, may be found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). The Abbreviated Doctrine of Intercalation, below, is 2.5 pages long.

### **The Super-Abbreviated Doctrine of Intercalation**

1. Going back to the timeline above, originally, there were 3 or 4 parts to the Age of Israel:
  - 1) The Age of the Patriarchs
  - 2) The Age of Nation Israel
  - 3) The Age of the Messiah (some view this as a separate dispensation)
  - 4) The Tribulation.
2. After the Tribulation, a new period of time begins, called the Millennium.
3. In the Age of Israel and in the Millennium, two things loom large: Messiah and nation Israel.
4. These ages and events listed above are all prophesied in the Old Testament. Believers in the Old Testament, if they knew their Bible, knew that God would send His Messiah-King to Israel; they knew that there would be some very desperate times for Israel; and they knew that this would all be followed by a dispensation of perfect environment. They knew that, in this final era, David's Greater Son would reign over Israel.
5. Let's consider that final portion of the Age of Israel: The Age of the Messiah, the Tribulation; both of which are followed by the Millennium.
  - 1) It was not entirely clear how or when these time periods would occur or how exactly they would play out.
  - 2) Israel expected a Savior; they expected a Savior Who would deliver them. They expected a great era of peace and prosperity to follow. Logically, if a Savior is sent by God to deliver them, then there must be something happening in order for them to be delivered from. For this reason (the oppression of Israel), the Savior/Messiah/King Who would come to them.
  - 3) If you were to sit down with an Old Testament theologian and ask about this, he might have said, "When Israel is in dire trouble, God will send us a King-Messiah, and He will deliver us out of this trouble. Messiah's reign will be wonderful, peaceful and prosperous. It will last for 1000 years."
  - 4) This information is found throughout the Old Testament Scriptures.
6. There is no Church Age presented in the Old Testament. Possibly the first prophecy concerning the Church Age was Jesus speaking to Peter. Jesus said, "**On this rock** (on the testimony that Peter gives), **I will build My church.**" The last prophecy that Jesus gave was, "Gather in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, 50 days hence, and I will send My Spirit to you all." I cannot recall from the top of my head any other prophecies of the Church Age. No doubt, there were some (Jesus taught a lot of Church Age doctrine during the Upper Room Discourse).
7. In any case, we now live in the era of the church, which is called the Mystery Age by Paul (Paul probably taught more doctrine on the Church Age than any other Apostle).
8. The key point is, throughout the Old Testament era, there may have been some

## The Super-Abbreviated Doctrine of Intercalation

- hints of Gentiles coming to the Hebrew God, but no one looking at the Old Testament could put together any information about the Church Age to come. It just is not found in any Old Testament prophecy.
9. One of the fascinating aspects of all this is, there is no clear separation between the coming of the Messiah-King, the time of trouble, and the Millennium kingdom found in the Old Testament. To us, living in the mystery age, there is a long separation between the advents of Jesus Christ. His 1<sup>st</sup> advent is described in the gospels; His 2<sup>nd</sup> advent is described prophetically in Scripture (when He returns at the end of the Tribulation). But Old Testament theologians did not see it in that way. They saw it as a connected series of events.
  10. Logically, the coming Messiah would bring Israel into an era of peace and prosperity (the era we know as the Millennium). For this reason, there is no separation indicated in the Old Testament between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advents of Jesus Christ. However, today, we know that there is at least 2000 years between these two events.
  11. Anyone who read and studied the Old Testament did not perceive two different advents of the Lord. They understood that the Messiah would come to Israel to deliver Israel. They understood that Messiah would then usher in 1000 years of peace and prosperity. All of these things are perceived as a series of events, one which followed the other. When we look back at the Scriptures, we can separate them into two sets of events (which is what Jesus did in the Nazareth synagogue). But, up to this point in the Lukian narrative, this had never been done before.
  12. Intercalated or inserted between the 1<sup>st</sup> advent of the Messiah and the Tribulation (and/or Millennium) is the Church Age.

At this point, you might begin to understand why Jesus stopped mid-passage in Isaiah.

*Intercalation* means *insertion*; the Church Age occurs in between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advents.

I have come up with 32 Old Testament examples of this, where we find the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advents of the Lord together in the same passage; but doubtless, there are others.

This is an abbreviated form of the doctrine of intercalation. Therefore, only 4 examples of intercalation will be given.

The light blue is the 1<sup>st</sup> advent (when Jesus is born in Bethlehem); the dark blue is the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Lord's 2<sup>nd</sup> advent can include the Tribulation and/or the Millennium.



## A Brief View of the Advents of Messiah

1 <sup>st</sup> Advent	2 <sup>nd</sup> Advent	The Text and Commentary
Num 24:17a	Num. 24:17b–19	“I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. Edom shall be dispossessed; Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly. And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!”

This is a very good illustration of the two advents. There is the incarnation of the humanity of Jesus Christ (also called *the 1<sup>st</sup> advent of Jesus Christ*); and then there is the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent where the Lord destroys the opposing armies and rules over the world. The first part of v. 17 is understated; but, in the rest of the passage, power and authority of Jesus Christ is unmistakable.

Jesus will be descended from Jacob, but He is also a long ways off from this prophecy of Baalim.

When He arises as a scepter, that is Jesus ruling over Israel. Jesus will rule over all of these territories, dispossessing all those who have opposed Israel. The enemies of God will be destroyed.

Psalms 2:7	Psalms 2:6, 8–9	Yea, I have set My king on My holy mount on Zion. I will declare concerning the statute of Jehovah: He said to Me, You are My Son. Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give the nations as Your inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth as Your possession. You will break them with a rod of iron; You will dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.
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Here, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Advents of our Lord are mixed. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent, our Lord will sit as King over all on Mount Zion; God (the Father) will give to Him all the nations as His possession. When He first returns at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent, He will destroy the nations plaguing Israel; those which are in open revolt against Him.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent, Jesus will come as the Son of God, begotten of a woman.

## A Brief View of the Advents of Messiah

1 <sup>st</sup> Advent	2 <sup>nd</sup> Advent	The Text and Commentary
Psalm 72:12–14	Psalm 72:15–17	For He delivers the needy when he calls [for help], the poor and him who has no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy. From oppression and violence He redeems their life, and precious is their blood in His sight. Long may He live; may gold of Sheba be given to Him! May prayer be made for Him continually, and blessings invoked for Him all the day! May there be abundance of grain in the land; on the tops of the mountains may it wave; may its fruit be like Lebanon; and may people blossom in the cities like the grass of the field! May His name endure forever, His fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in Him, all nations call Him blessed!

Delivering the needy and the poor, and having compassion for the weak and the poor describes Jesus in the 1<sup>st</sup> advent. However, when there is this great abundance of blessing, and His name continues to endure, that is the Millennium, when all nations will call Him blessed.

Isa. 9:6a	Isa. 9:6b–7	For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.
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God sent His Son in the form of a man, both fully man and fully God. He will, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent, assume all power over the earth.

Quite obviously, the Church Age is nowhere to be found in any of these prophetic passages. That is because it is intercalated between them.

The Hebrew people saw the coming of the Messiah as a singular event. They did not understand there to be two advents (and, theoretically speaking, there did not have to be two advents).

These are 4 examples from the 32 found in the **Doctrine of Intercalation** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

Now, if you understood what I have been saying, then you might already be able to explain what Jesus was doing by only quoting a verse and a half. He was quoting the section of Israel which refers to the 1<sup>st</sup> advent. He was not quoting the second section, which refers to His 2<sup>nd</sup> advent.

Luke 4:17–21 *And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because he has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Isa. 61:1–2) ESV (capitalized)*

What follows is the 5<sup>th</sup> example of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advents of our Lord occurring together, but not being properly separated until Jesus separates them.

1 <sup>st</sup> Advent	2 <sup>nd</sup> Advent	The Text and Commentary
Isa. 61:1–2a	Isa. 61:2b–3	The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, [the 1 <sup>st</sup> advent] and the day of vengeance of our God [the Tribulation]; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified [the Millennium].

If you compare these two passages, you can see that Jesus quoted right up the middle of v. 2, which was where the 1<sup>st</sup> advent ends. Jesus did not quote anything from v. 2b and forward, because this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> advent. What the people were seeing fulfilled before them is the Lord's 1<sup>st</sup> advent.

Intercalated between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advent, will be the Church Age. Now, it does not have to be this way. Jesus will present Himself as Messiah to the people. If the people accept Him, then these events will not be separated by two or more millenniums.

This is what we have been studying:

Luke 4:16–19 And He [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as was His custom, He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and He stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ESV (capitalized) (Isa. 61:1–2)

This is an amazing point in the ministry of the Lord. We have discussed how Jesus was not healing or doing signs, but He went from synagogue to synagogue, teaching the Word of God. Whatever He read from the scrolls handed to Him, He taught. Here, the Lord is teaching in the synagogue of his own home. At this point, Jesus reads a passage which is directly about Him right then at that time. Standing before the people of Nazareth, He is fulfilling this passage. Therefore, He reveals to them Who He is.

He read the passage above, after which He did this:

Luke 4:20 And He rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

What He is doing there has not been done before. Men get up, they read what is before them. They read perhaps 1 to 5 chapters. Jesus read one and a half verses and sits down.

No doubt the Lord has a reputation as a well-informed, young lay-teacher. But He has just done something that no one has ever done before. He read a very short passage, gave the scroll back to the attendant, and then sat down.

Everyone is looking at Him. So, He explains:

Luke 4:21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

With every eye on Him, Jesus tells them, "What I just read to you is happening right now. You are all witnesses to it."

Jesus has just told them that He is the Messiah.

Luke 4:22a And all spoke well of Him...

In this study, I use the English Standard Version, which is an excellent translation. However, now and again, they get it wrong. The verb here does not mean *to speak well of*. It is the imperfect active indicative of *martureô* (μαρτυρέω) [pronounced *mar-too-REH-oh*], which means, *to be a witness, to testify (literally or figuratively); to charge, to give*

*[evidence], to bear record, to have (obtain) a good (honest) report, to be well reported of, to testify, to give (have) testimony, to (be, bear, give, obtain) witness. Strong's #3140.*

More accurately, this should read: **All continued to bear witness of Him...**

The imperfect tense indicates that they did this in the past and continued doing it. So, those who were there said that this is what happened. This probably has a twofold meaning. They looked at one another and said, "Did He just say what I thought He said?" So they confirm with one another what they heard. And then, later, many who were there confirmed to Luke (or others, if Luke got this information secondhand), about what Jesus did and said on this day. They bore witness of what they saw.

What Jesus said was either the most amazing thing that anyone there had ever heard or, what He said was blasphemous.

Luke 4:22b **...and marveled at the gracious words...**

The verb here is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, imperfect active indicative of *thaumázō* (θαυμάζω) [pronounced *thau-MAUd-zoh*], which means, *to wonder, to marvel, to be struck with admiration or astonishment*. Strong's #2296. The 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural means that many or all of the people there were astonished by what they had just heard. The imperfect tense mean, they continued to be astonished. The indicative mood is the mood of reality, indicating that this is how they really felt.

Their amazement was *at, on, over, based upon* (epi + the dative, locative or instrumental case) *the words of the grace...*

What Jesus said was the most amazing statement of grace that any person there had ever heard. This does not mean that the people there understood that these were words of grace, because their reaction is going to be quite negative (that will take a minute or so before they all decide).

The people there are struck with astonishment. People, rabbis, students of the Word and just regular people, became aware of certain passages referring to the Messiah. Everyone there knew that this passage was about the Messiah. It would have been quite remarkable for anyone to have said what Jesus just said. **"Today, these words have been fulfilled in your ears."** The people there are momentarily stunned. They know what they just witnessed; they know what they just heard, and they are amazed. This does not mean that this is a good type of amazement or bad; they are having a hard time digesting what Jesus said, even though He has said very little.

These are called words of grace because God sending the Messiah to the people is an act of graciousness. The words spoken by Isaiah, now spoken by Jesus, are a message from a gracious God. This is clearly a message of grace.

The people there are on the verge of responding to what they just heard. It has to sink into their souls. They have to consider what they just heard. They have to *catch up* to the moment, as it were.

There is something else going on right now as well. This is the gospel message. The Holy Spirit is making this message clear to them, and the people there will respond to it.

Luke 4:22c ...that were coming from His mouth.

The ESV translated this literally. This refers to the things which Jesus just said.

The people there heard and understood what Jesus had just said; and this was remarkable to them. This would take a few minutes for the people to process what they have just heard. They have to think about what Jesus said and consider His words. To be specific, once the people fully appreciate what Jesus has just said, then they need to determine whether they believe Him or not.

Look at this another way. Jesus is giving them the gospel. He is telling them enough for them to choose to believe in Him or not. They all know the Messiah from the Scriptures; Jesus is saying, "That is Me." Those who chose to believe this are saved. This does not mean that they understand every aspect of soteriology. Jesus is giving them enough information to respond positively or negatively. They can choose to believe Him or not.

The participle suggests that Jesus spoke for more than a few moments. However, since Jesus is the Person speaking, then we may reasonably assume that He is speaking of Himself.

Luke 4:22a-c And all were bearing witness to Him and marveling at the grace of the words that are proceeding out of His mouth. (Berean Literal Bible)

What just happened will take some time to sink into the thinking of the people who are there. Obviously, they have to ask themselves, "Did I just hear what I think I heard?" We don't know if there was discussion. I see this as a hush coming over the room, where, for a few moments, the people are dumbfounded. They are considering what is happening and this moment in time. God has revealed to all the people there the gospel, which is in Christ Jesus. How will they respond to that?

Then, someone speaks up and states a simple, undeniable fact:

Luke 4:22d And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

The word for *speaking* is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, imperfect active indicative of λέγω (λέγω) [pronounced *LEH-goh*], the very common verb which means, *to speak, to say; affirm over, maintain; to teach; to exhort*. Strong's #3004. So several people said this; some may have repeated it. Many probably confirmed this *fact* (as an aside, despite what is being said, Jesus is not actually *Joseph's Son*; Joseph is His legal father).



Jesus was reasonably well-known there in that area. It seems likely that He had done carpentry work with and for his father; but far more likely He would have been known for His interest in the Scriptures. Given His discussions at age 12 in Jerusalem with the learned rabbis; it seems certain that He was closely involved at the synagogues, with the reading of Scriptures and possibly with the explanations of them.

Those who attended this synagogue had watched Jesus grow up. There is no indication that he went to any institution of higher learning. He is a local boy; a layperson (in the eyes of those in the synagogue). He has read and possibly even taught at the synagogue (possibly even encouraged by the rabbis there). Jesus is a familiar face to them all.

So, at first, the people seem to be impressed by what Jesus has been saying...but then, someone points out, *Isn't this man just Joseph's son? We all know this, right?* So, the implication is, *He is not some learned rabbi; he's just a carpenter; so what does He know? Why should we be listening to Him?*

For some there, these words would be considered a call from reality. But what they are doing here is simply finding something wrong with the messenger (or imply that there is something wrong with Him), and therefore, what He has to say can be ignored. Most importantly, Jesus appears to claim that He is the Messiah. This simple objection seems to be enough to negate Jesus' claim—at least to those who are there listening. The reasoning here is, *if He is Joseph's son, then He cannot be the Messiah*. Hopefully, you read this and understand, *that is not a logical statement*.

**Illustration:** Have you ever pointed something out to someone, and then they said, "Well, that was on FoxNews, so you know it can't be true;" or "Trump said that, so I know that means nothing." The issues raised are ignored; and something far less important is brought up. The intent is to impugn the message by impugning the character of the speaker.

**Illustration:** Have you not noticed that in many political fights, things from that person's background are brought up, which really have no importance in the difference between the candidates. A candidate made a mistake—or many mistakes—years ago. This does not make him a bad Congressman or Senator. It just means that he is flawed. In 2004, a Democratic candidate for president (Howard Dean, I think), got excited about how his campaign seemed to be going, and he made sort of a weird *hee yaw* noise. As a candidate, this ended his career. He had not said anything wrong; he simply got caught up in the moment, and his opponents used this against him.

**Illustration:** When someone does not want to deal with the actual content of a statement made by Charley Brown, then they impugn Charley Brown in some way. This is what these people are doing to Jesus.

"Listen up," they keep saying to one another, "This Man is just a carpenter's son." The implication being, *what does He really know? Or, we know Who He is; so how can He claim to be the Messiah?*

So, no one is saying that Jesus is a bad person. They are simply saying, *We all know Jesus; we've watched Him grow up. Therefore, He cannot be the Person Isaiah was talking about.*

There is another problem here as well—the people have decided that it is time for them to all critique what Jesus has said and Who He is. This happens in some churches; but there should be strict academic discipline within the local church. You don't start chatting in the middle of a sermon and starting telling everyone what you like or don't like about it. However, things are somewhat chaotic because of what Jesus did. Those in charge of the synagogue may have been the ones to remind everyone who Jesus really was (no specific person (s) is named for pointing out Jesus' supposed lineage).

Luke 4:22 *Those who were there continued to bear witness of Him and what He said and did there. They marveled at what He said. They also continued asking, "Is this Man not the son of Joseph?"* (Kukis paraphrase)

This is one of the most amazing moments in human history; and these people hear the Lord's words, and they see their Savior; and all they can do is say, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?" One person first says it; but many seem to grab onto these words and repeat them, making them more important to them than what Jesus has just said.

So, at first, the people there are impressed and/or taken aback by what Jesus has just said; and then someone makes this last remark and it seems to be enough to turn the people against Him.

We know this as peer pressure. Although this is primarily applied to teens, peer pressure at any age is a very real thing.

The argument made against Jesus here is not very sophisticated. It is simply, "We all know Who Jesus is. He is just a regular person." It should be noted that, at this point in time, Jesus has not done anything amazing. He has not healed; He has not done any miracles. He is the Son of a carpenter, Who, in their opinion, fancies Himself a lay teacher. No one in the crowd says, "But I saw him heal a man the other day." That is because Jesus had not healed anyone the other day.

## **Lesson 133: Luke 4:23**

## **Two Things that Will Be Said in the Future**

Jesus is in His hometown, Nazareth, where He grew up. He has just told everyone at the synagogue that He is the Promised Messiah. The people hearing Him rejected this notion, because they have supposed Him to be Joseph's son.

In any case, Jesus' approach in the past was to read from the Scriptures, whatever was handed to Him, and then He would teach the people about what He just read. Based upon the apparent change of the people's reaction towards Him, Jesus tries to explain the thinking of these people to themselves. He understands their reaction, but He also

understands the plan of God. So His response here is teaching (vv. 23–27). He makes an attempt to teach them, but they are not willing to hear Him.

Now Jesus responds to their negative response towards Him.

Luke 4:23a *And He said to them,...*

Jesus has just said one of the most dramatic things in human history to these people—something that was fraught with meaning and something that they all clearly heard and understood. These were men who regularly attended the synagogue, so they knew the Scriptures. They had heard the Old Testament and they themselves have read the Scriptures aloud. So, the people of Nazareth were able to grasp the impact of what He had just said.

And then some of them said, “Isn’t this just Joseph’s son? Who is He to say this?” This reveals their negative volition towards Him. These few words are enough to shake up the hearers in the congregation. Those who began to consider seriously what Jesus said, have now set His words aside, realizing that He is merely the son of Joseph the carpenter.

We have recently studied John the Herald (or *John the baptizer*) and the people who listened to him thought that he might be the Messiah. So, how do John’s followers think he might be the Messiah, but the people in Nazareth do not believe that Jesus is? I can suggest several reasons. (1) The people with John are his followers, so they are well-disposed towards him from the beginning. The people in the Nazareth synagogue are simply there, but not as Jesus’ followers, but as worshipers in the synagogue. (2) You will recall that John’s parents were quite old. In fact, they were so old that it was a miracle that his mother conceived. So, by the time that John’s desert-wilderness ministry begins, his parents are long gone and, apparently, he has lived out in the desert-wilderness for awhile (the weird things used to describe him may simply revealed how he lived day-to-day in the desert-wilderness). So, because John’s background is more mysterious and weird, people might think that he is the Messiah.

God the Holy Spirit, through Jesus, has made clear what Jesus has said to these people. At this moment in time, they understand what He has said. This is enough information that, if they choose to believe these words—if they choose to believe Jesus right now—they would have eternal life. They are hearing what amounts to the gospel message presented to them directly from their Messiah. The people can, at this point, choose to believe these words (that is, believe that Jesus is the Messiah) or choose to reject what He has said. Their eternal future depends upon their reaction to what they have just heard. Based upon the text here, it appears that most or all of the people there were brought to the point of gospel hearing, where they understood enough to make the eternal choice, and they rejected what they heard.

Some of you may be confused at this point, thinking, *the gospel is, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.”* Yes, that is the gospel message; but what Jesus has

said to them now is also the gospel message. When Jesus revealed something about Himself, and a person believed that, that person is saved.

As a young believer, I did not understand why every gospel account did not clearly contain the message, *believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved*. It is all over the place in the book of John; but not in Matthew, Mark or Luke.

When we are saved, what we know about Jesus Christ is very limited. Today, I understand the cross, what Jesus did on the cross, why it was necessary for my sins to be paid for; I know Who Jesus is and His place throughout human history. I did not know any of that when I believed in Jesus originally. I essentially claimed John 3:16 as a promise from God. “I claim this verse,” I thought (or spoke aloud to God).

Therefore, Jesus did not need to insert into every human interaction, “Believe in Me, if you want to be saved.” Jesus could say or do something, and then look to the person listening to observe his response. Whether uttered aloud or simply thought, “I believe what You have just said to me, Lord.” That was enough. So, for any of the people at the synagogue to be saved, when they heard Jesus say, *“Today, these words are fulfilled in your hearing;”* if they believed Him, they were eternally saved. It does not appear that anyone at the Nazareth synagogue was saved this day.

Jesus, hearing what was said (*Isn't He the son of Joseph?*) and reading the room, has something more to say.

Luke 4:23b ...*"Doubtless you will quote to Me this proverb,...*

Jesus asserts that, at some point in time, they will say this *saying* to Him.

The future tense of *to say* is important here. The proverb that these people will quote in the future will confirm their continued negative volition towards Jesus. Their response to Him now is negative; and they will say things in the future to express this same negative response. They are not saying this right now; they are not thinking this right now. They will say or think this in the future.

Luke 4:23c ...*'Physician, heal Yourself.'*

The idea here is—on the surface—is there is a physician and he is sick, and people make light of this and tell him, “Physician, heal yourself.” This means, a physician is sick, and he is mocked by saying, “You claim that you are a physician; well then, heal yourself!” Not many physicians at this time were able to heal anyone else; they wanted to; they studied to be able to; but modern medicine was not at a place where they had much success.

Quite obviously, if you have read any of the gospels, no group of men ever came to Jesus and said those exact words. But, they will say something analogous or similar to this. This is a *saying*, so it does not apply *only* to physicians who are sick.

Jesus, by revealing Who He is, marks the beginning of His public ministry. Right near the end of His ministry, people will call to Him up on the cross, "Savior, save Yourself!" We read in Luke 23:35 **And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at Him, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He is the Christ of God, His Chosen One!"** (ESV; capitalized)

This is equivalent to saying, *Physician, heal yourself*. "If you are the Son of God, then call upon God Your Father to save You." This is continued negative volition right up to what they expected to be the end of Jesus' life.

If they did not attend the crucifixion, but knew about it, they may have had the exact same thoughts. Or they may have expressed this to someone else: "He claims to be the Son of God; why did He not call upon God to be delivered?"

The idea is this. These people are expressing negative volition towards Jesus right now. Also, in the future, they will express this same sort of negative volition while Jesus is on the cross. "He claims to be the Son of God; so let Him call upon His Father to be rescued." Such a person is saying, "I was right to reject Jesus when He claimed to be the Messiah; and I am right to reject Him now, while He is being crucified. He is confirming that He is not the Lord's Messiah by being on the cross."

There is something else that these people will say in the future. (Again, they are not saying this now; they are not thinking this now.)

Luke 4:23d **What we have heard You did at Capernaum, do here in Your hometown as well."**

This is a rationalization that will be given in Nazareth by those who have rejected Jesus at the synagogue. The idea is, "Maybe You should have done some miracles and healings here in Nazareth, *if* you really wanted us to believe in You!"

They will hear of the great things that Jesus will be doing in Capernaum in the near future—the healings, the miracles (at this point in time, these things have not yet taken place). When hearing about the signs and healings which are taking place in Capernaum, these people here in the synagogue will say such things to one another.

They will say, "Why did he not do such miracles and healings in His Own city, where He was raised up?" But the negative volition towards Jesus there is strong against Him. God, right here, has given these people the opportunity to believe in His Son. They have heard the gospel and they have rejected it. They have heard and seen the Messiah, but they have rejected Him.

What these people will say about Jesus in the future will be an attempt to rationalize their own negative volition. These people will *later* hear about what Jesus is doing in Capernaum—which will involve some amazing healings and the casting out of demons—and they will say to one another, "Why didn't He do the same thing here? If this

is true, why didn't He prove Himself right here?" They will justify to one another their negative volition with words like these.

Luke 4:23 *And He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself.' [You will also say] 'What we have heard You did at Capernaum, do here in Your hometown as well.' "*

I think that these things that Jesus is saying were lost on the crowd in general (which is true of many things which the Lord said). Jesus is speaking spiritual truth, and some people are not yet ready for it. They are negative towards Him, so they are negative towards objective truth. However, Jesus is certainly going to be speaking rationally and logically to them. Therefore, we look at these things from the standpoint of, *what exactly did Jesus mean? We know that He is logical and rational; so what exactly did He say and what exactly did He mean?*

Those in Nazareth were beginning to develop mental attitude sins against Him. However, since Jesus said these things, there must be a few people there who heard and remember them. This is how Luke knows about these words. People heard what Jesus said and it stuck with them. They may have even thought about His words, wondering exactly what He meant. One or two of them, from this incident, must have believed in Jesus many years later (I suspect after the resurrection).

Luke is a human author who has gathered this information from many different people. He was not a witness to anything which Jesus did. So, someone had to tell him about what Jesus said at Nazareth. Luckily, at some point, someone from Nazareth searched Luke out, found him and told him the experience he had. Obviously, someone has to tell Luke about everything that is recorded in his biography of the Lord. That very same person also likely told Luke, "Jesus also said a couple of very odd things, before the mob came after Him."

I understand these future statements, to be made by those in the Nazarene synagogue, to be rationalizing. They will later rationalize not believing in Him, because He did not do the works of Capernaum in Nazareth. Or because He did not call upon God to take Him down from the cross.

These are things that these people will say in the future. They are not saying these things now; nor is Jesus saying that they are saying (or thinking) these things right now.

At this point in time, there have been some marvelous miracles which have occurred, but not many people have seen them. When Jesus was born, there were a number of related miracles and odd circumstances. When Jesus was baptized by John, the Holy Spirit, as a dove, landed upon the Lord. But, there were not many people who observed any of these things. John's followers, on any given day, might have been in the 10's or in the 100's, but his ministry was not so massive as to threaten the religious establishment. He got their attention, and garnered some interest, but they did not appear to have secret plans to capture and illegally try John.



Let me suggest that no one in Nazareth, apart from Mary and Joseph, have seen Jesus do anything miraculous (we don't even know if they saw Him do anything miraculous). Many of them know Jesus and they know His character, but, up to this point in time, He has not healed anyone.

Luke 4:23 And He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself.' [You will also say] 'What we have heard You did at Capernaum, do here in Your hometown as well.' "

At this point, no one is saying these things and there is no reason for them to be saying these things. Jesus is telling them what some of them will say in the future (or how they might rationalize their reluctance to believe in Him).

Now, why would Jesus say such things? What is His point? Right now, as He speaks to them, everything that He is saying is going over their heads. "Physician, heal yourself?" What does He mean by that? "What we heard that You did in Capernaum, why did You not do that here? What does that mean? What did You do in Capernaum?"

Let me suggest that Jesus was doing a wonderful teaching technique. He will leave them with a thought which they will ponder for many years. If you are in a classroom with 25 or 30 kids, and you say something at the end of class, and many of them think about what you said *after class*, then you have accomplished something great in teaching (assuming that they are pondering information related to your subject).

Sometimes, when you are teaching someone, what you say may not penetrate their brains, because they are not yet ready for it. However, if you are an excellent teacher, you might be able to say something which sticks with your students up to the point where they suddenly say, "Oh, I see; that is what he was saying to me!" They take what you have said, which has remained in their thinking, and suddenly have enough background information to understand it.

By the way, we know that this little teaching technique of Jesus worked, because Luke recorded it here in his gospel. He did not see this occur; and he did not necessarily talk to anyone from Nazareth until years later. But someone from Nazareth obviously remembered the events from this day and what Jesus said. It stayed with them. And so they could tell Luke about it and he could record it in his gospel.

Jesus appears to go back to Nazareth only one more time. He is called *Jesus of Nazareth* many times in Scripture. However, based upon the things which He is saying here, I don't believe that Jesus is going to return to Nazareth on a regular basis (as one might to see one's family again). There appears to be another time that Jesus will return to Nazareth, which is often cited as a parallel passage to what we are studying (Matthew 13:53-58 Mark 6:1-6).

We are studying Jesus speaking in the synagogue in Nazareth. He has told the people that He is the Messiah, but they do not believe Him.

Many translations rightfully place v. 24 with the passage that follows. What Jesus says in v. 24 will be illustrated in vv. 25–27.

Luke 4:24a *And he said, "Truly, I say to you,...*

Jesus will tell them something now; and the present tense of the verb suggests that He repeats this on several occasions (Matt. 13:57 Mark 6:4–5 John 4:44). This is translated by some as, *I keep on saying to you.*

Luke 4:24b *...no prophet is acceptable in his hometown.*

People who have seen a child grow up often have a hard time accepting who he becomes as an adult. This would very much be true of prophets, who, at some point in time, begin communicating God's message to the people. Jesus repeated this truth on several occasions to the people He taught.

The key here is the negative volition of the people in Nazareth.

Jesus will illustrate this truth with Scripture in vv. 25–27.

Luke 4:24 *And He said, "Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown.*

Because of a person's background, what he says is often rejected. This is certainly true in the spiritual realm.

Luke 4:25a *But in truth, I tell you,...*

Jesus is going to lecture these people, and it appears that He may have already taught this in some way or another.

Jesus has been going to synagogues from a very young age (at least from age 12; and probably much younger than that); and He has read portions of Scripture and He may have explained some things as well. You will recall that this was a portion of His public ministry which is barely mentioned in the gospels (only Luke records it using only 2 verses).

There are many ways that something can be taught; so that Jesus did not even need to exegete these passages, but read them with the proper emphasis—and the present tense used here suggests that He has been doing that.

Jesus will now give two illustrations of prophets who did not go to the citizens of their own country. Jesus is going to go where the positive volition is; and that is not Nazareth. So

that these people understand this, He is going to give some similar illustrations from the Scriptures.

So that you understand what Jesus is doing, He has told these people what they will say to Him or about Him in the future; and now He is answering them (that is, He is responding to their negative response). He is answering them in the here and now, because this seems to indicate that Jesus is not going to regularly return to His hometown again (He apparently will go back one more time). Eventually His mother and half-brothers will search Him out; but He apparently will not return to them.

Luke 4:25b ...there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah,...

The people to whom Jesus is speaking all know about Elijah; and they have read the Scriptures about Elijah on many occasions. Logically, they know that there were many widows in Israel during this time.

Luke 4:25c ...when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land,...

There was a time when there was a great famine on the earth, and this is known as national discipline (it appears that this discipline was extended much further out than just over Israel).

When God needs to send a prophet, this suggests that the people are on a self-destructive path.

Luke 4:25 But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land,...

A great famine came over the land, and God guided Elijah to a particular widow.

The famine was national discipline and Elijah was a prophet sent to the people, so that they might hear and turn themselves around.

**Application:** It is clear that the United States is under divine discipline at this point in time (I write this in 2021). Interestingly enough, Facebook has severely curtailed the distribution of conservative political dialogue. That is, if you or someone posts a story from a conservative newspaper or news site, often that story is severely limited in its distribution to your contacts on Facebook. But, what is often allowed through—if you have these sorts of connections—is Scripture and divine thinking. So, if you post a news article about the 2020 election, it is very possible that only a fraction of your associations will see it. But if you quote a verse from the Bible, it is likely that 10X as many people will see that verse. So, even though Facebook is intentionally censoring the content on their platform, what is far more important—the Word of God—is getting through.

Luke 4:26a ...and Elijah was sent to none of them...

God did not send Elijah to just any widow; nor did God send Elijah to a set of widows.

God's plan is very specific; and where there is positive volition is key to what God does.

Luke 4:26b ...but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

God sent Elijah to a specific widow; and he interacted with her. She was not an Israelite.

All of this explains why Jesus does not regularly return to Nazareth ( believe that He goes back just one more time, which is recorded in Matthew 13:53-58; Mark 6:1-6. I doubt that the people understand what He is saying, but I believe that they will remember His Words. Furthermore, some will remember what He said, His answers, and they will put it altogether.

When I began teaching in Humble, there was an older teacher there, Jasper Snellings, and he was exceptionally brilliant. Sometimes when we would talk, and what he said sounded like jibber jabber to me, but when I let what he said to me marinate, 5 or 10 minutes later, I would come to realize that he was making perfect sense. My brain just took a little more time to process what he was saying.

Sometimes, spiritual information is like that. We hear things, but it does not really make sense. I can guarantee you that no one there understood what Jesus was saying to them. Months later or even years later, they would possibly be more positive towards Jesus (say, after hearing what He was doing in Capernaum), and then what He said would come back into their memories and, suddenly, He made perfect sense. I believe that this was a form of gospel witness to some of the people in Nazareth. They are very negative right now; however, some of them, in the future, are going to reconsider Jesus (what He does will be known throughout Israel), and they will think back to this day, and what Jesus said, and how they reacted, and what Jesus said; and what they did.

Is Jesus saying, even at this early date, that God has sent Him to the Jewish people, but He will, at some point, have to go to the gentiles? Is this a veiled warning to the people hearing Him? "I have just come to you and revealed to you Who I am. Should I turn to the gentiles with the truth?" I think the key here is that He will go where there is positive volition.

Luke 4:26 and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

I believe that this says something amazing about God's specific plans for specific people. God goes where there is positive volition. If God knows that Charley Brown is completely negative towards the teaching of the Word of God, then God is not obligated to provide any divine information for him.

Jesus gives a second example.

Luke 4:27a **And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha,...**

Similarly, during the time of Elisha, there were many lepers throughout Israel...and this is something that the people to whom Jesus was speaking understood. During that period of time, there were many people with leprosy, or deformities, or seemingly incurable diseases.

Luke 4:27b **...and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."**

God had Elisha cleanse one leper in particular. The leper that he cleansed was not an Israelite. He cleansed a Syrian man because he was positive towards Elisha's message.

Wilbur Pickering suggests that Jesus appears to intentionally antagonize the people of Nazareth. I don't quite see it that way. Jesus presented the truth; He presented the truth of God's Word; He presented this information as it was pertinent to the situation.

It would be helpful to understand how Jesus chooses to do X or Y. God had not handed Jesus a *to-do* list, which He dutifully followed. Jesus did not use His Deity in order to figure out how people would respond to this or that teaching. I believe that Jesus movements and actions were very organic and related directly to where He was at any given time. Therefore, when He went to read and explain the Scriptures in His hometown, Isaiah 61 came up in the reading rotation, that told Him, it was time to reveal Who He was.

Let me try to explain this in a different way. Jesus knew what to do next very much like we know what to do in our own Christian lives. We do not have a written *to-do* list from God; we do not know what is going to happen if we do X or Y. What we have are a number of spiritual principles if we follow those principles, then we will know what to do.

Jesus has done for these people quite the amazing thing: right there, in His hometown, Jesus says, "I am the Messiah; I am the Christ. You are hearing and seeing the fulfillment of the promise of your Scriptures." What an amazing moment and privilege this was! Remember, all of this takes place at the beginning of His ministry. He states in very clear language Who He is, by saying "This passage applies to Me; these words that you have just heard—they are happening right now!"

At first, the people appear to be receptive; but someone says, "This is just one of Joseph's kids. He's no one!" And the people seemingly accepted that.

Then Jesus tells them what they will say and think in the future; and He illustrates it with doctrinal information from the Scriptures. The people are upset—yes; but that is mostly because Jesus emphasizes some points so that there is no confusion as to what He has just said or as to Who He is.

At other times, in other places, people will challenge the Lord, “Tell us plainly Who You are!” Here, Jesus has done that. He has plainly stated Who He is; and this will anger the people of Nazareth enough to want to kill Him.

If you find this hard to relate to, bear in mind, in the United States, about half of the people believe in Jesus and worship Him. The other half use His Name as a curse word or as a way to spice up their language. This is done in Great Britain and it is done in Australia. However, they don’t do this in Thailand. There is no group of people who use Buddha as a curse word. No one in majority Muslim countries use Mohammed’s name as a curse. Only Jesus’ name is used to curse. When people use Jesus’ name to curse, they are, in their own twisted way, affirming Who He truly is.

Luke 4:27 **And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”**

If Israel is negative towards the teaching of the Word of God, then God will take His message of truth elsewhere.

### **Lesson 135: Luke 4:23–29      The People in the Nazareth Synagogue Are Angry**

Jesus is in the synagogue in Nazareth, where He grew up. He reveals to them that He is the Messiah of God. The people in the synagogue are reacting with clear negative volition.

Jesus then gives them the illustration of two prophets who did not specifically go to individuals in Israel but they went to people outside of Israel first.

God generally sent His prophets to Israel when Israel was straying away from Him. There would be prophets and national disasters. These two things went hand-in-hand.

Luke 4:25–27 **Think about what you have been hearing from the Scriptures. When Elijah closed up the sky in Israel for 3½ years, causing a great famine on the earth, there were many widows in Israel. However, Elijah was sent specifically to one widow, Sarepta of Sidon. There were many lepers in the days of Elisha, but he was sent only to cleanse Naaman the Syrian.”** (Kukis paraphrase)

What is Jesus saying? When prophets are sent to Israel, they are not sent to each and every person; or to each person from a specific category. Elijah personally interacted only with a single widow; Elisha interacted with a single leper. These men went to those people with positive volition.

Similarly, Jesus is not speaking to every person throughout traditional Israel. He is not performing miracles and healings for everyone to come, see and evaluate. In fact, we will study several healings where Jesus chooses a singular person to heal, out of many.



The volition of individuals is important. If people have negative volition towards God, then there is no reason for Jesus to come to these people. In some cases He will; but let's say there is a blind man in Israel, who has no interest in God or no interest in God's Messiah, then there is no reason for Jesus to find and heal that man. There is no reason for Jesus to bring him the gospel, if God the Father knows he will reject Jesus.

Jesus explains all of this in the context of *no prophet is accepted in his own village*. And He gives the illustration of Elijah and Elisha who performed miracles and healings for people who were not from Israel. The fundamental reason for this is *volition*. Jesus is not saying that He is unable to perform miracles in Nazareth or that He won't because this is where he was raised; or even that no prophet is accepted in his own village. Obviously, some Nazarenes accept Jesus (His parents; His half-brothers<sup>36</sup>). He says this because someone raises the unrelated objection, *isn't this just Joseph's son?* And this tiny objection is repeated and it is enough to change the thinking of all the people there.

We see this in the popularity of politicians all of the time. If a politician is brought down, it is almost never for his misguided policies or pinhead ideas. Most of the time they do something or say something which may or may not be immoral, but it is enough for people to look at him (or her) and decide, "I think I will vote for someone else." So it is with the off-handed remark made about Jesus. Who His supposed father is, as related to His being the Messiah, is immaterial. That He is known in his hometown is immaterial.

Now, you may think that with such unequivocal proof as miracles and healings, which Jesus could certainly do, would result in Him being accepted and believed in. However, that is not the case. Jesus healed many people—people who have had diseases and infirmities all of their lives—but how did the religious crowd react? Did they believe in Jesus? No! They continued to reject Him; and they would accuse Him of healing on the Sabbath, which they arbitrarily decided was a religious crime (there is nothing in the Old Testament about healing being forbidden on the Sabbath). So the religious hierarchy accepted His healings as real; but rejected those which He performed on the Sabbath. That is illogical and it reveals their negative volition.

This tells us that the key to convince people is not performing miracles. If that were the case, then Penn and Teller (two magicians) could evangelize virtually everyone who attends their shows, to whatever set of beliefs that they want to sell the public (Penn is a libertarian).

Let's go back and examine this passage:

Luke 4:23 Then Jesus said, I know that you will say this to me "Doctor, heal yourself. We have heard what you did in Capernaum. Do the same things here in your own country."

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<sup>36</sup> If memory serves, His half-brother James will accept Jesus after His crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.

The implication is going to be this: Jesus will do signs and healings in Capernaum, and the complaint will be (this complaint will be made in the future), “Why did you not do these signs and miracles here in Nazareth?”

Similarly, when Jesus is on the cross, several will say, “Let Him call upon His Father God to save Him!” (This parallels the saying, *doctor, heal yourself.*)

Luke 4:24–27 And he went on to say, I tell you the truth. No prophet of God is accepted by the people in his own country. I tell you the truth. At the time of Elijah, there were many women in Israel whose husbands were dead. There was no rain for three years and six months. All over the country there was great trouble because there was no food. But Elijah was not sent to any of these widowed women in Israel. He was sent to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. Also while Elisha was the prophet of God, many people in Israel had leprosy a bad skin disease. None of them was healed. The only one who was healed was Naaman from the country of Syria.

Jesus gives some examples taken from the Old Testament to explain why He did not perform healings in Nazareth, but that He would in Capernaum. He will go with the positive volition is and He will help confirm the faith of those who believe in Him.

Now, logically, if Jesus does not access His omniscience, how does He know these things will take place in the future?

Jesus, in His humanity, understands Who He is (the Messiah of God) and He makes decisions daily (or hourly) not to access any aspect of His Deity. What Jesus knows about Himself has come from the Scriptures. What He is capable of doing *He knows from the Word of God*. Jesus knows, for instance, that He is greater than Elijah (Matt. 12:41–42). Therefore, if Elijah was capable of miraculous acts, then Jesus is as well. So, by knowing Who He is and by knowing the Scriptures, Jesus realizes what He has the power to do.

As we study the miracles which Jesus does in the future, think back on Moses. When Moses lifted up his staff to bring this or that plague upon Egypt, was he making that plague happen? When Moses lifted up his staff to part the Sea of Reeds, was that Him making the seas stack up? Of course not! All of this was the power of God. Moses, as God’s spokesman, pointed to such things, so that the timing of God’s great works and Moses lifting up his staff would coincide.

In my opinion, this is what is going to happen throughout the Lord’s life. In His Deity, He is capable of performing the great works and healings that He does; but He depends upon God the Father instead. He knows what He is capable of doing based upon the Scriptures. He knows the Word of God (Luke 2:40, 52). Jesus is living His life and executing His ministry based upon Bible doctrine in His soul and the power of God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus has just proclaimed Himself the Messiah inside the Nazareth synagogue. It took a minute or so for the congregation to consider what He had said and respond to it. However, given some time to reflect, the congregants were unhappy with what they heard.

They heard His claim and they rejected it. In fact, they heard His claim and it made them angry.

Luke 4:28 *When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath.*

What Jesus has taught probably seems pretty tame; but my guess is, the people there are fixated on His first words in the synagogue: "Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." With those words, Jesus is claiming to be the Messiah, the King, David's Greater Son; and the hearers could not abide with that. What He said was blasphemy to them.

On top of that, Jesus has compared Himself to Elijah and Elisha, two men of God, sent by God (all of the prophets are accepted and admired after their deaths). By making this comparison, Jesus is implying that He has been sent by God.

Logically, if Jesus is *not* the Messiah, then this would make Him a liar or worse.

"Isn't this Joseph's son? Isn't this the carpenter's son?" they asked of one another. By these words, they are saying, "This is not the Messiah; we know who this man is. This young man has delusions of grandeur; and He has blasphemed God with His words."

Then Jesus gives them two specific examples where two of God's recognized prophets provided comfort and healing for gentiles rather than for Jews.

The people now move against Jesus:

Luke 4:29a *And they rose up and drove Him out of the town...*

Often the words *rise up* indicate a person who is about to take a specific course of action; and sometimes, it simply refers to people actually rising up. They are all seating in the synagogue and they all stand up. They are infuriated that Jesus, a man that many of them know, would make such claims.

The exact method of driving Jesus out of the city is not specified. Did some grab Him? Was He surrounded and the crowd moved toward the outskirts of the city? However this was done, all of the people in the synagogue have forced Jesus to the edge of their city.

Luke 4:29b *...and brought Him to the brow of the hill...*

They have determined what they were going to do as a mob. This Man blasphemed God, they said to one another, and He had to die. This is what I assume is their motivation, as well as anger towards Jesus for what He said.

No consideration is given to the idea that maybe Jesus is telling them the truth.

Luke 4:29c *...on which their town was built,...*

The city is built upon a mountain (often this was done as a means of protection); and there would be portions of the city which overlooked a considerable drop (I don't now if we are talking about 20', 50' or 100' or more). In any case, going to the outskirts of the city meant going to the edge of a cliff, where the drop off was fatal.

Luke 4:29d ...so that they could throw Him down the cliff.

As a mob, their intention is to kill Jesus, without a trial, without a hearing; without any legal proceeding. Their self-righteous religiosity kicked in. They have completely given in to their anger and rejection of the Lord.

Their anger was out of control; and they were acting as a mob.

Luke 4:29 And they rose up and drove Him out of the town and brought Him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw Him down the cliff.

The negative volition of the Nazarenes was quite startling. They were ready to kill Jesus, as a mob. We have seen the extend of His crime. He told them that the words they heard from Isaiah were fulfilled right now; and Jesus then gave them some examples from the Old Testament where two prophets interacted with two Gentiles instead of with any Jews. That was his crime; that was His blasphemy.

Do you want to make a liberal angry? Tell him the truth.

#### **Lesson 136: Luke 4:28–32**

#### **Jesus Leaves Nazareth and Goes to Capernaum**

Jesus, in the synagogue of His hometown, taught them that the Messianic passage which He read to them is taking place right before their eyes. The people reacted poorly to this:

Luke 4:28–29 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove Him out of the town and brought Him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw Him down the cliff.

The people of Nazareth were so upset that they wanted to kill the Lord. They were acting as an out-of-control mob.

Luke 4:30 But passing through their midst, He went away.

This odd thing where Jesus appears to be indistinguishable, occurs on multiple occasions. Jesus does not appear to have a striking appearance. No one says, he is the tall, good-looking guy with the strong jawline (as, for example, most people tend to describe me). They seem to be unable to identify Him and keep track of Him. Whether there is a supernatural element here or whether He is nondescript, we do not really know. When this happens (it happens several times in the life of Jesus), there is no clear reference that this is a miracle. That is, we never read, *and He changed His appearance and walked through*

*the crowd unrecognized. We do not read, God made the people unable to recognize Jesus.*

On this topic, I find it quite Interesting that we have no physical descriptions of Jesus in the Bible (apart from His appearance on the Mount of Transfiguration). There are only a few things that we can say about His appearance based upon some logical deductions. He appeared to be very average in physical appearance. He was probably amazingly strong and had a solid, muscular build (several of His disciples would have had a similar build). He was medium dark-skinned (like His disciples); and He had short hair and a beard. None of these things are said directly; this is information which we get by logic and inference. Most of these characteristics will be true of His 12 disciples as well.

Luke 4:31a **And He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee.**

According to Google, the distance between Nazareth and Capernaum is 32 miles. On modern roadways, a reasonably fit person could make this walk in a day. However, travel in the ancient world was much more difficult, the roadways not being very smooth. Throughout the Bible—in fact, in the very book that we are studying—there are talks of making the paths straight and of removing any impediment which is in the way. Obviously, the straighter the road, the more level the road, and the fewer impediments along the way, the easier the road would be to travel.

I believe that Jesus is in exceptionally good health, and that He could make such a walk in two days, if necessary. Others estimate 4 days (I think that is far too long). Throughout His ministry, Jesus communed with God; so it would seem that, on a journey like this, that Jesus would continue this practice.

We do not know how Jesus chose to go to this or that place. The only thing which makes sense here is, He was guided or moved by the Holy Spirit (as we have read previously). So Jesus was guided to speak in places where there was positive volition toward the accurate teaching of the Word of God. I would believe that the Holy Spirit understood where the positive volition was, but that Jesus did not access His omniscience in order to have this knowledge.

It would make sense that Jesus would travel to cities and villages which are near one another.

On occasion, He taught at places where people were negative, but He rarely remained there for long. Also, He faced actual physical attacks in some places (like Nazareth). He did not appear to ever return to Nazareth. He will be turned away from the cities from the beginning. So, it is logical that Jesus would go to cities where He was accepted; and that He would avoid cities where people were clearly not interested.

For these reasons, Jesus mostly avoided places where the people have rejected Him or would reject Him. There was no reason for Jesus to spend any amount of time teaching people who rejected His Person and authority.

Let me remind you that Jesus had a mostly unknown ministry prior to Nazareth. I put an arbitrary time frame of 6 months on this ministry, where Jesus, without disciples, went from city to city, stopping in at the various synagogues, where He would read the Scriptures placed in front of Him; and then explain them. By this ministry (or, *pre-ministry*, if you will), Jesus would have known where the positive and negative volition was.

Jesus would eventually allow Himself to be taken by the law (by illegitimate authorities, actually); but He needed to complete His ministry. Jesus needed to assemble disciples and He needed to teach them. They would carry on His ministry.

As Christians, we stand upon the finished work of Jesus Christ. Without Him, we are lost. But the way that we know about Him is the Bible, which is written primarily by His disciples (and by Paul, chosen as a disciple by Jesus after the resurrection to serve Him).

Jesus' disciples were important for many reasons. They would continue His earthly ministry. They would stand as witnesses to His life, His miracles and healings, and, eventually, His resurrection.

Nothing is said about Jesus having any companions or followers at this point. The selection of Jesus' disciples is going to take place in the next chapter. My educated guess is, He traveled alone during His ministry chronicled in Luke 4:14–15 (we have no idea how long this portion of His ministry continued).

**Application:** God is always able to match up good teaching with positive volition. It may not seem that way when some doctrinal churches have 5 or 15 members, but remember what we read in the Old Testament: [Who has despised the day of small things?](#)

So Jesus arrives in Capernaum. What happened in Nazareth occurred on a Saturday (Luke 4:16); and now, it is the next Saturday.

Luke 4:31b **And He was teaching them on the Sabbath,...**

Whereas our Christian churches are famous for lasting an hour or an hour and fifteen minutes, I suspect that the reading and teaching in the synagogues lasted much longer. This was the day off for all Jewish people, and many believers (and religious types) took advantage of this, to hear as much of the Word of God as was possible.

Although it was typical for men to stand up and read passages to the congregation; Jesus apparently added some explanation as well to His readings. This does not appear to be out of the ordinary. I assume that teaching or providing some explanation was not unusual or unheard of.

I mentioned that I once took a course called Differential Equations and the professor was Polish, and it seemed, recently arrived. His English was difficult to understand and his writing was atrocious. So, we were supposed to do problem on the chalkboard. We were allowed/encouraged to explain them. So, knowing that this was not easy for those in the



class, I would explain exactly what I did, step by step, as clearly as I possibly could. I had people later tell me that the only thing they ever understood in that class was when I taught from the board (I usually did a problem during each class).

Jesus is thoroughly filled with both the Spirit and the Word of God. Therefore, when He taught the words that He read, many people understood these passages sometimes for the first time. “Oh, that’s what’s going on.” Or, “I understand what God is telling us in this passage.”

The Bible is filled with narrative. There are certainly doctrines, rules, laws and guidelines; but there is a lot of narrative as well. Even in the 5 books of the Torah, which contain the foundation of God’s instruction to the Jewish people, there is a lot of narrative. Nearly all of Genesis is narrative; and I would estimate over half of Exodus is narrative. Much of Numbers is narrative. That right there would suggest that the Torah is about half narrative.

Since God the Holy Spirit helped guide the writers of Scripture, there are a great many details of their life experiences which are left out. Therefore, when one talks about this or that narrative, there are sometimes very important lessons to be found in said narrative.

I have had the experience on many occasions of reading an Old Testament passage, not having any idea what it meant; and then R. B. Thieme, Jr. would explain the passage in detail, bringing in all of the relevant isagogics; and suddenly, an obscure passage made perfect sense.

As an aside, there are passages in the book of Luke which I recall R. B. Thieme, Jr. teaching (he taught primarily the parallel passage from the book of Matthew), and I still recall his explanation; and how much sense that it made. This is teaching which I received 40 years ago, for the most part.

There are very simple things, like the offering up of Isaac by his father Abraham. This is a very dramatic narrative, and many people, on their first read, wonder, *does God support child sacrifice?* There are a great many memes made up in the unbelieving world about Abraham bringing Isaac to be offered up as a human sacrifice to God (and many disparaging things said about God as a result). However, for the believer, the meaning of that narrative is quite significant.

Many times, when the believer’s faith is attacked and he hears the Scriptures being disparaged, along with all of his beliefs, a believer will remember early Old Testament passages and how well they are integrated into fundamental Christian doctrine. Our confidence is often based upon such passages. Our confidence is based upon the Word of God.

Back to the narrative:

Luke 4:31 **And He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And He was teaching them on the Sabbath,...**

Galilee describes the general region where Jesus' ministry, for the most part, took place. This is the region mostly north and west of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum is a specific city about 30 miles from Nazareth.

Jesus encountered negative volition in Nazareth, so He has gone to Capernaum instead.

Luke 4:32a ...and they were astonished at His teaching,...

People at these synagogues (perhaps there was just one in each city) heard Jesus teaching, and they were quite amazed.

Luke 4:32b ...for His word possessed authority.

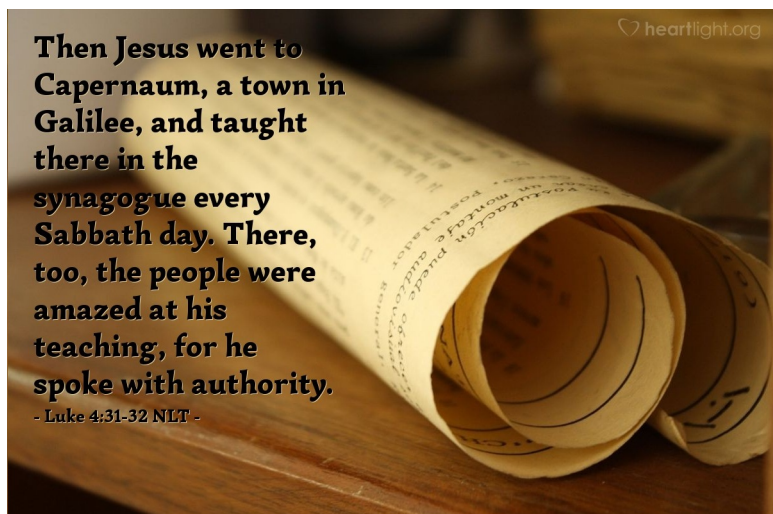
Jesus did not give the explanations offered by rabbis in the past; He did not offer up the explanation, "This passage means this; or, perhaps, it means that." He did not cite this or that rabbi when explaining what information was to be found in the passage that he read. He simply taught what was there, accurately, and with authority. Jesus was the authority as the One teaching the passage before them.

As an aside, you might think someone teaching accurately and with authority is arrogant when you first hear them; but the person who is arrogant is you. A good Bible teacher knows his material and has studied it for years, if not decades. On the other hand, many Bible students are barely dry behind the ears. Or their growth has been impeded by personal inconsistency or a lack of belief.

Luke 4:32 ...and they were astonished at His teaching, for His word possessed authority.

Jesus is in Capernaum teaching the Word of God with authority. The people are astonished. The verb here is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural, imperfect passive indicative of *ekplêssô* (ἐκπλήσσω) [pronounced *ehk-PLACE-so*]. It means, *to strike with astonishment; to amaze, to astonish; to be astonished*. Strong's #1605. The imperfect tense indicates that the people began to be astonished or amazed and they continue with their amazement. The passive voice indicates that they are listening, hearing and absorbing the teaching of Jesus. The indicative mood is the mood of reality.

However, unlike Nazareth, the people of Capernaum did not reject the Lord's authority.



Luke 4:31–32 (NLT) (a graphic); from [Heart Light](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

## Lesson 137: Luke 4:33–35

## Jesus expels a demon

At this point in our narrative, Jesus has exited His city of Nazareth and He is now teaching in Capernaum.

Luke 4:33a **And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon,...**

Jesus regularly goes into the synagogues to read the Scriptures and to teach them. He is in the synagogue in Capernaum and there is a man there possessed by a demon.

Virtually everything we know about demon possession is found in the gospels. We find the word *demon* (s) 68 times in the gospels; but the word *demon* (in the singular) is not found in the epistles or even in the book of Acts. We find the word *demons* twice in the Old Testament (Deut. 32:17 Psalm 106:37—both passages are about sacrificing to demons) and 7 times in the epistles and 3 times in Revelation—and not a single one of those passages references demon possession.

Very often, there is very odd behavior expressed by a person controlled by a demon (or, *demons*). We do not know if this carries over to modern society or not. Personally, I believe that it does. But, compared to what we find in our own lives, there was a lot of demon activity during the time that the Lord was walking the earth. And when it comes to dealing with demons or dismissing them—believers in the Church Age are given no actual guidance here. Certainly, we have read about Jesus and demons, but we have to be careful about reading about something taking place and then trying to copy it.

Paul spoke of various spiritual gifts—and there are, no doubt, more than he named—but he never spoke of the gifts *demon hunter* or *demon expeller*. Given that there are no mechanics whatsoever in that realm that we can read in the epistles, trying to make up our own mechanics to cast out demons is a very bad idea.

Therefore, even though I certainly believe in these experiences recorded by Luke of Jesus; I would suggest that we understand them to be a specific historical context. Jesus had the ability to cast out demons; and His disciples did as well; but actual exercise of this gift appears to occur less and less often in the book of Acts.

Luke 4:33b **...and he cried out with a loud voice,...**

The demon-possessed man calls out in a loud voice. We don't know if there is a reading going on or if Jesus enters into the synagogue and the man freaks (or, more accurately, the demon in him freaks). The demon cries out in a loud voice (using the vocal cords of the man it possesses).

No one has to introduce Jesus to this demon. They are apparently able to recognize Jesus for Who He is.

Now, bear in mind that Jesus has but one time revealed Who He is in Nazareth, and the people there tried to kill Him, they were so upset. For this reason, I would assume that Jesus is not teaching that particular aspect of Himself as He goes to the synagogue in Capernaum (I am assuming that is where this takes place based upon v. 31—that this is a continuation of vv. 31–32). Nevertheless, the demon possessing this man (or speaking through this man) is aware of Who Jesus is. How exactly, we do not know. Did he receive communications from other demons? Is he able to, somehow, recognize God's Messiah when humans cannot? Were all demons informed of the Lord based upon what happened when He was born? I don't have the answers to these questions as of yet.

Luke 4:33 **And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice,...**

Jesus, as was His custom, entered into a synagogue with the intent of teaching there. Before Him in the synagogue is a man who is possessed by a demon, and the demon calls out in a loud voice to Jesus.

We do not know how long that Jesus has been teaching, but it is long enough for the people to be astonished by His teaching. Perhaps this event takes place in the midst of His teaching, or when He is done. Based upon the narrative that I am reading, I would suggest that this all takes place while Jesus is teaching. He walks into the synagogue and, when it is His time, Jesus begins to teach, and He teaches with authority. However, suddenly it becomes apparent that there is a man in the synagogue with a demon. Academic discipline suddenly comes to a standstill.

The demon appears to be unable to contain itself.

Luke 4:34a **"Ha! What have You to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?"**

Jesus has been teaching the Scriptures with authority; and people are finding this to be very impressive. But this demon, through the man it has possessed, is speaking to Jesus, saying, "What will you do to us, Jesus of Nazareth?"

This way of referencing Jesus is interesting to me. Most often, men were identified by their first names and their father's name. Or, on occasion, by the name of the Jewish branch that they are in. But, on occasion, a person is known by the city where he has grown up.

I believe that there is some significance here, related to the fact that Jesus just came out of Nazareth and that the people there soundly rejected Him. I would postulate that the demon is aware of that, despite being confined to the body of this person he has inhabited (demons appear to have more mobility when *not* occupying a body). However, we do not know what sort of communication between demons takes place; and if such

communication can occur between a demon possessing a person (who is then confined to that person) and a demon who is not (who has complete mobility).

The man is said to be possessed by a demon—singular—but it is speaking in terms of *us*. This leads me to think that, there are a number of other demons possessing this man or the demon is speaking for himself and other demons who have possessed people in that region.

Demons know that their time on earth, clear of punishment, will come to an end at some point. Remember studying the concept of intercalation and how Old Testament prophecy blends the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advents of Jesus together? These demons are aware of the same Scriptures. They know Who Jesus is, and Him being there, in Capernaum, may make their end seem very near. They are unaware of a long period of time coming in the future, the Church Age. So far, there is nothing which has been taught which would suggest this.

Although the book of Revelation speaks of their dispatch, I am not sure what the demons were able to piece together based upon Old Testament prophecies. The Millennium is spoken of on a number of occasions in the Old Testament; and these demons may have simply figured, if there is perfect environment, then where are they in that picture? Demons would obviously have no place in perfect environment. Satan would have no place in perfect environment; and sin natures will have no place in perfect environment. Standing before them is the King-Messiah, Who will, at some point, bring in the Kingdom of God. No doubt, foremost on the minds of the demons is, *when is this going to happen?*

The world is a very difficult place, and that is due to two forces which are constantly at work: the multiple sin natures of man and the actions and influence of demons. Perfect environment seems to indicate, to the learned demon, that he does not have a place in that world.

Luke 4:34b **Have You come to destroy us?**

The demons are aware of God's power and they appear to know something about their fate. Has Jesus come at this time to destroy all of them? Is this the time that Jesus will cast them into the Lake of Fire? Are they fully aware of that sentencing? That information would not have to be in the Scriptures. It would make sense that God has unequivocally condemned all demons along with Satan; and that there is a final reckoning which will take place (where they are judged). The judgment will both be harsh and separate them from this world.

The demons appear to be aware that such a time of judgment is coming, and are concerned that it might be very near.

Luke 4:34c **I know Who You are...."**

It is logical that Jesus is not revealing to every congregation exactly Who He is. The problems with this self-identification were evidence in Nazareth.

For the most part, Jesus will allow His works, teaching and authority to dominate His ministry.

When it becomes more clear exactly Who Jesus is, then He will be crucified. Nevertheless, this demon says, "I know Who You are!"

Luke 4:34d ...—the Holy One of God."

The demon continues: "You are the Holy One of God." No mere man can have this title. All of us are unclean; we are all in rebellion against God. Man rages against God; and that includes you and I. We are anything but holy before God. The best person that you know (which isn't me) rages against God. That is our fundamental person; that is our base nature.

But Jesus is a man without sin—He has no sin nature, no imputed sin; and He has never committed a sin. Jesus is set apart to God. It is likely, based upon the events of the first portion of this chapter, that demons are very aware of Jesus and His great power.

Luke 4:34 "Ha! What have You to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know Who You are—the Holy One of God."

The demon controlling the man in the synagogue, speaks to Jesus, asking Him what is He going to do. Demons know that their time is limited; and the appearance of the Lord is one aspect to their removal from this earth (one of the *nails in their coffin*, if you will).

Luke 4:35a But Jesus rebuked him,...

This demon thinks he is going to be talkative and reveal whatever he feels like revealing; but Jesus rebukes (or censures) him. Jesus will stop him from talking and end the possession of the man.

At this point, Jesus is in control of the demon; or, at the very least, in control of its immediate options. To be clear, Jesus is functioning in the power of the Holy Spirit, and that is where all of the power is. That is, the power of God the Holy Spirit is accessed now; not the power of the Lord's Deity.

Luke 4:35b ...saying, "Be silent and come out of him!"

Jesus tells the demon to shut it and to come out of the man. Our knowledge of demon possession is limited and confined almost entirely to the gospels. I am unaware of any cases of demon possession in the Old Testament.

There is some mention of demon activity in the Old Testament—for instance, in Gen. 6 when demons apparently could take on a physical form and interact with mankind. We have a convocation of the spirits before God in Job 1–2 (which includes Satan). But we do not have demon possession as we find it during the Lord's ministry.



As an aside, when it comes to our interaction with demons—if any—how many believers go to Genesis 6 and cite the demon activity of this chapter as providing us the understanding of how to deal with them? Is there anyone that you know who is building a giant Ark right now? Of course not; no one is.

We have Satan speaking to God about Job in the first two chapters of Job. Do believers go to this chapter and figure out the best arguments that we can present to God, just in case Satan is thinking about taking all of our stuff away? Of course not! No one is doing that!

Therefore, despite there being a great deal of demon activity occurring in Palestine during the ministry of our Lord, should we go to these chapters and decide how we are going to personally defy Satan and his demon cadre? Let me suggest that, despite the fact that we will study such occurrences throughout the book of Luke, God has not called upon us to become demon hunters. Even though it appears that demons are in control of some people, has God called on us to go after those demons? At this point, we do not look back to Genesis 6 or to Job 1–2, or even to the gospels; but we consider what Paul and the other Apostles have taught us in the epistles (which is where most of our Church Age doctrine is to be found).

Paul describes in Ephesians what we ought to be doing regarding demons (as the conflict that we find ourselves in the midst of is an unseen conflict): Ephesians 6:10–18 **Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can make your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world's darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore take up the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you will be able to stand your ground, and having done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth fastened around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness arrayed, and with your feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times, with every kind of prayer and petition. To this end, stay alert with all perseverance in your prayers for all the saints.** (Berean Study Bible)

This passage makes it clear that we are in a spiritual battle, and that fundamental in this battle is Bible doctrine, the filling of the Spirit and a clear understanding of the gospel. We are to stand our ground regarding any sort of attack; but there is nothing about our taking the offensive against demons who inhabit the bodies of people throughout the world.

Since Jesus will, many times in the future, expel demons; I will take such opportunities in the future to evaluate Eph. 6:10–18 in greater detail.

Luke 4:35a-b **And this Jesus rebukes him, saying, "Be quiet and come out from him!"** (Kukis nearly literal) It appears as if the demon has already spoken. Do the people hear what it said? Do some there remember? I would have to answer yes, as this incident is

recorded, including the words of the demon. So, some people there actually heard the demon, but Jesus apparently stopped the demon in time, so that not all of the people there hear what the demon says. Some, in all of the commotion, possibly hear, or hear something, but it does not stay with them.

## Lesson 138: Luke 4:31–36

## Demon possession Part II

This is what we have been studying so far:

Luke 4:31–32 **And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And He was teaching them on the Sabbath, and they were astonished at His teaching, for His word possessed authority.**

Having been chase out of Nazareth, His life threatened, Jesus traveled to Capernaum.

I believe that Jesus, from His ministry of teaching (when there were no miracles and no disciples), learned about the various cities and their volition regarding the clear teaching of Scripture.

The people were surprised by Jesus' teaching in Capernaum. Rabbis who taught often quoted rabbis from the past or they may have offered the general wisdom on a particular passage, which may have several explanations. Jesus apparently read the passage and then He explained it. His explanation was the authoritative one. He made no apologies for His teaching; and He did not refer back to the great thinkers of the past.

Luke 4:33–34 **And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, "Ha! What have You to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God."** (ESV; capitalized)

The demons are aware of the Lord returning and casting them into fire, but they did not have a specific timetable. They certainly were able to recognize Jesus as being the Holy One of God; and that could have indicated to them that their end was near.

Luke 4:35a-b **But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!"**

From what occurs here, it is clear that demons are subject to God; and subject to Jesus' authority.

There are several reasons why Jesus would command the demon to be quiet: (1) Jesus does not want His Person to be testified to by an unclean spirit; and (2) when Jesus revealed Who He is in Nazareth, the people tried to kill Him. Therefore, for the most part, Jesus will allow others to testify to His Person (but not demons).

At this time, I cannot think of any time in the future where Jesus will clearly announce Who He is to a large audience. Even the day of the crucifixion, when He is slapped by the High Priest, demanding of him, "Tell us plainly whether You are the Son of God!" And Jesus responds with, "That is what you are saying."

Jesus allowed others to testify as to His Person.

One must wonder, *didn't the demon already let the cat out of the bag? Did he not just reveal who Jesus is?* The demon said the following to the Lord: "Ha! What have You to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are--the Holy One of God." (Luke 4:34; ESV; capitalized)

I propose two options: some (or all) of the people in the synagogue heard this demon or none of them did. If anyone in the synagogue heard the words of this demon, they may have understood it, partially understood it, or did not understand what he said at all. There will be things which Jesus will say which are not fully appreciated by those who heard Him perfectly (Luke 18:34). I lean towards the idea that, either no one heard what the demon said to Jesus; or, they heard, but they had no frame of reference for what they heard (so they did not fully appreciate what the demon was saying). Jesus claiming to be the fulfillment of prophecy in Nazareth did not go over very well, and we will see that Jesus does not repeat those words elsewhere.



What makes the most sense to me is, if anyone heard the words of the demon, things which occurred immediately after crowd out what they heard.

Luke 4:35c And when the demon had thrown him [the man who is possessed] down in their midst,...

The demon throws down the person that it is inhabiting in front of them. *In the midst* suggests that the people in the synagogue had gathered around this man, or from their place in the synagogue, they are focused upon this demon-possessed man.

The action of the aorist participles precedes or is coterminous with the action of the main verb; and the main verb, *to go out*, follows.

**Jesus Heals the Demoniac** (a painting by James Tissot 1836–1902), from [Garden of Praise](#); accessed June 4, 2021

There is a lot of action occurring, so many of the people there, despite being witnesses, hear, but then forget about the testimony of the demon. However, at least one person hears and remembers, since Luke records this incident in full.

Luke 4:35d ...he came out of him,...

This is the demon who goes out from the man.

This may not be very important, but I see two obvious options: (1) the demon still has the power to throw the man upon the ground or (2) when exiting the man, the man did not immediately assume control of his own body. He had been subject to the demon for such a long time that, he has given up trying to exert his own free will with regards to any part of his body. So the demon leaves, and the body collapses. In either case, the man will take control of his own body moments later.

Luke 4:35e ...having done him no harm.

The man who was possessed—despite being thrown to the ground—was unharmed. Once Jesus had given the command, the demon no longer could harm this man. Even throwing him onto the ground did not harm him. I believe that we can understand this as being permanent harm as well (he is not suffering any broken bones; the man has resumed control of his own body).

Another possible way of understanding this phrase is, the demon was no longer harming the man, because it was no longer inside of him.

Luke 4:35 But Jesus rebuked him [the demon], saying, "Be silent and come out of him [the man]!" And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm.

The demon began to identify Jesus. Jesus told it to be silent and He demanded that the demon come out of the man. The demon could do nothing but obey. Jesus has complete authority over the demons.

Luke 4:36a And they were all amazed...

What the people in the synagogue have just witnessed is quite remarkable. They have not seen anything like this before.

We know nothing about this possessed man—was he there for just the one day or did the people of the city know him? That backstory is left out. Whatever the situation was in the past, the people recognize what is happening right there before their eyes, and they are amazed by all that they see.

Luke 4:36b ...and said to one another,...

After witnessing something so dramatic, the people are quite conversant and animated. If there is some sort of history with this possessed man (and I would suspect that there is), there was probably limited conversation and interaction when he was around. But now that the demon is gone, there is a great release of tension. People do not have any reason to hold back their thoughts or emotions.

Luke 4:36c ...*"What is this word?"*

First, the people simply try to make sense of what it is that they just saw. The word here is *logos* (λόγος, ου, ό) [pronounced *LOHG-ohss*], and it means, *a word; conception, idea; matter; thing; decree, mandate; doctrine, teaching; the act of speaking*. Strong's #3056. What they are saying is, *what is this thing?* They ask of one another. *What exactly did we just witness?*

Or, perhaps when they said, *"What [is] this word?"*, they were referring to Jesus simply speaking. Jesus simply spoke to the man, and the demon came out of him.

All of this suggests to me that there is some backstory. That is, many of the people there were aware of this possessed man. Over what period of time had he been possessed and what sort of behavior had he exhibited? We have no answers for those questions. However, we can come to this conclusion: the people were aware of what just happened, and the people were able to recognize that this man who was once controlled by a demon, is controlled no longer. The instant transformation must have been remarkable.

Luke 4:36d *For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!"*

If you think back, the people at Capernaum were surprised that Jesus was teaching Scripture with such authority. They were used to the teaching of the pharisees and priests who tended to refer back to the authority of other previous teachers. Now they see that Jesus commands the demons, and this fact is even more impressive to those in attendance.

Jesus gave the command, and the possession of this man has suddenly ceased. The people are amazed and cannot believe that this Jesus has the authority and the power to do something like this.

In the book of Luke, this is the first recorded miracle done by the Lord. I believe that turning water into wine was probably the first public miracle of Jesus (but it was not done in such a way that many people recognized it; there, a handful of people knew what happened).

The fact that the people are amazed and recognize that Jesus has authority and power previously unheard of, indicates that there is a backstory regarding this possessed man.



The people in the synagogue knew more than what they had just witnessed. That is, they all knew this man and/or they knew something about him. The nature of what they knew is not given to us.

This authority and power reveal the Lord's divine authority; but Jesus will continue to reveal Himself in similarly subtle ways.

You will note what we do not have here. Jesus does not say, "I command the spirits for I am God" (or the *Son of God*). He does not say, "As the Promised Messiah, God the Holy Spirit has given Me this power and authority." Jesus does not say anything like this, even though, in Nazareth, He previously identified Himself as the *Promised Messiah*.

Earlier in this chapter, when Jesus said, "Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears." I believe that He said this for two reasons: (1) To clearly identify Himself to all right from the beginning (God knows that what is written in Scripture has been seen by billions more people than those in the synagogue that day; and (2) to help us understand why Jesus did not continue to tell people Who He is. He will allow others to recognize Who He is. He will allow others (but not demons) to testify as to His Person; but Jesus would no longer did so. It appears that there is a level of truth that those on negative volition are willing to accept; but that this is limited. If Jesus goes to the point of saying, "I am the Messiah of the Scriptures," those with negative volition would be suddenly motivated to attack Him. Making such a statement is just a bridge too far for some people.

For the most part, Jesus would allow others to identify Him; however, He will not go from village to village announcing, "I am Messiah."

**Application:** There are many self-proclaimed atheists in this world who simply hate God. And they want to do far more than give God a piece of their minds; if given the chance, they would want to inflict pain upon God.

The anger of man is quite a phenomenon; and, when some of the social controls are lifted, what some men will do is startling. This is dramatically multiplied when there are angry men in a group (that is, when there is a mob).

At this point in our narrative, the people of Capernaum are in the *wowed* state. They have witnessed something which is remarkable, and they are currently processing what they have seen and heard.

Luke 4:36 **And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!"**

The people in the synagogue all witness Jesus throwing the demon out of this man, and they find it amazing. They are trying to figure out just Who Jesus is at this point, as Jesus has not clearly identified Himself to those in Capernaum. His authority over these unclean spirits is clearly remarkable.



From the Analytical Literal Translation:

Luke 4:31–32 And He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbaths. And they were being astonished at His teaching, because His word was with authority.

Jesus left Nazareth, where the people tried to kill Him (He had proclaimed Himself to be the Messiah, the subject of the Scripture that He read aloud in their synagogue).

He is reading the Scriptures and teaching in Capernaum, but without saying, "These Scriptures are about Me."

The people are amazed that He is teaching with authority.

Luke 4:33–34 And in the synagogue was a man having a spirit of an unclean [or, defiling] demon. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Away! What to us and to You [fig., What have we to do with You], Jesus, O Nazarene? Did You come to destroy us? I know You, who You are—the Holy One of God!"

The demon within a demon-possessed man knows Who Jesus is. The demon is also aware of his own final end.

The demon tries to reveal who Jesus is.

Luke 4:35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silenced, and come out from him!" And the demon having thrown him down into [the] midst, came out from him, in no way having harmed him.

Jesus hushes the demon and throws the demon out of the man. The man collapses. The formerly possessed man is suffering no permanent injury.

Luke 4:36 And amazement came upon all, and they were conversing with one another, saying, "What [is] this word, that with authority and power He commands the unclean [or, defiling] spirits, and they come out?" (ALT)

The people are amazed as to what they have observed.

I will try to confine this to simply what information is clearly presented in this narrative.

### A Summary of What We Know from Luke 4:31–36

1. All of this takes place in Capernaum inside a synagogue.
2. Jesus apparently spends some time teaching, and the people in the synagogue

## A Summary of What We Know from Luke 4:31–36

- find that to be remarkable, that He speaks with authority.
3. While in the synagogue, one man begins to act up, as he is possessed by a demon. We do not know what his actions were or if he simply started speaking up.
4. The demon (s) clearly recognizes Jesus and knows Who He is.
5. The demon begins to identify Jesus, and Jesus shuts this down.
6. The demon (or demons) inside the man controlling him recognize that they face a future judgment and they are concerned that judgment has come to them at this time. Their final judgment is clearly associated with Jesus, the Son of God.
7. Jesus commands the demons to come out of the man. There is no formula used, no special words uttered, and Jesus does not identify Himself there when casting the demon out.
8. The people in the synagogue witness this and it is quite amazing to them. They know enough about the man and what they saw to recognize that what they have just witnessed is remarkable.
9. Jesus does not appear to use this event to launch into a powerful sermon. He does not say, "Now that I have got your attention..." Whatever Jesus says or does after this event is not recorded in the book of Luke. In v. 38, Jesus simply rises up and leaves the synagogue.

This does not mean that using an amazing event to kick off a sermon is a wrong thing to do. I am simply indicating that Jesus does not appear to do that.

Luke 4:37 **And reports about Him went out into every place in the surrounding region.**

Without a written newspaper, the reports about Jesus and what He has done go out throughout the land. Everywhere around people will hear about what happened in this synagogue.

The people saw the Lord cast out a demon; they saw that the demons obeyed Him immediately.

The word for *report* might be translated, in today's parlance, *buzz*.

This is one of those sentences in Luke which takes in a future event or events, but then he returns to the chronological narrative with the next verse. That is, these reports go out over the next few weeks, perhaps months. People from the synagogue tell everyone what they just witnessed. However, the verse picks up the narrative right after the shocked words uttered by the people in the synagogue (**And they were all amazed and said to one another, "What is this word? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!"**)

Luke 4:38a **And He arose and left the synagogue...**

Jesus, while in Capernaum, had been teaching in a synagogue, as was His custom. This was the synagogue where Jesus dismissed the demon (s) which had been in the a man.

He left the synagogue. If there was a sermon after, it is not recorded. It does not appear that Jesus did any more teaching after the casting out of this demon.

In this next short narrative of two verses, Jesus will rise up from the synagogue; and Peter's mother-in-law will rise up from her sickbed. After rising up, each one will attend to His/her purpose.

Luke 4:38b ...and entered Simon's house..

This is Simon Peter, as we have the parallel passage in Matt. 8:14–15 and Mark 1:29–31. Interestingly enough, Jesus is with James and John, at this point; and in Mark, we are told that this is the house of Simon and Andrew. We would expect this tidbit of information from Mark, as he appears to have crafted his gospel based upon Peter's oral history given to him.

It is fascinating what details are left out of this narrative by Luke. However, the fact that Andrew, John and James are also there is not really germane to this event. No doubt, there were several people there who are not named in many of the narratives.

Luke 4:38c Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever,...

Simon is married, although we don't know much about his wife. Simon's mother-in-law appears to live with them (this seems to be the case, as this is said to be Simon's house).

The participle can also mean *constrained*. Peter's mother may have been the sort of mother who liked to entertain and the see to her guests; and she was constrained by her illness; she was unable to tend to her guests and see to their needs.

There is nothing wrong with this. Many people who host a party spend most of their time seeing to the needs of their guests, to make certain that they are fed and given drinks. This is what this woman did.

When read by itself, it appears that Jesus saw Simon (Peter) fishing (in Luke 5) and said, "Let Me make you a fisher of men." And that appears to be the entirety of his calling. However, right here in the narrative, prior to being *called*, Simon knows Jesus and appeals to Him to heal his mother-in-law. This small clue would suggest that most or all of the disciples had some association with the Lord prior to their being called. It is logical that Jesus had some interactions with His disciples before officially calling them.

Jesus, being guided by the Spirit, revealed Himself in Nazareth; and casts out a demon in nearby Capernaum. He finds Himself associated with Simon (Peter)—perhaps he was in the synagogue; perhaps he was told what happened at the synagogue. Or perhaps there is more that happens in Capernaum than is revealed here.



In any case, Simon feels comfortable enough to ask Jesus to come to his home to heal his mother-in-law. As far as we know, there does not appear to be any precedence for this. That is, did Jesus heal any person prior to this? Is Simon Peter expecting Jesus to cure his mother-in-law? How much has Simon Peter figured out about the Lord?

**Jesus cures the mother-in-law of Peter of her illness** (a graphic); from [Women in the Bible](#); accessed June 11, 2021.

Luke 4:38d ...and they appealed to Him on her behalf.

There are friends and family concerned about Simon's mother, and they petition Jesus on her behalf. It is likely that Simon heard the Lord teach and was aware of Him casting out the demon. Simon puts these things together, and decides, apparently, that Jesus is able to cure his mother-in-law (or, at the very least, help her). This could even be based upon Scripture which Jesus has read and explained.

This could give us some insight as to how Jesus is led by the Spirit. He is rejected in Nazareth, so He cannot remain there. The people were actually hostile enough to try to kill Him. He then goes to a nearby village, and he goes to read and teach in the Capernaum synagogue. That was always a given in His schedule. He has probably taught there before and received a positive response.

Suddenly, there is a demon-possessed man before Him, so Jesus communicates with the demon and throws him out. Simon sees this (I am assuming this) and he asks the Lord, "Perhaps You might help me with my ailing mother-in-law." So you see, there are events which take place, which appear very much to guide Jesus.

Don't get the wrong idea. I am not trying to demythologize the historic Jesus. I do believe Him to be the Unique Son of God; and I believe that He had complete and total access to His Deity, if He chose to do that. I do not believe that He did. I believe that events directly Jesus to do X, then Y, then Z; I do not believe that Jesus used His Own omnipotence to guide His actions. I also do not believe that God the Father gave Jesus a series of

mystical signs, like, *turn left, up ahead*. I believe that Jesus functioned primarily or completely as a sinless man in the power of the Spirit. He was, for His entire life, sinless, as we are for periods of time between the filling of the Spirit and the loss of this filling.

That is, even though Jesus could, He did not step outside of His humanity. And, even though He lived during the Age of Israel (or, if you prefer, the Era of the Hypostatic Union); He is our example when it comes to living the Christian life. As R. B. Thieme, Jr. put it, *he test-drove the Christian life*. This point being made, this does not mean that you or I can travel around and cast out demons or instantly stop people from being sick. Those sorts of things were specific to Jesus to establish Himself as the Messiah.

## Lesson 140: Luke 4:38–40

## The 6 Rebukes

Jesus is in Capernaum, which is at the north end of the Sea of Galilee.

**Galilee and Decapolis** (a map); from [Bible Mapper](#); accessed June 18, 2021.

You will notice that south of the Sea of Galilee is the Jordan River valley, which is where John the Herald conducted his ministry of baptism and exhortation.

Luke 4:38 **And He arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to Him on her behalf.**



The fact that Jesus arises from the synagogue and goes to Simon's house suggests that Simon is in the synagogue and that there are no intervening events. If my understanding of this series of events is accurate (and I believe that it is), then Jesus really has no reason to recognize that God will use Him to heal, apart from the Scriptures. What I mean is, within the humanity of the Lord, there is no inner discussion, *will I be able to heal this woman or not?* Jesus simply goes along with Peter, as this is the next increment in God's plan for Jesus' life. Jesus is aware of the several Old Testament passages where Messiah is associated with the bearing of the illnesses of others.



I realize that most people view this narrative and think to themselves, *well, Jesus is God, so He can do anything*. However, I believe things to be more complex than that. I do not believe that Jesus accessed His Deity regularly; in fact, possibly not at all during His earthy ministry (or during His life on earth). You may recall that, when tempted by Satan, Jesus did nothing miraculous. When taken to the pinnacle of the Temple and told to throw Himself down, Jesus did not go, “Watch this” and *poof*, Jesus is back on the ground, seated and eating a meal. Although Satan clearly had some extraordinary powers, Jesus did not reveal any super-human abilities during the temptation (regarding His 40-day fast, I would attribute that to a body which lacks sin).

There is a doctrinal reason for this self-imposed limitation (known theologically as *kenosis*): Jesus is test driving the Christian life. That is, we have the same portfolio of invisible assets that He has; so that we can operate in our lives very similar to the way that He lives His life. Now, if Jesus accesses His Deific nature on a regular basis, then how exactly does this work for us? We do not have that option. We can certainly pray to God the Father; but we cannot access the essence of God for our own personal use. We are unable to plan out our day by deciding, *let us see this coming day using omniscience*.

There is also a logical approach to Jesus’ use or non-use of His Deity. On the cross, Jesus bore the sins of the world. He had to bear these sins in His humanity and apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is because Deity cannot have direct contact with sin. Therefore, God the Father judged Him, pouring our sins upon Jesus, but there was no assistance or help from either God the Father or God the Holy Spirit (Jesus cried out, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*”—Mark 15:34 Psalm 22:1).

So, throughout His life, I believe that Jesus understands that God the Father is with Him and that God the Holy Spirit empowers Him; and that He has potential access to all that being God entails. However, I also believe that Jesus chose not to access His Own Divine Nature (this is known as the doctrine of Kenosis, which we have already studied—see Lessons 114–115).

Let me draw an analogy. When a movie star goes out, dressed to the 9's, posing for photographs, they are accessing their movie star notoriety. But, let’s say they want to avoid all of that. Then some of them disguise themselves, just to simply be able to step out into the world and live a normal life (like going to the store for a quart of milk and eggs). They are still the same person, in both situations, but in the second example, all that they are by way of a movie star is carefully hidden.

Luke 4:39a *And He stood over her and rebuked the fever,...*

Jesus stood over this woman and rebuked the fever. There are Old Testament passages which suggest that Messiah will have power over illnesses. It is my contention that Jesus functions based upon this fact. He is trusting the Scriptures; He is not accessing His omniscience in order to find out that He can do this. These passages are listed below:

Psalm 146:8a *Jehovah opens the eyes of the blind; Jehovah raises those bowed down;...*



Isaiah 35:5–6a Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf opened. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

Isaiah 29:18 And in that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book; and the eyes of the blind shall see out of their gloom and out of darkness.

Daniel 6:26–27 A decree was given from before me that in all the domain of my kingdom there shall be trembling and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God and endures forever, and His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed. And His rule shall be to the end. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in the heavens and in the earth, He who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. (Green's literal translation; the Daniel text is separated into the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advents)

See also Isaiah 29:18 42:7

The mechanics would be this. Jesus may rebuke the illness, but it is the sovereign Father Who then instantly removes the illness. Throughout the gospels, we talk about Jesus doing this or that, but, if He did not access His Deity (which I believe is the case), then God the Father was the One doing these miraculous things. Or, in the alternative, God the Holy Spirit provided the power to do these things.

Luke 4:39a And He stood over her and rebuked the fever,...

Unless otherwise noted, the ESV; capitalized is used below.

### The Six Rebukes of Jesus in the Book of Luke

1. Jesus rebukes the demon (it appears that there may have been several demons). Luke 4:33–35 And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, "Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know Who You are—the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm.
2. Jesus rebukes the sickness which has constrained Peter's mother-in-law. Luke 4:38–39 And He arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to Him on her behalf. And He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.
3. The disciples fear a great storm on the Sea of Galilee. They wake up a sleeping Jesus and He rebukes the storm. Luke 8:22–25 One day He got into a boat with His disciples, and He said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, and as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. And they went and woke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And He awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they

## The Six Rebukes of Jesus in the Book of Luke

- marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that He commands even winds and water, and they obey Him?"
4. Jesus rebukes another demon, which had control of a young boy. Luke 9:38–43a And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out. It convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and shatters him, and will hardly leave him. And I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." Jesus answered, "O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." While he was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. And all were astonished at the majesty of God.
  5. Jesus rebukes His Own disciples. This involved a Samaritan city for not wanting to prepare for His coming. Luke 9:51–55 When the days drew near for Him to be taken up, He set His face to go to Jerusalem. And He sent messengers ahead of Him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for Him. But the people did not receive Him, because His face was set toward Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" But He turned and rebuked them.
  6. People tried to bring children—even infants—to the Lord, but the disciples kept them away. Jesus rebuked His disciples for doing this. Luke 18:15–17 Now they were bringing even infants to Him that He might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Him, saying, "Let the children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."
  7. 3 of these rebukes reveal that Jesus has great power over things men rarely have power over. Demons, sickness and the wind. Again, I would attribute the actual power to God the Father or God the Holy Spirit.

Luke 4:39b ...and it left her,...

Jesus is standing over Peter's mother-in-law and He has rebuked her sickness. The fever was suddenly gone. Many people recover from fevers and illnesses; and sometimes that is a process which takes several days. Here, it was immediate. She was sick one instant; perfectly well the next. She requires no recovery time.

Luke 4:39c ...and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

She got up immediately and began to serve them (perhaps she feeds them).

There is the notion today that, what Peter's mother-in-law is doing here is demeaning and that she sets a bad example (because *she rises up and begins to serve them*). This is a popular approach today of people-control. They pick out some aspect of a person's life, isolate that aspect, and then assign all sorts of negative meaning to it. Almost everyone in this life, in some way or another, performs a service or does things on behalf of someone else—this is virtually the concept behind all employment. People who do these things are not necessarily forced to do them; they simply chose to do them. It is not something which is inherently wrong; it is something which just is.

Let me give you another example of something which is isolated, given a very specific, unnuanced meaning, and then condemned in the most forceful terms: the confederate flag. In the United States, over the past decade or so, the confederate flag has been defined by liberals as being representative of the imposition of slavery and nothing else. Their logic is, *because is only glorifies slavery, it must be removed from all society* (or only relegated to dusty museums). Right in the middle of all this controversial nonsense, I happened to come upon a young Black man—in his early or mid-20's—who wore a shirt with the confederate flag on it. Because I perceived no ironic message from this young man, I believed that he wore this shirt because he liked it and it expressed him. Obviously, the confederate flag meant something very different to him than the polarized meaning given to it by the left.

My point is, there is nothing wrong with rendering service to others, regardless of your race or gender. Furthermore, sometimes being in service to others can be a great blessing to the one giving the service. I have been a janitor, a teacher, a real estate agent, and a landlord—in all of those cases, I was providing a service to others. I enjoyed each one of those jobs for a variety of reasons, and never felt as if I was demeaning myself in some way.

Luke 4:39 *And He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.*

This appears to be the first time that Jesus heals someone who is sick.

Luke 4:40a *Now when the sun was setting,...*

I suspect that there were quite a number of people there at Simon's house, and they either excused themselves or asked if they could bring someone back to the house.

V. 38 has Jesus teaching in the local synagogue, indicating that this was the Sabbath. So, people waiting until the sun set before they began to do what is found in this verse.

Luke 4:40b *...all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him,...*

These two miracles—the casting out of the demon and the healing of Simon's mother-in-law—caused a flood of requests being made of Jesus.

People heard of the curing of the man possessed with a demon in the synagogue; and/or of Peter's mother-in-law being cured. This was quite phenomenal for this to have happened. Everyone knew someone who was sick—sometimes desperately so—and they went out and brought those people to the Lord to be cured. Here, they wait for the end of the Sabbath to get their friends or relatives who need to be healed.

## Lesson 141: Luke 4:38–41

## Signs, Miracles and Healings

This is what we have been studying:

Luke 4:38 *And rising up from the synagogue, He [Jesus] went into the house of Simon. And the mother-in-law of Simon was being seized with a great fever. And they asked Him concerning her.*

Jesus was apparently asked by Simon (Peter) and others to come to Simon's house to heal his mother-in-law.

Luke 4:39 *And standing over her, He [Jesus] rebuked the fever; and it left her. And rising up instantly, she served them.*

Jesus simply rebuked the fever and Simon's mother-in-law was well. She immediately began to serve the people who are there.

Luke 4:40 *And the sun sinking, all, as many as had sick ones with various diseases, brought them to Him. And laying hands on each one of them, He healed them.* (Green's literal translation)

Jesus, prior to this, cast out a demon. Here, He heals Simon's mother-in-law. People suddenly start to bring their sick to Him to be healed.

### Signs, miracles and healings:

Bringing these people to Jesus indicates that all those concerned (the person bringing and the person being brought) have faith of some sort in the Lord. We know for this simple reason: in nearly every city, there are Pentecostal and full gospel churches, churches which believe in regular miraculous healings. I have been sick before; and you reading this have been sick before. But neither of us has gone to a *full gospel* church in order to be healed. That is because, we have no faith in the minister there or in current-day faith healings by church pastors.

On the other hand, I do appreciate prayers, as do many believers; as we are told in Scripture to pray for one another and to pray for the sick (or to pray in general for one another). Going to a healer today is not Biblical; but having people pray for you is.

God could bring down a storm all around my house, and let leave my home untouched by moisture. Now, that would be cool and a miracle, *but*, it is not going to make me have greater faith in the Word of God. Such a miracle is unnecessary for my life. The better you know the Word of God, the less reason your soul requires/desires the miraculous.

What about to those who do not believe? Again, a miracle does not cause anyone to believe. I have seen Penn and Teller on stage on 3 different occasions. I could not explain how they did what they did; but that does not mean that I now place my faith in Penn Jillette for matters philosophical, political or religious. We are going to read about Jesus doing a variety of miracles and the religious class does not question the miracles themselves; but they nevertheless question who Jesus is.

A surfeit of miracles was appropriate when there were major changes taking place in the plan of God. When God changes the way that He manages His household (= dispensation), He reveals this with signs and wonders. This happened at the exodus, at the public ministry of our Lord, and at the beginning of the Church Age. There is no indication that these signs and miracles are to continue throughout any particular dispensation.

If you are thinking of the book of Acts and the gospels where many healings do take place, we must bear in mind that there is a time and a season for many things. These public miracles did occur for a time and for specific reasons: (1) here, to give credence to Jesus as the Messiah; and (2) in the book of Acts, to transfer the authority of the religious class in Israel to the Apostles of Jesus. The latter transfer of authority has already taken place. The fact that I am working for many hours examining and exegeting this book of Luke indicates that I have faith that this is the Word of God. So, the purpose of these miracles, to transfer authority to the Apostles, has taken place. This transfer of authority is over and done with. The end result is, we have the New Testament, which Church Age believers accept as authoritative. Since we accept the writings of the Apostles as Scripture, there is no longer a need for miracles.

Let me be specific. I do not require any miracles to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing in Him, I have eternal life. People who come to the Lord in this way also do not require some sign or miracle. I do not need any signs or miracles to convince me that I am presently in the Church Age; and that I do not belong to the Age of Israel in any way. However, when those two events (the first advent of Jesus and the establishment of the church) were first taking place, such signs and miracles were a necessity. People had been waiting for hundreds of years for their Messiah. When Jesus arrived on the scene, if He simply said, "Here I am" He would not have been accepted as Messiah (witness what happened in Nazareth). However, throughout His public ministry, Jesus performed many miracles and signs of power, to confirm that He was indeed sent by God.

The change from the Age of Israel to the Church Age was also a very big deal. We don't think about this transfer of authority much today, as we simply accept it as fact. We don't



go to the nearest synagogue and bring a lamb to sacrifice; we don't think that we need to go to Israel and live there. However, the changes which took place around A.D. 30–33 were quite dramatic when it took place. There were a great many changes in the lives of believers which took place as a result. God needed to show, through the Apostles, that His power was with them, and not with nation Israel. God no longer would work through nation Israel (at least for the duration of the Church Age).

Since Jesus no longer needs to be established as the Christ; and since the local church is now where Bible doctrine is taught; there is no longer a need for miracles to establish those things. When I go to church, I don't need to see my pastor heal a few people, speak in tongues, and then teach a message from the Bible. I recognize his authority by choosing that church, and listen intently and take notes. If I did not recognize his authority, I would quietly leave the church and find a pastor whose teaching I could trust.

Luke 4:40c ...and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

All of this was brand new. Jesus has not before gone out and healed dozens (or hundreds) of people who were ailing or possessed. Prior to this, he cast out the demon (s) in the man in the synagogue and He healed Peter's mother-in-law. But now, dozens, if not hundreds, of sick and ailing people are brought to Him.

Jesus laid His hands on these various people brought to Him and they were cured. In every case, the healing would be instantaneous and complete, just as it has been with Simon Peter's mother-in-law.

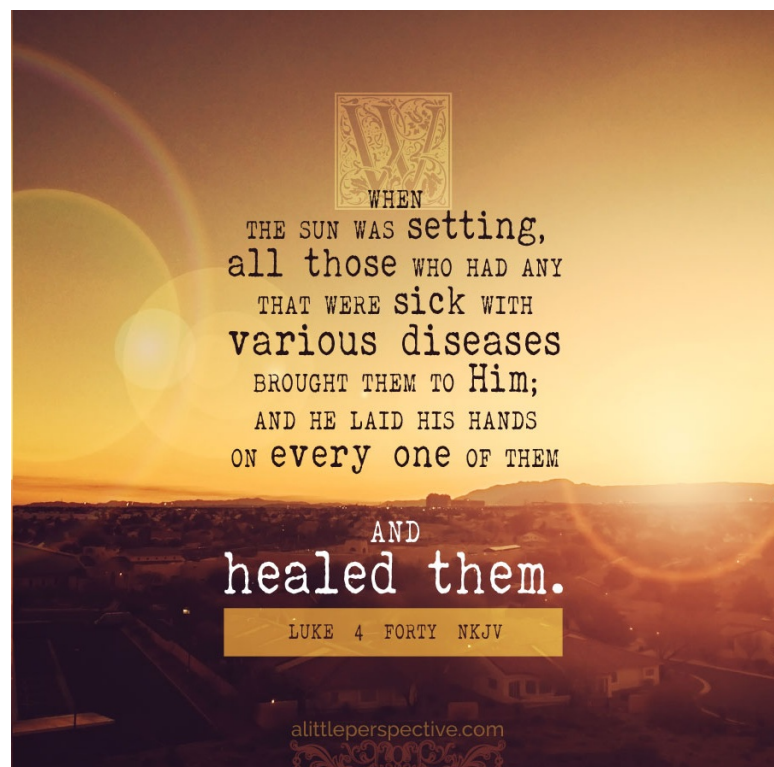
Luke 4:40 Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him, and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

This is a very big change in the ministry of our Lord.

**Luke 4:40 (NKJV)** (a graphic); from [A Little Perspective](#); accessed March 26, 2021.

Luke 4:41a And demons also came out of many,....

Some of these illnesses appear to be demon-related; and that demons were in some of the





sick people. When Jesus healed them, that including the casting out of these demons.

Casting out demons was not a long, drawn out process involving chants, holy water and religious ceremony. Jesus simply told them to get out and they did.

Jesus, as a man, still had the authority of God the Father, as God's Son; and therefore, He had command over the demons. When Jesus was tempted by Satan, He could have ended the temptations at any time, but He chose not to, as this was a part of the plan of God.

Luke 4:41b ...crying [and saying<sup>37</sup>],...

The demons, upon leaving the bodies of their hosts, began to cry aloud and speak (using the vocal cords of their hosts). These demons are simply fallen angels; and throughout the Bible, it is clear that they are able to speak. However, God apparently sets up limits and they must act within those limitations.

Luke 4:41c ...**"You are the Son of God!"**

The demons recognize Jesus immediately and say, "You are the Son of God." In fact, they use the emphatic *You*, suggesting great emphasis. Another way of saying this might be, "You really are the Son of God."

Demons appear to have some sort of perceptive ability which allows them to see this. We are not given further details on this ability.

Wilbur Pickering points out a peculiar trait of demons—they seem to be bound and determined to reveal that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God. Are they simply exclaiming this in recognition, not with the intent of revealing this information, but recognizing Him and saying it to any other demons nearby who might be in possession of people. When a demon takes up residence in a person, it appears that demon can no longer travel about freely. They are confined to that body. Therefore, when God tells the angels, "Come, take a look at this," or, "Have you considered Job, My servant?" these fallen angels possessing a person's body are not involved. If there is any communication between them and other demons outside, their typical line would be, "What's going on in the spirit world? You see, I don't get out much."

So Jesus comes and casts these demons out with authority, and they realize that this Man has power, and they suddenly exclaim, "Holy crap! You're the Son of God!" However, I think they are able to recognize Him without there being a demonstration of power.

Luke 4:41d **But He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak,...**

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<sup>37</sup> The words *and saying* are in the Greek.

Jesus did not allow the demons to say any more. From that point on, they were not allowed to speak upon leaving the bodies of their host/victim.

Jesus did not want the witness of the demons for two reasons: (1) Jesus did not want His identity revealed based upon the testimony of demons and (2) Jesus has already run into problems when He revealed Who He was. The crowd from the synagogue in Nazareth tried to kill Him.

For the most part, Jesus will have others testify to Who He is. Almost never in public, will He clearly proclaim Himself to be the Messiah or the Son of God.

Luke 4:41e ...because they knew that He was the Christ.

The demons, being cast out by Jesus, knew Who He was. We do not know exactly how they knew, but angels and demons certainly have some perceptive abilities beyond what man has.

Luke 4:41 And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that He was the Christ.

The word *Christ* is a transliteration of Christos (χριστός) [pronounced *krees-TOHSS*]. It means, *anointed, anointed one, Messiah*; transliterated, *Christ*. Strong's #5547.

Demons don't simply believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, they know. Even though they have sinned against God, God is still their ultimate authority, capable of limiting or confining them.

Apparently, some of the demons began to identify Jesus and say this aloud; but Jesus put a stop to that. Whether or not they had a nefarious reason for doing so is a matter of speculation.

## Lesson 142: Luke 4:40–44

## Jesus, the Gospel Message and Judæa

After Jesus had healed Peter's mother, people began bringing friends, relatives and even just people they knew of who were sick, who had been sick for a long time. They did this until night fell.

Luke 4:40 Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him, and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.

Healings were complete, without weird fanfare, without requirement that the recipient really, really believe. There is no indication that some could not be healed.

Luke 4:41 And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that He was the Christ.

Jesus also cast out demons. His authority extended over them.

Luke 4:42a And when it was day,...

The next morning, rather than to remain there and be glorified even more, Jesus did something which is quite unusual for a religious figure to do.

Luke 4:42b ...He departed and went into a desolate place.

Jesus left Simon's home—very surreptitiously might I add—and went out to a deserted area.

How many religious speakers do you know of who, when having a large crowd, will simply steal away to be alone (or, more accurately, *alone with God*)? So many would be looking for the microphone and the offering plate.

Luke 4:42c And the people sought Him...

We do not know exactly where the people went; whether they slept there or could not sleep; but when they realized that Jesus was gone, they searched for Him.

Luke 4:42d ...and came to Him,...

I suspect that there were a great many people there at Simon Peter's house; and they all fanned out. Remember, those who were sickly with various infirmities were no longer sickly. So they could also go out and help search for Him.

They apparently found Him.

Luke 4:42e ...and would have kept Him...

Literally, this reads that *they held fast to Him*. This is the imperfect active indicative of *katêcheô* (κατηχέω) [pronounced *kat-ay-KHEH-oh*], which means, *to have, to hold (fast), to keep (in memory), to possess, to retain, to seize on*. Strong's #2727. The imperfect tense means they would have begun this action in the past and continued doing it.

Whether the people physically embraced Jesus or surrounded him; or just urged Him to remain, we don't know. Perhaps an odd combination of those things. But they wanted Him to remain right there and, in some way, they held fast to Him.

Luke 4:42e-f ...and would have kept Him from leaving them,...

Various people there spoke to Jesus and asked Him to remain. It may have seemed odd to them (not to me) that Jesus just wandered off as He did.

This is a normal reaction. The people have found someone Who truly and accurately taught the Scriptures; and they want Him to remain there and to continue teaching them. Or, they were impressed that Jesus could apparently heal at will and cast out demons at will. He may have been seen as the solution to all that ailed them.

In any case, you can see just how different the response was to Him in Capernaum as compared to Nazareth. Because of this very positive response, the Lord performed more miracles.

Luke 4:42 **And when it was day, He departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought Him and came to Him, and would have kept Him from leaving them,**

Jesus has just spent the day casting out demons and healing those with various infirmities. As the day continued, more and more people kept coming to Him. Even when He sought some time alone, they went out and searched for Him.

Note how different the people respond to the Lord in Capernaum as opposed to Nazareth. In Capernaum, they were able to find Jesus, even though He had gone out to a desolate place. In Nazareth, He walked out right through the midst of them, and they did not discern this. Many of these people had seen Jesus grow up in Nazareth; but in Capernaum, Jesus likely had no pre-history with anyone.

Luke 4:43a **...but He said to them,...**

The people of Capernaum came looking to find Jesus. He spoke directly to them, looking at them right in the eyes. It was not for maximum impact but for maximum communication.

Luke 4:43b **..."I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well;..."**

Jesus is not there simply for Simon Peter and all those tangentially related to Simon. He must proclaim the good news to other cities as well.

Jesus' primary mission was not to find a group of believers with positive volition; His mission was to die for our sins. He was not going to remain here on earth for any length of time after providing salvation for us.

However, at this point in time, before the Jewish people have clearly and thoroughly rejected Him, He must provide them the gospel of the kingdom. He is the King and therefore, it is legitimate for Him to offer His people the Kingdom. What will happen is, the Hebrew people, as a whole—and particularly, the religious class—will reject Jesus as their King, and therefore, they reject the Kingdom, and the Messiah promised them by their Scriptures.

Luke 4:43c ...for I was sent for this purpose."

Going elsewhere and speaking is necessary for the Kingdom of God. He cannot just stay in one place. However, interestingly enough, Jesus does not venture far from the Hebrew people in general. In fact, no other well-known religious figure covered less ground than Jesus did. He walked a great deal and taught all over, but the area where He taught was quite limited.

Jesus must go throughout Israel and offer the Kingdom to His people. They must have a chance to see and hear their proposed King; and then to decide if they want to believe in Him and what He is offering.

Luke 4:43 but He said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."

Jesus tells the people that He must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns and cities as well.

Luke 4:44 And He was preaching in the synagogues of Judea [alternate reading, *Galilee*].

According to Wilbur Pickering, about 4% of the manuscripts read *Judæa*, and the rest read *Galilee*. Among the translations I refer to, I found this split pretty much half and half.

Where Jesus is, is in the Galilee area (vv. 31–43), but, in the future, He also travel further south into *Judæa* to proclaim the good news. Being that Jesus will be on the Sea of Galilee in the next chapter, this verse simply looks ahead into time, something which Luke has done on several occasions (that is, Luke appears to jump ahead in his narrative).

Therefore, if we accept *Judæa* as the correct reading, there are two ways to read this: (1) we are speaking in general of the land of the Jews, *Judæa*, which includes the Galilee area, where many Jews still reside (despite the great deportation of the northern kingdom hundreds of years previous). Or (2) this passage speaks of *Judæa* proper, where Jesus would eventually go and proclaim the gospel. The problem with #1 is, the Galilee region is not considered to be part of *Judæa*. The problem with #2 is, the few times that Luke looks into the future for a particular narrative, he is taking that particular narrative to its logical end. And then Luke returns to the proper time period and continues.

If we accept *Galilee* as the proper reading, then this describes most of Jesus' ministry over the next couple of years. He principally remained in the region of Galilee, which was known, in the past, as the northern kingdom (also called *Israel* in contrast to *Judæa* in the south; it is also called *Samaria*).

There is a general rule in textual criticism—that you take the most difficult reading. It makes sense that someone might intentionally change Galilee to *Judæa*; it makes less sense that someone would do the opposite (in this context). This is a good general rule;

but it is a rule that has a specific application: *when someone intentionally changes the text*. This cannot be overemphasized.

Let's consider the Lord and His ministry at this point.

### Judæa, the Gospel Message and the Lord's Ministry

1. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, not far from Jerusalem, in Judæa. Matt. 2:5–11 Luke 2:1–7
2. Many times, we find Jerusalem and Judæa mentioned together in such a way that could imply that they are two different places. Jerusalem was the capitol city of Judæa and Judæa is the province which was once the Southern Kingdom (it once housed the tribes of Judah and Simeon). Matt. 3:5 4:25
3. Jesus did do some teaching and training in Jerusalem as a young person (age 12). We may reasonable assume that this was not the only time in his early years when He did something like this. Luke 2:41–50
4. John the Herald is clearly associated with the people in Judæa. When he was baptizing people on the Jordan valley, many from Jerusalem and Judæa came to see him teach and baptize. Matt. 3:1, 5 Mark 1:5 Luke 3:1–20
5. Jesus did some limited teaching in Jerusalem. John 2:13–23
6. There seems to be very little information about His teaching in Jerusalem and in Judæa prior to His trip there for the final week of His public ministry. He clearly taught there from time to time, as mentioned in John 2:13–23 4:45 5:1
7. People from all over followed Jesus to hear Him teaching. They came from Jerusalem and Judæa; Galilee; Idumea; Tyre and Sidon. So Jesus did not need to go to Jerusalem in order to teach those there who were positive towards His teaching. Matt. 4:25 Mark 3:7–8 Luke 5:17 6:17–19
8. John's disciples were in the Jordan Valley and Jerusalem, primarily; which is in Judæa. When they had become confused about Jesus' teaching, they sent a delegation to Him in Galilee for clarification. Jesus preached a sermon about John and his faithfulness. Luke 7:18–28





## Judæa, the Gospel Message and the Lord's Ministry

9. Many of those who came to listen to Jesus were from the religious class of Jerusalem; and they were looking to find some way to either trip the Lord up, theologically speaking; or find a reason to condemn Him. They were not going to Jesus in order to learn about the Kingdom of God. Matt. 15:1–11 Mark 3:1–7, 22 Luke 5:21–27
10. There were times that, when the pharisees moved in on Him, Jesus went to regions further beyond, like Tyre and Sidon. He would take that opportunity to teach things about the Jews and the gentiles. Matt. 15:21–28
11. Jesus did do some teaching in Judæa, but there is not a lot recorded about this. Many times, we read about Him having taught in Judæa, but then returning to the Galilee area. John 4:3, 47, 54
12. Jesus did return to Jerusalem in Judæa for the final week of His public ministry. Matt. 19:1 20:17–19
13. On His trip towards Jerusalem, Jesus made many stops and did a lot of teaching along the way. Mark 10:1–52 Luke 13:22 17:11–37
14. Jesus did not spend a lot of time in Jerusalem or Judæa because this was the center of the apostate legalistic religion of Judaism. Furthermore, the religious leaders sought to kill Him, and it was not time yet. John 7:1
15. As we will see, Jesus did not shy away from controversy, or avoid confrontations with the religious hierarchy. However, His ministry was not about Him getting in the face of the religious class and castigating them. In almost every instance, they came after Him.
16. Jesus did return to Judæa to raise Lazarus from the dead. John 11:1–45
17. A great many things would happen when Jesus returns to Jerusalem for the final Passover. He begins to teach His disciples about what to expect, starting in Matt. 16:21 Mark 10:33 Luke 9:28–32
18. Jesus continued teaching about what would happen even as they continued towards Jerusalem. Luke 18:31–19:27
19. Jesus would present Himself as the King in Judæa. Mark 11:1–11
20. When Jesus drew near to the Temple, He often stirred things up. He threw the money changers out of the Temple (they were in one of the exterior areas connected to the Temple). Jesus did this near the beginning of His ministry and for His last trip to Jerusalem. John 2:13–16 Mark 11:15–17
21. When Jesus came into the Jerusalem area; particularly when He went to the Temple, the religious class was there on Him, like white on rice. Mark 11:27 Luke 19:47–48 20:1–2
22. However, Jesus would be crucified, despised and rejected by the religious people of Jerusalem and by the Roman government (which would oversee His execution). Luke 22.

Map of Galilee and Judæa in the Time of Christ; from [Christianity Today](#); accessed June 11, 2021.

## Chapter 4 Summary

Let's review this entire chapter in two lessons. The translation used below will be the Niobi Study Bible.

We have already studied this chapter; but we are going to condense that study and examine this chapter as a whole. An outline is helpful:

vv. 1–13	<a href="#"><u>Satan tempts Jesus</u></a>
vv. 14–15	<a href="#"><u>Jesus' early ministry without disciples and probably without signs or miracles</u></a>
vv. 16–30	<a href="#"><u>Jesus presents Himself as Messiah and is rejected in Nazareth</u></a>
vv. 31–37	<a href="#"><u>Jesus casts out a demon while in Capernaum</u></a>
vv. 38–41	<a href="#"><u>Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law and many others</u></a>
vv. 42–44	<a href="#"><u>Although Jesus went out into the desert, the people sought Him out and found Him. He continued teaching in the Galilee region.</u></a>

This is an *action-packed* chapter. Despite this being the beginning of the Lord's ministry, Jesus actually speaks in only 13 of the 44 verses in this chapter, which is less than a third of the chapter. The emphasis is upon what Jesus did more than what He said (however, what the Lord says in this chapter is quite remarkable).

As we move forward in the book of Luke, more and more of each chapter will be devoted to the words of Jesus. In chapters 5–9, about half of each chapter will be devoted to the teaching of the Lord; but nearly all of chapters 10–18 will be the words of Jesus. The final 6 chapters are about half teaching, half narrative.

### Luke 4:1–13      **Satan tempts Jesus**

Luke 4:1–2 **And Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, and for forty days was tempted by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward when they were ended, He hungered.**

Jesus is guided by God the Holy Spirit. It appears that He did not draw upon His Deity for any of this ordeal. It is passages like this which convince me that Jesus did not, at any time, depend upon His deity. I am not aware of any passage, including the Transfiguration, where Jesus necessarily accessed His deity.

He was in the desert-wilderness for 40 days and ate nothing during that time.

He was tempted by the devil. At the end of this period of time, Jesus was very hungry.

I have already made two statements which are potentially at odds with one another. Jesus fasted for 40 days and He did not access His Deity. Quite obviously, you and I cannot fast for 40 days, but Jesus did. Although Jesus is fully human, He also lacks a sin nature. This

sin nature affects not only our decisions and what we do, but it infects the entire physical body. Adam lived for over 900 years, and he had a sin nature. We don't live more than 100 years (for the most part). The sin nature actually made death a part of the human experience, and, taking into account the reduced life spans of Adam and his progeny, it has progressively affected the human body in a negative way.

My point is, the human body without the sin nature is far more resilient than the human body with the sin nature. Jesus, as we have studied, has no sin nature (we studied this in Luke 1:28–34). He is temptable, but not from within.

Luke 4:3 **And the devil said unto Him, "If You be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread."**

It is very possible that Satan was allowed to tempt Jesus only after this 40 days had passed. We only know of 3 specific temptations, so if there were more, they are not recorded.

Because Jesus is hungry, Satan suggests, "Just turn these stones into bread and satiate Your hunger."

Jesus did not do this because this would have required Him to depend upon His essence as God to do that. There are a number of things recorded in this gospel to suggest that Jesus did not depend upon His Deity for anything.

Luke 4:4 **And Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written: `Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'" (Deuteronomy 8:3)**

Jesus answers Satan by citing the Word of God. Man's sustenance in this life is also the Word of God. Jesus' soul is satiated with the Word of God, as we studied in Luke 2:40, 52.

Luke 4:5 **And the devil, taking Him up onto a high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.**

Satan takes Jesus up to a high mountain, somehow showing Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. We do not know how this was done, but it is reasonable to suppose that Jesus could take in what Satan was showing Him in an instant (without depending upon His Deity, but simply upon His Own natural abilities). My assumption would be that Jesus looked over a massive land mass.

Luke 4:6 **And the devil said unto Him, "All this power will I give You, and the glory of them; for this has been delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it."**

Satan tells Jesus that he is able to give Him all the power over these kingdoms, because they are in Satan's domain. Satan is the ruler of this world, making this a legitimate offer.

Luke 4:7 If You therefore will worship me, all shall be Thine."

Satan has but one requirement, to worship him.

Satan knows that Jesus is heir to the throne of David. Satan understands, from the Scriptures, that Jesus is David's Greater Son. Satan does not fully understand the plan of God; but he is able to offer Jesus what he believes Jesus wants—power over all the kingdoms of the world. The only catch is, Jesus must be obeisant to Satan.

Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Get you behind Me, Satan! For it is written: 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'" (Deut. 6:13)

Jesus tells Satan that man is to only worship God; to only serve Him.

This quotation comes from the book of Deuteronomy, which is primarily the teaching of Moses during his final month or so on earth. Despite these being the words of Moses, Jesus treats them as authoritative. That is, Jesus treats the words of Moses as being the Word of God. Based upon this (and similar passages), we have no reason to separate the words of God out of the Old Testament, as if they form a separate, more divine section. It is all the Word of God. It is all authoritative.

Luke 4:9 And he brought Him to Jerusalem, and set Him on a pinnacle of the temple and said unto Him, "If You be the Son of God, cast Yourself down from hence.

At the front of the Temple, there appears to have been a very high structure, possibly one that could be seen from a great distance. Jesus may be 5 or 6 stories up; and He may be hundreds of feet up (the height of this tower is disputed).

Somehow, defying the normal laws of gravity, Satan brings Jesus to the pinnacle of the Temple. Satan clearly has some supernatural powers, but they are limited to God's specific limitations. For instance, here, Jesus is able to see Satan; and Satan is able to take certain liberties with the human body of Jesus (such as, taking Him to the pinnacle of the Temple). Satan is able to talk to Jesus. However, Satan cannot make himself visible to us, we cannot hear his voice, he cannot pick us up. Satan is allowed to exercise some influence over people—possibly even to place ideas into the thinking of some men (we do not know exactly how Satan's viewpoint is made accessible to man). However, we can see clearly the results of Satan's warped thinking today on our society in the United States. People accept homosexual relations as normal; and many accept transsexuals as a normal thing. Large numbers of Americans actually accept socialism as a better form of economy than capitalism. All of this is Satanic thinking.

My point being, Satan is limited by God as to what he can do. His influence is clearly felt within the United States (and throughout the rest of the world, of course, as it is his domain). Here, Satan is give more leeway regarding his interaction with Jesus.

Satan tells Jesus, "Throw Yourself down from here, if You are the Son of God." Then Satan quotes Scriptures as well, to back up his point of view:

Luke 4:10–11 **For it is written:** 'He shall give His angels charge over You to keep You,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear You up, lest at any time You dash Your foot against a stone.' " Psalm 91:11, 12

Satan quotes Scripture back to Jesus. "God has given His angels charge over You to keep You. So You would not be harmed, even if You were to fall from here."

Essentially, Satan is thinking, "You are quoting Scripture to me; I will quote it right back to You." He attempts to use Scripture to make his point of view seem credible.

It is as if Satan is saying to Jesus, "You are up here at the very top of the Temple tower. You know You can simply drop to the ground, and you won't be harmed. Here is the Scripture which proves that."

Luke 4:12 **And Jesus answering said unto him, "It is said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'** " (Deuteronomy 6:16)

Jesus tells Satan that he is not to tempt the Lord his God. Satan is not to put God to the test.

Interestingly enough, Jesus does not argue Satan's ill-applied quote from Scripture, but simply condemns what Satan is doing. Jesus is not in some sort of debate with Satan. They have not sat down to debate any topic with all angelic creation in observance. Jesus is, in essence, telling Satan, "You have exceeded your limits right here. You do not get to test God in this way."

The debate between Divine and satanic viewpoint has, at various times, occurred to some extent. When Scripture is taught accurately from the pulpit, that is divine viewpoint. What we see, hear and read in this world is often Satan's cosmic thinking, but dressed up in some way or another (such as, *social justice*, which is not just).

Throughout His time on earth, Jesus is teaching both fallen and elect angels by what He says and does. This will continue in the Church Age by means of us, the Lord's representatives. How do we do this? We remain in fellowship and we take in the Word of God.

Luke 4:13 **And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him for a season.**

Satan, after ending this temptation, departed from Jesus. Jesus used Scripture to remind Satan of his limitations; and that apparently ended these temptations.

We do not know if these are the only 3 direct temptations by Satan of Jesus. They are the only recorded ones.

**Luke 4:14–15      Jesus early ministry without disciples and probably without signs or miracles**

Luke 4:14–15 *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and His fame went out through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.*

These two verses seem to reference the beginnings of the Lord's public ministry, which I believe to be very different from the years which follow. We always picture Jesus with His disciples and He is wandering about, teaching and healing people. This does not appear to be the case here. He is teaching, but there are no disciples and He is not healing anyone.

Jesus would be depending upon God the Holy Spirit along with the doctrine in His soul to guide Him as He taught. My assumption is, Jesus would enter the synagogue and volunteer to read. He would read a few chapters and explain what He just read. People responded very positively to the Lord's ministry during this period of time.

It says that He was glorified by all. This does not mean that people looked in the Lord's direction and said, "Glory, glory to You." It means, they told their friends and family. "You have to hear this new teacher who is at the synagogue. The Scriptures are making total sense. He explains them and I understand them far better than I did before."

We do not know how long the period of time lasted. I have arbitrarily suggested that this continued for 6 months or so. There were no miracles, no healings and no disciples. Just teaching. Luke is the only biographer of Jesus to speak about this period of time.

What happens in the next section is, Jesus continues this ministry, but, because of the passage of Scripture before Him, He reveals Who He is.

**Luke 4:16–30      Jesus presents Himself as Messiah and is rejected in Nazareth**

With v. 16, Jesus' circuit takes Him to where He was raised. Some of the people in the synagogue know Who He is.

Luke 4:16 *And He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read.*

Jesus continues this first segment of His ministry. On the Sabbath, He would go to the synagogue, wherever He was, and offer to read the Scriptures (along with several other men—locals—who also read the Scriptures).



So Jesus has come to Nazareth, where He was brought up. He appears to continue this familiar pattern of standing up, reading from the Scriptures and then explaining. However, Jesus does something which is very odd in this synagogue.

Generally speaking, a synagogue had a reading schedule. People did not stand up and read their favorite passage to those in attendance. They read each book of the Bible (the Old Testament), starting at the beginning and reading all of it. Possibly each synagogue chose the books to be read; perhaps the priests at the Temple released a list of the books to be read, and in what order. My point is, Jesus did not request this passage; nor, when handed the scroll, did He choose where to start reading. Someone had just finished reading Isaiah 60 (they were not divided into chapters then), and Jesus picked up with the next chapter.

Luke 4:17–19 *And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."* (Isaiah 61:1–2)

Jesus did not simply find the place in Isaiah, but He obviously begins to *read* this prophecy from Isaiah. However, He suddenly stops and sits down. He has only read a few verses. There is much more to this prophecy; but Jesus did not read it.

Luke 4:20 *And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister and sat down. And the eyes of all those who were in the synagogue were fastened on Him.*

Now, since men typically would read several chapters from the Scriptures, for Jesus to read a few sentences, and then suddenly sit down, without explanation—this was very unusual.

Jesus also had a reputation for reading and explaining the Scriptures. Yet He read only 2 verses and sat down.

Because what Jesus did here was so odd, everyone was looking right at Him. He hands back the scroll, and sits down, and every eye in the synagogue is on Him. Instead of reading a few chapters, the Lord has read only a few sentences. Because this is so unusual, everyone is now looking at Jesus. Their eyes follow Him back to the seat where He had been sitting.

Luke 4:21 *And He began to say unto them, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."*

What Jesus says here is remarkable. He tells the people that these words which He just read—the people at the synagogue are witnessing right then and there and fulfillment of this Messianic passage.

Given the passage which He read, given the situation that Jesus is in, He reveals Who He is. He did not get up that morning thinking, "I will reveal Who I am; it is about time that I do that." The passage which He read essentially demanded for Him to do this. Those words read at that moment in time revealed to Jesus that *it was time*.

You may recall that this was a rather complex study. However, the idea here is, the Old Testament is filled with prophecies of the Messiah and His return. From there, the next few words might be about the Tribulation and they might be about the Millennium. But, the idea is, there is a 1<sup>st</sup> advent of Jesus (His birth and public ministry that we are studying) and a 2<sup>nd</sup> advent (when He returns at the end of the Tribulation, which event leads mankind into the Millennium, after all the evil is removed from the earth).

Throughout the Old Testament, these two advents are generally treated as one. That is, there does not appear to be a period of time between the two advents. Jesus, due to the knowledge of Bible doctrine, and because He is a prophet, understood that there were two events in this passage. He stopped reading where the prophecy of the first advent stopped. Jesus reads only the prophecy of His 1<sup>st</sup> advent and then tells the people of Nazareth that these words are being fulfilled right before them.

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advents is the Church Age. The Church Age is inserted (intercalated) in between these two great events. Did Jesus, in His humanity, understand this? It is my own opinion that He did not. He understood the two advents as being separate events, but I don't believe that Jesus knew more than this at this point in His ministry (again, I believe that Jesus acts within the confines of being human throughout His earthly ministry—the doctrine of Kenosis).

Luke 4:22 **And all bore Him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"**

Everyone there heard and understood what Jesus was saying. He had just told them that the words of Isaiah were being fulfilled right there before their eyes. This required some time for what Jesus said to sink in.

Let me suggest that a minute or so of silence followed those words of Jesus. Hearing that the greatest prophecy of the Bible is coming to pass would have stunned the synagogue attendees.

Then one of them spoke up, saying, "Isn't this just Joseph's son?" And most of the people appear to agree, setting aside the claims that Jesus was making. Many of the people there knew Jesus from a very young age—so how could He be the fulfillment of a prophecy in Isaiah?

Luke 4:23 **And He said unto them, "You will surely say unto Me this proverb: `Physician, heal yourself! Whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in your country.'"**

Jesus then prophesies two things that the people of Nazareth will say to Him in the future: (1) They will say something akin to, *Physician, heal yourself*; and (2) they will hear about mighty works being done by Him in Capernaum, and they will ask Him to do these works in Nazareth.

When Jesus was suffering on the cross, some people remarked, “He is calling for God. If He is the Son of God, let God save Him.” This is akin to someone saying, *Physician, heal yourself*. They were saying, *Messiah-Savior, save Yourself*.

Secondly, there will be works performed in Capernaum and elsewhere—healings and the casting out of demons (Jesus has not done this yet). Some will later complain, “If Jesus did these things here, maybe we might have believed in Him.” However, that is simply not true. Many people would witness miraculous healings at the hand of Jesus, and they did not change their minds or their position against Him.

Luke 4:24 *And He said, "Verily I say unto you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.*

Jesus points out that no prophet is accepted in his own country. Jesus is not given the respect in Nazareth that He should have received.

This leads me to a somewhat interesting tangent. If these men knew Jesus growing up, did they not recognize Him as being out of the ordinary? After all, He was sinless throughout His entire life. Let me suggest that this stood out less than we might think. We have all known very honest, moral people in our lives, who have led very nearly irreproachable lives. We know academically that they had sin natures, but this was not something that we actually observed (my father was such a person). This is how Jesus would have seemed to those who knew Him. In a moral culture, Jesus did not stand out, despite being sinless.

Next, Jesus approaches the skepticism of the Nazareth crowd in a different way.

Luke 4:25–26 *But I tell you in truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land. But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Zarephath, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.*

God’s plan is very specific. Despite there being many widows in Israel during Elijah’s lifetime, Elijah was sent to a very specific widow. Elijah went to the person who was positive toward the plan of God.

Jesus is making the point that, God’s plan called for Him to reveal Himself in Nazareth, despite having been raised up there. God’s plan reveals from the beginning the negative volition of the Hebrew people towards their Messiah. The other widows would not have received Elijah. They would have been skeptical of him and his mission. Just as the Nazarenes are skeptical of Jesus.

Luke 4:27 **And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, except Naaman the Syrian."**

Jesus makes the same point here with Elisha the prophet. There were many lepers who needed to be cleansed, but only one from among them was.

There were going to be many specific things which take place during the life and ministry of Jesus the Messiah, and they are done just that way in accordance with God's plan. Jesus would not heal every person who is sick; Jesus would not cast out demons from every person who is possessed. He would, after a time, even go to the gentiles and present Himself as the Messiah.

Luke 4:28–29 **Then all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him unto the brow of a hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong.**

The people were filled with emotion; they were angry. What Jesus has alleged has sunk into their thinking, and they reject Him as their Messiah. They did not believe that Jesus, the supposed Son of Joseph, could be the Messiah.

Their city was built upon a hill, and they took Him to the edge of this city, to the edge of this hill. Their intention was to throw Him down the hill to His death.

It is fascinating, because one of the temptations of the Lord was to allow Himself to simply fall from the pinnacle of the Temple, knowing that the angels would protect Him. Here, Jesus is being faced with the same thing once again.

Luke 4:30 **But He, passing through the midst of them, went His way.**

Jesus is able to pass through the midst of these men, who are unable to recognize Him. He simply goes on His way from there; no one is able to recognize and stop Him. No one cries out, "Here He is! Grab Him!"

Some of these people had some moderate knowledge of Jesus, given that He grew up there. However, none of them were able to see and know the Lord as He walked through the middle of them. They could not stop Him from walking through their midst and out of Nazareth. They did not know Him.

Luke 4:31–37 **Jesus casts out a demon while in Capernaum**

Luke 4:31 **And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days.**

It is approximately 32 miles between Nazareth and Capernaum. It would have taken Jesus perhaps 2–4 days for this walk, depending upon the geography. It is fairly easy, if there is a modern road with a grassy walkway next to it, to make this walk in a day. However,

even though there would have been a road between the two cities, it may not have been very easy road to ride or walk. We might liken it to a poorly developed trail off in the wilderness.

Luke 4:32 **And they were astonished at His doctrine, for His word was with power.**

The people in Capernaum were astonished at what Jesus taught. Jesus also combined His teaching with power, which power is described in the verses which follow.

Luke 4:33–34 **And in the synagogue there was a man, who had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, You Jesus of Nazareth? Are You come to destroy us? I know You and who You are -- the Holy One of God !"**

Jesus only announced Who He was in Nazareth. This was not something that He did every time that He spoke. In fact, He almost never made such a clear declaration again; and not before a crowd of people.

Demons, however, have a better understanding of the invisible struggle and the part that they play in it. They know Who Jesus is and they fear that He will cast them into a state of permanent judgment. They are better able to look at Jesus and perceive exactly Who He is.

Luke 4:35 **And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold your peace, and come out of him!" And when the devil had thrown him in their midst, he came out of him and hurt him not.**

Jesus told the demon who was speaking to shut it, and He ordered the demon out of the man. There is nothing that the demon is allowed to do upon his exit from the man he possessed. This suggests that a demon might be prone to retribution; that it may want to retaliate against the man whose body it possessed, but he is apparently not allowed.

Luke 4:36 **And they were all amazed, and spoke among themselves, saying, "What a word is this! For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out."**

There are many people in the synagogue in Capernaum. What just had occurred would have been quite amazing. The behavior of this man was no doubt disturbing and noticed by everyone in the synagogue. The sudden return to normalcy must have been quite remarkable to the witnesses who are there. Clearly, no one had seen anything like this before.

Luke 4:37 **And His fame went out into every place in the country round about.**

I have suggested that Luke is both chronological (with a few obvious places where it is not) and that Jesus did not do signs or miracles until this visit to Capernaum, even though He had been teaching Scripture for an indeterminate period of time previously (I arbitrarily have suggested 6 months).

It does not appear that Jesus did anything but dismiss the demon, but that was enough. His fame went out to the cities and villages around Capernaum. Nobody had seen anything like this happen before, so this would have been the talk of this area.

Luke 4:38–41      **Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law and many others**

Luke 4:38 *And He arose out of the synagogue and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever, and they besought Him for her.*

When some passages are read in isolation, it seems as if Jesus just sees random people wandering about and He would say, "You, leave everything and follow Me." But here, Simon (Peter) has a relationship with Jesus that predates his being called by Jesus.

It is reasonable to think that many, if not all, of the disciples had some sort of interaction with Jesus before He chose them. Although it appears that Jesus seems to choose these men out of thin air, let me suggest that Jesus knew these men by talking with them and by observing them. These men were followers of Jesus, to some extent, prior to Jesus calling them.

At this point, Jesus appears to know Simon (Peter); and that he and others asked Jesus to come to see Simon's mother-in-law.

Many do not appear to understand Jesus' ministry or His power or how He was guided. There is no reason to assume that Jesus had specific directions given Him by God the Father; or that He acted based upon His omniscience as God the Son. What we read here suggests how Jesus chose to go from point A to point B. Simon and several others requested Jesus to come and see Simon's mother-in-law. They recognize that Jesus has some power and authority, based upon Him casting out that demon (or, *demons*). Jesus hears their petition and goes with them.

All or most of the Lord's ministry was done in the power of the Spirit in His humanity. He did not access His Deity or He rarely accessed His Deity (the more I study the gospels, the more I lean towards Him *never* accessing His Divine nature).

Exactly how this works, and exactly how the Lord's Deity functions apart from His humanity is difficult to understand. As R. B. Thieme, Jr. pointed out, there is at least one verse which indicates that Jesus, as God, held the universe together, even while being a baby in a manger. We can have some understanding of this strictly from the man-ward side—that He chooses not to access the attributes of Deity throughout His earthly ministry.

To offer yet another illustration: most of us have credit cards. Let's say you have a credit card with a \$5000 limit. Do you immediately go out and run that card limit up to the top? Or, do you have that card in your wallet, and maybe you use it and maybe you do not. Having the card but not using it is analogous to Jesus being God but not using those resources (like all analogies, this is certainly not a perfect one).



In any case, Jesus has gone to Simon's house, as was requested of Him.

Luke 4:39 **And He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and ministered unto them.**

Apparently Simon's mother-in-law was extremely ill; but when Jesus rebuked her fever, she was completely good-to-go. She likely provided a meal for Jesus and the followers who are with Him.

Many people apparently knew Peter and his mother-in-law and knew of her sickness. So when Jesus heals her (and or, they hear about Him casting out the demon (s) in the synagogue), everyone with a sick friend or relative quickly runs that person down and brings him or her to Jesus.

Luke 4:40 **Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands on everyone of them, and healed them.**

Apparently all day long, people began bringing their sick to Jesus and He healed them.

Jesus was associated with God the Father; and when He places his hands on the sick, He is identifying them with the power of God. Jesus is not necessarily using any innate power which He has but, just like Moses, was able to let God work through Him.

Luke 4:41 **And devils also came out of many, crying out and saying, "You are Christ, the Son of God !" And He, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak; for they knew that He was Christ.**

What appears to be the case is, when someone with a demon was brought to Jesus, the demon would immediately identify Jesus as the Messiah, (= *Christ*) the Son of God. Jesus would stop them, and likely stopped all of the demons from speaking at some point. Jesus was not going to allow demons to testify as to His person.

In his humanity, Jesus has the authority to require something or to forbid something, but He lacks the power. Let me provide an analogous situation: the Pharaoh of Egypt prior to the exodus had the authority to order pyramids and other buildings built. However, he did not, in himself, have the power to build anything. Men under his authority required of the Hebrew people the building of these structures and the Hebrew slaves actually did the work. So Jesus is exercising authority which God has given to Him; but He is not using His divine power to limit or direct the actions of the demons. They are being cast out either by God the Father or God the Holy Spirit. Similarly, what they are able to say is similarly limited.

Luke 4:42–44 **Although Jesus went out into the desert, the people sought Him out and found Him. He continued teaching in the Galilee region.**

**Luke 4:42** And when it was day, He departed and went into a desert place. And the people sought Him and came unto Him and would have stayed Him, that He should not depart from them.

Jesus, in His humanity, desired time apart from the human race. Many of us can relate to that. How many of us have hunted or fished or hiked among nature, simply to get away from it all? Even when I used to go to the ocean with my family, I used to enjoy hiking out by myself, often to deserted places that I had not been before.

Jesus has the added dimension of communing with God in these circumstances (obviously, believers have the added dimension of appreciating nature as God's creation when going to the mountains or to the ocean).

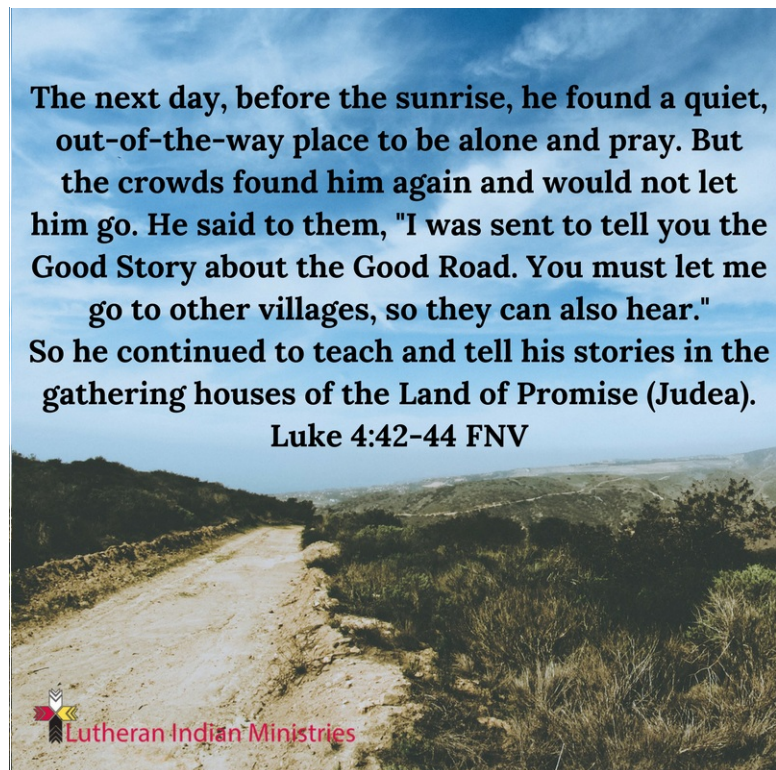
**Luke 4:43** But He said unto them, "I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent."

Jesus could not simply have a ministry in Capernaum. Even though His ministry was severely limited in a geographical sense (more than any other religious figure), He still chose to go to many cities and villages.

**Luke 4:44** And He preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

You may recall that this is a disputed reading. However, *Galilee* makes much more sense, as Jesus only went down to Jerusalem (in Judæa) 3 or 4 times during His public ministry. Most of His public ministry, interestingly enough, took place up in the northern kingdom (as it was known hundreds of years previous).

**Luke 4:42–44 (FNV)** (a graphic); from [Lutheran Indian Ministries](http://LutheranIndianMinistries.com); accessed March 26, 2021.



## Lesson 146: Luke 5:1–2

## Introduction to Luke 5

Luke 5, like most of the chapters in Luke, is a combination of several historic incidents which took place during the life of Christ (primarily during the 3–4 year public ministry which

He had), along with some teaching which He did (which was sometimes based upon the incidents which took place).

For the most part, the events of this chapter *probably* took place at roughly the same time, and in roughly the same chronological order as they are found in this chapter (however, we must bear in mind that not all incidents in Luke's gospel agree with the order of parallel incidents recorded by Matthew or Mark).

We begin this chapter with Jesus possibly considering the logical need for assistants. We are not told that He is thinking about this; we do know that He is pressed on all sides by a crowd of people, where His back is to the Sea of Galilee. Although He will figure out a way to speak to this crowd of people who are pressing ever closer to Him, that will involve Him relying upon Peter, who is not yet a *called* disciple.

The problem was simply that too many people were interested in Jesus, but they kept pushing closer and closer to Him, giving Him no room and nowhere to go.

I believe as a result of this incident that Jesus will call 4 disciples in this chapter (only 3 are named by Luke—Peter, James and John—but there are clearly 4 men called by Him in the parallel accounts). When Jesus calls them as His disciples, they drop everything and follow Him.

Throughout the gospels, it often seems as if Jesus points to a stranger and says, "Hey, you; come follow Me;" and they do. However, this is certainly not the first time that Jesus met Simon (Peter). An incident involving Simon is recorded in the previous chapter.

In this chapter, it is an interesting encounter. Peter (and, apparently John and James) have been fishing all night, but without catching a single thing. Then Jesus repositions Peter's boat slightly, and he catches so many fish that they overwhelm both boats. Then Jesus said that He would make Simon a fisher of men and Peter left everything to follow Jesus.

The second incident recorded in this chapter (vv. 12–16) is all about Jesus cleansing a leper. Jesus does not tell this leper, "Hey, tell your friends about Me." Jesus simply sends that leper to the local priest in order to follow a ceremony found in Leviticus, when a leper is cleansed.

The third incident has Jesus teaching in a house (or in a courtyard), and He is surrounded by people so that 4 men and a paralyzed man cannot come anywhere near to Jesus for healing. These men want their friend (relative or associate) healed; and they all apparently believed that Jesus could do this.

The men decide to go onto the roof and lower the paralyzed man down before Jesus. Jesus speaks of their faith as saving him. Most importantly, Jesus forgives this man his sins, which apparently causes several religious types, who are there in the crowd observing Jesus, to become quite disconcerted. Jesus therefore poses this question to the religious

types: “Is it easier for Me to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven’ or ‘Get up and walk’?” As the people witnessing this ponder that question, Jesus tells the man to stand up and walk, sending him back to his home. It is almost like the misdirection of sleight of hand.

The fourth incident is Jesus calling Levi (Matthew), a tax collector, to follow Him. Levi holds a massive party to celebrate all of these things and Jesus then explains to some religious types why He is hanging out with tax collectors and sinners.

Finally, the fifth incident involves pharisees and other religious types questioning the disciples about Jesus and his followers not fasting as John the baptizer did with his disciples. Jesus explains this by speaking 4 different parables.

These incidents do not appear to be connected to each other, although it is certainly possible that #5 occurs at Matthew’s party. However, it is equally possible that Jesus gave one parable at one time, and the other three at another. I don’t know that there are any connective words which clearly tie these 5 (or 6) incidents together. These could simply be things which occurred early on in the Lord’s ministry (I say early on, as Jesus calls 5<sup>38</sup> disciples in this chapter).

What Jesus says takes up approximately a third of this chapter. As we move further along in the book of Luke, more and more of each chapter will be given over to Jesus’ teaching.

As I began this chapter, one of the things which struck me—and I should have really noticed this much earlier—is the Lord’s humanity. This is an important factor in this chapter of Luke, and I suspect, in many of them. We tend to emphasize the Lord’s Deity because the unbelieving world (and even some cults) reject that Jesus is God. So often, we put so much emphasis upon this truth that we forget that Jesus is also very human. He is not part-man and part-God—He is not 50% of each. Jesus is fully God and He is fully man. Throughout most (or all) of His life on earth, Jesus *chose* to live as a man, with the very same limitations to which we are subject (although, because Jesus does not have a sin nature, His body is not corrupt—both the body and soul of everyone else are corrupted by the sin nature).

There are things which come with Jesus choosing to function fully as man (I believe that His entire ministry was the humanity of Jesus). He does not call upon His Own omnipotence or omniscience. All divine traits are available to Jesus, but He sets these things aside and does not use them or depend upon them. I am leaning towards this being the case throughout His entire public ministry.

One might compare Jesus to Clark Kent, the secret identity of Superman, where, as Kent, he does not use his super powers (I am drawing an analogy here, so just go with it). Whereas, Clark Kent often takes off his glasses and bursts forth as Superman, Jesus does not appear to do that. In fact, even when He is glorified, I would guess that this was done

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<sup>38</sup> Luke records 4 men who are called; but we find out in the other gospels that Jesus called 5 men in parallel passages.

by the power of God the Holy Spirit and not through any employment of Jesus' innate power.

Particularly at the beginning of this chapter, I consider the events that are taking place and intertwine this with Jesus, in His humanity. *Considering His humanity alone, what might I conclude about these interactions*, is the focus of my thinking early on.

Luke 5:1a **On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on Him to hear the word of God,...**

It appears that Jesus was teaching the Word of God; but the people apparently kept moving closer, pressing in on Him.

What I believe the situation is, Jesus, in His humanity, recognizes a need for assistants, helpers—disciples, in fact—to help control such situations. Big guys. Strong guys. The situation described here could use some security, if you will. I would assert that much that Jesus did was both in the plan of God as well as a logical step for Him.

Let me use this occasion to explain what I mean. Jesus is trying to teach a large crowd of people who are, for the most part, positive towards His message. However, these are people who have sin natures, and many of whom lack common sense. Why press so closely on the Lord, so that He has nowhere to go?

Jesus is certainly God, but, under the doctrine of Kenosis, He willingly sets aside His divine attributes. Obviously, this is not something which we can fully appreciate, each of us being 100% human and 0% divine<sup>39</sup>. However, we have had examples in the past where, an all-powerful God could have done something, but Jesus did not. For instance, when Jesus was being tempted by Satan. Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. Now, since God knows everything all at once, was that really necessary? Let me suggest, yes, that Jesus in His humanity was not fully aware of every kingdom in the world.

It is very hard to find an analogous situation. Right now, the best I can come up with is a Jew in Germany during the second world war—a Jew who might do whatever is necessary to hide His Jewish heritage. His vocabulary, his traditions, even his clothing, is all set aside in favor of appearing to be German. Such a person would be fully aware of his Jewishness and the importance of suppressing it.

In reality, Jesus appears to operate nearly all of the time completely separate from His Deity.

What I am trying to say is, Jesus considers the situation, the crowds, the difficulty in speaking and teaching when so many people are crowding in upon Him; and realizes that

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<sup>39</sup> We have the filling of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of God the Father and God the Son, but that does not make us divine.



He needs assistants. I believe that is *why* we find v. 1 leading us into Jesus choosing some disciples at this point. This uncontrolled crowd of people require some control.

There are other reasons why Jesus needs disciples. His teaching cannot be spread throughout the world apart from having disciples. Jesus will never write anything down; He limits Himself to a very small geographical area, and His earthly ministry would only last 3–4 years. Based upon all of this, there is no reason in the world that we should know anything about Him. However, His disciples will spread the word of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone. They will also teach Church Age doctrine.

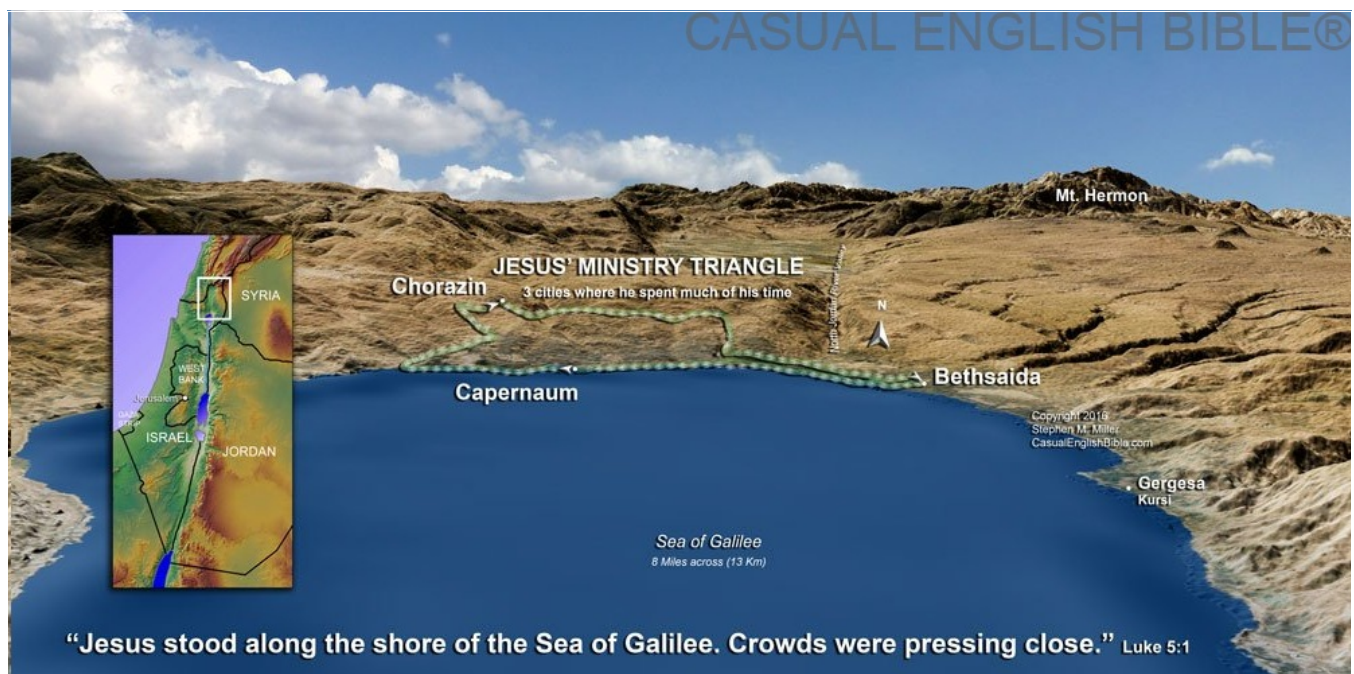
Luke 5:1b ...He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret,...

At the time, Jesus was standing at the Lake—also known as the Sea of Galilee.

I believe that the name here is a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name *Kinnereth*.

There are two verbs in this verse which are difficult to translate. There is the imperfect of *to be* (the imperfect indicates continues action in past time); but it is followed by a perfect participle of *to stand*. A perfect tense indicates an action in the past which has present-day results or affects.

So, what appears to be the case is, Jesus is somewhat trapped by the crowd at the shore of the Sea of Galilee.





**Jesus' Ministry on the Sea of Galilee** (Luke 5:1); from the [Casual English Bible](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:1 On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on Him to hear the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret,...

We have just begin Luke 5 and Jesus is teaching at the shore of Galilee.

Jesus, when in Nazareth, was pressed in on all sides by a crowd who wanted to harm Him. But here, this is a friendly crowd, but they are moving too close to Him. Their movements so close to Him make His attempt to teach difficult.

The difference in the crowds now is, Jesus has both cast out a demon and healed a woman (Simon's mother-in-law) (Luke 4:31–44). So people are flocking to Him, not just for His teaching, but for what He can do for them.

Luke 5:2a ...and He saw two boats by the lake,....

While He is teaching, Jesus sees that there are two ships nearby, anchored (they are not moving). He is very observant, and His senses appear to be open at all times for the intake of any change of circumstances.

Jesus has normal human knowledge of what He is seeing. What better men to call than some big, strong fishermen, who made a living using their bodies and muscles? Crowd control. This had become a necessity for the Lord.

As God, Jesus could have drawn millions of people to Him, held them at some reasonable distance, and teach in a way that the entire crowd could hear and understand Him. But Jesus speaks to these people as a man, from His human spirit, in accordance to the limitations of being a human being.

Luke 5:2b ...but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.

The fishermen for these boats are away from the ships washing their nets. Let me suggest that this shows an attention to detail as well as a dedication to their craft of fishing.

Jesus takes note that there is no indication that these men have caught anything; but He sees the boat as being the perfect amphitheater for His teaching this crowd.

## **Lesson 147: Luke 5:2–3**

## **Jesus Teaches from Simon's Boat**

Luke 5:1–2 On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on Him to hear the word of God, He [Jesus] was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, and He saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.

Jesus, as a man, was aware of the crowds—even friendly ones—could make it difficult for Him to teach. Jesus was also fully aware of His circumstances and was flexible and an original thinker. In other words, Jesus, His mind working all of the time, used what God provided Him with.

These first two verses speak to the environment in which the Lord has found Himself. The people who surround Him are not hostile to Him; they want to hear Him teach. However, given the circumstance, with the crowd fully surrounding Him and His back to the water of Galilee, Jesus looks around and makes an assessment of the situation.

Luke 5:3a **Getting into one of the boats,....**

Jesus was pressed in from all sides and was on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The people kept moving in closer. He really had nowhere to go. His ability to teach was overwhelmed by these crowds.

There are the two boats parked a little offshore, and Jesus boards one of the ships.

Although this is not specifically stated, I suspect that Jesus has already spoken to Peter on a previous occasion, and that He was aware that this was Peter's boat (Peter's given name at birth is *Simon*). Simon is not yet a called-disciple of Jesus. In fact, no disciples seem to have been called yet. Jesus public ministry has barely begun. This incident might not be much more than a month or two later from His public declaration in Nazareth.

Jesus makes an estimation of the situation. There are many people here; they want to hear Him speak, and it is clear that He cannot teach them from the midst of this crowd which is pushing in against Him, with the sea is directly behind Him.

For any given appearance, there will be people showing up who want Jesus to heal them or a loved one; and they may be pushing forward and they may be calling out the Lord's name. So, generally speaking, Jesus, early on in His ministry, is finding out that there are less than ideal circumstances for His teaching ministry.

There was actually a problem with the power that He had revealed. Jesus was there to teach and He also healed; but sometimes, the people who wanted healing did not necessarily want the teaching. And for the crowd there, they may have wanted to see others healed more than listen to the Lord teach. My point is, this situation was getting out of control and Jesus needed a solution. He needed for the crowd to be at arm's length, so to speak.

He looks the situation over, and thinking in His humanity(which is where the Lord thinks), He comes to a solution: "It is better for Me to teach this large number of people from a boat offshore, so that they are not encroaching on My space." His interaction with Simon suggests that He knows that He can impose upon Simon right here, even though their previous interaction was limited (the Apostle John has a very interesting story regarding Simon being introduced to Jesus as the Messiah, early on).

I was a teacher in a previous life<sup>40</sup>, and found it important to learn some student's names from the very beginning. Sometimes, this allowed me to get their attention or, at times, to use their names during a lecture. For a high school teacher, you might teach for a month or more before you know every person's name (the name-learning process took me at least a month).

Jesus has a different situation, but He does need to call upon someone (Simon) for a favor; for some help.

In the previous two verses, I suggested that Jesus may want to choose some men to accompany Him as permanent disciples. We do not know at what point Jesus began to consider calling specific men to be there with Him as His disciples, but this need may have become apparent in vv. 1–3.

Luke 5:3b ...[the one] which was Simon's,...

The ship that Jesus boards is Simon Peter's.

As an aside, you will notice that Luke, the author of this biography, says virtually nothing, so far, of Jesus calling His disciples. Simon Peter is named twice in two separate narratives, but not as a special person, a called disciple; but simply as a person who was there, a person that Jesus obviously knew (Jesus goes into Simon's house, He boards Simon's boat—so this suggests some familiarity). Therefore, this is not the first time that Jesus has encountered Simon Peter. Back in Luke 4, Jesus came to his home and healed his mother-in-law (Luke 4:38–39). Therefore, it is not unreasonable for Jesus to make a request of Simon. It is even possible that Simon made the offer, "If there is anything that you need, Lord..."

How well Jesus knows Simon or knows about him is a matter of conjecture. In my opinion, Jesus was able to take a very quick read of those whom He met. In just a few minutes of conversation, Jesus knew the measure of any man to whom He spoke. This is not because Jesus was omniscient; but because He was able to evaluate people through conversation and by watching their expressions. Also, the Jewish people tended to be very demonstrative in the actions, so, in many cases, figuring out what a person was thinking was as simple as looking at them.

Here, at this time, Jesus is going to give Simon direction, and Simon will do what Jesus tells him to do.

Now, if the men were washing the nets but Simon is on the ship, the suggests that Simon is in charge and that this is his ship.

Simon Peter was not yet a disciple of Jesus—he was on his fishing boat, overseeing his men washing the nets—and Jesus was attempting to teach a crowd of people right there

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<sup>40</sup> Don't misunderstand me; that is just an expression. I don't believe in reincarnation.

on shore. Jesus is comfortable making this request of Simon, and Simon readily agrees to it.

Bear in mind (based upon what is upcoming), Simon could have been in a lousy mood based upon having a lousy day at sea.

Luke 5:3c ...He asked him to put out a little from the land.

Then Jesus asks Simon Peter to put the boat further out into the sea, but only a little more. He is moving a small distance from the shore. He would be far enough off shore, that no one would try to walk through the shallow water to get on the boat.

As an aside, the Koine Greek language is notorious for leaving out direct objects which we might put in ourselves. In vv. 3c and 4 there is no word for *boat*, but that is the implication in both places. Very strict translations will follow the Greek convention; and more free wheeling translations will add the word *boat* (*ship, vessel*) into their translation.

Jesus was being crowded in by all of the people, so He is setting up some distance between Himself and the crowds, but for the purpose of teaching them. So He is not telling Peter, “Get Me out of here,” but “Move Me a little further away from shore.”

Simon Peter apparently understands and does exactly as the Lord asks. He does *not* say, “Listen, this is my boat and I decide what goes on here. Not You.” So Simon recognizes the Lord’s authority here. He is not yet a disciple of Jesus; but they have spoken and interacted previously.

Jesus may be considering a number of options at this point, even while teaching (if you have ever taught before, you know that, from time to time, you are going to be thinking about things which are not directly related to the subject matter that you are teaching).

So, Jesus is going to be teaching (v. 3d), but He is also going to be considering Simon here, who has given him obedience; and who might be of help to the Lord in the near future in His ministry.

I would assume that this portion of Luke is taking place during the Lord’s first year of public ministry, and that He has seen firsthand that He could use some help and that this man, Simon, might be very useful in that regard.

I do not think that we ought to gloss over the very human side of what is taking place here. Jesus knows, for several different reasons, that having a specific group of men with Him could be very helpful.

As an aside, we do not know exactly how the Lord sets His Deity aside or when that takes place, or whether this was determined in eternity past, so that Jesus begins from the beginning did not make use of His Deity.

He must decide, at some point, that He requires assistance; and He must know from the Scriptures Who He is. God the Father chose 12 tribes to represent Him on earth (actually, 13)—should Jesus not do the same?

Whereas, the doctrine of Kenosis helps us to grasp more readily what is happening here, there are certainly many unanswered questions. The chief question to me is, when did Jesus decide not to use the resources of His Deity and was that decision in effect all of His human life? Did Jesus become born into the world already having made this choice? That is, did His Deity make this choice, and His humanity agree to it (at whatever point the Lord's humanity could think well enough to make decisions).

Along the same lines, at what point did His humanity realize that He was God? Because Jesus is unique in human history, there are a number of things which we do not understand. We all know what it is like to be human and very limited—but none of us have any idea what it means to be God. We only understand God as the Scriptures reveal Him to us; but it is more difficult to understand what it means to be simultaneously ignorant and omniscient. We only understand half of that; but we are certainly at a loss when it comes to understanding how these two characteristics exist within the same Person.

Back to the narrative:

Luke 5:3d **And He sat down and taught the people from the boat.**

Then Jesus sits on the boat—on the edge or somewhere near the edge—and He teaches the people from there.

There are quite a number of times when Jesus sits and teaches, and I must admit, I do not get this. When I was a teacher, unless I was particularly tired, I taught from my feet nearly always. I also moved about. Perhaps I acted in part in accordance with the conventions of the teaching community; and perhaps Jesus was teaching according to the conventions of His era. I know that this is a minor thing, but teaching from a standing position seems far more natural to me.

There are some logistical nuances which are not examined here. There had to be considerable ambient noise, from the water, the ship, the waves, the people, the birds—and there must be a considerable crowd to cause Jesus to do what He has done here. If there were 10 people, then Jesus could easily instruct them from where He was standing. But they have crowded Him so much that, there must be at least 100 people there—maybe 1000. I would assume that most of the crowd was positive toward Jesus and His teaching—that is why they are there.

By stepping onto Peter's boat, Jesus places Himself further from them. What occurs to me is, they are able to hear Him, but how? Was all nature silenced so that Jesus could teach? Or was it possible for others to hear Him due to some supernatural means? Obviously, this particular aspect is not addressed here. Perhaps Jesus had the perfect voice for communication, no matter what the venue. I would assume that Jesus had a wonderful

voice to teach and communicate, even to a large crowd like this. The boat may have even acted as an amphitheater, multiplying the sound of the Lord's voice.

Setting aside these issues of communication, Jesus was giving the people here what they had desired since trusting in the Revealed God—truth.

Luke 5:3 **Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, He [Jesus] asked him [Simon] to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the people from the boat.**

Jesus stepped onto Simon Peter's fishing vessel, and asked for the boat to be moved a little further out into the water. Then He sat down and taught the people from the boat. He was no longer crowded on 3 sides with His back to the sea.

#### **Lesson 148: Luke 5:4–6**

#### **A Carpenter Tells a Fisherman How to Fish**

Jesus was pushed in from all side by a large crowd, and behind Him was the sea of Galilee. So He had Simon Peter take Him out a little ways from shore and He taught the crowd from there (Luke 5:1–3).

Luke 5:4a **And when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon,...**

Interestingly enough, we do not focus on what the Lord taught this crowd (and it is quite reasonable that Jesus repeated His sermons or the material in His sermons from time to time). As an aside, it wasn't that Jesus was unable to formulate a new set of sermons; but that his audience changed, so that He would often teach new audience what He had taught previously to another audience (compare the sermon on the mount to the sermon on the plain).

In any case, Luke does not tell us what Jesus was teaching. Instead, we focus upon what Jesus says to Simon.

Jesus has been teaching the crowds from Simon's (Peter's) boat.

Let me suggest that, leaving out the content of Jesus' sermon was an intentional edit (if not by Luke,<sup>41</sup> then by God the Holy Spirit).

At this point, I envision Simon, during Jesus' message, to be thinking about the work he has done so far that day (and the previous night) which has been futile. He had caught no fish at all; and I don't believe that he heard much of what Jesus was saying. Jesus, in order to reach Peter, sometimes gave him object lessons instead.

The fact that Simon does not remember what is being taught is reflected in the missing sermon at this point. If Luke had interviewed Simon directly, it makes sense that much of

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<sup>41</sup> Luke may have known about this incident, but not the sermon given.



what we read is the result of that interview (along with many other interviews). Throughout the book of Luke, we often see the incidents which take place through the eyes of someone that Luke interviewed. That means, we read about what that person remembered; and what that person did not hear is, accordingly, not included. I don't think that Peter heard a word of what Jesus said to the crowd, despite the fact that Jesus was teaching from his boat, and Peter was right there on the boat.

After the sermon, Jesus apparently addresses what is on Simon's mind (perhaps what was on his mind throughout the entire sermon). Jesus is a very observant man, and He sees the empty nets; He could read the discouraged faces on the fisherman associate with Peter.

I guarantee you that you know exactly what happened here. You have been in church listening to your pastor, but, at the same time, there was some pressing problem or some important set of circumstances, and you spent nearly the entire sermon thinking about those things. Simon, who has a great deal of responsibility as the ship owner and the business owner of this fishing enterprise, has got a lot of his mind right now. He had never before experienced a fishing day as bad as this one.

Luke 5:4a **And when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon,...**

Jesus concludes His sermon, and then He speaks to Simon, who is aboard the ship that Jesus is on. Jesus speaks directly to him:

Luke 5:4b **..."Put out into the deep..."**

Jesus has completed His sermon, and now He instructs Peter to go further out into the water.

We will find out that this had not been a good day for Peter; and it is likely that he was mentally preoccupied throughout the Lord's sermon.

Jesus then tells Peter to launch his boat out into some deeper waters (Jesus had been speaking to the crowd from the boat in shallow water).

Peter may be thinking, "Maybe the Lord wants to go sightseeing, because He certainly is not going to catch any fish today."

Remember how the Greek sometimes lacks direct objects, which we would naturally place into the text? V. 4b is a good example of this. Here are some translations which insert the missing direct object:

**When he stopped talking, he said to Simon, Put the boat out into deep water...**  
(Luke 5:4a–b; Worldwide English NT)

When Jesus had finished speaking, he told Simon, "Row the boat out into the deep water... (Luke 5:4a–b; Contemporary English Version)

This is a carpenter telling a fisherman how to run his business. Peter, even at this point, respected Jesus and believed in Him; but he is about to get a bit testy with the Lord.

Luke 5:4c ...and let down your nets for a catch."

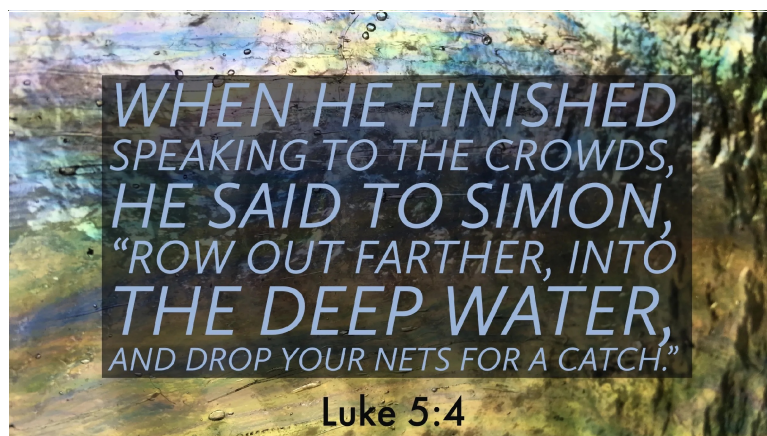
Now Jesus tells him, "Once we get out a little further into the waters, you are going to then let down your nets in order to score a great haul of fish."

So Peter has been thinking about his lousy day of fishing throughout Jesus' sermon. Quite frankly, Peter is not really appreciative of Jesus telling him what to do when it comes to fishing. However, Simon will do it, because it is the Lord, but he will also tell the Lord what he thinks of His idea. Peter will say, in effect, "I have a great deal of respect for You Lord, and I will do what you ask me to do; but let me just say from the outset, I think this is somewhat of a dumb idea."

Luke 5:4 And when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

Jesus, a carpenter, is telling Simon, a lifelong fisherman, "There is a right place to fish and a wrong." And sometimes, those places may not be too far apart. Simon simply does not buy into this approach.

Keep in mind that there is more going on here than Jesus performing a miracle. What is happening here is related to Jesus calling Peter as a disciple. Jesus did not do random miracles. That is, He is *not* taking Peter out into deeper waters simply to say, "Let your nets down. Now, check it out! See all of those fish? Now, who really knows how to fish, you or Me?"



**Luke 5:4 (The Common English Bible)** (a graphic); from [Verse Images](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:5a And Simon answered, "Master,...

Simon Peter's response here is quite interesting to me. He begins by recognizing the Lord's authority, by calling Him *Master* (a word only found in Luke and

mostly said by Peter). That word is epistatês (ἐπιστάτης) [pronounced *ep-is-TAT-ace*], and

it means, *master, commander, teacher; one appointed over; a superintendent, overseer*. Strong's #1988. This word is found 7x in 6 verses, all in the book of Luke.

Most of us have been taught that the book of Mark is really the book of Peter, and how Mark learned all of what is in his gospel from Peter. Throughout the book of Luke, there are specific sections which are clearly attributable to specific people (Mary in the first two chapters, Peter in this chapter). The question ought to arise in your mind, *if Peter is the primary source for the book of Mark and for this chapter of Luke, why aren't these parallel gospels nearly word-for-word accounts?* Let me offer up a possible explanation (I am speculating at this point): Peter more or less dictates the contents of the book of Mark to Mark. He tells Mark, as he remembers, what took place. Luke, on the other hand, is an historian. He does not simply speak with Peter and say, "Okay, tell me about this..." and Peter then tells Luke what happened. Luke asked a number of specific questions while interviewing Peter. "Exactly what did Jesus say after this sermon (which you apparently don't remember)?" And, "When Jesus said, 'Put the boat into deeper waters,' what was your response to Him?"

**Illustration:** If you are a reader and you have a favorite author—an author who does a book tour. Then you might listen to some interviews done by various talking heads, who attempt to ask relevant questions (about the author and about the book). Who does the interview makes all the difference in the world, even though it is the same person being questioned about the same book. One interviewer might really concentrate on motivation for writing the book; another might concentrate on the author's personal life and how that came into play when writing this book. In other words, you can see two interviews of the same author about the same book, but get a much different take due to different approaches made by different interviewers. It is certainly possible for you to hear one interview, and you are enthusiastic about getting and reading the book; but, upon hearing another interview, you think, *why bother?*

**Illustration #2:** Or, take this same illustration, but apply it to your favorite actor who is going on various venues in order to promote his new movie. The approach of the interviewer can make all the difference in the world.

My point is, Mark and Luke are very different men. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that their approach when speaking to Peter is different. Based upon the texts of Mark and Luke, I would surmise that Peter almost narrated the gospel of Mark; but with regards to Luke's gospel, Luke asked the penetrating questions, and then, after the interview, went off to write down this or that historic incident (as recounted by Peter, but through Luke's more engaging interview).

Or, in the alternative, perhaps Luke interviewed Andrew (Peter's brother) instead. Andrew is not mentioned in the book of Luke (except when all the disciples are named), and perhaps that was by design. Often, when a character is studied, it is often better when told by a third party. Again, this is just speculation, with the intent of illustrating how Peter can seem to be very different in the gospels of Mark and Luke.

Back to the narrative. Peter is speaking to Jesus, after being told to put his boat into deeper waters. Peter will do what Jesus is asking, but he is going to let Jesus know this:

Luke 5:5b ...we toiled all night and took nothing!

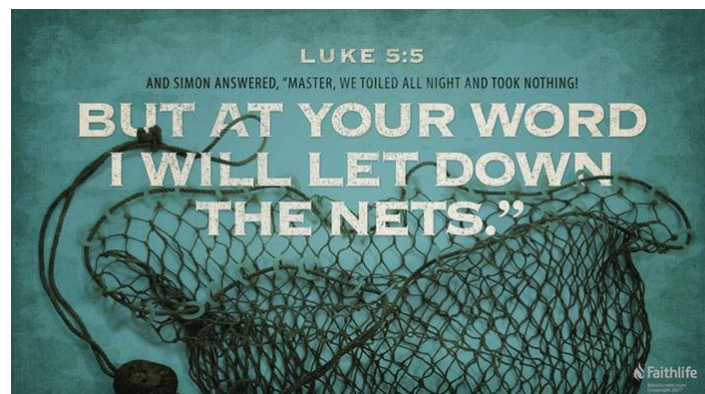
Peter has to point out to Jesus, “Listen, we worked hard last night fishing, and we got nothing.” I think the subtext is more like, “Master, I appreciate You suggesting these changes in our fishing strategy but, it is a plain fact that we fished all last night and we caught nothing. We should be done for the day.”

This may help to explain why they are washing their nets. It was an extraordinarily bad night of fishing, so I suspect that they were checking their nets for breaks as they washed them.

Luke 5:5c But at Your word I will let down the nets."

“Nevertheless,” Peter says, “You have told us to do this, so we will.”

We are unaware of many interactions between Simon and Jesus; but Simon is doing now what every natural instinct tells him not to do. He acts as Jesus suggests.



**Luke 5:5c (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Biblia](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:5 And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at Your word I will let down the nets."

Simon tells Jesus why His suggestion is not going to work, but, nevertheless, he will do what Jesus has suggested.

“Master,” Peter replied, “we’ve just come back from fishing all night and didn’t catch a thing. But if you insist, we’ll go out again and let down our nets because of your word.” (Luke 5:5; the Passion Translation)

I have often recommended having a study Bible (like the NKJV, the NASB) and a reading Bible (for instance, the NJB, the GNB, the Passion Translation, God’s Word™, etc.). On occasion, a reading Bible is going to include information which is not really there; but your primary learning should take place in the local church anyway.

Luke 5:6a And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish,...

Simon Peter had a lousy night fishing. He was worn out from working and they had not caught a blasted fish. Jesus then told them where to go and where to put down the net. Simon agrees to this (he seems to be in charge), and when they drop their nets, suddenly they have a massive amount of fish.

Luke 5:6b ...and their nets were breaking.

I think the idea of the nets *beginning to tear* to be accurate, as they still brought in a lot of fish. So Peter's men can tell that the nets are at the breaking point.

They have netted so many fish that their nets begin to tear. So he has gone from catching no fish at all, to catching so many as to strain their nets.



**Jesus Tells Peter to Go Out to Deeper Waters** (a graphic); from [Bible-daily.org](http://Bible-daily.org); accessed August 12, 2021.

#### **Lesson 149: Luke 5:6–10      The Two Fishing Boats Can Barely Handle the Fish**

Peter and the other fishermen have had the worst night of their careers as fishermen. They worked all night and caught nothing. Peter, at the Lord's direction, moved his boat out a little ways into the water and cast the net out. Because of the previous night, Peter expected nothing. However, what happened instead was this:

Luke 5:6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking.

Peter follows the Lord's directions, and suddenly, this empty section of the lake appears to be filled with fish. He went from catching nothing to catching more fish than he knew were in the lake.

Luke 5:7a They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them.

Originally, the second boat was not involved at all. Simon responded to Jesus' guidance by having only his boat go out a little further and cast a net. Now, there were so many fish, both boats were required to haul this catch in. They signal to the other boat, which also had a lousy night; to come over to help them.



Luke 5:7b **And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.**

The second boat moves in along side and they begin to bring the fish on board from the net which is almost tearing; and they have so many fish that their boats—both of them—begin to sink!

One translator (the Passion Translation) estimates that there are a ton of fish that are brought up, about the equivalent of 2 week's worth of fishing. I don't know where they come up with this approximation, but it does not seem unreasonable.

Luke 5:7 **They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.**

Peter calls to the other board—to James and John—to provide him with assistance. Peter's own boat would have sunk and/or capsized as a result of catching so many fish.

Jesus, interestingly enough, will do this one more time to Simon Peter, after the Lord's crucifixion. Jesus will have a message for Simon Peter then as well.

Luke 5:8a **But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees,...**

I think that Peter did what the Lord asked him to do partially to humor Him. "You think I should do this? Sure." But when he put the nets out and had more fish than he knew what to do with. He was shocked. I believe that it is at this point the Peter fully recognizes Who Jesus really is (his brother Andrew told him Who Jesus was, but apparently, Peter did not believe that until now).

This is the first time, in the book of Luke, that he is called Simon Peter. He is still named Simon; Jesus has apparently given Simon a second name (according to the gospel of John), but it really has not stuck with him yet. Nevertheless, the author Luke, knowing him as *Peter* uses the name *Simon Peter* at this point in the narrative. Peter has fallen before Jesus in great humility.

Luke 5:8b **...saying, "Depart from me,..."**

Peter requests that Jesus depart from him. If Jesus is Who Peter believes Him to be, then Peter should have no contact with the Lord whatsoever.

Luke 5:8c **...for I am a sinful man, O Lord."**

Peter knows his own motivation; he knows his own soul. He recognizes Who Jesus is, and asks the Lord to depart, as Peter recognizes that he is too sinful to have contact with Him.

Peter did not expect to catch any fish. He has seen Jesus perform at least a couple of miracles, but he just did not see this as happening. When he decries his own sinfulness, Peter knows that he should have believed Jesus, but he did not.



**The Miraculous Draught of Fishes** (by James Tissot) (a graphic); from [pinimg](#); accessed August 20, 2021. Information from the Brooklyn Museum: James Tissot (French, 1836-1902). The Miraculous Draught of Fishes (La pêche miraculeuse), 1886-1896. Opaque watercolor over graphite on gray wove paper, Image: 6 3/4 x 9 11/16 in. (17.1 x 24.6 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Purchased by public subscription, 00.159.87 (Photo: Brooklyn Museum).<sup>42</sup>



From the [Brooklyn Museum page](#): *In Luke's account of the calling of the first apostles, the fishermen return empty-handed after a long night of fishing in their boats. At Jesus' command, they lower their nets once more and harvest more fish than their boats can hold, prompting Peter to confess his unworthiness in Jesus' presence. While the other fishermen struggle with their hefty catch, Peter bows on bended knees before Jesus, a gesture that underscores his primacy among the disciples in Luke's Gospel.*

*In response to Peter's wonder at the miracle, Jesus assures his new apostle: "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Peter and his companions leave behind their fishing boats to follow Jesus in his ministry.*

Luke 5:8 **But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."**

Peter perceives the holiness of Jesus, and recognizes that he should not be in close proximity with the Lord. This is an insight that few believers (or unbelievers) seem to have. Those people who believe in God and believe that they will stand before God after death think, "I have been a pretty decent guy for most of my life. Sure, I have made mistakes, but then, who hasn't? Where's my harp, Lord?"

However, before God, we are the worst filth. We are born with Adam's sin imputed to us. We all have a sin nature. And we have all committed personal sins—thousands of them. God cannot have contact with any of this.

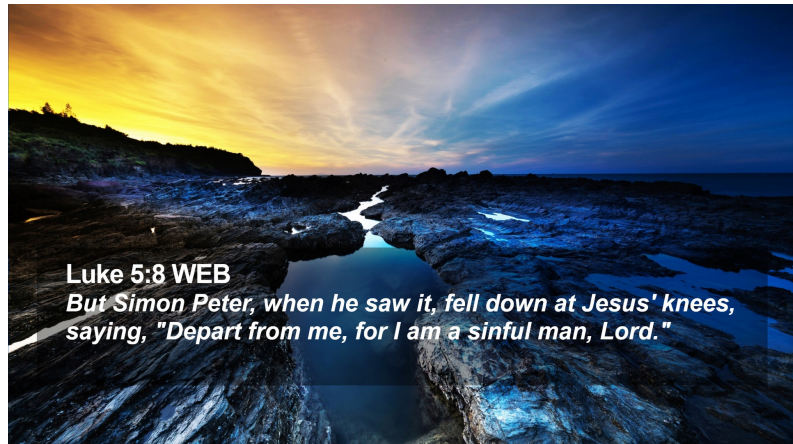
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<sup>42</sup> From the [Brooklyn Museum](#), accessed August 20, 2021.

You might own the most beautiful white suit in the world, tailored perfectly to your figure, so that, cleaned up, you look quite impressive. Now, imagine how you would look if this white suit is covered all over with dog excrement. How would you look then? That excrement changes everything.

God is that perfect white suit, and everything that we are is like dog excrement. God cannot come into contact with us, as long as we are dog excrement.

Peter recognizes that. He knows that he is before a man that he should have no contact with. I would submit to you that Peter does not really know Who Jesus is at this time, except that Jesus is holy and he, Peter, is anything but. Peter is completely and totally embarrassed for himself, and for his thoughts, his actions and his motivations. When Peter agreed to take his boat out a little further and drop the nets, *what was he really thinking?* Was Peter thinking, *Take the boat out a little further and then drop our nets? Sure, I'll show You, Wise Guy.*



**Luke 5:8 (WEB)** (a graphic); from [scripture-images.com](http://scripture-images.com); accessed August 12, 2021.

Throughout this study, I have used the NKJV as my base text. However, because the order of the words in the Greek is different from that in the NKJV, I will use the Kukis moderately literal text for v. 9, as I have kept all of the words in roughly the same order as the original Greek:

Luke 5:9a **For surprise surrounded him...** (Kukis moderately literal text)

Simon Peter was completely taken aback by what had just happened. This suggests to me that, he was more or less humoring the Lord when he went back and set out his nets again.

However, this incredible catch just shook up his mind. He realized, to some degree, just Who Jesus was. Jesus was more than just an amazing man. Jesus was not just some great teacher. He was not simply a man with an interesting take on life.

Luke 5:9b **...and all those [who were] with him...** (Kukis moderately literal text)

Remember, these men had worked all night, to the point of complete exhaustion, and they had not caught anything. So to go out and put down their nets and make their biggest catch of fish in their lives—this shocked and surprised everyone.

One of the interesting things I find concerning the miracles of the Lord is, they are always crowd appropriate. Every fisherman there on both boats experienced this, and they understood, as experienced fishermen, that this experience was not simply unusual, but impossible. Furthermore, they knew there was no way to fake any of this. If you studied the book of Exodus with me, you know that the first few miracles done by the hand of Moses were replicated by the magicians (or religious illusionists) who were a part of Pharaoh's cabinet. They could not do all that Moses did; and certainly, they could not undo what Moses did. However, they could approximate what Moses did on a small scale. But the miracles done at the hand of Moses were observable by every single Egyptian, every single time. The religious illusionists, at best, could make it appear to those within the palace that they were able to duplicate the miracles done by the hand of Moses.

What Peter and the others observed could not be trickery; it could not be faked. They all knew this. What just happened to them was beyond belief and beyond explanation.

Luke 5:9c ...when they caught [all of those] fish. (Kukis moderately literal text)

But, what amazed them was the amount of fish that they caught. These men had a great deal of experience on the seas, and a haul like this was beyond a good catch (or a great catch). It was miraculous.

Luke 5:9 For surprise surrounded him and all those [who were] with him when they caught [all of those] fish. (Kukis moderately literal text)

When we take my translation of v. 9, it is quite similar to the NKJV, but with some changes in the word order.

Luke 5:9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken,... (NKJV)

All of the deckhands were amazed by what they witnessed. They had never seen anything like this before; and they will never experience a catch like this ever again (until Jesus does this again).

Luke 5:10a ...and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee,...

Specific men were particularly impressed. Peter was astonished and so were James and John. There were many more men on these boats; but they are not named.

Luke 5:10b ...who were partners with Simon.

James, John and Simon Peter apparently all had this business together. We do not know the exact nature of the partnership, but it seems that they worked together.

This would have been quite a significant business given that they had two ships. Peter's brother, Andrew, was probably there, but he is not mentioned at this juncture in the gospel

of Luke. In fact, Luke only mentions Andrew once by name, and that is when he names all the 12 disciples in Luke 6.

Luke 5:10a-b ...and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.

These 3 men will play a very important part in the ministry of the Lord, before and after His crucifixion.

## Lesson 150: Luke 5:1–11

## Jesus Calls 3 Disciples

This is what we have studied so far:

Luke 5:4 And when He [Jesus] had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

Simon (Peter) did not hear a word of Jesus sermon. He could not stop thinking about his lousy night fishing (that previous night).

Luke 5:5 And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets."

"There are no fish in this lake right now," Peter tells the Lord. We fish all night last night and we did not catch a blasted thing."

Luke 5:6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking.

Peter did what the Lord suggested that he do; and suddenly, his nets had captured thousands of fish.

Luke 5:7 They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

The second boat came near to help out, and now both boats were overloaded with fish.

Luke 5:8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Peter, at this point, recognizes Jesus for Who He is; and himself for how failed he is as a person.

Luke 5:9–10b For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. (ESV; capitalized)

Everyone there was shocked. These men had never taken in a catch like this before.

Recall that Jesus has had a ministry going on for awhile. If I were to guess, perhaps for 6 months. All of this was a solo ministry which did not involve signs, miracles, healings or disciples. Based upon some of the things which we read in the first chapter of Acts, Jesus probably had some followers. They heard Him speak, and they wanted to travel with Him.

In any case, the Lord's ministry was Him simply reading and then teaching the Word of God. What we know of the Lord's ministry is very different than He started out (and the time period I have allowed for this ministry is purely speculative).

Only recently had Jesus begun to use the sign gifts given Him by God the Holy Spirit (from about the middle of Luke 4 to this point).

If Jesus is not depending upon His divine nature (that is what I believe), then He is only beginning to use these sign gifts, and the fact that He is able to cure people or cast out demons comes from passages which Jesus has read in the Old Testament.

When it comes to choosing His disciples, Jesus is evaluating these men as a man would. He does not look at Peter and decide, "I know that Peter will recognize Who I am." Jesus does not know that Peter will write two epistles. Although Jesus is a prophet, this does not mean that He knows everything from the future. He can speak of things only as they are revealed to Him. There is nothing that I have read which suggests that Jesus, at this point, had any information from the future about Peter. But Jesus was very able to read people, and that is what He did with Simon Peter.

Jesus is simply meeting and speaking with His various followers and evaluating them. He recognizes, for a number of reasons, that He needs more than casual followers.

Luke 5:10c **And Jesus said to Simon,...**

The preposition *prós* (πρός) [pronounced *prahç*] often indicates direct communication. Whether Peter has gotten up or not, Jesus is likely looking right at him.

Jesus has evaluated Peter. He understands who Peter is, and He is able to discern that Peter is honest and grace oriented.

Based upon what he has seen, Peter knows that he is in the company of a truly holy man. Peter also recognizes his own sinfulness. I don't believe that Peter understands much more than that, but this places him light years ahead of the arrogant religious class (with whom they will have considerable interaction).

Luke 5:10d **..."Do not be afraid;...**



Simon Peter, like many men, understands his many failures, sins and weaknesses; and he recognized that he had no place being with Jesus. He feels both ashamed and, apparently, frightened. Jesus tells him not to be afraid.

We really do not know what is going through Peter's mind, but Jesus believes the correct thing to do is to reassure him.

Luke 5:10e ...from now on you will be catching men."

"From this point forward," Jesus tells Peter, "You will be ensnaring men." This means that Peter will be evangelizing people for the Lord. He will be telling others about Jesus. To what extent, Peter has no idea; and we don't really know how much Jesus in His humanity is able to determine. However, Jesus is able to look at Simon and see great potential. Let me suggest several reasons for this: (1) Jesus told Simon what to do with the boat and the nets, and, even though this seemed silly to Simon, he still went ahead and did it. He did not argue with the Lord; he did not attempt to explain that this was a silly idea. He just did it. (2) Peter recognized just how amazing this catch of fish was. This is quite important. Remember that Pharaoh of Egypt personally experienced many miracles at the hand of Moses, but he did not appreciate the power behind them. (3) Finally, Peter fully recognizes his own sinfulness in the company of Jesus. These things tell Jesus that Peter is able to see and properly evaluate a situation; and that Peter has an honest opinion about himself.



**Luke 5:10d-e (ESV)** (a graphic); from [De La Salle](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:10c-e And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."

Now let me explain the miracle. This was a real miracle, insofar as it happened just the way that it did. God did not suddenly make fish out of nothing and stock the lake; but He moved the fish over to where Jesus guided Peter to put the boat. God brought the fish and the nets together. The fish were always there; but it required God to bring them to the nets.

The meaning of this miracle is that Peter, as a disciple of Jesus, will move only slightly from where he is. He has made his living catching fish on the sea; He will follow Jesus and His ministry to the people all around. As a result, Peter will *catch* tens of thousands of men. And through his writings, Peter has captured hundreds of millions of men. Peter is one of the greatest fishers of men of all time. Peter recorded for all time the great gospel



statement of 1Peter 2:24 **He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.** (ESV; capitalized) Many have read this verse and then have trusted in the Lord as a result.

The NET Bible: *With the statement “You will be catching people” Jesus turns the miracle into a metaphor for mission.*<sup>43</sup>

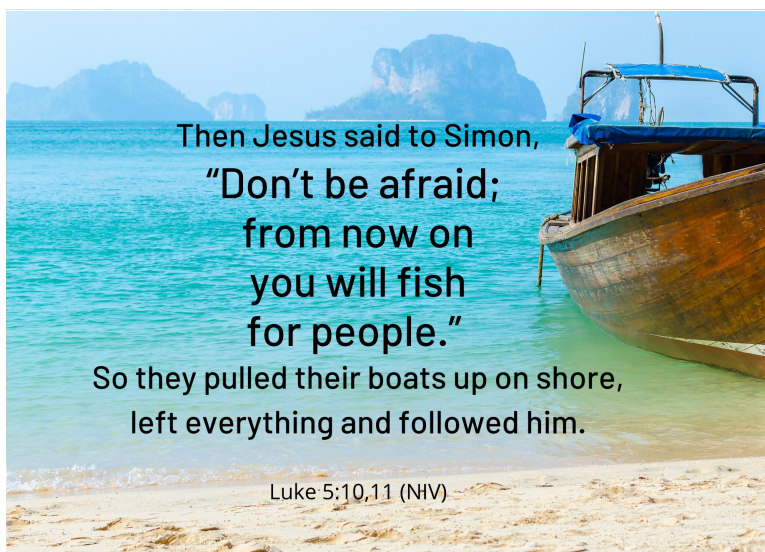
Luke 5:11a **And when they had brought their boats to land,...**

They (Peter, Andrew, James and John) pulled their boats up onto the shore, to dock them.

Luke 5:11b **...they left everything and followed Him.**

Peter, James and John are all named in this chapter; so we would assume that they forsake everything (meaning, they just leave their boating/fishing business behind). In parallel passages, Peter's brother Andrew joins them. Whether anyone else from their crew joins them, we don't know (many people followed Jesus regularly or faithfully without being one of the *twelve* and without being specifically named in Scripture).

Although I wonder what happened to Peter's boat (I assume it is his, as Jesus told him specifically to launch his boat out a ways from the shore in Luke 5:3); it is simply a possession that Peter, for a season, shed. Perhaps Peter simply left the boats right there (one may have belonged to James and John). Perhaps Peter turned to another fisherman there and said, “If you don't choose to follow the Lord, then you can run this business.” I am only speculating here. But, Peter does, temporarily, go back to the fishing business after the Lord has been crucified and resurrected (John 21:1–6). That suggests that he put the boat in the hands of someone else, not having any idea when (or if) he would come back for it.



At this time, these three men hear their calling and they follow the Lord. They themselves will also call many men to the Lord.

Luke 5:11 **And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.**

**Luke 5:10–11 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Seek Grow Love](https://seekgrowlove.com); accessed September 3, 2021.

Most of us have had lifelong careers; or careers which may

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<sup>43</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?luk5.htm> (footnote); accessed October 7, 2019.

have spanned 15 or 20 years. In many instances, we trained for these careers or went to school (s) for these careers.

We know that Peter has interacted with Jesus on at least three occasions: (1) his brother Andrew introduced him to the Lord; (2) Peter petitioned the Lord to heal his mother-in-law; and (3) the incident which we just studied. Based upon this amount of interaction, Peter is ready to set his life aside (or put it on hold) for as long as the Lord needs him (we don't know if there were other interactions which took place between the two men or not). John and James join him.

This is a difficult thing to imagine, given that fishing was Peter's life, to a great extent. At this point, it would be difficult for him to quantify exactly what he would do as a follower of Jesus.

We know that Jesus appealed to some people tremendously; while others took a strong dislike to Him. Peter knew enough, at this point, to leave everything to follow Jesus, even though I believe that he would be hard-pressed to explain what this meant, what exactly it was that he was going to do, or for how long he expected this to go on for. When I first believed in Jesus Christ at age 21, that was exactly what I faced. I did not know what it meant. I had no idea what I would do in relationship to this decision. I did not know how long exactly I was signed up for. This describes virtually everyone's salvation experience.

Based upon some passages that we will study in the future, apparently many of the followers of Jesus expected Him to establish His kingdom on earth—perhaps through force, perhaps through assent. This is what the Messiah was supposed to do, eventually. It would be my educated guess that, despite these men being hard-working fishermen, that they had some understanding of the Scriptures and of the Messiah (during this era, Israel had a very *Messiah-centered* faith called *the way of Y<sup>e</sup>howah* in the Old Testament).

Essentially, Peter, James and John are signing up for *full-time Christian service*, whatever that might have meant to them at that time.

**Application:** In the Church Age, all believers are in *full-time Christian service* (the time period which we are studying here in the book of Luke is not the Church Age). This does not mean that, at the very moment you believed in Jesus, that you must quit your job and go into some ministry. In fact, that sort of thing might not be right for you to ever happen. Being in full-time Christian service does not mean that you *must* be a pastor, a missionary or an evangelist. We are all, by default, in full-time Christian service. We may remain at our jobs and even, at some point, retire from the place where we are working (20, 30 years from now). Our mission field is where we work, among our family members, within our circle of friends, the school that we attend, the barracks where we stay, etc.

**Application:** This does not mean that you that you carry tracts with you and distribute them to everyone at work. You can and should evangelize those that you come into contact with, but you have to also obey company policies. In order to evangelize others, you must know the gospel message, and you need to have the discernment, through Bible

doctrine, to recognize time and place. In other words, you pick your spots. Generally speaking, your spots aren't going to be 10 or 20x a day. Your life and your attitude should reflect your faith. You live a life according to the teaching of Bible doctrine. And when that time comes to witness to Charley Brown, then you tell him about the Lord.

**Application:** After salvation, there is a period of time where you have no idea what you are doing, but you take in Bible doctrine in order to understand what just happened to you. Peter will learn this under the direct teaching from the Lord. We learn this in a local church (ideally speaking; I realize that the local church is a mess today).

## Lesson 151: Luke 5:1–11 Comparing the Gospel Accounts of Calling 3 Disciples

The Tree of Life translation is used below. *Jacob* is the Hebrew equivalent of *James*. *Yeshua* is the Hebrew equivalent of *Jesus*. I have added additional information in the brackets.

It was pretty much impossible to match up these passages from different gospels, as they are seen from very different vantage points. So, I have culled out the narrative of John and a portion of the narrative of Luke and placed them by themselves.

I am not providing the definitive explanation as to how these narratives match up. This is simply the way that I see it.

Differentiate between John the author (and disciple) and John the Herald (aka, John the baptizer).

### Jesus Calls His First Disciples (a comparison)

We do not know how much contact Jesus had with the various disciples prior to calling them. Peter interacted with the Lord on at least 3 occasions before he was called.

John, who probably read the three synoptic gospels before writing his own, knew that Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, had met Jesus a few months earlier than the fishing boat incident that we are studying. John includes this meeting in his gospel, possibly because it is not referenced in the other gospels.

Perhaps after reading the other three gospels, John thought to himself, *there is a lot missing here*. And then he wrote his gospel, which is very different from the other three.

John 1:35–36 Again the next day, John [the herald] was standing with two of his disciples and watched Yeshua [Jesus] walking by. He [John] said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”

John 1:37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Yeshua.

John 1:38 Yeshua turned around and saw them following. He said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which is translated Teacher), “where are you staying?”

John 1:39 “Come and see,” Yeshua tells them. So they came and saw where He was

## Jesus Calls His First Disciples (a comparison)

staying, and they spent that day with Him. It was about the tenth hour.

This likely would have taken place in the Jordan valley. The two disciples are, apparently, Andrew and someone else (*not* his brother Simon Peter). They are with John (the herald), and Jesus is walking by. One possible explanation is, Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover (prior to the beginning of His public ministry), and He travels there along the Jordan River and up through Jericho (the same route He will travel prior to the last Passover). Then Jesus returns the same way (possibly this is during the Passover season).

John introduces Andrew and his friend to Jesus. They spend the day with Jesus. Were there others there? Was Jesus with a group? Was He alone? We have no idea, based upon John's narrative.

It is possible that these are Jesus' first disciples, culled from those who had come to hear John the herald.

John 1:40–41 Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard John [the herald] speak and followed Yeshua. First he finds his own brother Simon and tells him, "We've found the Messiah!" (which is translated Anointed One).

Andrew returns home, where his brother is fishing in the Sea of Galilee, and he tells Simon about meeting the Messiah. How did he know that Jesus was the Messiah? John the Herald told him so.

John 1:42 Andrew brought Simon to Yeshua. Yeshua looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John. You shall be called Kefa (which is translated Peter)."

From this, it appears that Jesus *renamed* Simon on at least two occasions. On the second occasion, Jesus will explain in detail why He chose this new name for Simon. Giving Simon another name, at this point in time (assuming that John is presenting that portion of this narrative in the correct time sequence), would suggest that Jesus is a prophet. This does not mean that Jesus could foretell everything in His future relationship with Simon Peter, but that He knew Simon would be important to His ministry.

Again, time passes, and Jesus (Yeshua in the Tree of Life Bible) is teaching in their region. Andrew takes Simon, his brother, to hear and meet Him (I am assuming that Andrew and Simon heard the Lord teach).

It appears, in John's narrative, that Jesus *then* gives Simon a second name.

Perhaps at that same time, or perhaps on another day, the following incident takes place:

Matthew and Mark record an abbreviated version of this incident, leaving out the recasting of the nets narrative. At this point, there are enough parallels to set these passages next to one another.

## Jesus Calls His First Disciples (a comparison)

Matthew	Mark	Luke
Matt. 4:18 Now as Yeshua was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter and Andrew his brother. They were casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.	Mark 1:16 Passing along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew casting a net in the sea, for they were fishermen.	
At this point in time, Jesus would have recognized both Andrew and Simon. He had already given Simon the name Peter prior to this.		
What follows is a narrative found only in Luke <sup>44</sup> :		
Luke 5:1–3 It happened that the crowds were pressing upon Yeshua to hear the word of God as He was standing by the Lake of Kinneret, when He saw two boats standing beside the lake. Now the fishermen had left them and were washing the nets. Getting into one of the boats, Simon's boat, Yeshua asked him to push out a ways from the land. Then sitting down, He taught the crowds from the boat.		
So, prior to this incident, Andrew introduced Simon Peter to Jesus, the Messiah (we do not know exactly how Andrew introduced Jesus and Simon Peter (John 1:42). And, after that (presumably), Peter asked Jesus to come to his home to heal his mother-in-law (Luke 4:38–39)		
So, now Jesus is going to tell Peter to do some things, and Peter obeys, despite having some misgivings. He is willing, to some degree, to listen to Jesus and do what He asks.		
<p>Luke 5:4 When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Go out into the deep water, and let down your nets for a catch."</p> <p>Luke 5:5 Simon replied, "Master, we've worked hard all night and caught nothing. But at Your word I will let down the nets."</p> <p>Luke 5:6–7 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.</p> <p>Luke 5:8 But when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Yeshua's knees, saying, "Go away from me, Master, for I am a sinful man!"</p> <p>Luke 5:9–10a For amazement had gripped him and all who were with him, over the catch of fish they had netted; so also Jacob and John, Zebedee's sons, who were partners with Simon.</p>		

<sup>44</sup> There is a great deal of the book of Luke which is unique to his gospel.

## Jesus Calls His First Disciples (a comparison)

This record above, taken from the book of Luke, is exclusive to Luke's biography of Jesus.

If you read only the book of Matthew or the book of Mark, it appears as if Jesus just calls these men to follow him out of the blue.

Matthew	Mark	Luke
Matt. 4:19–20 And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.	Mark 1:17–18 And Yeshua said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.	Luke 5:10b–11 But Yeshua said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on, you will be catching men." So when they had brought the boats to the landing, they left everything and followed Him.

Even though Matthew and Mark make it sound as if Jesus just called out to these men, somehow knowing their names, and then they followed Him—no questions asked—that is not exactly what happened. Andrew had already introduced Simon Peter and Jesus. Jesus gave Simon another name. Jesus had healed Peter's mother-in-law. And James and John would have assisted Peter in catching two week's worth of fish after a single casting of the net. It is possible that there were additional interactions between Jesus and these men whom He called which were not recorded.

Matt. 4:21–22 Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, Jacob the son of Zebedee and John his brother. They were in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and He called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him.	Mark 1:19–20 Going a little farther, He saw Jacob [= James] the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired hands and followed Him.	<p>What is parallel to these passages in Matthew and Mark is Jesus telling Peter where to put down his nets in order to catch fish.</p> <p>Logically, Jesus would have called James and John after the fish were netted and hauled in.</p>
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No doubt, Peter and Andrew have already told John and James (Jacob) about Jesus; and they all witnessed the miracle of the great catch of fish. These men do not just up and follow a stranger, Jesus. They have good reason to follow Him at this point.

There are quite a number of parallel incidents throughout the gospels, some of which are difficult to match up, verse for verse. This is because Luke often has portions of narrative which are exclusive to his gospel; and because John wrote a gospel possibly with the intent of including things which he remembers, but are not found in the other biographies.



The 4 biographers of Jesus all took a different approach to Him and His ministry, much like any set of biographers would view presidents Lincoln or Kennedy or Reagan. Even places where we would expect there to be quite a number of parallels, there simply aren't.

## Lesson 152: Luke 5:12

## Ritual Cleansing of a Leper

Luke spoke to a number of people in order to prepare his biography of Jesus. There would have been a period of time when Luke did not know that he would be writing the gospel of Luke; but during that time, he would have been in contact with those who saw Jesus and listened to Him. At some point, Luke decided to *put to paper* the biography of Jesus, and so, after that, he would interview eyewitnesses very carefully, having a specific reason for interviewing them. He probably sought out certain people specifically for this purpose (for instance, Luke apparently interviewed Mary, the mother of Jesus, at length).

As a result, Luke would not have a perfect recollection of each and every incident which took place during the Lord's life. For possibly this reason, Luke records this following incident, but does not know city it takes place in (that is my presumption, based upon the fact that Luke often records identifying details in association with the narrative vignettes).

Luke 5:12a **While He was in one of the cities,...**

Jesus, and, we assume, His recently acquired disciples, are in one of the cities where Jesus is teaching (or planning to teach).

Jesus is traveling right now with at least 4 men whom the Lord called specifically; and this takes place in a city where they go. Other people are also following the Lord at this time. When we get to the book of Acts, there will be two followers of Jesus named in the first chapter who were with Him going back all the way to John the baptizer's ministry (Acts 1:21–23). So Jesus has followers pretty much from the beginning. How many there are, how faithful they are, are things which we do not know.

By the time that Jesus arrives in Jerusalem for His last Passover, there will be hundreds of people with Him; and those from the outside find it very difficult to simply come up and speak to Jesus.

Luke 5:12b **...there came a man full of leprosy.**

A man with leprosy from the street sees them. It will become apparent that this man understands Who Jesus is and knows about Him.

I find this to be interesting because the very nature of being a leper is isolation. But somehow, despite being isolated from much of society, this man knew about Jesus. There is no internet; no one has a cell phone. No one texted this leper saying, "Jesus coming to ur city; let me tell u what I no." But, even without these 21<sup>st</sup> century tools, somehow this leper knew Jesus.

Luke 5:12c *And when he saw Jesus,...*

He sees Jesus. From that point, the leper is not focused on anything else.

This is always fascinating to me that, those who rejected Jesus could not find Him in a crowd (we will have several instances of this; not the least of which is when the chief priests, scribes and pharisees will require Judas to pick Jesus out from a crowd). But this man, a leper, sees Jesus and knows Him. We don't know how or any of the attending circumstances. We do not know how this leper knows about Jesus, how he recognized Him, or even what he knows at this time about Jesus. Nevertheless, He knows enough to reverence the Lord and he knows Jesus' power.

Luke 5:12d *...he fell on his face...*

The man comes to them and he falls on his face before Jesus, which is a sign of obeisance.

Bear in mind, if you or I fall before an angel in obeisance, they will tell us to get up, as they are servants just like we are. But, when people fell before Jesus in worship, He never reprimanded them, for He is the God-man. He is worthy of their worship, even though He is only employing His human assets in His public ministry.

Luke 5:12e *...and begged Him,...*

The word translated *beg* is the aorist middle/passive indicative (although this is identified as the passive voice, I think it is the middle voice, or the deponent middle/passive voice) of *deomai* (δέομαι) [pronounced *DEH-om-ahee*], which means, *to want, lack; to desire, long for; to ask, to make a request, to petition, to beg; the thing asked for; to pray, make supplications*. Strong's #1189. Because this is a request made from a position of great humility (the man is laying on the ground before Jesus), the ESV translated this word *beg*. I would have gone with *request* or *petition*. *Beg* simply has a negative connotation with me; and the word does not properly connote the leper's thinking or attitude.

This man has an obvious request, and he begins by saying, "Lord..." which indicates that he recognizes the authority of Jesus.

I believe this is the second instance of *Lord* in the vocative in this chapter.

Luke 5:12f *..."Lord, if You will, You can make me clean."*

This is known as a *3<sup>rd</sup> class condition* in the Greek, meaning, *maybe You will or maybe You won't*. The leper does not belie any disbelief in the Lord by saying this. He is allowing for both options (making him clean or not), based upon the Lord's will.

The man precedes his request with, *if You will*. The leper is not questioning the Lord's ability; he only questions whether the Lord is willing to cleanse him.

Luke 5:12 While he was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged Him, "Lord, if You will, You can make me clean."

In an unnamed city, a leper spots Jesus, and he falls before Him. He recognizes both the Lord's power and volition regarding his severe skin disease. "Lord, I know that You can heal me—but will You?"

Luke has talked to a variety of eyewitnesses, and there are some who saw first hand certain things take place, but they could not remember exactly where they were at the time. This particular incident, I believe, comes from the memory of one of the disciples who traveled with Jesus. This could have come directly from the leper himself, but, in my estimation, he would have known the name of the city where he first met the Lord. He probably would have provided Luke with more of a backstory as well. A superficial read of this narrative suggests that we are getting the perspective of someone who is watching this happen.

Luke 5:13a And Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him,...

Jesus reached out and touched the man—and this was unusual in that era, because people did not touch lepers, not wanting to catch whatever skin disease that they had (some of the skin diseases could be transmitted through contact and some could not). Furthermore, this would make a person doing the touching ceremonially unclean. However, Jesus could not be made unclean.

Luke 5:13b ...saying, "I will;...

The man expressed no doubt in the Lord's ability; only in His willingness. Jesus tells him, "I am willing to do this." Jesus is acknowledging this man's correct assessment of things, which is, Jesus has the authority and ability to heal him.

Luke 5:13c ...be clean."

Jesus then orders the man to be clean, as this is a part of His authority, under the power of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 5:13d And immediately the leprosy left him.

Immediately, all of the effects of the leprosy are gone. The man went from being cursed for life to having no trace of leprosy on his body. Throughout the healings done by Jesus, there was no recovery time; there was no require regimen of physical therapy. Men went to a state of being as if they had never had the disease or debilitation.

This is illustrative of our relationship to God through Jesus. We come to God absolutely clean when we believe in His Son. There is not a period of time during which we make ourselves better to Him, after which, He saves us. Positionally, we are there, totally, 100%.

And anyone who comes to Jesus—no matter who—will be made clean. Jesus has both the ability and the desire to make us clean.

Luke 5:13 And Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him.

Jesus was clearly willing to heal this man; and Jesus had the ability to do so.

This, like all healings, has a parallel to salvation.

Luke 5:14a And He charged him to tell no one,...

First thing that a person who has been healed of such a disease is to go off everywhere and tell everyone what has happened to him. Jesus orders this man not to speak to anyone.

Does Jesus not understand public relations? Isn't this man's testimony exactly what Jesus wants?

Why doesn't Jesus want this man to go far and wide and tell everyone how he used to be a leper and how Jesus cleansed him? Having good PR is human viewpoint thinking. Jesus had a very targeted audience for the testimony of this leper, and the audience in this case would be the priests, and, specifically, the priests to whom this man would go.

The first point of confusion—Jesus did not come to live among us to cure our diseases. Jesus could have snapped His fingers and, *poof*, every sickly person on earth could have been cured right at that instant. In fact, Jesus could have cured illnesses for good and no one would ever get sick again (until they died).

Or, a crowd of people could come to Jesus and He could wave His arms and, suddenly, everyone in the crowd is healed. But, Jesus did not come primarily to heal. Physical healings were representations of spiritual healing, and this is one of the reasons that Jesus healed. Jesus primary purpose was to come here, live a sinless life, and then die for our sins. This cleansing of a leper is illustrative of the Lord's true power—His authority to forgive us of our sins and make us clean before God.

As an aside, why doesn't God change our environment? Why doesn't He end sickness and disease? Why doesn't He fix the world? Having a good environment does not mean that (1) people will come to God through Christ; nor does this mean that (2) people will appreciate perfect environment. I live in the United States, as do many of those who read these lessons. We have the best living conditions and the most freedom in the United States. In fact, there has never been a better time or place to be alive than the United States right now, today. Furthermore, people who are objective and interested in this sort of thing can confirm it—particularly now, with the internet. However, there are millions of people—Americans—who live here and think that America is unspeakably corrupt—possibly one of the most corrupt countries in the world. They think that life in the

United States is horrible, and they will express their intense anger, in some cities, by burning down, defacing and destroying various pieces of property. Almost all of these people who are angry, who hate the United States, who think that this is an awful place on earth—have the ability to find out about other places. One of the great things about being an American is, we could leave this country and go virtually anywhere in the world and take up residency there. So, if there is a better place for man to be, all of these angry frustrate anti-Americans could go there. But they never do (now and again, a movie star will move to another country, but they can insulate themselves from the rest of the hoi polloi no matter where they go).

One of the false set of philosophies in this world is, that there are things that man can do to change and improve the environment enough so that we will have *heaven on earth*. God placed us on earth for a variety of reasons, and we are certainly given the ability to affect our immediate environment (and it is reasonable and even spiritual to do that). That is, we can choose the place where we live and even change the outside environs to some limited degree. Throughout the world, the housing industry is one of the economic powerhouses of many countries. The greater blessings heaped upon a country, the greater the choices that we have when it comes to our immediate environment (that is, our home and yard).

However, despite there being some limited freedom in this realm, that does not mean that there is sustained happiness to be found in that. There is probably a great freedom with regards to our immediate environment in the United States than anywhere in the world, and yet, there are a great many unhappy people in this country. We have a very high rate of drug use, alcoholism and suicide, despite having the greatest blessings of any country in human history.

The point I am trying to make is, Jesus could snap His finger, eliminate disease over a particular city or throughout the entire country of Judæa and Galilee; or even throughout the world, but that (1) would not bring long-term happiness and (2) this would not bring people to Jesus. In a good or bad environment, we need a Savior. We have a sin nature which is unbridled and the source of man's fallen state (along with all of the wrong decisions which man makes).

The Millennium is going to be an *experiment* in perfect environment. We will have it on earth for 1000 years. Will man be happy? Not entirely, no. In fact, when Satan is loosed from prison for a time, there will be a worldwide rebellion against God, despite mankind enjoying perfect environment for a thousand years.

So, Jesus did not come to establish perfect environment. He did not come to bring an end to all diseases. He did not come to establish the best public relations ever known for a religious figure.

This is the narrative that we have been studying:

Luke 5:12 While He was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged Him, "Lord, if You will, You can make me clean."

This is an incident which stuck in someone's mind, and they told Luke about it. The person apparently could not remember the city, suggesting that the leper is not the one who told Luke about this incident.

A man with leprosy hears that Jesus is coming to his place, and he waits out for Jesus and comes up to Him and falls before Him.

The leper knows that Jesus is able to cleanse him; the question is, *will He?*

Luke 5:13 And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him.

Jesus touches this man and he is immediately cleansed of leprosy.

Luke 5:14a And he charged him to tell no one,...

Jesus, not going in for traditional public relations, tells the former leper not to run around and tell everyone.

Luke 5:14b ...but "go and show yourself to the priest,..." (ESV; capitalized)

"You have an assignment," Jesus tells him, "to go to a priest and subject yourself to the cleansing ritual found in the Scriptures."

Although this recently-healed man might have wanted to run around and tell everyone what Jesus did for him, Jesus told him to do something else. Jesus told this man to go, instead, to the Temple and to present himself before the priest there (it is likely that this man has not been anywhere near the Temple since whenever he contracted leprosy—we do not know when that occurred). This former leper was going to be a witness to the priests at the Temple.

Now, I inserted the word *Temple*. It is unclear to me whether such ceremonies occurred elsewhere. There were Levites scattered throughout Judah, Samaria and Galilee. It is possible that some of them acted as priests in certain areas other than the Temple.

This is an important aspect of the Lord's ministry. His greatest opposition will come from the religious hierarchy, but this is an instance where He reaches out to them. He provides them with a chance to see, with their own eyes, the power of God.

Luke 5:14c ...and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded,...



Again, the words of Jesus are elliptical; but we assume that the man fully understood what was being said. He is going to take with him an offering (an animal) to be sacrificed. This will be an animal appropriate to his cleansing, which will be described in Leviticus 14:1–32, which is examined [below](#).

Now, Jesus does not tell the man which animal to bring.<sup>45</sup> The man will have to figure this out himself. So, he will need to go to a synagogue or to speak to someone with religious training to find out what animal (s) will be needed. So, if this man does as Jesus has told him, he will interact with quite a number of those in the religious class.

So, he would go to the local synagogue and he would ask the ruler of the synagogue (possibly a scribe, a priest or a Levite<sup>46</sup>), just what he needed to bring to the Temple in order to present the appropriate gift to God. Now, this is not going to be readily known at the synagogue. I don't think they had concordances at that time (although we do not know what written information was developed at that time), so there might be 3 or 4, or maybe even 10 people scouring the Old Testament trying to find the applicable passage. They had all heard this passage before—many times. But remembering where it was from is something else indeed.

From my own knowledge of the Old Testament, I know that this passage might be in Exodus or Deuteronomy, but is most likely to be found in Leviticus. I say this, suggesting that those at the synagogue (assuming that this man goes to a synagogue first) will have a good idea where to look for this ritual.

All of this should have these men thinking, *a person cured of leprosy? How on earth did that happen?* They would have questions and this man could answer them. Jesus had a targeted audience that He was going for. By this, Jesus is reaching out to the religious class.

**Jesus Heals the Leper** (a graphic); from [SSPX](#); accessed September 17, 2021. There were quite a number of various paintings and artwork for this incident, but nearly all of them had a long-haired Jesus.



Luke 5:14d ...for a proof to them.”

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<sup>45</sup> Perhaps Jesus was being elliptical, and this is left out of the narrative.

<sup>46</sup> Not all Levites were priests.

The ceremony which is going to take place will be a testimony to the priests who take part in it.

Where this information will be found is in the books of Moses (probably in Leviticus). “Moses has written down the proper procedure for this,” indicating that this man needed to find out what this is, “and going through these proper steps is your testimony to them.”

The religious class will become, for the most part, antagonistic to Jesus and to those who believe in Him (although this is not the case yet, as Jesus is barely known).

Jesus specifically wants the religious class to consider Him. Furthermore, this might be the best way to appeal to those steeped in Judaism. They should not face everything at once, but hear a little at a time. “This Man healed me and told me to come to you.” “Tell us about this Man.” Etc. Not only should the priest or Levite say, I think that I can find that passage in Leviticus; but, in the back of his mind, he should be thinking of other Scriptures as well. “Someone just healed you?” the Levite might say. And then his mind should also go to the appropriate Scriptures for that.

Leviticus 14 is where the passage can be found as to how a leper is to be ritually cleansed after he has been cured. Bear in mind that no one, after reading this passage, ever expected to ever apply it.

The ESV; capitalized is used below:

The Ritual Cleansing of a Cured Leper (Leviticus 14:1–32)	
Scripture	Text/Commentary
Leviticus 14:1–2a The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "This shall be the law of the leprous person for the day of his cleansing.	If a leper experienced cleansing, then there was a protocol for him to follow. He would first show himself to a priest; and then there would be specific sacrifices that the man was supposed to make.
Leviticus 14:2b–3a He shall be brought to the priest, and the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall look.	This has never happened before for the priests who will assist in this ritual. In many of the rituals found in Leviticus, these priests have done them over and over again. However, this will be brand new to all those involved.

The cleansing of a leper was an event which simply did not happen (I think it occurred once in the Old Testament). So passages like this would be read in the synagogues, but no one in most generations had actually ritually cleansed a leper before.

## The Ritual Cleansing of a Cured Leper (Leviticus 14:1–32)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Leviticus 14:3b–4 Then, if the case of leprous disease is healed in the leprous person, the priest shall command them to take for him who is to be cleansed two live clean birds and cedarwood and scarlet yarn and hyssop.	<p>After examining this man who previously had a serious skin disease, the priests assemble the supplies needed for this ritual.</p> <p>Here, there will be two live, clean birds, the very aromatic cedarwood, scarlet yarn and hyssop (hyssop was also used in the Passover ceremony)</p>
Leviticus 14:5–6 And the priest shall command them to kill one of the birds in an earthenware vessel over fresh water. He shall take the live bird with the cedarwood and the scarlet yarn and the hyssop, and dip them and the live bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the fresh water.	<p>There was more to this ceremony than to simply kill the birds. One bird was killed and its blood was used throughout this ceremony.</p> <p>Blood, in these rituals, always represents the spiritual death of Jesus.</p> <p>The fresh water refers to cleansing.</p> <p>We have the death of one birth, and the life of the second bird, cleansed by the blood of the first bird.</p>
Leviticus 14:7 And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed of the leprous disease. Then he shall pronounce him clean and shall let the living bird go into the open field.	<p>The blood of the bird would be used on this man with the leprous disease.</p> <p>The number 7 represents God's perfection and completeness in Scripture.</p> <p>The priest pronouncing the man clean is equivalent to God the Father pronouncing us clean once we have been cleansed of our own leprous condition (which is the sin nature).</p> <p>The bird which is freed represents the leper being freed of his disease.</p>

## The Ritual Cleansing of a Cured Leper (Leviticus 14:1–32)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
<p>Leviticus 14:8–9 And he who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes and shave off all his hair and bathe himself in water, and he shall be clean. And after that he may come into the camp, but live outside his tent seven days. And on the seventh day he shall shave off all his hair from his head, his beard, and his eyebrows. He shall shave off all his hair, and then he shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and he shall be clean.</p>	<p>There were certain things that the man with leprosy was supposed to do, which included bathing and shaving, along with some continued isolation.</p> <p>Time would also be given to make certain that the leprosy does not start back up again. With all of the man's hair removed, this could be determined with a simple inspection.</p> <p>All of this shaving and bathing is analogous to us being not just pronounced clean (at salvation), but being then made clean by God the Father (which is ultimate sanctification).</p>
<p>Leviticus 14:10 "And on the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb a year old without blemish, and a grain offering of three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, and one log of oil.</p>	<p>There were more animals to be offered up to God. Fundamental to this process was the blood sacrifice.</p> <p>The grain sacrifices speak of the humanity of Jesus; the oil speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit.</p>
<p>The grain sacrifice exactly describes Jesus at this point in time. He is true humanity and all that He is able to do is done by the power of God the Holy Spirit.</p>	
<p>Leviticus 14:11–13 And the priest who cleanses him shall set the man who is to be cleansed and these things before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. And the priest shall take one of the male lambs and offer it for a guilt offering, along with the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD. And he shall kill the lamb in the place where they kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the place of the sanctuary. For the guilt offering, like the sin offering, belongs to the priest; it is most holy.</p>	<p>The priest had a great many duties to see to when a leper was cleansed. The priest himself, in this ceremony, represents Jesus Christ.</p> <p>The Tent of Meeting, I believe, represents fellowship and union with God. The leper did not go into the Tent. Our complete union with God will occur after death.</p> <p>At this point in time, this would have been done at the Temple, which replaced the Tabernacle.</p> <p>The animal sacrifices were to be considered very holy (set apart to God). These sacrifices represent Jesus going to the cross and dying for our sins.</p>

## The Ritual Cleansing of a Cured Leper (Leviticus 14:1–32)

### Scripture

### Text/Commentary

The Tent of Meeting (later the Temple) was not like a church. People could not simply enter into it. Only priests could go inside and only with a particular duty to attend to. This was not a place where high-level religious types could hang out together.

Leviticus 14:14 The priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering, and the priest shall put it on the lobe of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot.

The priest used the blood of the sacrifices to cleanse the man. The blood represents the spiritual death of our Lord.

The ear represents what a man hears (ideally, he should be hearing Bible doctrine to influence him). His foot represents volition in terms of the direction that the man goes; his hand represents what the man does.

Leviticus 14:15–16 Then the priest shall take some of the log of oil and pour it into the palm of his own left hand and dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand and sprinkle some oil with his finger seven times before the LORD.

Oil which represents the power of the Holy Spirit, is also used in this set of ceremonies. The number 7 always represents completeness or perfection.

The priest, who represents Jesus Christ, has his own hand used in this ceremony, as it is Jesus who actually cleanses us.

Leviticus 14:17–18 And some of the oil that remains in his hand the priest shall put on the lobe of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot, on top of the blood of the guilt offering. And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed. Then the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD.

The cleansing which takes place is representative of the cleansing of salvation. The oil represents the spiritual power of the Holy Spirit.

The head represents the thinking of the person in this ceremony. After being ceremonially cleansed, our thinking also needs to be changed. It is changed through Bible doctrine.

The feet represent volition, which are now guided by God the Holy Spirit; and the hands are capable of producing divine good.

The focus here is upon the leper himself. The cleansing of the leper is parallel to the cleansing of a person who has believed in Jesus. After we are cleansed by the Lord, we have a life to lead. That means we need to listen to Bible doctrine being taught, and the direction that we go in and the things that we do suddenly become very important (that is, after salvation, we live the spiritual life).

## The Ritual Cleansing of a Cured Leper (Leviticus 14:1–32)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Leviticus 14:19–20 The priest shall offer the sin offering, to make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. And afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean.	<p>Even though this ceremony is for a leper who has been cured, he still has a sin nature. He is still sinful before God. Therefore, atonement must be made for his soul as well.</p> <p>The uncleanness of the leper represents the uncleanness of all mankind. These various sacrifices represent the actual cleansing done by God.</p> <p>The cleansing of the believer in time is a process which continues throughout our lives.</p>
<p>Essential to the believer's life is fellowship with God, which is established by 1John 1:9 (If we acknowledge our sins to Him, we will be temporally forgiven and cleansed from all unrighteousness—sins which we have committed but don't realize that they were sins). R. B. Thieme, Jr. designates this the <i>rebound technique</i>.</p>	
Leviticus 14:21–22 "But if he is poor and cannot afford so much, then he shall take one male lamb for a guilt offering to be waved, to make atonement for him, and a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering, and a log of oil; also two turtledoves or two pigeons, whichever he can afford. The one shall be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering.	<p>Lepers would not have a great many resources, having been separated from family and society, so lesser sacrifices are allowed.</p> <p>No one is kept out of the plan of God simply for lack of resources. No matter what our origins, we can be saved.</p>



## The Ritual Cleansing of a Cured Leper (Leviticus 14:1–32)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Leviticus 14:23–25 And on the eighth day he shall bring them for his cleansing to the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, before the LORD. And the priest shall take the lamb of the guilt offering and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them for a wave offering before the LORD. And he shall kill the lamb of the guilt offering. And the priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the lobe of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed, and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot.	<p>The offering of a lamb represents the offering of Jesus Christ for our sins. The blood represents His spiritual death which takes place on the cross. The blood represents the cleansing of the man by the Lord's spiritual death.</p> <p>A wave offering appears to be nothing more than the offerer lifting up the sacrifice before God and moving it to and fro (waving it). This suggests that God is able to see what we are doing.</p> <p>The blood of the lamb is related to what we hear (accurate Bible doctrine), the direction that we go in (the big toe on the right foot) and what we do (the thumb on the right hand).</p>
Leviticus 14:26–29 And the priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand, and shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD. And the priest shall put some of the oil that is in his hand on the lobe of the right ear of him who is to be cleansed and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot, in the place where the blood of the guilt offering was put. And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of him who is to be cleansed, to make atonement for him before the LORD.	<p>Oil, again, is used, to represent the empowerment of God the Holy Spirit. The priest represents Jesus, as being empowered by God the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>The hand represents what a person does. His ear represents what he hears (ideally speaking, he hears the Word of God). His foot represents volition (his foot is place out there in the direction that he is going to travel; his big toe points in that direction).</p> <p>One fundamental aspect of our salvation is, the perfect life led by the humanity of our Lord.</p>

## The Ritual Cleansing of a Cured Leper (Leviticus 14:1–32)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Leviticus 14:30–31 And he shall offer, of the turtledoves or pigeons, whichever he can afford, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, along with a grain offering. And the priest shall make atonement before the LORD for him who is being cleansed.	<p>The birds are available publically and they are not as expensive as livestock. No one is deprived of cleansing by God, regardless of financial status.</p> <p>The sin offering speaks of the payment made to resolve his sin problem; the burnt offering is the judgment of those sins in Christ. The grain offering speaks of the humanity of Christ Jesus, which is necessary in order for us to be forgiven. God cannot die for our sins; God cannot take upon Himself the penalty for our sins.</p>
Leviticus 14:32 This is the law for him in whom is a case of leprous disease, who cannot afford the offerings for his cleansing."	Fundamentally, none of us can afford the offerings necessary for our cleansing.

Bear in mind that the Scriptures are read regularly throughout the land, and the priests often did the readings. So they have read this passage for centuries now, but at no time have the priests ever taken part in the ceremonies herein prescribed. Lepers were not cleansed because they were not cured (there may have been an exception to this; it seems to me the Elijah or Elisha healed a leper). Therefore, lepers never came to the Temple (here, in Leviticus, to the Tent of Meeting) for ceremonial cleansing to match their actual cleansing.

This former leper was to show up to the Temple and tell them, "I used to be a leper, but now I am cleansed. I am here to submit to the requirements of the Law." Jaws would drop.

This is why such a testimony was so incredible: the Jewish people believed that this was the Word of God, but, there is this one passage which they had read many times, but which seemed to lack specific application, because former lepers did not come to the Temple to fulfill the requirements of this passage.

This is a very lengthy and complex set of sacrifices and rituals. This allows for a great deal of time for interaction between the former leper and the priests. No priest would have known all of this information off the top of his head. They would have to be reading the passage and then doing what they are told to do for each step.

This was to be a very subtle testimony to the priests. The implication is, the Messiah is among them, if such a passage need be invoked.

Think of healings as the same as teaching by parable. This was simply another way of teaching the Word of God. A healing illustrates a great truth, and it was easy to remember. A person was once sick (or had leprosy) and then Jesus healed him. That is easy to remember and it connects what has happened to the truth of Jesus.

What people expected in the Messiah was one thing. They took a specific set of Scriptures and doubled down on those Scriptures; however, they set aside a great many other Scriptures which did not make sense to them (like, Isa. 53). They were expecting the Messiah to be a mighty warrior-king (not unlike King David). But this is not Who Jesus was. Not at this point in time.

Exposure to this aspect of the Lord's ministry was to help ease the religious folk into setting aside some of their preconceived notions. When the leper shows up for the appropriate cleansing rituals, this would almost throw the priests into a panic. They had to go searching back through the Scriptures to find this set of rituals and then they would need to perform them. None of the priests had ever participated in this set of rituals before.

They should be thinking about what happened. and discussing things amongst themselves as well. No doubt, they would question this former leper of how his cleansing came to be, and he would have told them about Jesus.

Luke 5:14 **And he charged him to tell no one, but "go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them."**

People were not just cleansed from leprosy. Leprosy was a set of skin diseases which a person generally endured for the rest of their entire lives.

Having interacted with a great many atheists and agnostics, one of the things which they object to is, they see God as this grandiose egomaniac who needs adoration and worship. Jesus reveals God to us, as He is God and His humanity reflects the character of God. In this particular vignette, Jesus is not searching out great adoration and approbation. To this leper whom He has just healed, Jesus does *not* say, "Hey, tell all of your friends about Me; and, after doing that, go to your local priest." The testimony of this particular leper was intended to be quiet and understated. Jesus' point was to reach the priests of that region, that the testimony of the leper might indicate to them that the Messiah was here.

#### **Lesson 155: Luke 5:15–17b**

#### **Pharisees and Experts in the Law Show up**

At this point in the Lord's ministry, He has called a few disciples and His very public ministry which includes healings has begun. He has just healed a man of leprosy, but rather than allow this man to run all over the place telling people what happened, Jesus told him to go to a priest and follow the cleansing rituals required for a leper who has just been cleansed. Luke 5:12–15

However, more than just this one leper have been cured; and their stories are going out all over the land. We do not know if healings have occurred but not given in Luke's historic record.

Luke 5:15a **But now even more the report about Him went abroad,..**

There are increasingly many reports that keep going out. Everyone who witnesses Jesus and believes in Him tells others what they have seen.

These reports keep on going out to all the cities around. The sort of healings done by the Lord were amazing and life-changing events for those who received the Lord's healing touch. The life-changing result of being cured of a serious illness is analogous to the life-changing result of believing in Jesus Christ. We understand the parallels in retrospect; but it is unclear if anyone understood these parallels when they were actually taking place.

There was apparently a mixed response to the Lord, some positive and some negative; but when it came to healing and having demons cast out, people came to Him in droves.

Luke 5:15b **...and great crowds gathered to hear Him...**

Large crowds kept gathering, some of them hoping to hear Jesus teach. The authority that Jesus had to cast out demons and to cure illnesses gave Him a hearing among the people. This phrase tells us that many came simply to hear Him teach.

Most people who went to see the Lord and to hear Him would have assumed that Jesus would be from God, given His teaching and what He is able to do.

Luke 5:15c **...and to be healed of their infirmities.**

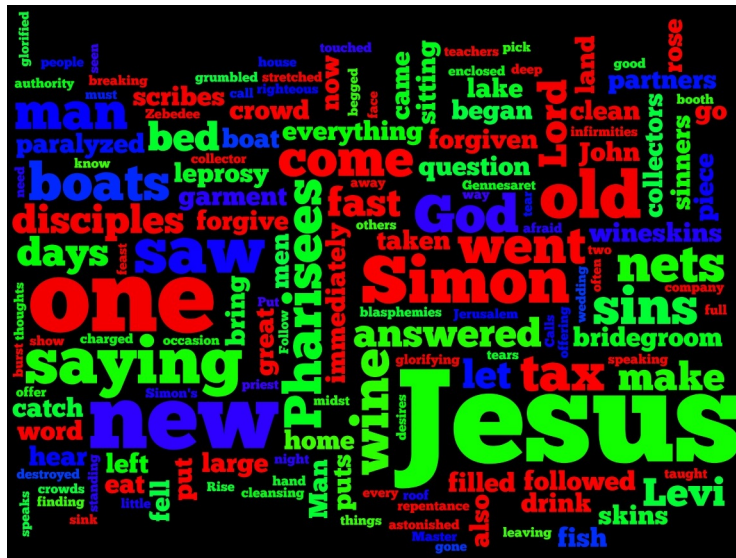
Also important to those in the crowds were those who were ill and wanted to be healed from their illnesses.

This appears to be very early on in the Lord's ministry, and people flocked to Him to be cured of their illnesses. It does not appear that, He again revealed to a large group of people exactly Who He was (apart from that one time in the synagogue). For the most part, Jesus has allowed the people to come to their own conclusions about Him. In fact, at some time in the future, Jesus will quiz Peter as to Who He is, and Peter, surprisingly enough, will give the exact correct answer.

Luke 5:15 **But now even more the report about Him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear Him and to be healed of their infirmities.**



**Luke 5:15 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Pinterest](#); accessed September 3, 2021. This graphic is interesting simply because of what is emphasized. Which word of text is in the largest font? But is that really the headline? Is that really to focal point of this verse?



Luke 5:16a But He would  
withdraw to desolate places....

Even though many people—particularly religious leaders—would have reveled in all

I believe that the plural of desert-wildernesses (or, *desolate places*) simply indicates that Jesus did not go out into a single wilderness area, but, in every place that He and His disciples went, Jesus tried to determine where He might get away to commune with God, His Father.

Luke 5:16b ...and pray.

Jesus apparently enjoyed fellowship with His Father and spiritual renewal when communing with God (bear in mind that Jesus operates solely within His humanity).



We have a similar experience in Bible class (if it is done right). Sometimes we go there exhausted; but there are times for the believer when he looks forward to church. There are certainly times when the believer tunes everything else out (problems, people, situations) and concentrates on the teaching of the Word of God. If that is your experience (or sometimes your experience), then you have an inkling of understanding why Jesus would go off alone, away from the crowds, to pray to God.

We should comprehend that, if Jesus, in His perfect humanity, needed spiritual renewal or strengthening, then perhaps, we do as well. We get ours in a Bible class taught by a well-qualified and well-prepared pastor-teacher.

Luke 5:16 **But He would withdraw to desolate places and pray.**

If Jesus came primarily to heal, then withdrawing from the people would run contrary to that. However, Jesus had a number of objectives for His ministry. There were times when He required some spiritual renewal.

**Luke 5:16 (KJV)** (a graphic); from [Etsy](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:15–16 **But now even more the report about Him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear Him and to be healed of their infirmities. But He would withdraw to desolate places and pray.**

We notice here a balancing of priorities; where Jesus is sometimes with the people, healing their sicknesses and teaching; and sometimes, He is alone with God, in a secluded area.

Jesus, although He had the ability to access His omniscience, He did not. He could have accessed any of His divine attributes, but He did not. Therefore, on occasion, He required communion with God the Father. This refreshed His human spirit.

Luke 5:17a **On one of those days,...**

Jesus has just begun His public ministry, which included teaching and healings. People were coming to Him from all over.





This passage is about one particular day.

Luke 5:17b ...as he was teaching,...

Jesus is teaching and there are many people gathered around Him, some open to His teaching and some needing to be healed.

Luke 5:17c ...Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there,...

At this point in time, there are a number of pharisees and those who were known as teachers of the Law (these would be rabbis and similar level scholars) in the crowd .

This is the first time that Luke has mentioned the Pharisees (and perhaps this is the first time that they appear to be lying in wait for the Lord). This indicates that they knew about Jesus early in His public ministry. Perhaps it was in part from His declaration in Nazareth; and perhaps a result of so many people coming to see Him. Recall also that Jesus sent a cured leper to the priests for the Levitical ceremony prescribed in Scripture.

*Thayer: [The pharisees are a] sect that seems to have started after the Jewish exile. In addition to OT books the Pharisees recognised in oral tradition a standard of belief and life. They sought for distinction and praise by outward observance of external rites and by outward forms of piety, and such as ceremonial washings, fastings, prayers, and alms giving; and, comparatively negligent of genuine piety, they prided themselves on their fancied good works. They held strenuously to a belief in the existence of good and evil angels, and to the expectation of a Messiah; and they cherished the hope that the dead, after a preliminary experience either of reward or of penalty in Hades, would be recalled to life by him, and be requited each according to his individual deeds. In opposition to the usurped dominion of the Herods and the rule of the Romans, they stoutly upheld the theocracy and their country's cause, and possessed great influence with the common people. According to Josephus they numbered more than 6000. They were bitter enemies of Jesus and his cause; and were in turn severely rebuked by him for their avarice, ambition, hollow reliance on outward works, and affection of piety in order to gain popularity.<sup>47</sup>*

Jesus has not come up through any traditional way of attending the right schools or placing Himself under the right teachers. He is somewhat known (He has been reading and teaching in synagogues for much of His life), but He does not really have the credentials that most Jewish scholars of that era would have had. He lacks the formal education.

The lack of formal religious training was not really a problem for Jesus until now. At this point, He appears to be bucking the religious establishment. On top of that, in a few

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<sup>47</sup> Thayer text for Strong's #5330

verses, Jesus will forgive the sins of a man placed before Him. To the religious class, His religious credentials are now in question.

The religious class had heard about Jesus and there were incidents, such as one that we have studied, where Jesus is discussing with the scholars of His day the Scriptures when he is but 12 years old. Whether this is remembered 18 years later, I could not say (I doubt that it was).

No doubt, based upon what Jesus said when reading the text from Isaiah when he was in the synagogue in Nazareth, religious authorities were contacted. Also, Jesus was beginning to become known for teaching the Bible in the synagogues and elsewhere, as well as known for healing. So the religious types came to observe. If I were to guess, the pharisees probably thought, for the most part, that this was a suspicious man who might start up a cult or irritate Rome.

Let me suggest that this is not an unreasonable first impression of Jesus, based upon what these men have heard about Him. Do they know that He has claimed to be the Messiah? Hard to tell. The religious types probably are aware the Jesus' training is unknown but that He has a large following. Being skeptical of such a person is not wrong. However, these of the religious class will listen with their own ears to Jesus and observe with their eyes what He is capable of doing. So, even though we can give these pharisees a pass at having some skepticism at the start, they will hear and see enough to be able to draw a reasonable conclusion about Jesus.

It is very possible that the incident which probably brought the most attention of the healing of the leper, which Jesus approached subtly. "Don't run around telling everyone," He said to the leper, "Just show yourself to the priests and follow the cleansing rituals that they recommend." (I am paraphrasing, obviously). Exactly what to do would have stumped the priests at first, but they would have eventually found the rituals which needed to be performed. During this time, they would have been questioning this leper and finding out about Jesus. In my opinion, this is when the higher ups in Judaism were contacted, and many came out to see Jesus.

However, the attitude of the religious leaders seems to be one of heavy skepticism; they are not open to the idea that this Man might actually be the Messiah.

#### **Lesson 156: Luke 5:17**

#### **Pharisees and Experts in the Law Show up**

We are in the early stages of the Lord's ministry. At this point, He has at least 4 primary disciples; and He has done healings.

Luke 5:17a-b **On one of those days, as He was teaching,...**

Jesus is teaching, as He so often has; but there is something new to observe.

Luke 5:17c ...Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there,...

I believe that Jesus had become known—when research was done on Him—as a teacher, but as a teacher without solid portfolio (in the eyes of the religious hierarchy). Therefore, a number of men who specialized in teaching the Mosaic Law went with the Pharisees to observe Him teaching. Now, bear in mind that most of these men were not as much trained in the Law as they were experts in the teaching of rabbis who went before them. So, when they read and taught from the Scriptures, they would often quote this or that rabbi as their authority on this or that interpretation or application. They knew the stock interpretations of the Old Testament Scriptures; but these would not necessarily be accurate.

Future from now, these various groups who, in times past were not necessarily friendly with one another, but would band together to form a decidedly anti-Jesus coalition. However, at this point, these men are probably, for the most part, simply skeptics of Jesus' teaching and ministry. Generally speaking, the first inclination of these men would be negative towards the Lord's teaching; but they were not yet filled with anger or bitterness towards Him. Nevertheless, these men would be quick to call out anything that Jesus said (or did) that struck them as wrong.

Luke 5:17a-c On one of those days, as He was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there,...

I believe that one of the keys to understanding these men and their bias is, they bring with them the *teachers of the [Mosaic] Law*. Although these men are called *teachers of the Mosaic Law*, they would have been heavily steeped in the religious traditions of the rabbis. What Moses wrote would have been indistinguishable to these folk from the legalistic tenets that were being taught throughout Judæa and beyond. They no doubt believed their vast addition of laws, expansive regulations, and explanations; and they did not appear to separate them (in their own minds) from the writings of Moses. In this regard, they would be wrong.

They are going to carefully pay attention to everything that is said and make certain that it does not contradict what they believe. They will be examining the Lord for any statement which appears to go against their teaching of the Law; and they were looking for any violation or perceived violation of the Law.

I believe that their intention, at this point, is to merely publically discredit Him. They expect that Jesus will say something and, if it is clearly wrong, they will speak up, and point this out. Everyone listening to Jesus is going to be made aware of His shortcomings as a teacher. That, I believe, is their general plan.

Luke 5:17d ...who had come from every village of Galilee...

Now, the way the text appears to read, these are pharisees and teachers of the law who have come from all over to hear Him. However, I believe that this is a reference to the

overall crowd here and not only to the religious groups who are here. What convinces me of this is, *from each village* (which would be a reference to the people in general). Now, in order to take that sense, one must read into the text (I will explain that remark shortly).

Luke 5:17e ...and Judea and from Jerusalem.

They had also come from Judæa, which is equivalent to the southern kingdom (this nation was a Jewish nation, but there were many other groups of people living there. Also, Judæa was ultimately ruled by Rome.

Some people had come from Jerusalem; and this may refer specifically to the religious class. Although these religious types come from all over, most of them resided near the Temple in Jerusalem.

What we are studying can be read in two ways: (1) it is the pharisees and teachers of the Law who come from every village in Judæa and Jerusalem. However, (2) one might also understand this to refer to the people who are there. After looking at 100 or so translations, I see it translated in both ways:

Revised English Bible—1989

One day as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting round him. People had come from every village in Galilee and from Judaea and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was with him to heal the sick.

*The Amplified Bible*

One day as He was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the Law sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* with Him to heal.

Kukis Mostly Literal Translation

It happened on one of the days when He was teaching that pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting [among those being instructed], those who had come from every village—from Galilee, Judæa and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Him to *cure* [or, *was to cure them*].

Interestingly enough, it is the REB which has departed from the exact text, but may still provide the best translation (however, I find myself going back and forth on this interpretation in my own mind).

In any case, whether we are speaking of the disciples there or of the religious class, some of them had come from villages from all over Galilee. What we undoubtedly know is this: (1) The Pharisees and teachers of the Law came from all over; (2) there had to have been a great many people there, who had also come from all over. (3) Jesus' gift of healing was on full display this day (v. 17f). Recognizing these things may make the exact interpretation of v. 17 less key to understanding this overall passage.

The religious class was there, taking this all in, thinking about what Jesus was doing and saying. Likely, the teachers of the Law and other religious types quietly spoke to one another concerning what Jesus was saying.

Something is about to take place which will really anger this portion of Jesus' audience.

Luke 5:17f **And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.**

Most believe that Jesus had the ability to heal at will and was, apparently, healing many people—virtually all who came to Him. However, it is interesting that this is stated specifically, and we might understand this to mean, **...and the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal [was on full display this day]**. This is a phrase that should be examined.

Luke 5:17f **And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.** If Jesus healed from the ultimate source of His Own Deity, then these words would never be used of Him.

Let's take this in points:

### **The Power of the Lord was with Jesus to Heal**

1. First thing to note is *Lord* translates the Greek word kurios (κύριος) [pronounced KOO-ree-oss], which means, *lord, master; Lord; he to whom a person or thing belongs; a prince, chief, sovereign*. Strong's #2962.
2. *Kurios* is most used to translate Y<sup>e</sup>howah from the Old Testament. *Kurios* is not always used to refer to deity; but its emphasis is on authority. However, in this case, *Lord* refers to Deity in the same way that Y<sup>e</sup>howah does.
3. Y<sup>e</sup>howah can refer to any Member of the Trinity; and *Lord* is used in that way here.
4. We are *not* speaking of the inherent power of Jesus, because, throughout all or most of His life, He operates from His humanity. That is, even though Jesus is the Son of God, it is possible that He never accesses this power as a part of His ministry (I am leaning towards Him never accessing it throughout His entire life).
5. If we were speaking of Jesus' Deity, then He would always have the ability to heal. There would not be one day where this power is more pronounced than on another day.
6. However, Jesus operates within the confines of His humanity, which is known as the doctrine of kenosis.
7. This suggests that there are times when Jesus is able to heal; and times when He is not.
  - 1) However, I do not recall any examples of Him being unable to heal anyone.
  - 2) Jesus appears to have some awareness when it is in the will of God to heal.
  - 3) Jesus could have healed every person in the world (had this been the will of His Father). He could have ended all diseases forever, had He chosen to (acting from His Deity, of course).
  - 4) However, there appear to be some limitations upon His healing, despite

## The Power of the Lord was with Jesus to Heal

- the fact that an inability to heal is never discussed in the biographies of Jesus (insofar as I can recall).
- 5) That is, we do not actually read the words, *Jesus could have healed everyone in Judæa, but He did not.*
  - 6) We also do not read the words, *Jesus wanted to heal those in the crowd this day, but the power to heal was not with Him.*
  - 7) However, every time that Jesus walked to the Temple courtyard, He probably saw a man who was lame soliciting donations for himself at one the entrances. Jesus never healed this man. In the book of Acts, Peter will heal this man instead (which will cause quite a stir).
  - 8) So, although we do not have a verse that says, *Jesus walked by this lame man near one of the entrances to the Temple complex, but He chose not to heal him*; that appears to be exactly what happened on a number of occasions.
8. Nevertheless, this verse tells us that Jesus' power to heal was either with the Father or with the Holy Spirit, either of Whom may be referred to as *Lord* (I would assume the Holy Spirit).
- 1) Regarding Jesus and the plan of God (the Father); God the Father is the Author of His plan; Jesus executes the plan; and God the Holy Spirit provides the power for Jesus to execute God's plan.
  - 2) Therefore, *Lord* refers to God the Holy Spirit.

As believers in Jesus Christ during the Church Age, we have the plan of God for our lives and we have the empowerment of God the Holy Spirit (which is *not* a feeling or an emotional experience). When we learn Bible doctrine, we are best able to apprehend the plan of God; and God the Holy Spirit has something with which to work with in our souls (our volition and our knowledge of divine information).

Let me put this in another way: Jesus Christ *test-drove* the Christian way of life<sup>48</sup>; and that is the life which we are supposed to live today. This does not mean that we *copy* Jesus in our actions, but that we use the exact same resources which He used.

As an aside, I cannot tell you how many times when I am studying 2 or 3 books at the same time (during the same week), and I find interesting overlaps, and very interesting connections between these books (such as this verse that we are studying and Peter's healing of the lame man at the Temple in the book of Acts).

I believe that the power of the Holy Spirit, in a very visual way, was very available to the Lord and that He fully realized that. Jesus, in His humanity, would have understood His capabilities as the Messiah through His study of the Scriptures. The religious crowd can see that the Lord was indeed able to heal a variety of maladies; and many which could not be disputed, even by a stranger.

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<sup>48</sup> I believe that R. B. Thieme, Jr. coined this phrase.



Luke 5:17f **And the power of the Lord was with Him to heal.**

The text does not actually say that Jesus knows that or feels as if He has a great power in the Spirit; but saying that the power for Him to cure right here, right after saying that there were pharisees and teachers of the Law in the audience—that seems to me an attempt by the author Luke to tie these two things together. The pharisees would know for certain that there is no reason to doubt the Lord's power (just as, for instance, the Pharaoh of Egypt had no reason to doubt the power of Moses' God). The pharisees will observe for themselves the undeniable healing power of Jesus.

## **Lessons 157–158: Luke 5:17–23**

## **A Binary Choice for the Religious Types**

Luke 5:17 **On one of those days, as He was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.**

This verse is the set up for the incident which follows. The pharisees and other teachers of the Law were there, along with the people who wanted to hear the teaching of Jesus.

The power of God the Holy Spirit was with Jesus, giving Him the ability to heal.

Luke 5:18a **And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed,...**

The first two words are *and behold*. Even though this is the way people spoke during Old and New Testament times, it is not something which we say today. Perhaps a far more casual translation might be something like, *And here is an interesting thing which happened while Jesus was speaking; or, listen to what happened next; or, hey, take a look at this!*

There are some men who have a friend or a relative—or, who knows, possibly even a stranger—and they are carrying him on what is often translated *a bed*; but it appears to be something designed in order to transport a person from point A to point B, Possibly more like a stretcher, which doubled as this man's cot.

However many men are involved here, they have decided to transport the paralyzed man to Jesus—and I assume that this is for the purpose of healing him. Elsewhere in another gospel, we know that there are 4 men.

Luke 5:18b **...and they were seeking to bring him in...**

The verb *to seek* here has a wide and interesting set of applications. It is the imperfect active indicative of *zêteô* (ζητέω) [pronounced *zay-THE-oh*], and it means, *to seek after [to find]; to seek by thinking [reasoning, inquiring]; to seek for, to aim at, to strive after; to require [demand]; to crave, to desire from someone*. Strong's #2212. The imperfect tense means, they knew that Jesus was coming to speak in their town. So after hearing, they

decided to take this man to Him. The first step was to find Jesus. Well, they found Him, but he could not be reached. So they were acting on a plan which they set into motion when they found that Jesus was going to be near. However, they ran into a few roadblocks along the way.

They wanted to (more literally, *they were seeking to*) bring the paralyzed man in to where Jesus was—that is, right up to where Jesus was standing (or sitting). They had intended to deliver this man to Jesus and ask for Jesus to heal him.

The exact environment is not explained in the text; perhaps Jesus is speaking in a large courtyard of a home, but there are so many people everywhere, that these men cannot even gain entry into the courtyard. I will continue with that presumption, as it fits well with the narrative.

Luke 5:18c ...and lay him before Jesus,...

They wanted to bring the paralyzed man and place him before Jesus. Their desire, no doubt, is for him to be healed.

This is another fascinating aspect of the gospels. When someone has positive volition towards Jesus, they are able to go into a crowded situation and pick Him out. Sure, often He is speaking; but they seem to know, even though they perhaps have never seen Him before.

The pharisees and religious types are there, and they know Who Jesus is right now, but there are times when they are unable to recognize Him. Near the end of this gospel when Jesus is seized to be crucified, the men who seized Him needed Judas to lead them to the Lord and to point Him out. This is after literally hundreds of Pharisees had listened to Jesus, spoke with Him, criticized Him and debated with Him. In the previous chapter, Jesus spoke in a synagogue and declared Who He was. Men surrounded Him and were going to throw Him off a precipice; but He escapes walking right through their midst.

I do not know exactly what this phenomenon was that caused this—whether it was supernatural in some way, or if Jesus was rather nondescript. In any case, you will see throughout our study of this book that if someone wants to speak with Jesus, they are always able to find Him and pick Him out (for example, in a later chapter, we will study the narrative of a woman who comes to Jesus when He is at dinner and she uses her hair to clean and moisturize His feet). Those who believe in Jesus never seem to have any trouble recognizing Him, finding Him in a crowd, and then coming right up to Him.

Luke 5:18 And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus,...

Jesus is speaking—likely within the courtyard of a large home—and there is a large crowd of people around Him. However, there is no way that He can be reached. These men

have a paralyzed man on a stretcher and they desire to bring him to Jesus. It becomes apparent that they cannot get through the crowd to see Jesus face to face.

Despite coming to this roadblock of people, these men continue to survey the situation (that is the imperfect tense of *zêteô* (ζητέω) still) and try to figure out how they might accomplish their goal of setting their friend before Jesus.

Luke 5:19a ...but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd,...

It became clear that there was no way to get close to Jesus. For one thing, we are speaking of 4 men who are carrying this stretcher; and one man who is on it. That in itself is a rather bulky procession. And Jesus is speaking before a *standing room only* crowd.<sup>49</sup> No doubt, these men individually, walked around here or there, and scoped out the entire place. They realized that there is no way that they could get into that courtyard (or room, wherever Jesus happens to be). But, in scouting out this situation, they realized, there is a rather unconventional way to get this man before Jesus.

So, you can imagine these 4 guys, spreading out and walking around the house and around the courtyard (often a courtyard was an integral part of a house or a building; a great deal of living occurred right there in the courtyard itself). So, they walk around the house, they scope it out, and they find there is no way to simply carry this lame man directly in to see Jesus. There is a virtually impenetrable crowd all around Jesus.

Luke 5:19b ...they went up on the roof...

Plan A was bringing their friend on a stretcher and placing him right in front of Jesus. Now they have moved to plan B. They wanted to just carry their friend on the stretcher right in to Jesus, but there was no way to do this; so they figured out that they could get onto the roof and move in to a better position.

In the ancient world, just as a courtyard was an often-used living area, so was the roof. On hot summer days, being outside—particularly outside in the breeze—was a thing. Therefore, roofs were designed for people to walk on. In fact, they were designed so that people could live on them.

However, this was set up, there was a roof for the house that this group could get onto. This roof could be walked across or navigated.

Luke 5:19c ...and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus.

Thayer: *The phrase “through the roof”, means through the door in the roof to which a ladder or stairway led up from the street (according to the Rabbis*

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<sup>49</sup> That's an expression; not necessarily an accurate description.

*distinguish two ways of entering a house, “the way through the door” and “the way through the roof”.*<sup>50</sup>

The roof was not broken; but there was an opening where they could move to and drop their friend down through the opening. We do not know if this was a way to place the man inside of the room; or inside the courtyard. I believe that the latter is the case. This did allow the men to place their friend right in front of Jesus.

One of the aspects of Scripture which gets my attention is just how often human volition is such an integral part of the narrative; in fact, many times, human volition is a key element of many narratives. Here, the narrative would still stand up if it read, *and the 4 men put their paralyzed friend in a stretcher before Jesus*. However, they go to great lengths to place this man before the Lord, which is what we read in v. 19.

As an aside, I get the gist of what is happening. However, I cannot form a clear picture in my mind of how exactly this took place. One translator suggests that some tiles (roofing tiles?) were removed; the text suggests that the man is lowered down between the tiles, which suggests some sort of opening above Jesus or near Jesus.

If this was some sort of public courtyard, it could have been designed like this perhaps for two reasons (1) to allow some light into the area and (2) to put that natural light on the a particular portion of the courtyard, which is, apparently, where Jesus is. It is even possible that this place where Jesus is may have been designed specifically for a person to speak before a gathering.



**The Paralytic is Lowered from the Roof Before Jesus** (a graphic); from [Christian Healthcare Ministries](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:19 ...but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus.

In contrast to the positive volition of these men will be the volition of the religious spectators. The 4 men bring their friend to place before Jesus because they know that he will be healed. They have the faith in the Lord which causes them to take extraordinary measures to put their friend right in front of Jesus.

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<sup>50</sup> From Thayer definition of Strong's #2766.

On the other hand, the religious crowd—including the experts in the Mosaic Law—are watching carefully, looking for any misstep or misspeaking on the part of Jesus. Whether or not they came specifically for that reason, we do not know (I would assume that many of them came intending to be critical). But there certainly could have been some religious types who were there who had somewhat of an open mind. Now, they still might be listening carefully to anything that Jesus says that may not square with their own religious sensibilities, but they may not be completely anti-Jesus yet.

Jesus has only just begun His ministry and He has already attracted the attention of the pharisees and religious teachers, who have come from all over to hear Him. Based upon the tenor of gospels, most of them appeared to be negative towards the Lord from the beginning (Nicodemus is a notable exception to this—John 3).

This portion of the narrative began setting this up with pharisees and experts in the Law being in the audience; but these men who brought their friend to Jesus on a stretcher—well, their mental attitude had to be something entirely different.

Luke 5:20a **And when He saw their faith,...**

Jesus takes note of all that has happened, recognizing instantly of the trouble and work that these men had gone to in order to bring their friend before Him. This required faith; it involved faith upon which they acted. They believed in the Lord and the paralyzed man believed in the Lord.

In the beginnings of this operation, no one said, “Take this stretcher onto the roof? No way. Look, this man Jesus is probably a fraud anyway.” But no one reacted that way; they believed in Him. “Put me in front of Jesus and I know I will be healed,” the paralyzed man may have said.

The men carrying the stretcher had faith; and the paralyzed man had faith. Their faith is saving faith.

Jesus does not literally see their faith, but He observes their actions which reveal their faith.

But then, Jesus does something which is quite astounding (and He does this, no doubt, because the religious crowd is there and observing Him). Jesus does not say, “Stand up and walk; you are now healed.” Instead, He says,...

Luke 5:20b **...He said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."**

“Man, your sins have been forgiven.” The perfect tense here means, they were forgiven in the past (when he exercised faith in Jesus) with results that continue into the future (he will remain forgiven and saved to the last day).

Although Jesus is speaking in particular to this man, what He says also applies to the friends who brought him as well. Jesus observes *their* faith; and their faith in Him is saving faith.

One of the thing which Jesus does—and He does this often—is He allows what is taking place around Him to be a jumping off point for His teaching. What is taking place right here could not be ignored. No doubt, everyone is looking at what has taken place. No matter what Jesus was talking about, that had to be set aside. This man on a stretcher is placed before Jesus, coming down from above, as it were. This has to become a part of Jesus' teaching. Being the brilliant man that He was, Jesus could turn on a dime. He could acknowledge this man and this situation, without being thrown off His game.

Luke 5:20 **And when He saw their faith, He said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."**

At this point, we will see a contrast between the faith of the men carrying the stretcher; and the man on that stretcher, with the thinking of the religious crowd, who were there observing.

The scribes and pharisees are there as observers, but they are not converts, nor do they want to become converts. In my opinion, their minds are made up (for the most part; there are exceptions). They are simply looking for evidence to back up what they already believe.

**Illustration:** Let me give you a contemporary reference (I began writing this section in 2018–2019). Nearly all of the news media dislikes the current president, President Trump. He is not going to change their minds with anything that he says or does. They observe and report on what he says and does, with this exact storyline: *whatever Trump says, he should have said the exact opposite thing; whatever Trump does, he should have done the exact opposite thing*. They take that as the basis for all of their news about President Trump. On cable news, they then assemble a panel of commentators to explain to the viewer just what Trump said (or tweeted) that was wrong (he had the wrong tone, he used the wrong language, he asserted things which were not, strictly speaking, exactly true<sup>51</sup>); and then they discuss that, with nearly everyone taking the side opposite Trump.

**Illustration:** For the previous president, the exact opposite was true. On almost every news program, whatever the president said or did was brilliant, exemplary, and well thought-out. That was their starting point for any story about Obama. I recall a news report explaining what President Obama said by using the example of him actually playing 3-dimensional chess with the recipients of his message (obviously, any person playing 3-D chess is super brilliant). Another *reporter* would swoon over this or that speech, and suggest that school children in the future study President Obama's speeches.

These are contemporary examples of people who begin with their opinion first, and go from there.

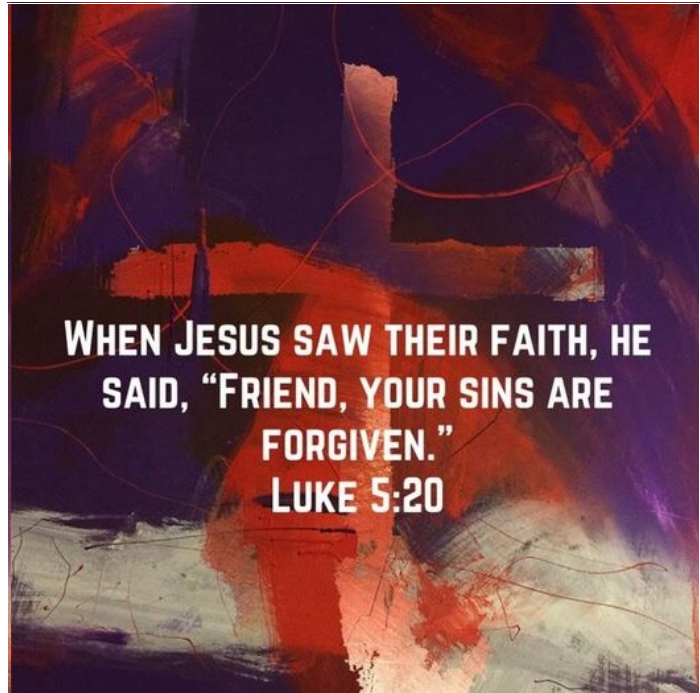
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<sup>51</sup> The President is given to hyperbole.



So these scribes and pharisees are watching carefully, trying to determine where they can find fault with Jesus' message. When Jesus forgave that man His sins, that became their primary bone of contention. This is because they did not know where Jesus was going to take this conversation.

**Luke 5:20 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Bethel Church Facebook](#); accessed September 3, 2021.



Luke 5:21a *And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question,...*

Many translations suggest that these religious scholars reasoned in their minds, without having an open discussion. I think that they said these things back and forth to one another very quietly, coming to a clear consensus.

Jesus, by what He said, knew exactly what He was doing. He forgave the sins of this man instead of healing him...and He did this loudly. Every religious ear perked up. *What the hell did He just say?*

It appears that these men simply thought these things, based upon what Jesus will say in the next passage: *When Jesus perceived their thoughts,...* (v. 22a).

Luke 5:21b *...saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies?"*

Forgiving sins is the blasphemy spoken by Jesus, according to the Scribes and Pharisees. When He said this, it caused them great concern.

At this point, they are either thinking these thoughts or speaking them very softly—perhaps just to themselves or to one another.

Luke 5:21c *Who can forgive sins but God alone?"*

At this point, the scribes and pharisees state a true point: *who can forgive sins except God?* Jesus knows this as well. He has either blasphemed or He is God or He is acting upon the authority of God.

What appears to be the case is, these religious types first began thinking these things, and then started saying them out loud—but quietly. They agreed on this point, and it is an accurate conclusion: *Who is able to forgive sins apart from God?*

Luke 5:21 **And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"**

At this point, the pharisees are not standing up and loudly objecting. They are thinking that only God can forgive sins and they may be saying very quietly to one another. They are far enough away, that Jesus cannot hear them.

Luke 5:22a **When Jesus perceived their thoughts,...**

What appears to be the case is, these scribes and pharisees are observing all that is taking place, and they are thinking about it and how wrong it was for Jesus to say, "Your sins are forgiven you" (it was wrong in *their* minds). If they are saying anything, it is very quietly to one another.

Nevertheless, Jesus knows what they are thinking. Perhaps Jesus can read their faces and perhaps this is revealed to Him by the Holy Spirit. I have suggested that some of the religious types might have even muttered to themselves, and Jesus could hear that or He could get the gist of what they were saying simply by watching their expressions. In my opinion, Jesus spotted these religious types, said these words, and then looked right at them. He could see an obvious change of demeanor. Whatever the case, these scribes and pharisees might as well be shouting; as Jesus completely understood them and what was going on in their minds. Let me suggest that it does not require divine revelation to know this.

Let me also suggest that Jesus knows that these people are there. These religious types probably stood out, based upon the clothing which they wore. Loudly forgiving the sins of this man was intentionally provocative. Jesus was able to anticipate their reaction as well as be able to note it without necessarily hearing them.

As an aside, it is my own belief that Jesus is not always portrayed by commentators as acting within his fully human nature, as I believe He is doing right here. I do not believe that God the Holy Spirit needed to reveal the thinking of the religious types to Jesus. I believe that (1) Jesus knew what He said ("Your sins are forgiven you") would cause them to think what they did and (2) Jesus is able to read their expressions and determine what they were thinking. When it says that Jesus perceived their thoughts, this does not mean that He was reading their minds. God could do that. However, there is no indication that Jesus is using the powers of His Deity.

There are some people who cannot hide their emotions and we can see it in their faces. So many times in a movie, there might be a close up on an actor's face, but without any dialogue being spoken; and we look at the actor and know what is going on in his mind; we know what he is thinking. People trained to read micro-expressions can look at a person

and see past what they are saying and understand what they are really thinking. Although Jesus' formal ministry began only this past year, we know that He has been speaking to people—particularly to religious types, in synagogues and elsewhere—and that He simply knows how to read people.

My point is, there does not need to be anything supernatural going on here. Based upon what He said and looking at the expressions on their faces, Jesus knows what the religious types are thinking right then.

Luke 5:22b ...he answered them,...

Jesus addresses their unspoken thoughts (or whatever muttering they may have done under their breath). Jesus looks right at them. He can tell that they are thinking or possibly formulating arguments and likely fuming a bit. In any case, Jesus speaks to their inner thoughts.

Luke 5:22c ..."Why do you question in your hearts?"

Jesus asks them, "**Why are you deliberating in your hearts?**" I do not believe that these words preclude these men from quietly muttering under their breaths or even making quiet comments to one another. Their words (if they are quietly speaking) reflect the thoughts of their souls.

Jesus asks them, "Why are you getting all riled up? Why are you disputing and deliberating in your own thinking what you just saw? Why are you upset that I just forgave this man his sins?"

These religious types had their own thoughts—expressed quietly or not. Jesus is able to read them and answer their questions without them expressing these questions loudly enough for anyone a few rows away to hear.

Luke 5:22 When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts?"

Jesus is speaking as the public speaker, so that those gathered there can hear Him. The pharisees and other religious types are likely saying a few things very quietly. No one else can hear them; Jesus certainly cannot hear them. But He is able to determine what they are thinking.

Luke 5:23a Which is easier, to say,...

Jesus now asks these religious type a direct question. He is going to give these men a reasonable binary choice. Which of the following is easiest to say and do?

Luke 5:23b ...'Your sins are forgiven you,'...

The first option is, *your sins have been forgiven you*. *To forgive* is in the perfect passive indicative. The perfect tense is something which is done in the past with results that continue into the future. So, Jesus is not simply saying, *you're forgiven*; He is saying, "*You are forgiven now with results that continue into the future.*" The passive voice means that the man receives this forgiveness; and the indicative mood is the mood of reality.

Even though God is the only One to forgive, it would be quite *easy* to simply say these words. People could disagree with you theologically; they might say, *where do you get off forgiving someone's sins?* But saying those words would be easy to say.

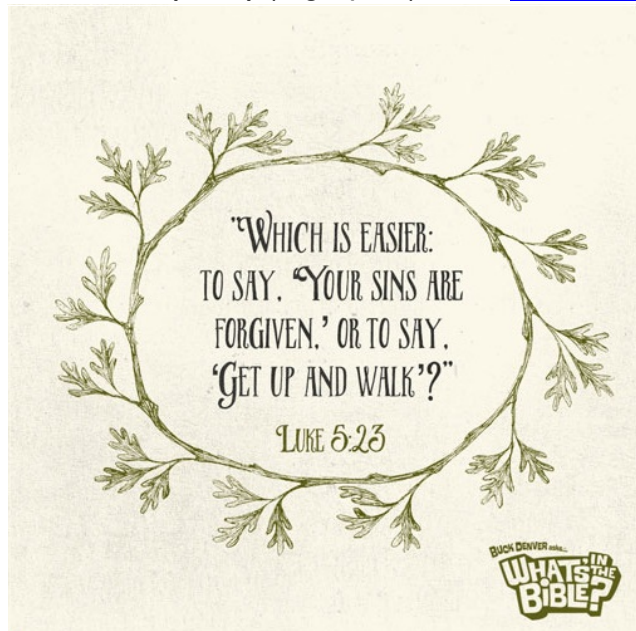
Now Jesus offers the other thing that He might say...

Luke 5:23c ...or to say, 'Rise and walk'?

Then Jesus offers up the other choice: *Is it easier to say, 'Get up and walk'?* Now sure, any person could say either thing, but this is a paralyzed man. Telling him to get up and walk would be a very cruel thing to say unless he actually gets up and walks. But, someone could certainly say either thing. But, what Jesus is asking, in either case, can He say those things and do His words mean what they say?

Everyone there is a witness. Simply saying "Get up and walk" is meaningless if the person does not, in front of everyone, get up and walk.

**Luke 5:23 (CSB)** (a graphic); from [What's in the Bible](http://www.whatsinthebible.com); accessed September 3, 2021.



Luke 5:23 Which is easier to say? 'Your sins have been forgiven;' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

For the most part, Jesus flummoxed the religious types. They did not really understand the Mosaic Law, nor did they know how to properly apply the Law; therefore, they could not out-argue Him. Every time that they would object to what Jesus does or says, Jesus could easily explain what he is doing or saying in the light of the Law. Sometimes, when necessary, He explained these things in the light of their traditions.

Most of the time, if Jesus asked them a question, they would be unable to answer it. Their religious training, no matter how extensive, was not enough preparation to field a few questions from the Lord.



Were these religious types forgiving sins themselves? Did they have occasion to do this, as Catholic priests did in later centuries? I don't know. But the logical answer is, it would be easier to say, *your sins are forgiven you* than to say, *get up and walk*, because they could not say the latter and expect anything to happen. At their word, no one could be healed.

## Lesson 159: Luke 5:20–25

## Healing the Paralyzed Man

The scene is this: there are many people surrounding the Lord to hear Him speak and to be healed. He appears to be in the courtyard of a private home and there are many people around Him. There are pharisees and other religious types in this large crowd as well. Four men (or however many) have managed to lower a paralyzed man laying on a cot before Jesus from the rooftop.

**The Men Lower the Paralytic Before Jesus** (a graphic); from James Martin's [Twitter](#); accessed October 29, 2021.

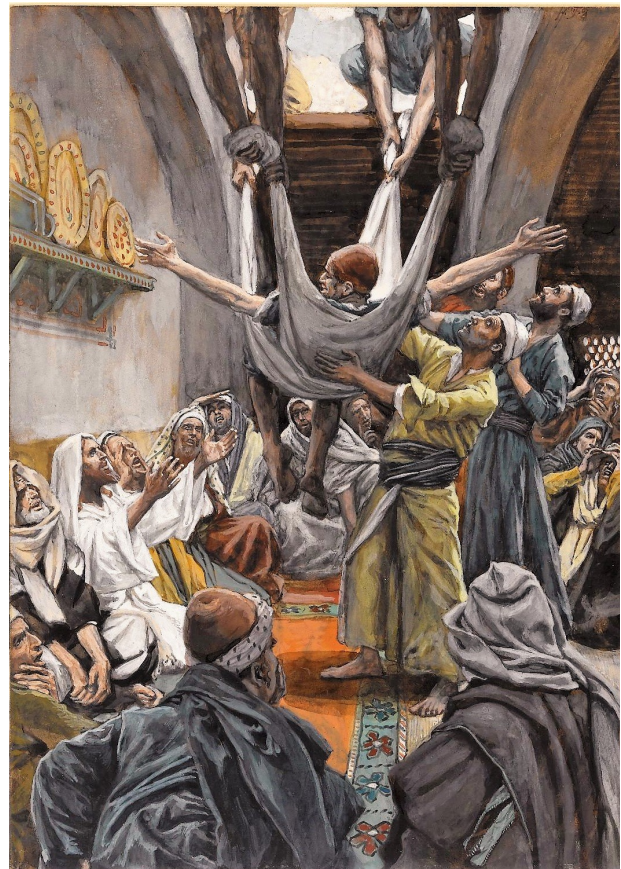
Luke 5:20 *And when He saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."*

Jesus sees the evidence of these men's faith by their going to so much trouble to put their friend before Jesus for healing.

Luke 5:21 *And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this Who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"*

The pharisees are either saying this very quietly to one another or this is what they are thinking when they hear Jesus' words. Jesus cannot hear what they are saying, but He can see them. Jesus was also well aware that many of the things which He said would set off religious types. He did not make His message palatable to religious types.

Luke 5:22–23 *When Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? (ESV; capitalized)*



Most questions posed by Jesus to the pharisees could not be answered by them. Anyone could say either of those things, but was it possible for a man who is paralyzed to simply rise up and walk if Jesus tells him to? The religious types had no answer for Jesus.

Luke 5:24a But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"...

The word *has* above is the present tense of *to have and to hold* indicates that Jesus keeps on having (linear aktionsart) this power or authority or ability to forgive sins. Jesus again uses the perfect tense for *forgive, pardon*. He forgives the sins in the past with the result that they keep on being forgiven.

Some versions of Christianity treat the forgiveness of sin as sort of a one-time thing and that if you continue in sin, then the forgiveness no longer holds. In that case, the aorist tense would be used. The aorist tense is something that occurs or has occurred. We look at the verb as a singular action. For instance, we might say that a person *stood up*; but later, he might sit down or lie down. *Stood up*, in this example, would be in the aorist—point-of-time—tense. But, when Jesus uses the perfect tense of the word *forgive*, this is something that happens in the past with results that continue into the future.

Jesus, by saying to this man, “Your sins are forgiven,” is letting the people in the audience (particularly the skeptical religious group) that He has the authority to forgive sins. By His word, this man’s sins are forgiven (this is because he has placed his faith in Jesus).

At this point, the religious types are flabbergasted. To one another, they have expressed some very quiet skepticism (if that); and if they spoke quietly, they know Jesus cannot hear them. Furthermore, if they did not speak, they know that this man cannot read their minds. But, point in fact, that is exactly what is happening. Simply by looking at them, Jesus knows what they are thinking. Don’t misunderstand me at this point. Jesus is not accessing His omniscience in order to look into these men’s minds. Jesus is people-smart. Furthermore, He has been in many synagogues and talked with many religious types already. He knows their thought processes and He knows their predilections.

Jesus also knows how to push their buttons, which He clearly did by saying, “**Man, your sins are forgiven you.**”

Bear in mind that this is early in the Lord’s ministry. He has healed many people and given many sermons—but we are probably less than 8 months into His public ministry. It has only been a month or two since Nazareth. Therefore, the intractable negative volition of the religious class is not really a thing yet, as this appears to be the first time that they have attended a meeting of His (or the first time that many of them as a group came to see Jesus). Their negative point of view is apparent, but not to the point where they are ready to act.

Luke 5:24a But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"...



These men have questioned whether Jesus can forgive sins. To them, saying such a thing is blasphemous. They cannot forgive sins; nor can they make this man walk. They may be well-studied, but these are things which they cannot say.

To drive this point home, Jesus is going to say both things. He has the authority from God to forgive sins; and the power of God the Holy Spirit to heal the sick and wounded.

Luke 5:24b ...—He said to the man who was paralyzed—...

We don't know the Lord's stance or gaze at this time. Has He shifted from looking at the scribes and pharisees, or is He still looking at them? Perhaps He is looking right at the scribes and pharisees, yet He then speaks to the paralyzed man so that all can hear.

Luke 5:24c ..."I say to you, rise,...

"As for you," the Lord says, "Get up!" Everyone has heard Jesus talk about forgiving sins or telling this man to stand up and walk. No one knows what is going to happen next.

Everyone sees these events unfolding (although most there do not necessarily know about the negative volition of the religious class which is there). This man lying there before Jesus is paralyzed. He was carried there on a cot of some sort, and Jesus tells him to get up. The verb is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, present active imperative. The 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular means that this is addressed to the paralyzed man alone. The imperative mood means that this is an order. The active voice means that the paralyzed man must do this himself. The present tense means, *Keep getting up; and stay up!*

When it comes to an act of healing, Jesus does not Himself do the healing. That is, His Deity does not engage and cause someone to be healed. The power of God the Holy Spirit in accordance with the Father's plan make these healings happen.

Luke 5:24d ...pick up your bed...

Jesus is going to be very specific as to what this man is to do next. Then Jesus says, "After you stand up, then you are going to lift up your cot." In other words, *you're not going to just leave it here, but you will carry it out of here*. The man was carried to this point on the cot; now he will stand up and carry his cot out of there.

For *picking up* his cot, the aorist tense is used. The man is not going to do this over and over again. He is going to do that one time.

God has always been somewhat theatric—the great plagues of Egypt, for instance. So, this man will not just stand up and walk, he will stand up and then pick up his cot and then he will walk. He won't get lost in the crowd, because he will be the man carrying a cot.

Although this is translated here in the ESV as in the imperative (which is true of many translations), this is an aorist active participle. The correct way to translate this is, “I say to you, rise, and, having picked up your bed,...”

Luke 5:24e ...and go home.”

This is a present imperative. Literally, this reads, *keep on departing to your home*.

Luke 5:24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins—he said to the man who was paralyzed—“I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.”

Although there are not three imperatives here, many have so translated this verse. It does not really do violence to the original language. Because the aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb, stating it like this is similar to issuing three commands.

This would be the man’s testimony—he gets up and he walks home, carrying his cot—upon which he has been confined for so many years.

Jesus is making a logical point here. He will command the man to rise up and depart; and the fact that the man does this will be proof that Jesus also has the authority to forgive sins. The two things go together and Jesus is able to say and do both (forgive sins and heal this man).

Luke 5:25a And immediately he rose up before them....

This man who has been paralyzed for we don’t know how long, suddenly stands up.

The scribes and pharisees were totally upset that Jesus said, “Your sins are forgiven;” and now this crippled man is standing up in front of them and then walking out of there, carrying his cot. They might question, *who can say, ‘Your sins are forgiven;’* but then also, *who can say, ‘Get up and walk’ to a man who is paralyzed?* Then the man gets up and stands and he will walk. What kind of a man can say these things? How can such a thing happen?

What should have happened, had these men been neutral observers, is, when they see this man get up and walk, that should have caused them to rethink their position. They should be thinking, “Who can say something like this and then it comes to pass?”

Luke 5:25b ...and picked up what he had been lying on...

The paralyzed man has stood up and then he lifted up his cot that he had been lying on.

When Jesus healed someone, they were not just slightly healed, and then they needed physical therapy to get back to normal. Jesus healed them for good, completely, totally and immediately. This man’s legs and body had muscles that no doubt had atrophied over the years; but when Jesus healed him, the muscles were strong and normal, as if he had

been walking all of these years. He was not simply healed, but he was restored to what his health would have been, apart from being paralyzed. Let me put this another way: if anyone noticed the man's legs, they would have seen a dramatic physical change in their appearance. Someone who had been paralyzed for a year or more would have lost all muscle definition in his legs; but those muscles were restored instantly.

There was another thing which had to take place. This man has not stood or walked for many years. Standing, walking and running all require coordination. Most of us have seen an infant walk for the first time (or third or fourth time). They are unsteady, uncoordinated; they are learning how to think and coordinate their body and its muscles. This formerly paralyzed man is perfectly coordinated. He stands up and walks as if it is normal. There is no relearning which must take place. When Jesus healed someone, he was healed perfectly, as if that disability had never existed.

Luke 5:25c ...and went home,...

Now this guy has not been walking for years, I would assume; and suddenly being able to stand up and pick up his cot—this must have been an amazing experience for him.

This would possibly be a family home; but we do not know the circumstances. Nor do we have any idea how far the walk is. No doubt, every moment of that walk was a joy to the previously paralyzed man.

Luke 5:25d ...glorifying God.

In terms of what this man actually did; I would guess that he is praying and thanking God along the way—perhaps praying aloud—and telling everyone that he came across about what happened. This glorifies God.

As a people, the Jews tend to be very demonstrative. This is a characteristic of their people at this point in their history. This does not mean that we should imitate the actions of this man, and walk around praising God everywhere that we go. That is not what is being taught here.

Luke 5:25 And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God.

We do not know what became of the men who brought him to Jesus. But the paralyzed man walked home. That we know.

The context of our study is, a man who could not walk wanted to come before Jesus to be healed. Jesus is teaching in his vicinity, but the crowd around Jesus was too large and too packed to bring this cripple to Jesus. What appears to be the case is, Jesus is teaching

in the courtyard of a home, and it is standing room only. The men with the man on the cot, found a way to get onto the home's roof (ancient roofs were made to be walked on and lived on). The men lowered the cot from the roof down before Jesus (I may have some of these details wrong, as they are not all specified in the passage).

Luke 5:20 **And when He [Jesus] saw their faith, He said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."**

The men who lowered the cot before Jesus and the man who was lame were the ones with faith. Obviously, Jesus could not see their faith, but He saw evidence of their faith (the fact that they found a way to put this lame man before Him).

Knowing that there are pharisees and other religious types in the crowd, Jesus says, for the benefit of all, **"Man, your sins are forgiven you."** This is a rather monumental thing for Him to say.

Luke 5:21 **And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"**

Apparently, in this crowded pack of people, there were those from the religious hierarchy, and they heard what Jesus said and were shocked (not in a good way).

If they expressed this shock out loud, it was quietly whispered to one another (or they said nothing at all).

Luke 5:22–24 **When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the man who was paralyzed—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home."**

Jesus is *not* reading their minds. Jesus knows who the scribes and pharisees are (from previous contact and/or by the clothes that they wore); and Jesus was an astute observer of human behavior. When He spoke, He no doubt looked at them and could tell by their expressions that they did not like what He said.

Jesus asked these experts in the law, "Which is easiest to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you;' or, 'Rise up and walk'?" Jesus knew that there would be no answer forthcoming from the religious crowd.

While everyone's attention is on the Lord, thinking about His question, Jesus says, "Just so you know that the Son of Man has the authority to forgive sins, rise up and walk!"

Luke 5:25 **And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. (ESV; capitalized)**

Before the crowd, which was, no doubt considering what Jesus had just said, saw the man get up, pick up his cot, and walk out of there on his own, unassisted, not just partly healed, but with muscle definition and locomotion coordination.

Luke 5:26a **And amazement seized them all,...**

The people who are there, who came to hear Jesus speak, are amazed by what they have just seen. They have never seen anything like this before. The man got up and walked, as if he had been walking all of his life.

Even though what Jesus said was directed towards the religious crowd, we do not know how they specifically reacted. Were they astonished? Were they struck with awe? They had just witnessed a miracle which involved actual physical changes to the lame man's legs. Based upon later incidents involving the religious crowd, we would have to assume that, for the most part, they were not quite as impressed as the people, in general, were.

However, everybody there, including the religious types, was astonished, as the narrative here tells us. Many, I assume, believed in Jesus as a result. At the same time, even though the religious types who were there saw the same thing, they were not moved to believe in Jesus.

This is a simple principle to understand. You can see a miracle and not necessarily be swayed by it.

**Illustration:** At any given time in the United States, we all observe the same events. Despite the distortion of our media, most of us can see the things which are taking place. Yet, there remain perhaps 40% of the people on one side, and 40% of the people solidly on the other side, with very little chance of either side changing their minds. The information on what is taking place is available to all (at least, right now it is); and yet, people observe the same events, and come to completely opposite conclusions about them.

**Illustration:** We live in a world, swirling through space, which is fine-tuned for human life. The atmosphere, the amount of water on the earth, temperature range, our location from the sun—all of these things are designed for human life (and animal life and plant life). Change any of the hundreds of parameters set for our earth by 5% or so, and in a very short time, our planet becomes inhabitable. One of the rarest compounds in the universe exists in abundance on the earth: water. The liquid state of H<sub>2</sub>O has a very limited temperature range, and our planet has that temperature range almost everywhere. We, as believers, can see this, and recognize God's handiwork. An atheist sees this and is completely unimpressed, and will tell you with great faith and certainty, "There are probably hundreds of earths—thousands maybe—throughout the galaxies. We're not special." Two people can see the exact same things and draw completely different conclusions.

**Separation and a Realignment of Loyalties:**

If there were some religious types there who were amazed by what they had seen, it would have been a good idea for them to determine whether or not they were in the right company. In the book of John, chapter 3, Nicodemus, a pharisee, comes to Jesus privately, separating himself from the other pharisees to speak to Jesus alone.

In this era, it was a time for people to realign themselves. There were religious types who clearly responded positively to Jesus (not many, but some did). They needed to consider that they were faced with a binary choice—remain with the religious crowd or believe in Jesus. This was a necessary choice because the pharisees and other religious groups would begin to set themselves against Christ.

Let me offer two analogous situations by way of illustration. For the longest time, the Catholic Church reigned supreme in Europe; and they had developed, like the pharisees, a host of evil traditions, which they followed. The Catholic Church began wonderfully under Saint Jerome (who translated the Bible into Latin, the common language of his day); yet church itself became quite corrupt a few centuries later. When Martin Luther and John Calvin (and others) came along (over 1000 years later), there was the *Protestant revolution*. That is, there was a movement which favored Scripture over Catholic traditions. This was the right thing for them to do (by the way, I hope you notice the parallel, where Jesus was teaching the Scriptures in opposition to the religious traditions of the Jews).

These five solas were not articulated together as a group until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some of them individually were recognized by the early protestant movement (which began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

### **The Five Solas of Protestantism**

**Sola scriptura** ("by Scripture alone"): the Scriptures were to be taken as authoritative over the religious traditions which had developed in the Catholic Church.

**Sola fide** ("by faith alone"): the Christian salvation and the Christian walk was based upon faith alone. There were no additional conditions which must be met for salvation.

**Sola gratia** ("by grace alone"): our salvation and our Christian life is based upon God's grace; not upon our works.

**Solus Christus or Solo Christo** ("Christ alone" or "through Christ alone"): We are saved by faith alone in Christ alone. There is no other means of salvation apart from Jesus Christ. The church plays no part in our salvation apart from being an auditorium in which some people are saved (after hearing the gospel message). And, as an aside, no one must enter into any religious building of any kind in order to be saved.

**Soli Deo gloria** ("glory to God alone"): the glory for our salvation and our subsequent life rests in God alone. We do not glorify ourselves (or others).

To be clear, there are many Catholics who will say, I believe in these things. And there are possibly Catholic churches which teach these things, for the most part. However, official Catholic doctrine differs from these 5 solas.



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Mostly taken from [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five\\_solae](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_solae) accessed October 12, 2019.  
Some editing and additional text has been added.

There came a time in the Protestant revolution when people needed to make a choice between the Catholic Church and the teaching of Protestantism. One could not hold to the teaching of Scriptures and continue to have an allegiance to the Catholic Church, because they were in opposition to one another.

This is very much analogous to the religious teachings being promulgated by the Jewish religious hierarchy in Jerusalem and the faith spoken of by Jesus. Jesus carefully and accurately taught the Old Testament Scriptures during His ministry (there were no New Testament writings yet).

Now, let me update these remarks about the Catholic Church: the modern Catholic Church is *not* the Catholic Church of the Dark Ages (which was *not* the Catholic Church of Saint Jerome's day). Many people are saved today in the Catholic Church (and more so in particular countries and areas than in others). So, it is possible to turn to the Catholic Church of today or to be raised in the Catholic Church today and be saved. Let me add, the original Catholic church and the original Latin translation by Jerome would have been embraced by the original Protestants.

That being said, the Catholic Church still adheres to a number of doctrines which are anti-Christian (these doctrines are against Scripture, which makes them anti-Christian beliefs). Among these is (1) the pope as some sort of successor to Peter as an Apostle and there is some sort of infallibility of the pope's decrees (I find it hard to pin down Catholics when it comes to the pope's decrees and authority). (2) The entire religious hierarchy of the Catholic Church is completely unbiblical. (3) Monks, nuns, and priest celibacy are not a part of the Bible. In fact, priests (as in a specialized priesthood), nuns and monks do not exist in any form in the Bible. All believers are priests, according to the New Testament. (4) Indulgences, purgatory, anything which involves the church in salvation. (5) Mary, although she is the mother of Jesus, she is *not* the mother of God; nor should she have some sort of exalted position among believers (nor is she sinless, nor did she remain a virgin). That is strictly paganism. We do not ever pray to her. (6) Transubstantiation (that the elements of the Eucharist actually become the physical body of Jesus and the physical blood of Jesus). This last teaching came about by people who never understood the blood of Christ; and who are confused by the concept of metaphors.

As a believer who attends a Catholic Church learns more doctrine, there should come a time for him (or her) to separate from the Catholic Church. This is *not* to say that every Protestant church is a good church (quite frankly, most of them are not). When I was originally saved and heard R. B. Thieme, Jr. teach, I lived in a different city and state. So, I decided to simply find a church where the Bible was being taught carefully word-by-word, verse-by-verse and chapter-by-chapter as Bob did it. There were hundreds of churches in the city where I lived, so finding one, I figured, would be fairly easy. I went to quite a number of churches and was disappointed to learn that locating a church which specialized in accurate Bible teaching was nearly impossible (a taper's group popped up in my city,

and I went to that group for many years). I found one Bible institute which was pretty good and I took a couple of courses there (although, there was an infestation of legalism there). At some point, based upon Bible doctrine, I chose between a conventional church and a *taper's group*<sup>52</sup>. I had to, at some point, make a choice (by the way, this is what the word *repent* means).

Now, on the plus side regarding the modern Catholic Church (yes, there is a plus side): (1) Many Catholic Churches (not all of them) teach faith alone in Christ alone. I know many people who are Catholics who are saved and their salvation is based upon Jesus Christ, not upon the Catholic Church. (2) Many who attend the Catholic Church recognize that the pope is just a man; and that the religious hierarchy of the Catholic Church is not necessarily valid. (3) Whereas the Catholic Church used to keep the Scriptures from the people and literally persecuted those who wanted to get the Scriptures out to the public, they no longer do this. There are many translations given the Catholic imprimatur which are excellent (apart from their addition of the apocrypha to the Scriptures).

What is the biggest problem with the Catholic Church today, apart from their heretical doctrines? You cannot spiritually grow in the Catholic Church. To grow, you need Bible doctrine and you need to be in fellowship (which comes from naming your sins to God, not to a priest). You do not get enough Bible doctrine taught in the Catholic Church to grow from. However, to be fair, this is true of most Protestant churches today.

**Application:** Let me give you a secular example of separation (which is a realignment of loyalty). There was a Trump rally in Minnesota, and there was an anti-Trump rally outside the stadium where the Trump rally took place. Now, the great thing about a democracy in the United States is, the President of the United States can speak publically and 10 people or 10,000 people can gather and say, "We don't buy what this man is selling. We disagree with him, and here is why..." However, this anti-Trump rally provoked fights, they took MAGA hats from Trump supporters and burned them, they threw bottles of urine and other objects and the police, at their horses and at Trump supporters. They damaged private property. They blocked the exit of people from the Trump rally and were confrontational. The Trump supporters were enthusiastic, very supportive and appreciative of the police, and, for the most part, non-confrontational (they just wanted to get home and decompress). For some independents and Democrats, this should have been very educational. *Who do I support? Who seems to favor the kind of behavior I believe in?* For some, situations like this ought to cause a separation or a realignment of loyalties (a repentance, if you will).

**Application:** However, still in the secular realm, one must be careful about this concept of separation. There are *Christian* cults out there who would like nothing better than to separate you from your family and friends, and they actively push for that. Now, whereas there are times when a person should separate from his family (they all do drugs, they drink constantly, they hold Satanist rituals in their home, they are shakers and movers in the LGBTQ community, etc.), this sort of separation from family and friends is the exception,

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<sup>52</sup> In this era, we listened to teaching on a tape recorder, which is far different from today, where an entire Bible class is merely a file on a computer.

not the rule. No church group should ever encourage you to separate from family and friends as a general principle that all parishioners should adhere to). You may choose to separate for one of the reasons I listed above; but if your church is pushing you in that direction, you need to leave your church (your relationship with your family and friends is *not* their business). Separation from such a church is what is called for, not separation from family and friends. In almost all instances of salvation, you will still retain contact with your family and see them at various times. But, when a cult has you choose between them and family and friends—and your family and friends are relatively normal—then you need to get away from that cult.

**Application:** There is a separation of sorts between a person and his family, if he is a believer and no one in his family is. That is a separation which might become permanent. But there are many, many cases of people witnessing to family members and friends about the Lord; and many cases of people being brought to Christ through a friend or family member. That is one very important reason to maintain family ties and not to get all weird about your relationship to your family and to former friends.

**Application:** There are no hard and fast rules for the new believer when it comes to separation (or realigning one's loyalties). There can be so much alcohol and substance abuse, when it is best for a person to remove himself entirely from that environment after believing in Jesus Christ. However, this is not necessarily an all or nothing proposition. Alcoholics do have times of sobriety; drug users do have times when they are not high. So there are times when the believer can certainly enjoy times with his family, despite their predilections. In fact, at times, such a change in the life of the believer can encourage others (but, don't hold your breath).

Now, back to the narrative:

Luke 5:26b ...and they glorified God...

Many of the people there, who were positive towards the teaching of Jesus and appreciated the healings that they observed, glorified God. That is, they recognized that Jesus was of God or from God.

Luke 5:26c ...and were filled with awe,...

The people there, for the most part, were filled with fear/respect. They recognized the divine nature of what was happening.

Now, to make a fine point here, the people observing this miracle are not necessarily theological experts. Probably not a single one of them realized that Jesus was acting by the power of the Holy Spirit, as opposed to relying upon His Own Deity. These are issues which Jesus did not raise.

Luke 5:26d ...saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

The people are amazed at what they have just seen. The healing of this paralyzed man was an incredible thing. Obviously, they talked about this amongst one another.

However, it is good to keep in mind that, no one grows spiritually from seeing a miracle. People may have become more well-disposed toward Jesus and more willing to hear what He has to say. Also, some would have believed in Him (which means salvation). But spiritual growth occurs when a person listens to the teaching of the Word and believes it. Then that doctrine becomes a part of that person's soul (much as food becomes a part of our bodies after we eat it).

Luke 5:26 **And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."**

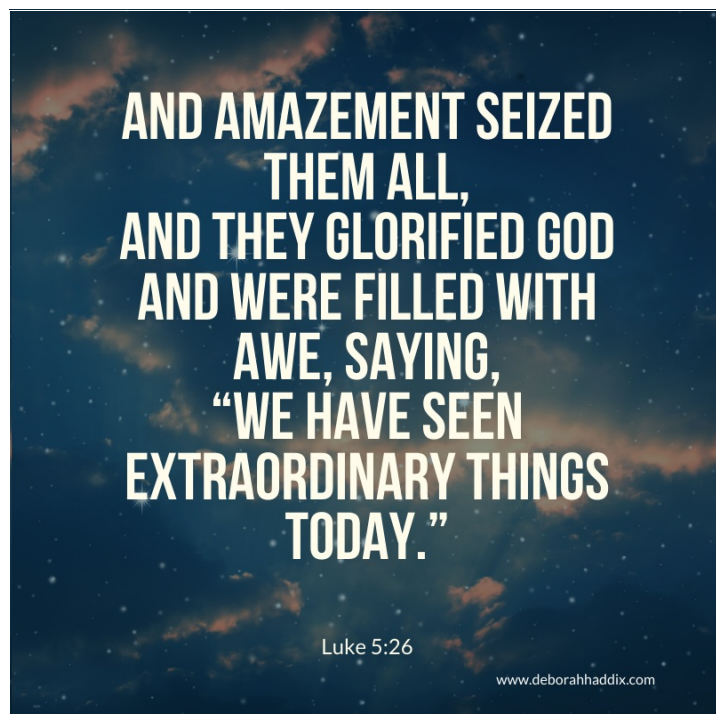
**Luke 5:26 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Deborah Haddix](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

The people were amazed at what they just saw. My guess is, few of them fully understood the interchange between Jesus and the religious group who were there. Remember that the scribes and pharisees were not necessarily speaking aloud, but taking it all in and thinking about what is wrong with what they are seeing.

Also bear in mind that this is all brand new. Jesus has just begun His public ministry. People are just beginning to find out about Him. He is known well enough that people from all over that area have come to see Him. Also, at this time His potential enemies have come as well. But, given the timing, I don't believe that they were there with plans in the works to shut the Lord down. I think they were there on a fact-finding mission. They may have been on negative volition toward the Lord; but right now, they were just seeing what was going on.

Therefore, for that reason, I think what Jesus said to the scribes and pharisees just went over the heads of most people there.

Luke 5:27a **After this He went out...**



After this encounter with the paralyzed man and the religious crowd, Jesus moved on. The Lord did not wear out His welcome. People appear to be willing to listen to Him for however long He teaches.

Luke 5:27b ...and saw a tax collector...

After the incident that we studied, Jesus comes across at tax collector.

At least one translation has some harsh things to say about Matthew. Actually, in reference to a *publican*, the AUV writes: *Note: This was a person with a bad reputation for dishonest tax collecting activities.*<sup>53</sup> If we understand this as a reference to the tax-collectors in general, this is quite possibly true. Regarding Levi (Matthew)—it is possible that he has had financial gains based upon dishonest tax collection, as he is able to host a great feast with Jesus as the honored guest. However, even if this is the case, when Levi believes in Jesus, his sins are forgiven. Furthermore, he will become a disciple and travel with Jesus. So, insofar as we know, Matthew does not ever return to this profession.

However, so that there is no misunderstanding here, being a tax collector is an honorable profession, as long as a person is moral and stays within the guidelines of the law (you may recall the John the Herald gave advice specifically to tax collectors and this advice did *not* include, “You need to quit your jobs.”).

Luke 5:27c ...named Levi,...

The tax collector is known both as Levi and as Matthew. Levi is a very common name among the Jewish people, as the Levites were responsible for the spiritual shepherding of the people.

Luke 5:27d ...sitting at the tax booth.

I am assuming that Levi was sitting in a prominent place where people might come up to him and pay him their taxes. Some translations suggest that this is a tax office; I have gone with *tax table*, suggesting that Levi is outside (maybe there is a tax office behind him?). Quite a number of commentators say that this is not much more than a table at the edge of the city.

It would seem logical to me that there are records where Levi is, receipt books, a place to stash the cash, etc. There would have been security of some sort with him (I am making this assumption). So, I see this as more than Levi simply sitting at a table by himself somewhere in the city.

Luke 5:27e And He said to him, "Follow me."

Jesus tells him, “Follow Me.”

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<sup>53</sup> An Understandable Version; the translation of Luke 5:27.



It is also reasonable that Jesus knows who Levi is. As we have studied, there was quite a backstory to know about Jesus and Peter before Peter was officially called. Therefore, it makes sense that there is an unrecorded backstory beyond this one meeting.

**Luke 5:27** After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me."

Luke 5:28a And leaving everything,...

Luke 5:28b ...he rose and followed him.

Levi may or may not have interacted with the Lord before (Peter had when he chose to follow the Lord). It is likely that Levi was familiar with the Lord, had investigated Him, or even interacted directly with Him previously. My point being is, the description of Matthew's calling does not mean that Jesus chose him, on the spot, at random. Nor does this mean that Matthew, on the spot, simply began to follow the Lord. We are simply not





told of the incidents and decisions involved before making this specific choice to follow Jesus.

**Application:** Most people have their own salvation story (not all, so don't be panicked). But we went through a number of things, a number of personal experiences, to the point of gospel hearing, where we decided to believe in Jesus. I do recall from old journals that I was angry and taking my life in bad directions and making some very bad decisions. Believing in Jesus changed a lot of things in my life and discovering Bible doctrine not too long after turned my life around. That was about 50 years ago, and I never had any idea what a change it would make in my life.

What really stands out in Matthew's gospel is, he quotes a lot of Old Testament Scripture to explain Jesus. The Old Testament is filled with Scripture which foretells Jesus. Maybe Matthew had learned a reasonable amount of Scripture up to this point in time, and noticed how many Scriptures seemed to point to this Son of Man. That is speculation; but based on the fact of Matthew apparently knowing a lot of Scripture.

Luke 5:28 **And leaving everything, he rose and followed Him.**

Jesus calls Matthew (Levi) to follow Him; and he did.

## **Lesson 162: Luke 5:27–32**

## **Levi's Feast for Jesus**

Luke 5:27 **After this He [Jesus] went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And He said to him, "Follow Me."**

In the passages where Jesus calls someone to follow Him, we are given very little information. How much did Levi know about Jesus and how much did Jesus know about Levi? I do not believe that Jesus' selection of disciples was like picking random names from a hat, even though the narrative gives that impression. That is, Jesus is not strolling through town, and, having seen a guy sitting at a booth to collect taxes, says, "He's got the right look. Hey you, dude; come on, follow Me."

What interaction (s) they had prior to this is unknown. It is logical that Jesus had known Levi in some way—we simply do not know about those circumstances.

Luke 5:28 **And leaving everything, he rose and followed Him.**

What was Levi's process? Had he been thinking about Jesus the Messiah? Did he have a desire to learn from Him?

Again, although there is information missing, it is likely that Levi knew Who Jesus was and that following Him had entered in his mind already.

When it comes to the calling of Jesus' disciples, Luke only provides some backstory to the relationship between Peter and Jesus. However, Luke does not provide this information for every disciples, because this book is the biography of Jesus, not of His disciples.

Luke 5:29a **And Levi made Him a great feast in his house,...**

All of this was new but fantastic to Levi. As we will find out, he is quite a scholar of the Scriptures (probably more so than any of the other disciples), and he wants to celebrate his relationship with the Lord. So he holds a great feast.

Holding a large feast with many guest suggests that Levi is fairly well off and can afford to pay for such a celebration. This is a big party.

This might appear to be a moral problem. It is possible that some of Matthew's wealth had come from dishonest tax collection; and here, he is using this money in order to celebrate the Lord (and to throw a big party for Him). If Matthew committed any sins, these sins are forgiven him, because he has clearly believed in the Lord (as he chose to follow Him). So, despite the possible origins of his wealth, that is now in the past.

We may also consider this: Matthew is a believer who is well-versed in the Old Testament. Perhaps he was honest in his profession. You can be honest in your business and still make money. Some believe anyone with money has made it dishonestly, but that simply is not true.

As an aside, we will never find out what Matthew did about his wealth, apart from what we are told here: **So, Matthew gave up everything, got up and followed Jesus.** (Luke 5:28; AUV) Furthermore, Matthew's command of Scripture might suggest that he is an honest tax collector.

Not much further back in our study, when Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James and John, they appeared to simply leave their ships behind (although, apparently, not for good, as there will be some more fishing which takes place after the crucifixion and resurrection).

Luke 5:29b **...and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them.**

It is probably well-known that Levi throws great parties (in part, because he could afford to), and he had quite a large crowd there.

Being a tax collector, Levi was unpopular with Jewish people in general and certainly with the religious class. Most of his friends were other tax collectors and what the pharisees will call *sinners*.

The phrase *reclining at table* simply refers to the way that people ate in that era. Today, we sit in chairs around a table raised about 2 or 3' off the ground. Then, they laid on their

sides, apparently on the ground, around a table which was perhaps raised a foot off the ground (I am guessing about that last part).

Luke 5:29 **And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them.**

Levi, to celebrate his becoming a follower of Jesus, has a great banquet at his house. Many fellow tax collectors come to celebrate with him.

Luke 5:30a **And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples,...**

The pharisees and scribes are grumbling, which indicates that they are unhappy about something.

Also at this party are the scribes and pharisees. So far, they have not directly confronted the Lord, although He has confronted them. They have questioned the Lord in their minds and they may have exchanged some snide remarks with other pharisees. But we don't have any recorded incidents yet where they directly confront the Lord. However, at this point, they will. But not quite yet.

At this party, rather than directly confronting Jesus, the scribes and pharisees speak their minds to His disciples. Maybe they can cause a fissure of sorts, is probably their thinking. Or, perhaps they figure, *a chain is only as strong as its weakest link*, and clearly, these disciples are not experts in much of anything related to the Mosaic Law (apart from Levi). So, it ought to be easy to trip them up in a conversation.

Luke 5:30b **...saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"**

So the scribes and pharisees confront Jesus' disciples and they ask, "Why exactly are you all eating with tax collectors and sinners?" These are the lowest of the low on the scale of values of religious types. Those who whom Levi normally associates are the outcasts of proper society. These are people with whom the pharisees would never associate.

Notice that this is directed towards all of the disciples; the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural is used. "What are you guys thinking?" they are asked. "You [all] know who these people are—do you think this is right?"

"So how is it that you and your Master find it okay to party with this type of people?" they ask by implication, as Jesus is there as well.

Perhaps, "By day, your Master talks about a lot of high and mighty topics, but here, after the day is over, He chooses these questionable people to hang out with?"

Luke 5:30 **And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"**

The scribes and pharisees speak to many of the Lord's disciples directly. These would not necessarily be of the 12 disciples (who were not all yet called). They question the company that they are keeping.

Jesus is paying attention to what is happening. He hears the accusations being made.

Luke 5:31a *And Jesus answered them,...*

Jesus apparently has kept eyes on the religious types. He knows the scribes and pharisees are there, and He sees them talking to the disciples. He listens in to hear their objections, and then He addresses the scribes and pharisees directly.

His disciples are recently added to His entourage, and they have a lot to learn. Jesus is not yet ready to throw them to the wolves (the pharisees and other religious types) without first giving them some wolf-training.

Luke 5:31b *..."Those who are well have no need of a physician,...*

"People who are in good health do not need a doctor," Jesus tells them. Now, this makes perfect sense; but what does Jesus mean?

The scribes and pharisees consider themselves to be righteous; they believe that they have held fast to the doctrines of Judaism, and that this along with their racial relationship to God, makes them righteous. So, in their own minds, they are healthy; therefore, they don't need a physician; they don't need Jesus. They do not need anything in order to be considered righteous.

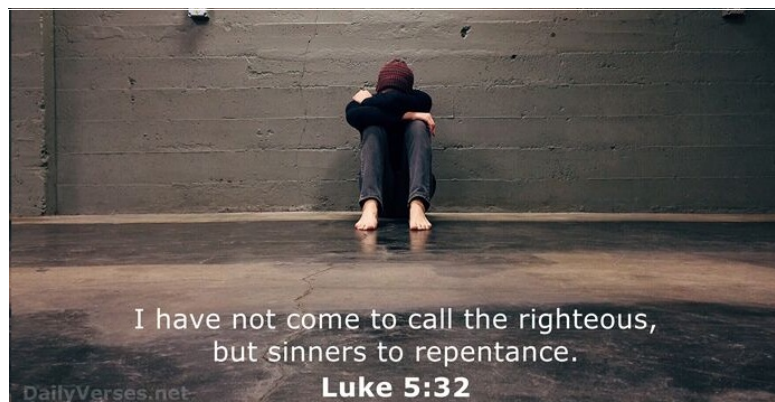
Luke 5:31c *...but those who are sick.*

This short phrase may be better conveyed as, *...but those who are ill [need a physician].*

The scribes and pharisees don't see themselves as having any need; but the people around them clearly have a need for something. So, Jesus is agreeing, to a degree, with the scribes and pharisees.

Luke 5:31 *And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.*

Jesus would teach often by parables and parallelism. This sort of teaching is found throughout the Old Testament, particularly in the wisdom literature.



Obviously, we don't call a doctor unless we are sick. No one needs Jesus unless they are spiritually lacking.

**Luke 5:32 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Daily Verses](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:32 **I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."**

Jesus testifies that He did not come to call the righteous to a change of mind, but sinners. The scribes and pharisees see themselves as righteous; and they also see those attending this party as sinners. The scribes and pharisees see nothing wrong with themselves; therefore, they have no reason to avail themselves of God's grace (in their own eyes). "These sinners are here because I need to minister to *them*," Jesus is telling them.

The word translated *repentance* here refers to a changing of one's mind. It indicates the use of volition. This is not about sin and it is not about emotion.

## Lesson 163: Luke 5:31–35

## The Religious Types Question the Disciples

**Luke 5:31–32 (KJV)** (a graphic); from [Reflections in the Word](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

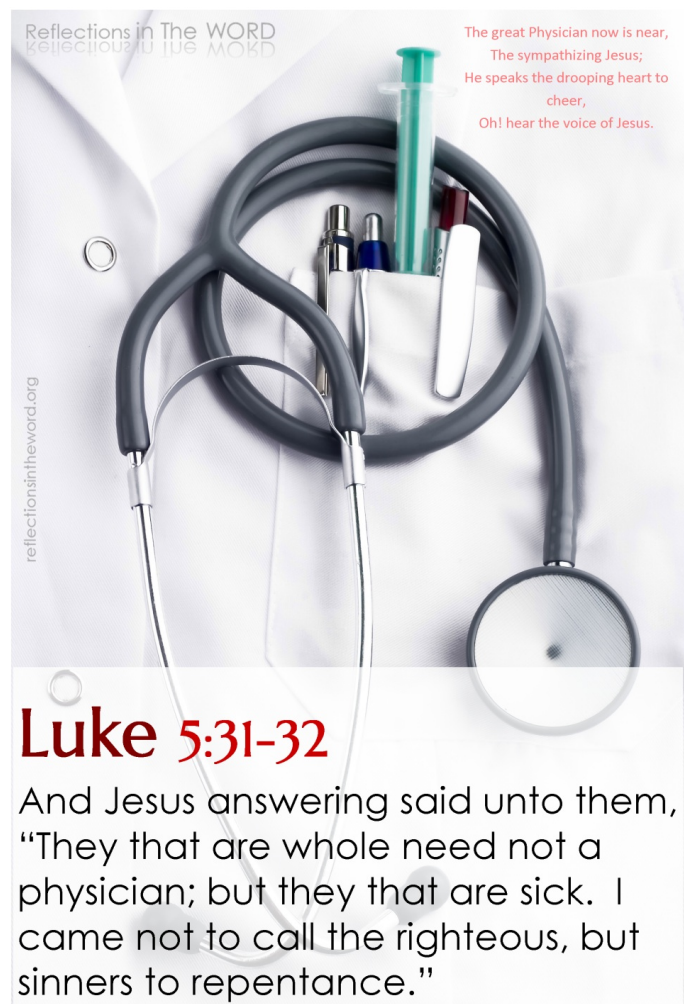
Luke 5:33a **And they said to Him, ...**

When the scribes and pharisees tried to step in and ask Jesus' disciples some hard questions, Jesus stepped up, speaking to them. So the scribes and pharisees now direct their questions to Him.

The religious types have apparently stored up some questions. They knew about John the Herald because the religious hierarchy saw him as a potential troublemaker.

Luke 5:33b **..."The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers,...**

The scribes and pharisees are in the gathering of information mode right now. So, they are simply offering up what they have observed. It appears that they have a negative bias against



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The great Physician now is near,  
The sympathizing Jesus;  
He speaks the drooping heart to  
cheer,  
Oh! hear the voice of Jesus.

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# Luke 5:31-32

And Jesus answering said unto them,  
"They that are whole need not a  
physician; but they that are sick. I  
came not to call the righteous, but  
sinners to repentance."



the Lord early on, so their fact finding mission is interrelated to personal attacks against Jesus and against His disciples (but, at this point, this is still early days).

Their information gathering by the religious hierarchy is not out of curiosity, nor is it being done in order for them to make a decision about Jesus. They have already made a decision about Jesus—He's bad for them. Information gathering is all about helping them to decide what are they going to do about it.

Even though the pharisees were not happy with John the baptizer's ministry, it now has less of an impact compared to the Lord's ministry (John said, "**I must decrease and He must increase**").

Based upon what this religious crowd has observed, John's disciples sometimes fasted and they offered up prayers.

Now, bear in mind that the religious class did not like John's ministry; but they don't like Jesus' either. So they are not above taking something from John's ministry and using it against Jesus.

Luke 5:33c **...and so do the disciples of the Pharisees,...**

And the pharisees then add to their stated observation, "We do this as well. We fast and we offer up prayers."

The scribes and pharisees are saying, "We can understand this approach to life; this is what we do. We fast and offer up prayers quite often." In truth, they did not care much for John the baptizer's ministry, but here is something which they offer up as positive: "they fasted and we fast; they prayed and we pray."

Let me suggest that this positive attitude towards John's ministry did not exist *during* John's ministry. They make it sound almost as if they appreciated John's ministry, related to it, and even supported it—but they didn't.

Luke 5:33d **...but yours eat and drink."**

But, then they ask, "But what about Your disciples, they are eating and drinking; they party like it is 1999."

This seems like the opportune time to put a question like this to Jesus, because all of his disciples are there and they are all eating and drinking and enjoying life. No one is fasting; no one is offering up prayers.

Luke 5:33 **And they said to Him, "The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink."**



The pharisees and scribes saw what they believed to be some inconsistencies between the ministry of John and the ministry of Jesus.

Let me phrase this in another way. It is as if these religious types are saying, “You seem to claim that Your ministry is a follow-on to John’s ministry, but where is the consistency? They seemed to do one thing and you all are doing something else completely.”

The pharisees believe this to be a real contradiction because they do not understand what is happening. They look at the superficial, the different behaviors exhibited, and they think that they have found a great chasm between the ministries of John and Jesus.

The kind of argument being made by the pharisees is quite fascinating. They did not like John; they did not support his ministry. However, they will use anything in order to attack the Lord.

**Illustration:** We find this in political discussions all of the time. When a president is in office from the other party, people will post memes about his wasteful vacations, the number of times he plays golf, and the bloated budgets which he signs. However, when their candidate is in office, suddenly that man’s expensive vacations, his golf playing and his bloated budgets are no longer a concern.

Luke 5:34a **And Jesus said to them,...**

The pharisees came towards the disciples, to ask them some hard questions. Jesus has intervened, to answer these questions directly.

The question asked is, “The disciples of John fast, just as we fast; but your disciples here are eating and drinking? What is the deal?”

Luke 5:34b **..."Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?**

Jesus speaks of a wedding party or a wedding celebration. There are attendants there and the bridegroom is there. The attendants of the bridegroom are the friends of the bridegroom. When they are all together there, they would be celebrating (eating and drinking). Would people fast at a time like that? *Of course not*, is the expected answer. When the bridegroom is there, it is time to celebrate—to eat and drink.

Jesus is speaking metaphorically here, which is how He will answer many of the objections of the religious crowd. Jesus is the bridegroom, and the attendees to the wedding celebration are His disciples. Of course, while He is there among them, they will celebrate.

Luke 5:34 **And Jesus said to them, "Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?**

Jesus speaks in a parable, which makes perfect sense—but possibly not to the religious hierarchy who have posed this question to Him.

Luke 5:35a *The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them,...*

There is a time coming when the bridegroom is removed from all of this (he goes off with his bride); and the attendees then might fast.

Jesus, at some point, will be taken up, away from His disciples. At that time, they will fast.

This is an interesting point for Jesus to make. Why would the bridegroom be removed, in this analogous situation? There is really no common reason for that to occur. So, what happens is, these people hear this and they begin thinking about it and they concentrate on Jesus has just said, because, analogy-wise, it goes off the rails somewhat.

Here is how it parallels—Jesus, the Messiah, the Prophet like Moses, David's Greater Son, will come to His people and yet, He will be removed from the earth because that is the choice of His people. Just as it makes little sense for the bridegroom to be taken away from a wedding; similarly, it also makes little sense for Israel's Messiah to be taken away from Israel *because of* Israel's negative volition.

Luke 5:35b *...and then they will fast in those days."*

When Jesus is removed from among them, then His disciples will fast.

Luke 5:35 *The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days."*

What would help, at this point, would be to understand what it means *to fast*, because so few Christians understand it. There is the legalistic fast, which is what the pharisees (and Christians without doctrine) do; and there is the spiritual fast, which Christians with doctrine do. The legalistic fast is, a person intentionally suffers for Jesus. This could be fasting or intentionally inflicting any sort of pain or want on oneself. "Look at me, God, I am fasting for You; I am suffering for You." This is a life of privation that a monk might live. This is a vow of celibacy that a Catholic priest might live. This is a fast that a Christian might do in order to *suffer for Jesus*.

What a true Christian fast is, is a believer might set aside any sort of legitimate activity and engage in spiritual activity instead. The most common which occurred in Berachah Church, when they were meeting 8 or 9x a week was actually fasting for a few hours in order to be in church. Quite a number of people came to Berachah in the evenings, just getting off work, and they did not have time to stop to eat—and eating is a legitimate function. Their own schedule combined with Berachah's schedule meant that they often walked into Berachah Church with their notebook, in a state of hunger. If they stopped off at a fast food place to eat, that would have cut into their time in Bible class. Learning the Word of God was far more important than being hungry for a few hours.

People did not necessarily think, "I should miss a meal and go to Berachah, because that will show God just how dedicated I am to Him." This was more along the lines of, "Work

is over for the day, and I just have enough time to drive to Berachah Church before teaching starts up.” These people did not expect a brownie button; they did not tell others around them about this great sacrifice that they were making; they did not use this as a bargaining chip when praying to God. “God, you know how often I go into Berachah Church and I am hungry. Maybe You could do something for me now?” It simply comes down to priorities, and the Word of God is a priority over eating.

Now let’s move away from food. A married couple who are very attracted to one another might put off having sex in order to pray or to take in doctrine. That is a form of fasting.

The idea is not, “Hey, look at us, God, we are doing stuff for You!” The idea is, they have a higher calling, they have a greater desire for that which is spiritual. They are going to be able to eat again in the near future; or the married couple will enjoy their private time together. That is simply set aside for something that is more important.

We do this on the secular level all of the time. A person might work through lunch because of a project which is going on. Eating is obviously important; but they set that aside for a time in order to complete the project. A young couple who are dating, despite being attracted to one another, opt instead to simply spend time getting to know one another, considering the future of their relationship (I am not saying that intimate relations between them is legitimate; but in the thinking of today’s society it is). A parent may have time planned for something that would be entertaining for him and his son, but due to his son’s bad behavior, discipline is required instead. In other words, a legitimate activity (or seemingly legitimate) is set aside for a more important activity. These examples would be none-spiritual fasting, something which many of us have done; and some of us without giving it much thought. Something, for whatever reason, takes priority over a legitimate activity. It is simply a matter of priorities.

I can give you an example that virtually every parent has had—they have just sat down to have a meal, or it is bedtime and they are just ready to sleep (two legitimate human functions), and then, suddenly, something involving the kids happens. One child is suddenly taken ill, or another breaks an arm, or there is that call from a neighbor about your son or daughter—these things, under many circumstances, supercede sitting down to dinner or settling into bed for a good night’s sleep. Legitimate activities are set aside because something of a greater priority is taking place. This is essentially a non-spiritual fast.

Luke 5:34–35 Jesus answered them directly, saying, “Can you make the guests of the bridal celebration fast when the bridegroom is right there with them? The time will come when the bridegroom is removed, and then they will fast.” (Kukis paraphrase)

What is Jesus saying? He is the bridegroom. He is there at the wedding party. He is with his friends and guests. They are not going to be fasting, but they will celebrate because He is there. However, Jesus will be taken away, and then there will be cause for sorrow.

There is less fasting which occurs in the Old Testament than we tend to think. So, here is the deal: *fasting* is when you set aside normal activities—activities which are completely legitimate for you to take part in (like eating or sleeping)—in order to pursue a higher purpose—a spiritual purpose.

Let me give you two very specific examples: (1) When Jesus was on the cross, his mother and Mary Magdalene, and John and others were right there with Him, sitting or standing near the cross. Now, it would have been legitimate for them to eat during that time; but my guess is, they did not. Although they did not fully apprehend what was happening, they were all focused upon their Savior on the cross. (2) For a more common example that you might be able to relate to: thousands of people have attended Berachah Church and many went straight from work to church, not having time to get a meal in between. However, they recognize that getting spiritual food is more important than stopping and getting dinner, and then maybe missing 15 or 30 minutes of Bible class. That is also fasting, a kind of fasting which is legitimate during the Church Age.

At this point, Jesus will introduce a different parable, one which is related to the true faith of the believer; and how this is in contrast with the false faith of the Jewish religious class of that day. This is a very wonderful and meaningful parable.

#### **Lessons 164–165: Luke 5:30–39**

#### **Parable of the Wineskins**

Even though this is early in the Lord's ministry, the religious types have begun to look critically at His ministry, and to offer up their negative views on it.

At this moment, Levi (Matthew) has become a disciple of Jesus and is celebrating this event with a feast. Since he is an outcast among the Jewish people in general, Matthew knows other tax collectors and women with questionable backgrounds—these would be among his guests.

**Luke 5:30 And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"**

Somehow, at this party, the scribes and pharisees have insinuated themselves into the midst of the disciples of Jesus. These religious types had some observations to make and they determined immediately that the weakest links were those who followed Jesus. So they begin to question the disciples, not Jesus.

**Luke 5:31–32 And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."**

Jesus is watching His flock and He sees what is going on. He steps in between the disciples and the religious types. He will give 3 sets of answers to the objections/observations made by the religious types.

First Jesus tells them (and I am giving you the interpretation at this point): “These people who are here, the ones whom you all have judged as being morally deficient—I have come to save them. You do not believe yourselves to be morally deficient in any way, so My calling out to you would go unheeded.”

The religious types had another observation to make:

Luke 5:33 **And they said to Him, "The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink."**

The religious types then make the point that what Jesus is doing is inconsistent with John the baptizer's ministry. Now, bear in mind, the religious types did not care much for John's ministry either. Nevertheless, they will use it against the followers of Jesus.

Luke 5:34–35 **And Jesus said to them, "Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days."** (ESV; capitalized)

Jesus telling these religious types, “I am the Bridegroom and the people with me are going to naturally celebrate My Presence. However, when I go away, they will become much more somber.”

Then Jesus approaches their question from a different perspective. In my opinion, I don't think that the negative religious types had any idea what He was saying to them. I don't believe that they understood what he said in vv. 34–35; I don't believe that they will get what He is about to tell them.

Luke 5:36a **He also told them a parable:...**

Jesus' disciples were brand new to all of this. They had no idea the viciousness with which they would be attacked. At this point, the things said by the religious types probably seemed like a few harmless questions to them. However, Jesus knows what is happening; and these religious types are filled with negative volition towards Him. Because they are negative towards Him, they are filled with jealousy and anger towards Him (which will increase and intensify over the next few years).

As an aside, Jesus does not miraculously peer into the souls of those who are around Him, and makes note of those who are positive and those who are negative. He is extremely observant and He can read a person simply by looking at them and/or listening to Him. This does not take a supernatural power to do. When Jesus heard the religious types asking His disciples, “Why did John's disciples fast, but you guys seem to be eating whenever you feel like it?” Jesus could tell that, these men were not eliciting information, but trying to catch His disciples in some sort of contradiction; or to make His disciples doubt Jesus' leadership. The disciples probably did not get this; but Jesus understood immediately what was happening.

Jesus answers their objection directly. He uses a parable which is applicable to the situation.

A parable is not always readily understood by the listeners. Sometimes, it has to ruminate in their brains before it becomes clear; and sometimes, they don't get it at all.

As an aside, there are some parables spoken by Jesus whose meaning has been argued about for centuries.

What Jesus says can be understood; but it may take some time and some thought to put it together with the reason that Jesus said what He did.

Luke 5:36b ...**"No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment.**

Jesus uses a parable; and it is clear that this parable is true. My thinking is, what Jesus says does not make sense to them. It requires them to think objectively and make the application. So, we believers who are positive toward the Word of God understand what He is saying; and those who are negative do not.

The general idea is, you have an old garment, and that garment is torn. You do not take brand new material from a new garment and use it to repair the old garment.

Luke 5:36c **If he does, he will tear the new,...**

The new patch laid upon the old material will eventually tear.

What will happen is, the garment would be washed and the new material will shrink; and, as a result, it will pull away from the old material and tear it further. The old material has already been washed many times and it has shrunken naturally.

Luke 5:36d ...**and the piece from the new will not match the old.**

Not only will the new material tear, but it will not blend in with the old material. It will never look right. The two types of materials will always have a different sheen and a different color tone.

Luke 5:36 **He also told them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. If he does, he will tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old.**

Here is what Jesus is talking about. The old material is the incorrect religious teachings of the pharisees; it is the falsehoods that they have been teaching. You cannot take the faith being taught by Jesus and lay it on top of the false teaching of the religious class. The new faith will be torn apart and it will never look right in the framework of the pharisee teachings.



In fact, this can also be applied to John the Herald's teaching. He was teaching at a specific time for a specific purpose—primarily to introduce the King of Israel. John was herald to the King. However, Jesus is now here, so even John's teachings and practices cannot be easily incorporated by Jesus. And, Jesus has already told the people why things are now different: *the Bridegroom is here!* That is what has changed everything.

Vv. 37–39 are actually two parables, but both of them will be very much like the one Jesus just taught. Both parables are about wine. V. 39, even though we are speaking of old and new wine still, we are no longer concerned about the wine containers.

Despite the numerous textual problems with this verse, the meaning of it is still easily ascertained.

Luke 5:37a *And no one puts new wine into old wineskins.*

Jesus offers up another analogy. The scribes and pharisees will understand the analogy itself, but I don't think that they will figure out, at first, *what* Jesus is teaching them. Everyone will understand the underlying analogy: old wineskins are not good for holding new wine.

In the ancient world, liquid containers were made out of animal skins. A new wineskin is one which has been recently made and possibly only tested for leaks.

Luke 5:37b *If he does, the new wine will burst the skins...*

The new wine—possibly due to its aging and expanding as it ferments—will pop open an old wineskin. The new wine needs fresh wineskins which are more pliable. As the wine ferments, the skins have to expand. Old wine skins have lost their full elasticity.

The Amplified Bible and the Translation for Translators treats this new wine as unfermented wine, which will expand as it ferments. This seems to be the best explanation. New wine skin would be fresh leather and it could expand as the wine ferments and expands.

Luke 5:37c *...and it will be spilled,...*

If the new wine proves too much for the old wineskins, the wineskins will crack open and the wine will gush out when it ought to be curing.

This process actually involved the wine becoming alcoholic. That is, it would expand, and in an old wine skin, there would not be the ability to expand as the gas was produced.

Luke 5:37d *...and the skins will be destroyed.*

The old wineskins are unable to take the pressure of the ever-expanding new wine (the gases will cause the wine skin to expand). The old wineskins will be ruined, unable to be used for any sort of wine.

Luke 5:37 **And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.**

Just like the previous parable, the old wineskins refer to the religion of the pharisees. They had departed from the teachings of the Old Testament, replacing them with their own beliefs and traditions. Jesus was teaching the Old Testament correctly; and He was offering Himself as the Messiah of Israel. He is the new wine, and He could not be confined to the framework of the old teachings of the pharisees. That old teaching would simply burst apart. It could not contain Jesus' teachings.

**New Wine; Old Wineskins** (a graphic); from [Come and Reason](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:38a **But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.**

The conclusion is, new wine is to be placed into fresh wineskins; wineskins which are more pliable and expand as the wine ferments.

Now, what follows is text which is found in some translations, but not others.



Luke 5:38b **...[so that both are preserved].** (Kukis Mostly Literal; not found in the Westcott Hort text)

The Westcott Hort text lacks v. 38b; however it is not really objectionable. It would make sense that the wine and wineskins are preserved when properly matched.

Luke 5:38 **So, new wine belongs in fresh wineskins [so that both are preserved].** (Kukis mostly literal; with the portion not found in the Westcott Hort text)

I have a memory of my Father and his friend from down the street, who decided they were going to take our apricots and ferment them and make an apricot liquor. During the fermenting process, the brew which they made blew up in its glass container due to the fermentation process. The fermentation released a lot of gas into a confined space. That expansion blew up the glass container that it was in. There was broken glass and a yellow-orange goop everywhere. My memory of that occasion was seeing my dad's friend push a wheelbarrow filled with goop that was going to be taken back behind our house to the

land there and unceremoniously dumped. Neither the apricot liquor and the glass containers were preserved.

Luke 5:37–38 *And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the new wine will burst the old wineskins, and it will be poured out and the wineskins will be destroyed. But new wine is put into new wineskins, and both are protected together.* (Modern Literal Version, 2020)

The idea is, there is the teaching of the pharisees, which is mostly traditional, but contains some aspects of the Mosaic Law; and there is the teaching of Jesus. For the most part, Jesus taught the Mosaic Law, but without the distortions of the pharisees and other Jewish theologians.

The mixing of the old and new teaching cannot occur. There is no middle ground. The Jewish traditions will not be able to sprinkle their teachings with a little bit of what Jesus is teaching; and Jesus cannot give in somewhat, and include some of the traditional teachings of the Jewish theologians. These theologies are mutually exclusive.

The new wine, taught by Jesus, belongs within a new structure (new wineskins). Jesus, in His humanity, may be aware of what is coming in the future—we actually do not know what He knows in His humanity, except as He understands from the Old Testament. Nevertheless, all that is being taught by Jesus forms a new framework upon which all truth may be fitted. There is no place for the teaching of the scribes and pharisees.

V. 39 is its own parable and it has its own separate meaning. Even though we are still talking about wine, this verse is still to be understood separately.<sup>54</sup>

Luke 5:39a *And no one after drinking old wine desires new,...*

This is a true saying; but it does not properly fit with the previous parable that Jesus just taught. This statement has nothing to do with the new wine and the old wineskins.

This final verse makes no sense at all, if we try to integrate it into the previous text. However, on its own, this verse stands as another analogy or another parable.

The old wine would be the fermented wine; the new wine is grape juice.

Luke 5:39b *...for he says, 'The old is good.'* “

People like wine which has been brought to its proper point of fermentation. That would be the *old wine*. *New wine* would be that which has not yet fermented.

Luke 5:39 *And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, 'The old is good.'* “

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<sup>54</sup> Some translations, like God's Word™ place these parables into two separate paragraphs.

The old wine has been brought to its proper level of fermentation, and that is the ideal point when it comes to taste.

There are two possibly ways to understand this, and I am not certain which is meant by the Lord. (1) The pharisees and other religious types already have their religion [= old wine] and they do not want something else [= new wine]. Or (2) there is a proper way to bring wine to its favored taste, and that is what Jesus is doing with His teaching (He is bringing the wine of the Old Testament to its proper fermentation by means of accurate teaching). This second approach I believe is the accurate one.

Jesus' disciples respect and appreciate His teaching, which is truth—and it is wine brought to its correct level of fermentation. The teaching of the pharisees is the *new wine* (it is new relative to the Scriptures), and no one wants their *new wine*. Their new wine are the additions and clarifications which they have made to the Mosaic Law.

No parable completely matches up in all respects to what it is being taught. For instance, the old wine represents the old teaching of the pharisees; and the new wine/juice is the teaching of Jesus. However, Jesus is simply teaching the Old Testament accurately. He is teaching the Law of Moses correctly. So the oldest teaching is what Jesus is properly teaching (and this teaching is distorted by the pharisees).

**Luke 5:36–39 (First Nations Version)** (a graphic); from [Lutheran Indian Ministries](#); accessed September 3, 2021.

Luke 5:37–39 It is a bad idea to put new wine into old wineskins; the wineskins will burst open and the wine will gush out. So new wine belongs in fresh wineskins. Anyone who drinks wine brought to its proper level of fermentation will not want inferior wine. (Kukis paraphrase)

These are two parables. First parable: the new wine is the doctrine that Jesus is teaching. Technically, it is not new, but it is accurate teaching. However, it is new to many of the hearers, since the pharisees have been teaching legalism all of this time. The Old Testament also presents a gracious, forgiving God. The Old Testament is not





a legalistic document which demands complete obedience in order to have God's approval.

This new teaching (the new wine) must be kept completely separate from anything old. You cannot take what Jesus is teaching and somehow make it conform to the apostate teaching of the scribes and pharisees.

In the second parable, the old wine and new wine synch up with Jesus' teachings as over against the pharisaical teachings (they switch places, more or less). Once people have tasted the old wine (Jesus' accurate teaching of the Old Testament) they no longer want the new wine of the pharisees (which is their legalistic distortion of the Old Testament).

Let's put the question of the pharisees with the final two parables given by Jesus in answer to them:

Luke 5:33 **They** [the pharisees and other religious types] **said to Him, "The disciples of John fast often and offer prayers, and so do those of the Pharisees, but Your followers eat and drink."**

Luke 5:37–39 [Jesus answers and says] **And no one puts new wine into old wine-skins. If he did, the new wine would burst the skins and it would be spilled, and the skins would be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wine-skins. And no one after drinking old wine wishes to drink new, for he says, 'The old is fine.'** " (Riverside New Testament, capitalized)

The scribes and pharisees try to set up some sort of parallel situation between themselves and the disciples of John. Both sets of disciples fast. So, the scribes and pharisees see themselves as doing the same thing. Therefore, John and his disciples were acting as they are supposed to act, as they synch up with their existing religious practices (even though this was *not* the attitude of the religious types during John's short ministry).

Jesus is telling them, the fact that the disciples of John fast is unrelated to the scribes and pharisees fasting. These are not the same things. The fasting of John's disciples is new wine. It cannot be placed into the old wineskins of the scribes and pharisees fasting. Those things are unrelated, despite appearing to be the same thing.

Jesus is telling them, "You cannot take anything that I am doing or that John's disciples are doing, and somehow synch it up with your apostate religion." (which the pharisees were attempting to do by saying that they did the same things that John did). But since Jesus says this with a parable, the scribes and pharisees don't really understand what Jesus has just told them. However, this stands as a record of what Jesus taught.

The religious type who is interested in Jesus' teaching would remember the things which were said and what Jesus said in response. Those positive to the Lord's teaching would ruminate on these words and figure out what was meant. Those who are negative to the teachings of Jesus would not give much thought to these parables, unless they could somehow twist them around and use them against Jesus.

A review of Luke 5:

An Understandable Version (by William E. Paul; ©1994, 2003) is used for the text. Inserted into the translated text are some additional notes by Wm. Paul, always placed in brackets and italicized. So, the notes which appear in that formatting come from Wm. Paul and not from me.

Jesus has had a public ministry for a period of time different from the public ministry which we associate with Him. Perhaps this had continued for a few months; perhaps as long as a year. But this ministry is barely described in two verses back in the previous chapter.

In that chapter, Jesus did not have any of His 12 disciples; He did not appear to perform healings or any other miracles; He appeared to travel by Himself from synagogue to synagogue. Perhaps there were disciples (students of His) who traveled with Him; perhaps not. I lean towards there being some followers with Jesus from the very beginning, some of whom go back to John the Herald's baptism of Him.

Nevertheless, in this chapter, we will begin studying more about the sort of ministry with which we are all more familiar. Jesus will have disciples whom He calls; He will teach and He will heal; and He will have His detractors (the Pharisees and others of the religious hierarchy). He will teach the Old Testament; and He will teach using parables. This describes the bulk of His public ministry. All of these things appear to begin with v. 31 of the previous chapter and continues on with this chapter.

Luke 5:1–11	<a href="#"><u>Jesus calls Simon (Peter), James and John as disciples</u></a>
Luke 5:12–16	<a href="#"><u>Jesus cleanses a leper and tells him to show himself to the priests</u></a>
Luke 5:17–26	<a href="#"><u>Jesus heals a paralytic before an audience which included pharisees and teachers of the Law</u></a>
Luke 5:27–39	<a href="#"><u>Jesus calls Levi; and the pharisees criticize Jesus and His disciples</u></a>

### **Jesus calls Simon (Peter), James and John as disciples**

Luke 5:1 **Now it happened while Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Genneseret [i.e., Lake Galilee] that the crowd was pushing closer to Him to hear God's message.**

This narrative apparently takes place not too long after Jesus was teaching in Nazareth, in the synagogue, where He proclaimed Himself the Messiah (and was nearly killed for saying that).

Along the lake, Jesus is receiving a much larger response of those who want to hear Him teach. The people here appear to be very positive towards His teaching.



One thing that Jesus will no longer be teach to the crowds is, that He is the Messiah. He is; He knows that He is; but most of those in Nazareth became enraged when He taught this.

We do not know exactly how this is taking place. However, Jesus has been, for several months, teaching in synagogues all over the region, and on off days, people apparently wanted more.

At this point in time, this situation of Jesus standing alone in the midst of a crowd—it appears to be potentially dangerous. There are a very large number of people who have come to Jesus. Somehow, these crowds need to have some control.

Luke 5:2 He saw two boats *[tied up]* along the shore of the lake, for the fishermen had left them *[there]* and were washing their nets *[i.e., on the beach]*.

Jesus, as we would expect, is extremely observant, and His immediate environment often plays a part in the narratives that we read.

Jesus observes a group of fishermen who are washing their nets on the beach. He actually knows some of them.

Luke 5:3 So, He entered one of the boats that belonged to Simon *[i.e., Peter]*, and asked him to launch out a short distance from shore. Then He sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

Jesus goes on to one of these boats which belongs to Simon (Peter). We know from the other biographies of Jesus that He and Simon have already been introduced by Simon's brother Andrew, who met Jesus when listening to John the Herald. So there is enough history there for Jesus to be able to make this request of Peter.

Jesus gets into the boat, asks that it be taken a little ways from the shore, and then Jesus teaches from there. The water around the boat forms a natural border between Jesus and the people.

Given all that is taking place, there may be a thousand or more people listening to Jesus.

Luke 5:4 And when He had finished talking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into deeper water and lower your nets for a catch *[of fish]*."

At this point, recall that the human author, Luke, did not see any of these things take place himself. He heard these stories from those who experienced them firsthand. I suggested that Luke heard this from Peter, and here is why: Peter is very distracted at this point in time and he did not hear a word of what Jesus said. Hence, this narrative concentrates heavily on Jesus and Peter interacting, but there is not a word from Jesus' teaching this large crowd. It would have been brilliant; it would have been thought-provoking, and yet,

Peter did not hear a single word of it. Peter remembers his interaction with Jesus at the beginning, but once Jesus began to speak, Peter tuned out.

Surely you have gone to church before and emerged an hour later, unable to remember a single thing that was taught, because you spent that entire time thinking about your own personal problems. That is what is happening with Peter at this time.

Jesus, fully aware that Simon had not heard a single thing that He said, speaks to Simon directly, and He tells Simon what he needs to do. "Let's go out into deeper water and then you can cast your nets into the water there."

Luke 5:5 Simon replied, "Master, we worked all night, but did not catch anything. But I will lower the nets if you say so."

Peter is not being disrespectful; he simply lays out the facts. They had worked all that night and had caught nothing at all. "But, You want me to go out a little further and lower the nets, I will do that." (Peter is no doubt thinking, "I have no idea what Your plan is, but this is a waste of my time.")

Luke 5:6 And when they had done this, they gathered in a large number of fish *[until]* their nets began to break.

When Peter did what Jesus suggested, Peter's net became engorged with fish—with enough fish to break the nets. This is coming out of the same water which yielded not a single fish to Peter and his crew the night before.

Luke 5:7 So, they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. When they came, they filled both boats until they began to sink.

They called for their partners in the other boat to come and help them. The other boat was brought near, and all of the men struggled to bring all of the fish on board. There was more fish than the two boats were able to hold. The boats began to sink noticeably lower into the waters.

Luke 5:8 But when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, because I am a sinful man."

Peter knows all that has taken place. Jesus has been teaching for however long, and Peter knows that he did not listen to a word of His sermon. During the sermon, Peter was thinking about what a lousy night that they had just had and how that impacted his life and the lives of the others there. But now, they had so many fish, they almost cannot transport them.

Although Luke does not give us the background, Andrew, Simon's brother, brought Simon to meet Jesus, telling Simon that Jesus was the Messiah. Let me suggest that, at this

point, Simon realizes that is a fact. Simon also becomes acutely aware of the moral distance between himself and Jesus.

Sometimes at salvation, a person may have a distinct understanding of his unworthiness before God; and sometimes, this information is learned after salvation. In any case, it is a good idea to begin to understand how far we are from being right with God if we stand upon our own merits. At this point in his life, Peter gets this. He understands that there is a great gulf between his own personal standards and righteousness; and those of the Lord. That gap is so massive that Peter understands there is nothing that will bridge the gap between himself and the Lord.

Luke 5:9 For he and those who were with him were amazed at the [huge] quantity of fish they had caught.

Throughout the Bible, in the Old and New Testaments, there is one thing that all these miracles have in common: they are always audience-appropriate. Jesus *does* this miracle for Peter and the others who work with him (presumably Andrew, James and John). Let me suggest that not one of them heard the sermon which Jesus gave that day—all that was on their minds the whole time was their lack of fish. And now they have more fish than they know what to do with. They are now ruminating about what just happened.

The concept is this: these men spent an hour or two thinking about their own problems while the Lord of Glory was teaching them the truth—truth which they could not even be bothered with. Their personal problems were greater, in their own minds, than what Jesus had to say. But now, each one of these men understands the gravity of this situation and the power of God working through Jesus.

Peter's own conclusion is this: "Lord, I should not even be in the same room as You."

Luke 5:10 Simon's partners James and John, sons of Zebedee, were also amazed. So, Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will catch people."

These 3 men (4, when you include Andrew) are awestruck by what has just happened. Jesus tells them, "From now on, you will be catching people (instead of fish)."

As an aside, this is very prophetic, as these disciples would primarily act as evangelists for most of their lives.

Bear in mind that Jesus is a prophet, and He will make prophetic announcements. Speaking prophetically does not mean that He is accessing His Deity. No prophet from the Old Testament was equal to God.

Quite frankly, I do not know how the mind of a prophet works. My guess would be this: the prophet has information in his own mind much as you or I have information stored in our own minds. I read this verse, I study it in the Greek, and then I pontificate about it. Because I am using the grace apparatus for perception, this is all a grace process. As I

study and learn more about this verse, I am able to expound upon it. I would think that a prophet will occasionally have information in his mind which he did not really have process by which it enters into his mind. Either God, in some way, tells him, “X, Y and Z,” or, that information is suddenly in his soul. “Hmm,” the prophet thinks to himself, “X, Y and Z.”

So Jesus, at various points during His teaching ministry, has information somehow implanted in His thinking, as He is a prophet.

Luke 5:11 **And when they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed Jesus.**

These men were convinced. They brought their boats onto shore and left everything behind in order to follow Jesus.

### **Jesus cleanses a leper and tells him to show himself to the priests**

Luke 5:12 **And it happened while Jesus was in one of the towns [i.e., surrounding Lake Galilee], that a man covered with an infectious skin disease appeared and, when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face [to the ground] and begged Him, saying, “If you want to, You can heal me.”** [Note: Throughout this narrative the terms “heal/healing” are originally “clean/cleansing” because the Jews viewed a person with such a disease as ceremonially “unclean.” See Lev. 13:1-3].

Jesus continues His ministry to the various cities and villages in Galilee. Bear in mind that this would have been considered *northern Israel* after the time of Solomon, when two nations were formed from nation Israel (which was a unified nation under Saul, David and Solomon). We often call them the northern and southern kingdoms (or *Israel* and *Judah*), but they operated as independent nations after Solomon died.

Both nations were disciplined by God, to the point of each nation suffering the 5<sup>th</sup> stage of national discipline (= the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle of discipline). The Bible contains quite a bit of information about Judah (the southern kingdom) becoming reconstituted as a nation; however, after 400 B.C. or so, they were no longer an independent nation.

The northern kingdom also faced the 5<sup>th</sup> stage of national discipline, earlier than the southern kingdom; but how it was reconstituted is less well-defined.

I bring up this history because Jesus did most of His teaching in the northern kingdom (in Samaria and in the Galilee region). Obviously, most of His teaching was to Jews (given that He teaches at the synagogues throughout this region). It is less clear which tribes are there. Jesus is from the tribe of Judah (genetically and legally), yet He was raised up north (not in Judæa, where the tribes of Judah and Simeon originally settled).

Not many of the 10 northern tribes are mentioned in the gospels. Some people, over the years, who have called them the *ten lost tribes*). Nevertheless, Asher is mentioned in Luke 2:36. The territories of Zebulun and Naphtali are mentioned in Matt.4:13–15. There

is a town named Ephraim in John 11:54. Paul is famously from the tribe of Benjamin (Romans 11:1 Philippians 3:5). Levi (Levites) is (are) mentioned throughout the New Testament, as they were scattered throughout both regions. My point is, there are a lot of Jews living in the northern kingdom. Clearly, they must know their Jewish heritage, or those names would not be used. However, I am unaware of a clear history of their return to the land (to the northern kingdom). It is certainly possible that small patches of Hebrew groups never left the northern kingdom.

**Israel at the Time of Jesus** (a map); from [Conforming to Jesus](#); accessed October 1, 2021. Galilee and Samaria (populated mostly by those who are half Jew and half gentile) are where the northern kingdom was; Judæa is where the southern kingdom was. Their territories shown on the map and much more were a part of what made up a united Israel under Kings David and Solomon.

Most of Jesus' teaching takes place in Galilee, but He does some teaching in Samaria, Judæa and Perea.

The actual region where Jesus taught is very small compared to other *religious* leaders; and the period of His public ministry (3–4 years) is also very short comparatively speaking. Historically speaking, we should not even know Who Jesus is. Examining, from human viewpoint, what Jesus did as a religious leader suggests that the greatest miracle of all is, we know His name.



That being said, while Jesus is teaching in Galilee, a leprous man came up to Him and said, "I know that You can make me clean, if You choose to." That is quite an amazing statement of faith, because Jesus' ability to heal was not well-known at the beginning of His public ministry. Up to this point in time, Jesus had healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law and a number of others (Luke 4:40–41), but we have no record of Him healing a leper.

Luke 5:12 *And it happened while Jesus was in one of the towns [i.e., surrounding Lake Galilee], that a man covered with an infectious skin disease appeared and, when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face [to the ground] and begged Him, saying, "If you want to, You can heal me."*

There is also a question of, how does the leper know to come to Jesus. For the most part, lepers are going to be separated from society, to keep them from spreading their malady. Yet, somehow this man knew about Jesus and he had enough faith to seek Jesus out.

Luke 5:13 *Then He reached out His hand and touched the man, saying, "I [do] want to; be healed." And immediately the infectious skin disease left him.*

Jesus, amazingly enough, touches this man (ceremonially, a person is made unclean by touching a leper). However, somehow, rather than the unclean leper making Jesus unclean; Jesus made the leper clean.

Luke 5:14 *Then He ordered the man not to tell anyone [about the healing], saying, "Go on your way and show yourself to the priest and offer the proper sacrifice for your healing that Moses required [Lev. 13:49; 14:2ff] as evidence to people [that you were healed]."*

What Jesus has done is a very major thing; and if He is looking to drum up some interest in His ministry, He could have told this man, "Go back out into the world and tell everyone you have ever known what I just did. If they know you from being a leper, this whole thing will knock their socks off." But Jesus does not do that. He tells the man to go to a priest and follow the ceremonial instructions for a leper who has been cured.

The people to whom Jesus is sending this man have performed a great number of sacrifices and offerings, according to the specifics laid out in the book of Leviticus. Many of the ceremonies that they oversee are so well-known to them that they can simply do them, without even needing to reread the Biblical instructions. However, this is one thing which they have never done before. This leper shows up and these priests will be in a panic. "What are we supposed to do? I know the instructions are in the Scriptures, but where exactly?"

Jesus healing men was not specifically to alleviate suffering, although Jesus clearly did feel empathy for men so stricken. The healings which Jesus did were illustrative. This leper, his body covered with skin abrasions and various eruptions on the epidermis, is a picture of us ruled by our sin nature. How the leper looks to his fellow man; that is how we look to God. Jesus curing this man symbolizes our spiritual healing at salvation. In life, we



continue to have a sin nature; however, by the use of rebound, we are able to be graciously controlled by God the Holy Spirit and to perform divine good.

Luke 5:15 But the news about what Jesus had done spread all the more widely, so that large crowds assembled to listen to Him and to be healed of their sicknesses.

Other people were there and they witnessed this with their own eyes. People told everyone that they knew what was taking place.

Many religious leaders love the position of recognition and even adoration which they receive. Some even seem to bathe themselves in that light. However, Jesus regularly sought to have time alone with God.

Luke 5:16 So, He went away to deserted places and prayed.

Throughout the Lord's ministry, He took time to pray to God the Father in private. We do not know if this was a one-way or a two-way conversation. In my opinion, Jesus did all of the talking to His Father (off the top of my head, I can remember only two instances in the gospels when God's voice from heaven was audible).

### **Jesus heals a paralytic before an audience which included pharisees and teachers of the Law**

Luke 5:17a And it happened on one of those days *[in Capernaum. See Mark 2:1], as Jesus was teaching, that some Pharisees [i.e., a strict sect of the Jewish religion] and teachers of the Law of Moses, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem, were sitting around [i.e., listening to Him].*

Jesus ministry had begun a new phase, since He had taught in Nazareth. He was now healing people and He had called some disciples. There was a period of time which is described in one passage where Jesus simply went from synagogue to synagogue reading the Scriptures and then teaching them (which ministry is found in the previous chapter).

In Nazareth, Jesus caused a great commotion by claiming to be the Messiah. The people there tried to kill Him.

Since then, He no longer publically claims to be the Messiah. However, he has performed some miracles and healings (the Holy Spirit worked through Him to cause these things to happen).

Pharisees have come to observe Jesus. We can only speculate as to how and why they did this. What He said in Nazareth certainly caused a big stir; and what He has done lately, by way of signs and miracles, has also been quite incredible. He had also cleansed that leper, and told him to keep his healing quiet. However, the mental attitude sins was to go and tell the priests, so that they could go through the ritual from the Bible for lepers

being cleansed. It is likely that these were the things which caused the Pharisees to come and to audit what Jesus is doing.

People were coming from all over to see Jesus; and members of this religious sect were also coming from all over to observe Him.

Luke 5:17b **And the power of the Lord was with Him, enabling Him to heal people.**

Also, right at this time, Jesus was aware of His own power to heal—that this ability was in full force on this particular day.

Jesus, in His humanity, did not have the inherent ability to heal people. Jesus in His Deity certainly could heal anyone, but He did not operate in the power of His Deity (the doctrine of Kenosis). The very fact that this verse specifically tells us that the Lord (=God the Father<sup>55</sup>) was with Jesus to heal indicates that we are not speaking of an innate ability of the humanity of Jesus.

Luke 5:18 **Just then [four] men [See Mark 2:3] brought a paralyzed man on a cot and attempted to place him in front of Jesus.**

It appears that the period of time during which Jesus has been healing is relatively short. However, Luke 4:40 tells us that many people from all over came to Him to be healed. Therefore, this became an important and well-known part of His ministry.

4 men + 1 paralyzed man came to see the Lord while He is here, speaking in Capernaum (Mark 2:1–3). Their intention was to place this paralyzed man before Jesus.

Luke 5:19 **But because they could not find a [suitable] way to get him in [to the house] because of the people crowded [around], they went up to the housetop [Note: This was a flat area, where people retired for rest, prayer, etc., with a stairway accessible from the outside] and lowered the man on his cot through the roof tiles into the presence of Jesus.**

The men could see where Jesus was, but it was also clear that getting close to Him was nearly impossible, as there were so many people crowded around Him. The men determined that they could get onto the housetop and be very close to the Lord.

Many houses of that era came with a courtyard (this is where Jesus probably was speaking) and a rooftop where people might go to catch a breeze (rooftops in this era were designed to be lived on). People lived in their courtyards and on their roofs just as often as they were inside of the house structure.

By going onto the roof, these men were able to lower the cot very close to Jesus.

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<sup>55</sup> In the Old Testament, a reference to *Lord* (or, more accurately, to *Y<sup>e</sup>howah*) could refer to any Member of the Trinity. In the New Testament, almost most allusions to the *Lord* refer to Christ Jesus.

Luke 5:20 And when He saw the evidence of their faith, He said, “Man, your sins are forgiven.”

Jesus no doubt observed all of this; and He was aware of the pharisees in the audience. What He says here He knows to be very provocative. Jesus was a brilliant man, and He knew that this would cause quite a stir.

The pharisees were quietly observing. They might have said a few things to one another; they may have been taking some mental notes, but they were not revealing bias or opposition in the beginning. However, these words from Jesus apparently flushed them out.

Luke 5:21 Then the experts in the Law of Moses and the Pharisees began to reason *[in their minds]*, saying, “Who is this man who speaks things against God *[i.e., by claiming the ability to forgive sins]*? Who can forgive sins except God only?”

Despite having the word *saying* here, we do not know whether this group of men spoke to one another quietly, or if this simply reflects what they were thinking (people can speak to themselves in their own minds).

When Jesus said, “Man, your sins are forgiven,” that would have caused quite a stir among the religious crowd. Charley Brown could not simply tell Lucy Van Pelt, “Your sins are forgiven.” That would be unheard of; and this is how they saw it. The pharisees saw Jesus as an ordinary man—possibly as an independent religious charlatan—but what he said here stepped over the line.

Luke 5:22 But Jesus perceived their reasonings and answered them, “Why are you reasoning in your hearts?”

Jesus can see the religious crowd and He knows what they are thinking. This is not because He is functioning in His omniscience, but simply because He knew what He said would have provoked them. He probably said those words, in part, for that reason. He knew exactly what they would be thinking: “What the heck did He just say? No man can forgive sins!”

Luke 5:23 Which is easier, to say *[to the paralyzed man]*, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?

Jesus certainly has their attention, and He says to this religious group, “Which is easier for Me to say to this paralyzed man? ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or, ‘Stand up and walk?’ ”

No doubt, the religious types begin to ponder this question. If He says, “Your sins are forgiven,” what can we really say about this? What does it look like for sins to be forgiven? But if Jesus says, “Stand up and walk,” then we can all see that. The man either gets up and walks or he doesn’t. But how could He make such a man walk?

Do you see? If they ponder these two options, the first requires Jesus to have divine authority, as no one but God can forgive sins. But the second—which involves a miraculous healing—would that not reveal that Jesus has this divine authority?

Luke 5:24 **But so you will know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins, (He then said to the paralyzed man), 'I say to you, get up, pick up your cot and go home.'**"

Then Jesus says, "I have the authority to say both of these things. Now I am going to say the things that should prove to you that I can forgive sins." He turns to the paralyzed man and says, "Get up, pick up your cot, and go home."

The recorded narrative suggests that this seems to happen very quickly. That is, Jesus is not engaging the pharisees here in a discussion. He knows what they are thinking; and He answers whatever misgivings that they may have directly.

Luke 5:25 **So, immediately he stood up in front of them and picked up what he had been lying on [i.e., his cot], and went home, giving honor to God.**

The man stands up in front of the pharisees and everyone else and he picks up his cot. He then walks home, giving honor to God for his healing.

Luke 5:26 **And everyone was filled with amazement; they gave honor to God and were overwhelmed with reverence, saying, "We have seen incredible things today."**

Everyone saw this. Even though Jesus did this specifically for the pharisees to see, to answer the questions in their mind, everyone in this large crowd saw this, and they were amazed.

### **Jesus calls Levi; and the pharisees criticize Jesus and His disciples**

Luke 5:27 **Then after these things happened, Jesus went out [i.e., probably walking along a street] and saw a publican [Note: This was a person with a bad reputation for dishonest tax collecting activities] named Matthew [i.e., the same person as Levi. See Mark 2:14] sitting at the toll booth [collecting taxes] and said, "Become my follower."**

Jesus calls Matthew (aka, Levi) to follow Him.

In many of the gospels, it appears as if Jesus simply picks some random dude out of a crowd and tells him to follow Him; and so he does. However, when we examined Simon (Peter) earlier, it was clear that they had interacted on several occasions prior to Jesus calling him.

I would suggest to you that the calling of Matthew was not random and completely spontaneous. It is possible that Jesus came looking for him specifically. A lack of background history does not mean that the two men had no history. However, we cannot rule out that Jesus, as a prophet, knew this man, and therefore called him.

Luke 5:28 So, Matthew gave up everything, got up and followed Jesus.

Matthew was probably the wealthiest of all the disciples.

Luke 5:29 Then Levi prepared a lavish dinner for Jesus at his house. A large number of [other] tax collectors were [also] having dinner with them.

We have parties and gatherings all of the time. However, this is not nearly as common in the ancient world—particularly a spontaneous dinner, as what appears to be taking place here (I say spontaneous, because Jesus calls Matthew; and then, by that evening,<sup>56</sup> there is a dinner party).

Many of us have a thing for celebrities, and if our favorite celebrity (a football player, an actor, a politician, a billionaire) somehow walked into our life, we might want to throw a party for everyone that we know so that they might meet this celebrity face to face (and certainly, we hope that our association with this celebrity will impress our friends and relatives). This is sort of what Matthew was doing, but not exactly. The greatest celebrity of all time (in fact, the *only* true celebrity of the human race) is Jesus. Matthew would like everyone that he knows to meet this Jesus. Let me suggest that Matthew is not doing this to bask in the notoriety of knowing Jesus, but to introduce his friends to Jesus.

After Jesus told the leper that his sins were forgiven him, the religious types began to take a much closer and more critical look at Jesus. We do not know if they were invited to this party or not, but they are there.

Luke 5:30 Now the Pharisees and their experts in the Law of Moses complained to Jesus' disciples, saying, "Why do you men eat and drink with tax collectors and worldly people?"

The pharisees and the experts in the Law of Moses are still around. Are they at the party? Could anyone come to the party? Did they hang around the entrance to the party? These religious types are still complaining about the things being done by Jesus.

They have sized up the situation and they realize that going head-on against Jesus might be difficult. He is quick and can meet their arguments. But, the disciples—well, that is a whole other matter.

The pharisees ask the disciples specifically, "Why are you all eating with tax collectors and other worldly people?" Those associated with the religious pharisees are not considered *worldly*; and those not closely associated with them are considered *worldly*.

Jesus will step in for the disciples and give 5 answers by way of explanation.

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<sup>56</sup> This would have happened that evening or very soon thereafter. Jesus did not appear to stay in the same town for a long period of time.

Luke 5:31 **And Jesus answered them, “People who are healthy do not need a doctor, but [only] sick people do.**

Jesus is apparently watching over His disciples. He hears the objection made by the pharisees and Law experts, and He steps in. He tells the religious types, “Only sick people need to see a doctor.” What He is telling them is, only people who have sinned and cannot reach God need Me.

Obviously, the religious types need Jesus as well, even though they may not recognize that fact.

Luke 5:32 **I did not come to call those who are doing right to repent [i.e., to change their hearts and lives], but [only those who are] sinners.”**

Jesus has not come to call the righteous to a change of mind; He makes His appeal to those who are sinners (the types of sins committed is not really a part of this discussion, although the pharisees would like to make it so).

We understand that all people are sinners; however, the pharisees did not see themselves in the same classification as the tax collectors and others at this party. Jesus tells the religious crowd, “These people that you disapprove of—they are the very ones I need to reach.”

The pharisees essentially blow off Jesus’ response and they essentially build upon their first objection. Now they address Jesus directly.

Luke 5:33 **Then they said to Jesus, “John’s [the Immerser’s] disciples fast frequently [i.e., going without food and/or drink for religious reasons] and they offer earnest prayer requests, and the disciples of the Pharisees do the same things. But Your disciples eat and drink.”**

It is apparent, by this statement, that the religious types have done some research. They have not just shown up out of the blue to listen, to consider, and to discuss later. They have put together what they believe to be some serious disparities. As far as they can see, these objections have no answers.

Even though the pharisees were not fans of John the baptizer, they noted that his disciples fasted a lot and they prayed a lot; as do the disciples of the pharisees. “However,” they say, ‘Your disciples don’t do any of that stuff. Here, they are just eating and drinking and hanging out.”

Jesus explains, using an analogy (or a parable):

Luke 5:34 **Jesus answered them, “Can you force the companions of the groom to fast while the groom is [still] with them?**



Jesus is the groom and His disciples are the friends of the groom. Prior to the wedding, the groom and his friends are celebrating. They are not fasting. It would make little sense for the groom and his friends to hang out together and fast.

Luke 5:35 **But the time will come when the groom will be taken away from them [Note: Jesus here refers to Himself]. Then they will fast at that time."**

There will be a time when the groom (Jesus) is taken away from His friends. At that point in time, they will fast (but not in the way that the religious types fast).

You may recall the fasting is simply taking a legitimate act—like eating—and setting it aside temporarily while time is spent on spiritual things (such as, learning the Word of God).

Luke 5:36 **And He told them a parable [i.e., a brief story to illustrate His teaching]: "No one tears a piece [of cloth] from a new item of clothing and sews it on an old one. If he does, it will tear the new one. And besides, the piece [of cloth] from the new clothing will not match the old one."**

The pharisees have tried to take what they know from their own ministry and from the ministry of John the Herald and apply it to the work of Jesus. The things of the pharisees and even of John represent the old cloth. Jesus is the new cloth. You cannot take a patch from old clothing and try to patch up a new shirt. It won't match and it won't shrink in the same way.

The pharisees are somehow likening John the Herald's ministry to their own, as they both pray and fast. Jesus is telling them, "These two things do not fit together. It is like trying to repair an old piece of fabric with a new patch. It just won't work."

Luke 5:37–38 **And no one puts freshly squeezed grape juice into previously used bottles made of animal skins. [If he does], the newly squeezed juice will [crack and] burst the [dried out] animal skins and [all the juice will] spill out, and the animal skin bottles will [also] become useless. But freshly squeezed grape juice must be put into newly made animal skins."**

Jesus then illustrates the same thing with a different parable. New wine (or grape juice) is placed into new skins. The new skins are more pliable, and when the juice begins to ferment, these new skins expand as needed; they will not burst open.

If new grape juice is placed into old wine containers made of leather, the fermentation process will burst the old skins.

The old skins represent the traditional teachings of the pharisees and other religious types. The Jewish people had developed great traditions around the Mosaic Law. They defined in detail what *not working on the Sabbath* looked like. Then they held the people to these new regulations.

Jesus' teaching, which was, at this point in time, simply the Old Testament, His correct exegesis of the Scriptures would be the new wine (the unfermented grape juice). His teaching could not be put into the confinement of the Jewish traditions; otherwise it would burst those traditions, much as unfermented wine would cause old skins to burst as the wine begins to ferment.

Luke 5:39 *And no one who has drunk aged wine wants newly squeezed [juice], for he says, 'The older [grape juice] is better.'*"

This remark is also directed at the pharisees. They want their old wine, which refers to the old religious customs which they have followed all of their lives. They do not want fresh squeezed juice because it has not yet aged and fermented.

What Jesus is offering is newly squeezed juice (as per the parable). The pharisees do not want that.

It is possible that this should be reversed. That is, Jesus is providing the old wine—accurate teaching from the Old Testament. The pharisees are promoting their new teachings (their traditions). Once people taste the *old wine* (which Jesus is teaching), they will not want the *new wine* of the pharisees (the traditions which they developed after the writing of the Old Testament).

The interpretation of this final parable depends upon who is the person making the subjective judgment, "I want the old wine; not the new wine."

No parable or analogy matches up in all respects, so we need to be careful not to push them in that way. Jesus' teaching is actually the accurate teaching of the Old Testament. What the Pharisees and other religious types are teaching is based upon their traditions more than it is based upon the Old Testament.

Today, in Judaism, this is even more apparent. If you find the most conservative synagogue in your region and watch what they do and say, you will recognize that there is only the barest connection to the Old Testament. They may even read the Old Testament (often in Hebrew), but the practices outlined in the Old Testament—that is not what they do today.

## Lesson 169: Luke 6

## Introducing Luke 6

### Introducing Luke 6

Luke, perhaps more than any other biographer, will concentrate on the actual words of Jesus. He has interviewed many people who were with Jesus, who saw what Jesus did. But what remained with these witnesses more than anything else were the actual words that Jesus spoke—His teachings, His parables, His unassailable logic, and His complete and thorough knowledge of the Law of God. Some of you own a *red-letter* edition of the

Bible, which simply means that all the words of Jesus are in red (in my work, I put the NT in red and the OT in blue; and all quotations from the OT in purple). Luke will have many chapters which are nearly all in red. From v. 20 and forward, almost every word in Luke 6 is in red (in the red-letter editions of the Bible).

When we study the words of Jesus, it is important to note *to whom is He speaking* and what is the context. Jesus spoke of things in virtually every dispensation (yet, He spoke at a time when dispensations were not known). Therefore, most everything is understood within the context of the dispensation of Israel, but with a wider and more precise understanding which might be gleaned centuries later.

When the pharisees ask a tricky question to catch Jesus in a contradiction, Jesus might speak in one way. Sometimes His answer to them is, “Okay, what about this?” And then He will name some incident in the Old Testament which they cannot explain in the light of what they have just complained about. Whatever Jesus cites may or may not specifically contradict their issue with Him; but this is often designed to send His religious detractors back to the Scriptures for more study (ideally speaking<sup>57</sup>).

When Jesus is speaking to a massive number of people, Jesus primarily teaches the correct way to understand the Law, which has been terribly distorted by those currently in the Jewish religious heirarchy.

When Jesus is teaching His disciples (not just to the 12, but to those who regularly followed Him—perhaps 50, perhaps 100, perhaps more), His teaching often takes in a greater realm of doctrine than simply the Law of Moses. He also provides explanations to His disciples for parables which may have confused them (His parables were often quite complex).

The middle chapters of Luke feature a great deal of the Lord teaching. We are not to those chapters yet, but the latter half of this chapter focuses on the Lord’s teaching. This latter half of Luke 6 will provide the most concentrated teaching so far in the book of Luke.



**Luke 6 — Plain Talking** (a graphic); from [Hope Church Huddersfield](https://www.hopechurchhuddersfield.co.uk/); accessed January 7, 2022.

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<sup>57</sup> This also causes current readers of His words to go back and investigate the things which Jesus speaks about.

Sometimes I do my own outlines, and sometimes I take them from another commentator. However, there will be obvious differences between how Arno Gaebelein divides up this chapter and how I do it.

### **An Outline of Luke 6 (Arno Gaebelein)**

1. The Son of Man the Lord of the Sabbath. (Luke 6:1-5)
2. The Man with the Withered Hand Healed. (Luke 6:6-11)
3. The Twelve Apostles Chosen. (Luke 6:12-19)
4. Blessing and Woe. (Luke 6:20-26)
5. Good for Evil. (Luke 6:27-31)
6. Instructions to Disciples. (Luke 6:32-38)
7. Warnings. (Luke 6:39-45.)

Arno Clement Gaebelein, *The Annotated Bible*; 1919; from e-Sword, Luke 6:1-49.

#### **Section One: Jesus and His Disciples in a Wheat Field on the Sabbath (vv. 1–5)**

Even though we are still in early days of the Lord's ministry, the religious hierarchy is becoming more and more aggressive toward Jesus and His crew. In the first 5 verses, Jesus and His disciples are walking through a grain field and eating the grain. In order to do this, the chaff must be separated out from the grain itself. This involved taking a stalk of grain and rubbing it between two hands. The pharisees complain directly to Jesus about this—so they are right there watching Jesus and His disciples on this Sabbath morning. “What are Your disciples doing?” they ask Him. The logical retort would have been would be, “Just what exactly are you and your other religious friends doing right now?”

The pharisees believe that they have just caught Jesus and His disciples working on the Sabbath. One could make the argument that these pharisees are also working, standing here where they normally would not be standing, observing the disciples and Jesus and then making accusations against them. That strikes me as work on a Saturday (the Sabbath = Saturday). Following people around that you do not like and finding fault with their every move—that is certainly work.

These accusations made against the disciples of Jesus were often used by the pharisees. This appeared to be the go-to approach to anyone the pharisees wanted to shut down. They have about 600 Sabbath regulations (which the religious hierarchy developed over the years), so the pharisees can generally find one or more regulations that a random person violates. These regulations did not come out of the Word of God; it came out of the imagination of their forefathers; and then became a time-honored tradition.

But Jesus will not go for the obvious retort (“You think we are working; well, what about you?”). Instead, Jesus will ask the Pharisees a question about David, and that will shut them down. They never have an answer for any of Jesus' questions. They always know about the passages to which Jesus refers, but they cannot explain them.

#### **Section Two: Jesus Heals a Man's Withered Hand on the Sabbath (vv. 6–11).**

So, on another Sabbath, Jesus is apparently in a synagogue, and there is a man there with a withered hand. When it comes to healing, Jesus does virtually nothing. He intrinsically, in His humanity, cannot heal anyone (apart from handing someone an aspirin or something). He has the divine ability to heal, but He does not employ the power of His divine nature.

Jesus would have felt compassion for this man, and God the Holy Spirit would have worked through Jesus to heal this man. Jesus essentially functions as a Vanna White<sup>58</sup>—He somehow indicates that a healing will take place or He simply touches a person's hand, or whatever, and that person would be healed. This is not done by any inherent power of Jesus Himself or by any effort on His part, but by the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the plan of God the Father. In other words, when Jesus touches the hand (or head, or whatever) of some man, that is all that He is doing. In no way could this be understood to be a work.

Nevertheless, Jesus will be accused of violating the Sabbath. However, there are no actual regulations or laws against healing on the Sabbath (who would ever think to write such a regulation?). And further, theologically speaking, Jesus was not doing anything of Himself to heal this man. He might touch a leper, or give a hand to a lame man to help him up—but none of this could really be construed as actual work. God (the Holy Spirit) is the One doing the work by healing.

### **Section Three: Jesus Selects His Apostles (vv. 12–16).**

In the third section (vv. 12–16) all of the disciples are named. We know, more or less, how Jesus called a few of these men, but there are just as many disciples about whom we know nothing about (apart from what tradition tells us). They are all named here, but with very few details.

### **Section Four: Jesus Ministers to a Great Multitude (vv. 17–19).**

In the fourth section of this chapter, Jesus teaches a large group of people on a plain. This first section is simply Him healing many of them and casting out demons. These things are spoken of generally; no specific examples are given. What is important are the principles which Jesus taught, which are found in the next section:

### **Section Five: The Sermon on the Plain (vv. 20–49).**

Much of what Jesus says here, He also taught in the Sermon on the Mount. Almost everything in this section will be Jesus teaching. He will teach the beatitudes; He will pronounce the woes (which appear to be in contrast to the beatitudes); He will talk about loving one's enemies; He will talk about judging; and He will give 3 parables about (having a speck of dust in one's eye, about a tree and its fruit, and about building on a solid foundation).

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<sup>58</sup> I am certain that this cultural allusion means very little to most readers.



Whereas the Sermon on the Mount goes on for three chapters in Matthew, the Sermon on the Plain takes up about half a chapter. However, there are many parallels between the two sermons. This would make sense, as we would not expect Jesus to teach something brand new, each and every day (although that certainly may have been possible).

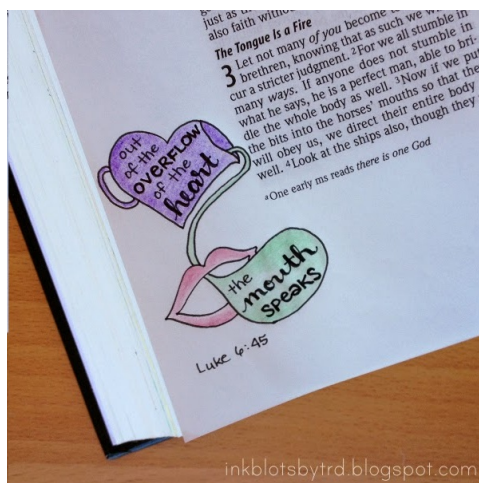
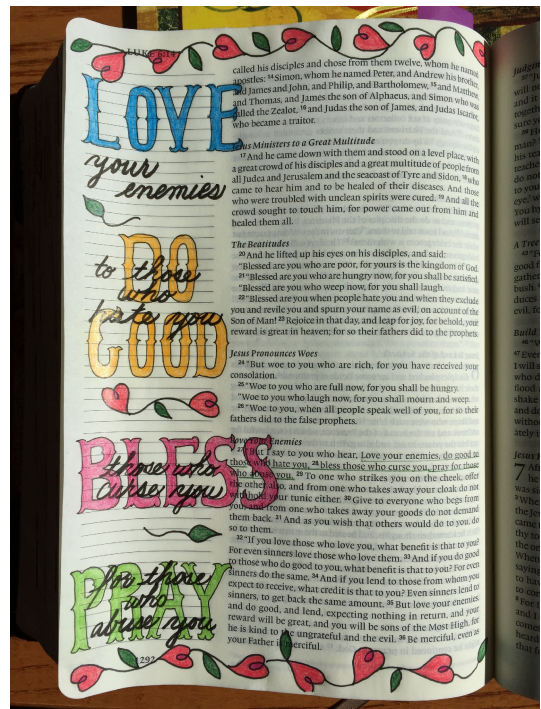
This final section of Luke 6 might be easily broken up into many subsections: The Beatitudes, Jesus Pronounces Woes, Love Your Enemies, Judging Others, A Tree and Its Fruit, and Build Your House on the Rock (I took these sub-headings directly from e-sword).

Although Luke 6:20–49 will be all Jesus' teaching, we return to narrative in the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter.

None of the gospels provide an hour by hour history of the Lord's ministry (until the crucifixion and the night preceding it). Each gospel is filled with vignettes. Sometime 5 or more of these vignettes take place on the same day and sometimes, a month or more may have passed in between vignettes. Sometimes we will be able to figure this out; sometimes not.

**Luke 6 — Bible Journaling** (a graphic); from Teri Millbourn in [Pinterest](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

**Luke 6 — Bible Journaling example** (a graphic); from [Inkblots](#) (from TRD); accessed January 7, 2022.



Quite frankly, my biggest concern when it comes to teaching this chapter is properly explaining all that the Lord is teaching. This is not an easy task.



**Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:1–5)** (a graphic); from [Redeeming God](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

Luke 6:1a **On a Sabbath, while He** [Jesus] **was going through the grainfields, His disciples plucked...**

On a Sabbath day, the disciples and the Lord are walking through a grainfield; and quite obviously they are hungry. They begin to pluck the heads of grain to eat.

This is not a grainfield which belongs to any of the disciples and yet, they are not stealing. Jewish farmers were supposed to leave portions of their fields unharvested for the poor (Leviticus 19:9 23:22). The poor could go through these unharvested sections of the field and harvest for themselves to eat.

On the one hand, ancient Israel had a poverty program; but, on the other hand, they had to actually go into the fields and pick the grain themselves. That is, there was some work involved on the part of the poor.

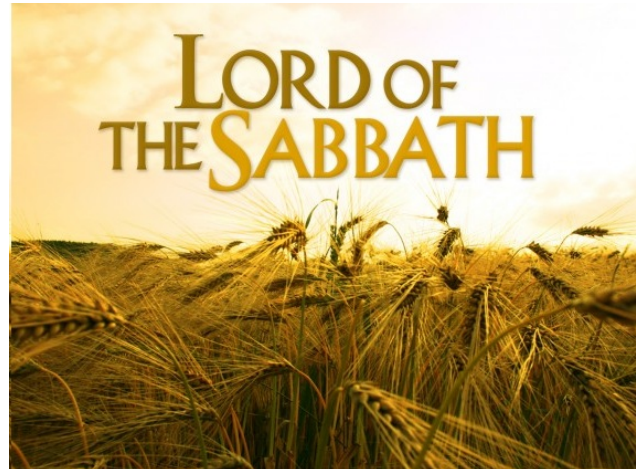
Luke 6:1b **...and ate some heads of grain,...**

The disciples are eating grain—and, so far, what they are doing is not a problem. It is not a sin to eat food on the Sabbath. Logically, it would not be a sin to prepare food, because how do you eat food without there being some preparation involved?

Luke 6:1c **...rubbing them in their hands.**

Quite obviously, the disciples are not just picking and eating the grain as is. They have to get to the nutritive part (the food part) of the grain.

This phrasing here is key. This is the problem, in the eyes of the pharisees. The disciples are rubbing the grain stalks together in their hands on a Sabbath. This is considered work



by the pharisees. In the eyes of the pharisees, this is a serious infraction. To be clear, there is nothing written in the Mosaic Law which tells the disciples not to do this.

**Picking Heads of Grain** (a photo by Ferrill Jenkins); from [Ferrell's Travel Blog](#); accessed January 14, 2022.

Luke 6:1 **On a Sabbath, while He [Jesus] was going through the grainfields, His disciples plucked and ate some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands.**

It is the Sabbath; and the disciples are hungry. Therefore, they walk through a grainfield and legitimately pick some of the grain to eat. In order to get to the nutritive part of the grain, they rub the grain together in their hands to cause the chaff to drop off. My guess would be that the disciples would rub the grain together, and then blow on it, to blow the chaff away.

It appears that the Lord's entourage has company. Some pharisees are there, watching them, and determining what, if anything, they might be doing wrong.

Now, consider what these pharisees are doing? Does that not sound like work to you? They are gathered as a group, they are making observations as a group; they are discussing amongst one another what is taking place and whether or not this is a violation of their traditions. Now, this sounds exactly like a job to me. So here the pharisees are, working on a Saturday, trying to determine whether or not Jesus and/or His disciples are working.

**Illustration:** There are so many people out and about today, who have one set of standards for those whom they do not like; and another set of standards for themselves. To talk with them, it appears that this is not an issue to them. At most, they may attempt to rationalize that set of standards.

On another Day of Resting, Creator Sets Free  
(Jesus) and his followers were walking  
through a field of grain. The men were hungry,  
so they plucked some grain, rubbed the husks  
off in their hands and began to eat.  
(Luke 6:1 FNV)



**Luke 6:1 (FNV)** (a graphic); from [Lutheran Indian Ministries](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

Luke 6:2a **But some of the Pharisees said,..**

One pharisee asks them about this. This suggests to me that there are a crowd of pharisees observing them and even traveling with them. Now, what is possible is, one saw them do this, and he quickly ran and got some more to witness this. It is also possible that the pharisees gathered with the disciples in order to catch them committing infractions on the Sabbath. Given the hundreds of transgressions which might take place on a Sabbath, this is their best bet to find something which they can accuse Jesus of.

Think about this for a moment: it is the Sabbath day and there is a group of pharisees there following Jesus, essentially spying on Him, looking for Him to do anything wrong. Would you not consider that work? This may not be a specific job spoken of in Scripture, but it is still a job; it is still work.

Now, we might attend church or go to a conference and listen to a speaker that we want to hear. No problem with that. But, let's say there is some cult leader and you have decided to check out what he is teaching (whatever your motive might be). Is that not work? Is that not research? Is that not a job or some sort?

My point is, this pharisee (and those with him) are going to accuse Jesus and the disciples of doing exactly what they themselves are doing—working on the Sabbath.

This is a fascinating aspect of legalism; as the accusers are often guilty of doing exactly what they accuse someone else of doing.

**Illustration:** I first began writing my commentary for this chapter back in 2019 and the Democrat party spent two years accusing President Trump of colluding with the Russians. He did not, of course; but his opponent, Hillary Clinton, actually did. Her campaign paid for a document vilifying candidate Trump, which document had its ultimate origins in Russia, written either by Russian spies or Russian scriptwriters. This same document was used in order to spy on members of the Trump campaign and it was used in order to obtain FISA warrants on the Trump campaign (as if they were some sort of a terrorist organization<sup>59</sup>). I write this not to re-litigate what happened; only to illustrate that the accusers (the Democrat party) accuse their opponent (Donald Trump) of exactly what they themselves had done. For the most part, their supporters do not appear to think that there is anything wrong with what they have done. This simply illustrates with a modern example that this is common human behavior.

Luke 6:2b ...**"Why are you [all] doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?"**

"What are you doing," the pharisee asks. "Why are you breaking the Mosaic Law? Surely you know that you cannot work on the Sabbath."

Now, if these were fields that belonged to the disciples and they were all out there harvesting their fields to gather a crop to store or sell, this would be quite a different matter. That would have been a violation of the Mosaic Law. They would be working on the

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<sup>59</sup> That is what the FISA courts were designed to get warrants for.

Sabbath, had they done that. However, they are simply eating the fresh grain that they pick.

Some people don't work on a Sunday, but they eat breakfast. They may haul out the cereal bowls and cereal and fruit and milk for eating breakfast, but this is not really considered work. However, if they were servers in a restaurant, bringing this stuff to a table, that would be considered work. Not those eating, of course; those serving them are working (just so there is no confusion, there are no Sabbath-style regulations for believers in the Church Age).

Luke 6:2 But some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you [all] doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?"

Just as before, the pharisees go after those whom they believe to be the weakest in the flock; they spoke to the disciples. The disciples would not have been able to answer their religious accusers. The religious accusers probably could argue circles around the disciples. On the other hand, Jesus was able to do the same to this religious crowd.

Luke 6:3a And Jesus answered them,...

Even when the pharisees tried to question the disciples, Jesus stepped in and answered for them. The disciples knew next to nothing at this point. They had believed in Jesus, but their spiritual growth was negligible to this point in time. They knew enough to follow Him and to listen to Him.

The question posed to Jesus is, He and His disciples are walking through a field, and they are eating the wheat which has been left there for the poor. The problem is, as the pharisees see it, they are taking the heads of this grain and rubbing it together to separate out the wheat out for them to eat. In the eyes of the pharisees, the disciples of Jesus are both harvesting and shucking the grain on the Sabbath.

Jesus is not going to specifically deal with this particular problem of violating the Sabbath; nor is He going to accuse the pharisees of being hypocritical (as they are essentially working right now). Instead, Jesus is going to offer up an analogous situation from Scripture—one which is well known—about a young David. The Lord's implied question at the end is, "Now, did David violate the law here? Are you also going to condemn David as well?"

What David does in this circumstance has nothing to do with the Sabbath; but it certainly appears to be a violation of Mosaic Law. David holds a very special place in the hearts of Israel; and he would have been admired by many pharisees.

Luke 6:3b ..."Have you not read what David did...



When fielding questions, Jesus generally had two approaches: (1) He would illustrate His answer with a parable or (2) He would cite either Scripture or an incident recorded in Scripture which related to the question/objection.

The pharisees would know what He is quoting and they would know about whatever story He cites. They knew a great deal of the Old Testament, but too often, they applied it incorrectly (the problem being, religious traditions had added on many of their own laws, turning God's promises into legalism).

Luke 6:3c ...when he was hungry, he and those who were with him:...

David, before he was made king, was persecuted by King Saul, who was the first king of Israel. Saul had become quite paranoid and he feared that the much more popular David would rise up and take his crown from him (David would never do this). So, there was this period of time that David and his men were on the run. On the day of this particular incident, they were starving, and they had come to the priest city where the Tabernacle was (the Tabernacle was designed to be moved about from place to place).

Luke 6:3 And Jesus answered them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him:...

Jesus answers the objection of the pharisees with a story from the Bible. David was greatly venerated by religious Jews, and so, it would be difficult for them to condemn anything that he did.

The parallel is this: David and his followers were being unjustly persecuted by Saul, the man in power. Jesus and His disciples are being unjustly persecuted by the religious hierarchy of Jerusalem. In both situations, David and his followers are hungry; Jesus and His disciples are hungry.

Luke 6:4a ...how he entered the house of God...

When David got to the city of the Tabernacle, he entered into the Tabernacle; here called the House of God. I do not recall him asking permission of anyone.

Luke 6:4b ...and took and ate the bread of the Presence,...

David knows the Scriptures and he knows that there are 12 loaves of fresh, consecrated bread in the Tabernacle. So, he goes inside, gets the bread, and he eats it with his men.

The parallel here is, Jesus and His disciples are hungry and they know that the fields are not completely harvested, but there are sections left as is (like in the corners) where food might be gotten. Therefore, that is where they went. David more or less did the same thing.

Luke 6:4d ...and also gave it to those with him?"

I use the NKJV, which is an excellent translation. They switch up the order of these two phrases, v. 4d and 4c.

David also distributes this bread to the men who are with him.

What is hypocritical is, the pharisees, before coming out to observe Jesus and complain, probably ate breakfast themselves already. And now they are here, watching Jesus and His disciples, in order to determine what laws they might be breaking—essentially doing a job themselves.

Luke 6:4c ...which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat,...

Now, this bread in the Tabernacle was to be eaten, but only by the priests. It would be baked fresh daily; and then the priests, at some point, would take the bread and eat it. David was *not* a priest.

So Jesus asks the pharisees, “You have a problem with us eating this wheat; so first, you explain David’s actions to Me.”

David, like Abraham and Moses, is a revered saint. It is clear that he was starving in this incident and that he was being persecuted for no reason by a paranoid king. The pharisees all know this. So he just goes right into the Tabernacle because he knows that there is bread there, and he takes it. Essentially, this saves David from starvation. Obviously, David being who he is, that is a good thing (at least in the eyes of the pharisees).

What David did was far more questionable than what Jesus and His disciples are doing. Going in and taking the bread of Presence was far more ambiguous, law-wise, than taking some unharvested crops from a field—which are left there precisely for people who are hungry and without.

The problem with the pharisees is, they are unable to discuss properly what is in the Old Testament. They have used their Scriptures as weapons against those that they don’t like (like Jesus and His disciples); but they don’t really take the time to think about what is in the Bible, what does it mean, what is its significance, and/or what they are being taught from it. All the pharisees can do is, if they are after someone, they say, “Look, what you did is wrong!”

Luke 6:4 ...how he entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the Presence, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those with him?” (ESV)

The ESV switched these final two phrases around, so that they are in a different order in the English as opposed to the Greek. They could have been left in the same order and made perfect sense:



Luke 6:4 ...how he entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the Presence, and also gave it to those with him (which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat)?” (Still the ESV, but switched around to the original word order)

There is nothing wrong with switching the word order around; I simply put it back to the phrase order of the Greek text (retaining the exact word order of the Greek text can sometimes be less than intelligible).

Luke 6:5 And he said to them, "The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

This is a great statement of authority. He tells these pharisees that He has the authority at this point to determine what is right or wrong regarding the Sabbath. This is not their purview. I don't know that they fully appreciated what He just said to them.

If the religious types agree that David did not sin, then they had to recognize that David's Lord, the Son of Man, was standing before them, and His authority was greater than David's.

Jesus is claiming to be Deity here; He is claiming to have God's authority.

The Unlocked Dynamic Bible has an excellent translation here: Jesus also said to them, "In the same way, the Son of Man has the authority to determine what is right for people to do on the Sabbath!"

Paraphrasing this, Jesus has said, "Just as David went into the Tent of Meeting with authority and took the Bread of Presence, I, being greater than David, can determine what may be lawfully done on the Sabbath."

There is an additional dig that Jesus is making here, but it is not as obvious. The religious types are the ones that have proclaimed themselves *lords over the Sabbath* by what they are doing. They have developed hundreds of rules about what can and cannot be done on the Sabbath. Jesus is implying here, "You do not have the right to do this—make laws and regulations for the Sabbath—but I do. You are not lords of the Sabbath, but I am." That is the gist of what Jesus is saying to them.

Luke 6:5 And He said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

### **All that Jesus did by proclaiming Himself *Lord of the Sabbath***

1. Jesus is proclaiming Himself God, as the Sabbath day commandment was spoken by God in Exodus 20.
2. Exodus 20:8–11 [God is speaking] "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and

## All that Jesus did by proclaiming Himself *Lord of the Sabbath*

earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” (ESV)

3. Jesus is suggesting that the religious types who are before Him—have in essence proclaimed themselves as *lords of the Sabbath*—that is, they are actually traveling with Jesus and attempting to enforce the Sabbath rules—which they themselves have essentially made up<sup>1</sup>.
4. Jesus is telling them, “This is not your call; it is My call. I have the authority here; you (all) do not.”
5. Jesus connects Himself to King David, as He is David’s Greater Son (again, implied here but not stated). But, in fact, David’s Greater Son would have authority over the Sabbath.
6. Jesus states His title here, *Son of Man*, which presents Him as completely human.
7. He is assuming authority given to Him by the Father.
8. You may recall in the previous chapter that Jesus forgave sins. Assuming authority over the Sabbath—and thus displacing the authority of the pharisees—Jesus again proclaims Himself as acting under God’s authority and with God’s authority.

<sup>1</sup> The pharisees who are with Jesus, at this point, have not made up the regulations surrounding the Sabbath themselves. But they are following the traditions handed down to them (traditions not found in Scripture). They know their traditions just as well as they know the Scriptures; and they do not distinguish between the authority of the two.

What Jesus said is just 7 words in the Greek, but it says so much.



**Luke 6:1–5 The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath** (a graphic); from [Catholic Daily Readings](https://catholicreadings.org/); accessed January 7, 2022.

**Lessons 172–173: Luke 6:6–11**

**On Another Sabbath**

Luke 6:6a **On another Sabbath,**...

The religious hierarchy was continually watching the Lord, seeing if they might catch Him in a clearly wrong action. He could always be found in one of the synagogues on Saturdays.

The way that this is phrased, *and it was on another Sabbath*; there is no implication that this event which follows took place in the same time period, the week after, in the same city or not. It is more like, "I just told you about one thing that I recall about Jesus on the Sabbath; and this is a second thing that I remember about Jesus and the Sabbath."

Recall the Luke did not personally witness any of these events. Various people sat down with Luke and told him what they remembered; and Luke endeavored to place all of the incidents in roughly chronological order.

Luke 6:6b **...He entered the synagogue...**

Jesus enters into the synagogue on the Sabbath, as was His custom. The time that the Lord spent in Jerusalem was quite limited; but He made many trips to the various local synagogues each and every Sabbath.

A logical question is, *why not ban the Lord from the synagogues?* Let me suggest when Jesus walked into a synagogue, quite a number of disciples came in with Him—including many locals who had not been coming regularly. Given the number of disciples that Jesus had (it was way more than 12), local synagogues were probably standing room only (meaning, they were full and bursting at the seams). Secondly, it is not clear who really had control of the synagogues. Logically, they were locally controlled, and that edicts from Jerusalem would not necessarily affect them. Thirdly, we are still in early days in the Lord's ministry, knowing where Jesus was going to be allowed the religious hierarchy to set Him up. That appears to be what will happen in this event.

Luke 6:6c ...and was teaching,...

Jesus went into the synagogues in order to teach the truth. He would both read a passage and He would expound on it. We may understand His teaching to be similar to the sermon on the mount or the sermon on the plain (which we will study in this chapter).

I am sure that you have had the experience of hearing the Word of God taught, and thinking, *that makes perfect sense; I understand that!* Under my right pastor, R. B. Thieme, Jr., I had the experience all of the time.

This was the Lord Jesus Christ, the Living Word; so when He taught the Old Testament, it made perfect sense. No doubt, many locals attended the synagogue when it was rumored that Jesus would be there (that is, as He became more and more well-known). There are huge numbers of people who would like to hear the Word of God taught accurately.

Luke 6:6d ...and a man was there whose right hand was withered.

There was someone placed in the synagogue who had an infirmity; that is not simply a person who just wandered in. His right hand was withered. It appears that the nature of his defect could be seen by all.

The adjective describing his hand is *xêros* (ξηρός) [pronounced *xay-ROSS*], which means, *shrunk, wasted, withered [of members of the body deprived of their natural juices]*. Strong's #3584. Clearly, this is a physical deformity.

How exactly this man chose to come this day is unknown to us, but there is evidence that perhaps the religious class brought him in before the Lord. I believe that this is a setup.

Luke 6:6 On another Sabbath, He entered the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was withered.

The pharisees had observed that Jesus was compassionate, and He hated to leave someone in a state of suffering. The pharisees are expecting Jesus to heal this man (again, I am making the assumption that this is a setup).

Luke 6:7a **And the scribes and the Pharisees watched Him,...**

Either the scribes and pharisees placed this man right where Jesus would have to see him.

These religious types, by this point in time (which is still early in the Lord's ministry) seem to have made up their minds about the Lord. They were not attending these teaching sessions in order to be informed, to grow spiritually, or to see various passages brought to life. They were there to watch the Lord very carefully. If there was a wrong note, the pharisees were there to observe it, agree upon it, and call Jesus on it.

Let me further suggest that this was, for all intents and purposes, a job for these men to be there. That is, these scribes and pharisees are, once again, working on that Saturday. If they were there to hear Jesus brilliant reading and explanation of the Scriptures, that would have been one thing; but these religious types were not there for that reason.

Luke 6:7b **...to see whether He would heal on the Sabbath,...**

This phrase tells us that this whole thing is a setup. The religious hierarchy was there to do the imperfect middle indicative of *paratêreō* (παράτηρέω) [pronounced *par-at-ay-REH-oh*], which means, *to observe, to watch*; lit., *to inspect alongside*, that is, *to note insidiously or scrupulously*. Strong's #3906. What did they want to observe or inspect? We then have the 1<sup>st</sup> class conditional *ei* (εἰ) [pronounced *I*], which means, *if, whether*. Strong's #1487. So, they want to *observe whether* what? They wanted to find out if Jesus would do the following: the present active indicative of *therapeuō* (θεραπεύω) [pronounced *there-ap-YOO-oh*], which means, *to heal, to cure, to restore to health*. Strong's #2323. They cannot make such an observation unless they know that there is someone in the crowd for Jesus to heal, and he needs to be on or near the front row. He can't be simply sitting in the back, because Jesus might not see him.

These religious types made another calculation. They want to make certain that everyone sees that Jesus heals someone. So this healing cannot be someone with a questionable defect. If Jesus heals him, everyone needs to see it. Everyone needs to see something which is an unmistakable cure. Then these religious types can accuse Jesus of working on the Sabbath.

This man has a physical deformity. Everyone can see that deformity. We may reasonably assume that his right hand was of no use to him. This is a medical issue that medical science today could not cure. Yet, this man is put before the Lord, and the religious types were watching to see if Jesus would *keep on healing* on the Sabbath.



Here is what concerned the scribes and pharisees—not that this man might be healed, but whether or not Jesus would heal this man on the Sabbath. To them, this man was a pawn in this game that they were playing.

The present tense suggests that Jesus probably had a healing ministry to this particular town or village earlier in the week. He had already healed some people. The question is, *would the Lord continue to heal people on this day, the Sabbath?*

It is fascinating that they do not question whether or not the Lord is able to heal this man; their only concern is, *can they catch Jesus doing something wrong?*

Luke 6:7c ...so that they might find a reason to accuse Him.

The scribes and pharisees hope to trap Jesus; they hope that they can catch Him doing something wrong by which they might accuse Him. This is such an amazing passage!

Here is what is fascinating about this entire scenario: there are no prohibitions against healing on the Sabbath—it is not in the Mosaic Law nor were laws/regulations developed by the religious class over the years relating to healing. This has never been a violation of the Sabbath which has ever been discussed or debated. And yet, here are these pharisees and scribes, who, they themselves were *working* on the Sabbath, watching Jesus carefully, to see if He heals this man.

Do you see the irony in all of this? There has never been defined as work either of the following two things: (1) healing a person who is sick or deformed on the Sabbath; and (2) watching Jesus to see *if* He will heal a man who is crippled on the Sabbath. Jesus is engaging in the healing (#1) and the pharisees and other religious types are engaged in the watching/observation (#2). Neither of those things are specific violations of the Sabbath; but if one wanted to hold court and discuss it, surely the latter involves the most amount of work and effort, comparatively speaking.

The religious types essentially want to trap the Lord into doing exactly what they themselves are doing. They are working on the Sabbath, watching the Lord. They are there watching to accuse Him of working on the Sabbath, *if* He heals this man.

**Illustration:** We see this sort of thing in politics all of the time. Politician A violates the law or ethics; and then he turns around, and before he is found out, he accuses his opponent, politician B, of doing these things. Over the past 20 years (I write this in 2019), there have been some major problems in specific cities: the water in Flint, Michigan was undrinkable and unsafe; and a hurricane which was in New Orleans was particularly devastating. What is the first thing that politicians did in both cases? They found someone in the other party and blamed that person for everything that was wrong. Before they gave a single thought as to what went wrong, where were there failings and how could they fix the problem; their first response was, “So-and-so of the other party made this happen!” And they went right to the media to make these declarations as if they were calling out someone for corruption or an ethical lapse.



**Illustration:** In one case the governor was blamed; in the other case, the President. In both cases, the person receiving the most blame had about the least to do with the actual problem itself. Both were very local problems, and the harm brought to the citizens was a result of local officials making bad decisions and/or not doing their jobs. But without the least amount of circumspection, these local officials immediately pointed the finger to the nearest person of the other party. They themselves were to blame, but they ran out in front of the cameras immediately, and pointed their finger at someone else, calling them out for this tragedy.

**Application:** Generally speaking—and this is certainly true of both political parties—if there is a tragedy or a disaster which occurs, and there are failures in the system, that first person who gets out in front of the cameras and blames the other party—he is probably the person most at fault for whatever was done or was not done.

Luke 6:7a-b **And the scribes and the Pharisees watched Him, to see whether He would heal on the Sabbath,...**

There is another irony here. The pharisees and religious class have decided that they want to remove the Lord from His ministry (discredit Him, remove Him, anything along these lines); so they are going to use the Law in order to do this. This was certainly not what the Law was designed to do, and one would think that the pharisees understood this. Yet, they are going to use the Law to entrap the Lord, something in itself ought to be considered blasphemy. These pharisees are using the Law as their own personal hammer. Is there anything anywhere in the Law which suggests that this is an appropriate use of the Law?

**Illustration:** Allow me to use an illustration from our very colorful American politics. The FISA courts were designed to allow investigations of terrorists and their immediate contacts; that was their purpose. However, not long after they were instituted, one political party began to use these courts to go after the other political party. Just as the Mosaic Law was being misused by the religious types here; so the FISA courts were similarly misused. I am not trying to indict one party or the other—there are no doubt horrid people in both parties—I am simply giving an illustration of the depravity of man, and setting up a parallel act in our day, so that we might better understand what was happening then.

It is also quite odd. They want Jesus out of the way; and they will even, at some point, want Him dead. But, they cannot order a hit on Him; they cannot seem to send someone out with that to be done (certainly, it would have been hard to do). They want to do this thing *legally* and they will do anything in order to make that happen (include use eyewitnesses to lie about what they saw and heard). So, they were not above breaking the Mosaic Law themselves; they just were only willing to go so far.

Again, recall that this is very early on in the Lord's ministry. The anger and mental attitude sins of the scribes and pharisees is not anywhere near peaking yet. They will become much more forceful in their attempts to stop Him.

Luke 6:7 **And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, to see whether He would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse Him.**

The way that this verse is expressed suggests to me that this man with the withered hand is in the synagogue as a set up. He did not just wander in that Saturday morning.

Furthermore, the pharisees here are clearly misusing the Law of Moses. On top of this, they will have to allege a violation of the Mosaic Law where no violation actually occurred. In fact, no regulation falsely established by Jewish tradition is violated either.

Luke 6:8a **But He knew their thoughts,....**

When it says that Jesus knew their thoughts, this is in the pluperfect, suggesting that He knew their thoughts from eternity past. He knew exactly what these pharisees had planned.

However, there is another way of understanding this. That is, Jesus had come to know the thinking of unbelievers and skeptics and religious types early on in his life. Remember that He had been going to Jerusalem and to the synagogues all of His life. He therefore understood what they were thinking at this time. Their attitudes and their approach to Him were not new to Him. What they were intending to do was not a surprise to Him.

Luke 6:8a **But He knew their thoughts,....**

This is an interesting phrase to insert here, as this entire narrative could have been presented without including this particular fact. Furthermore, how did Luke know this, as he would have been dependent upon eyewitness testimony for the most part? I can speculate here, but it is only speculation. Jesus told His disciples later that He knew the thinking of the pharisees; or that Luke wrote this, as guided by the Holy Spirit.

This does give us further insight into the thinking and strategy of Jesus Christ. He understood what His enemies were doing; He understood what sort of harm they were intending towards Him (recall that the Lord admonished His disciples to be wise as serpents, yet harmless as doves).

We may understand that Jesus knows exactly what is going on, but He does not seek to bring harm to these religious types; He does not seek the same evil against them as they do against Him. However, bear in mind, what these teachers do is teach that which is false. Therefore, Jesus will publically expose their fraudulent teaching.

**Jesus [lit., He] had known their thoughts** [from His human perception or from eternity past?];...

What is said here leaves us with another speculation: *is this knowledge from the Lord's omniscience or from His extremely intelligent and perceptive humanity?* Here, I would lean towards the latter. Just because the Lord figured out these people—and, in fact, had them

figured out for a long time—this does not necessarily require omniscience in order for Him to know these things. Some people are able to perceive a great many things about another person, even though they might spend a relatively short amount of time with them. Jesus is about 30 years old, so He has had enough time to accumulate a great deal of psychological information about the people that He encounters. Recall that He has spent a great deal of time in synagogues and among the learned (you may recall that when Jesus was 12, He was with religious scholars discussing their thinking on absolute truth). Jesus is also brilliant and very observant.

Luke 6:8b ...and He said to the man with the withered hand,...

Despite knowing that He is being set up by the religious types there, Jesus speaks to the man with the withered hand.

Bear in mind, with a physical deformity like this, there is nothing that even a doctor could do. There was no cure for this man. Even today, with all of our modern medical science, we do not have any way to restore such a man.

Luke 6:8c ..."Come and stand here."

We do not know exactly how the ancient synagogues were set up. The NET Bible suggests that there are benches and/or tables around the sides and backs of the room. Because of my background, I tend to think of a classroom set up when I think of any room where learning takes place, but that is not necessarily the case.

Jesus ordered this man to rise up and stand right in the middle of the room, between everyone, so everyone could see clearly what was happening. Asking this man to come up to the front and stand is *not* a work. People were invited to come forward and to read from the scrolls of the Old Testament. They would come up to the front, they would hold out their hand, and a scroll would be handed to them to read.

Jesus often used the people that He healed as teaching aids. The simplest teaching about healing is, Jesus has the power of God and the authority from God to heal men physically. This suggests that Jesus is also able to heal them spiritually (meaning that through Jesus, we may have a relationship with God). Even in the devil's world, Jesus is able to provide spiritual clarity and guidance for man.

Luke 6:8d And he rose and stood there.

The man did what Jesus told him to do. Even though he was an intentional plant, that made little difference to him. He has one useless hand. Jesus was his one hope.

Luke 6:8 But He knew their thoughts, and He said to the man with the withered hand, "Come and stand here." And he rose and stood there.

The scene is this. It is Saturday (the Sabbath) in a local synagogue. Many religious types are there ready to accuse Jesus of violating the sacred Sabbath laws. It appears that they have brought this man with a withered hand to place before Jesus, so that they may see whether Jesus heals him on a Saturday. Jesus is teaching, but He then calls the man to come forward and stand right in the middle of the room, where all could see.

What Jesus says here explains the beginning of v. 8, that He knew what these religious types were thinking. He addresses them, but without naming them specifically.

Luke 6:9a **And Jesus said to them,..**

Jesus again directly addressed the pharisees; He engages with them completely. They are not ignored; but He does not ingratiate Himself to them either.

Luke 6:9b **..."I ask you,...**

This is legitimate, because these men who are watching him carefully, they are the teachers and enforcers of the Law. If anyone should be able to determine right and wrong, according to the Law, it should be this religious class. In fact, they are there to do that very thing. They are waiting for Jesus to heal this man so that they may accuse him of working on the Sabbath.

Luke 6:9c **...is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm,...**

"What exactly are the ground rules?" Jesus asks these pharisees, which is an interesting question. This is a general question, obviously, where the focus is not upon a specific act.

If memory serves me, Jewish traditions provide about 600 regulations regarding the Sabbath, Jesus cuts to the quick and asks, "Let's say I want to do something good on the Sabbath; what is your learned opinion here? Or something bad? Is doing good, good? Is doing bad, bad?" It seems like there is a pretty logical answer to this question.

Jesus intends to do good to this man; the pharisees and other religious types seek to do evil against Jesus. Although most of the pharisees will not understand Jesus' point, Jesus is going to do good to this man. The pharisees are going to do evil to Jesus. Given that simple distinction, who is really violating the Sabbath?

The simple answer is, it is always legitimate to do good; and never legitimate to do evil, whether on the Sabbath or on any other day. Yet Jesus is about to do good; and the religious men there are about to do evil.

Luke 6:9d **...to save life or to destroy it?"**

There is some disagreement as to the final verb found here. The Westcott Hort text has the aorist active infinitive of ἀπολύω (ἀπολύω) [pronounced *ap-ol-OO-oh*] (which means, *to relieve, to release, to dismiss (reflexively depart), or (figuratively) to let die*).

Strong's #630. The Scrivener Textus Receptus has the aorist active infinitive of *apollumi* (ἀπόλλυμι) [pronounced *ap-OL-loo-mee*], which means, *to destroy; to put out of the way entirely, abolish, put an end to ruin; render useless; to kill; to declare that one must be put to death*. Strong's #622. The Byzantine Greek text has the aorist active infinitive of *apokteinō* (ἀποκτείνω) [pronounced *ap-ok-TEE-no*], which means, *to put to death, to kill, to slay; figuratively to destroy*. Strong's #615. Obviously what happened was, the last letter or two on this word had become unreadable, and the copyist did not want to simply leave it blank, as he had most of the word right there. In my opinion, at least two of these scribes simply supplied the final letter (s).

Luke 6:9d *...to save life or to destroy it?"*

Jesus continues to ask what right to do on the Sabbath. Specifically, Jesus asks, "What if I want to save a life on the Sabbath—is that permitted? What if you want to destroy a life—is that permitted?" I have spelled it out here. Jesus simply gives the generalization.

In each case, Jesus adds an additional possible action—to do wrong on the Sabbath or to let someone die on the Sabbath. What about those things?

In the first pair of questions, Jesus asks about doing good or doing evil. Obviously, Jesus would not do the latter on any day. The second pair of questions is also intriguing. "What if I want to save a life or let a life go?" Letting a life go would Jesus simply deciding to do nothing about this man before him. Jesus, interestingly enough, has the authority to do either, as long as it is within the plan of God.

Jesus wants to make this man's life whole; yet, at the same time, on the same Sabbath day, the pharisees seek to destroy the Lord's life. They are not at all concerned about the life of this man with the withered hand. Not only do they believe that Jesus is capable of healing this man, but they are pretty certain that He will do it on that day, on the Sabbath.

It should be clear that, on any day, it is good to save a life; but wrong to destroy a life (this is a general principle; capital punishment and war excepted). See the **Doctrine of Murder** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) to understand these distinctions.

Luke 6:9 *And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?"*

The Easy English version provides us a nice translation: *Then Jesus said to the people, 'Let me ask you something. Is it right for us to do good things on our day for rest? Or should we do bad things? Should we save a person's life? Or should we destroy their life?'*

The whole idea here is for these religious types to become a bit more introspective. They seem to be all concerned about what Jesus is about to do; yet they have plans regarding what should be done with Him. How many of these religious types are thinking, "Life would be so much better without Jesus being here"?

Luke 6:10a **And after looking around at them all He said to him,...**

Throughout these narratives (and the Bible is filled with narrative), there are sometimes phrases which stand out simply because they don't stand out. Before Jesus does anything, He looks around at the people there. Perhaps He is pausing for dramatic effect, or, perhaps He is reading their faces (or He is doing both). He just asked them a question and I believe that He is looking at these religious types to see if any of them are actually thinking about what He has just said to them. Is there a single man there—a single expert on the Law—who is able to answer Jesus' two simple questions?

I was a teacher for several decades, and I found out that, sometimes pauses could be quite effective as a teaching technique. Often I used them for pre-disciplinary measures (pausing and looking at a student who is not paying attention), but pause and focus (here, on those in the synagogue) sometimes causes people to concentrate more on what is happening.

Jesus is pausing, and allowing the experts in the Law to respond to his two simple questions. Apparently, no one dares to speak.

Jesus has said a few things, and perhaps He is allowing His words to sink in. Now, with some people, what Jesus said was not sinking in. Their minds were concrete and nothing was seeping into them. However, it would make sense that there are some people there actually interested in the Word of God, actually interested in the words of Jesus. So, perhaps Jesus is allowing them some time to digest this mental food. (Pause)

Jesus has just posed two similar questions. I believe that He was also giving time to the religious intellectuals to think about and then to answer His questions (if only within their own minds). He looks at these men one after the other, as if to say, "You heard the question that I just posed to you; are you able to answer it?"

**Jesus said directly to them, "Allow Me to ask you pharisees a question—is it permitted to do good on the Sabbath, or harm? Can a man save a life on the Sabbath, or end a life?"** (Kukis paraphrase)

I understand this to mean that, Jesus just posed a question to however many pharisees were there (5? 10?); and it is a question which ought to be easy to answer, and yet, these experts in the Law are unable to answer. How many of these pharisees and scribes hear this question, think about it, and realize, "Well, if I answer correctly, then I am essentially condemning myself for what I am about to do."

Throughout the Lord's ministry, the pharisees continually try to catch Jesus with a question—even a dishonest question. But every time He questions them, they deign to answer, either being unable to or not wanting to set themselves up to be humiliated.

Although this is a setup, Jesus has given these pharisees time to make their case. If it is wrong to do good, but right to do evil, explain that. Should Jesus save a life or simply let



this life go? Explain that? Not a single pharisee would come forward and give the principles by which all men should act.

Luke 6:10b ...**"Stretch out your hand."**

The pharisees were watching carefully, so that they might accuse Jesus of doing a work on the Sabbath. All Jesus does is say, "Stretch out your hand." How could that be considered a work?

Luke 6:10c **And he did so, and his hand was restored.**

Jesus, other than those words, does nothing. He only says a few words. Nevertheless, the man stretches out his hand—also, not really a work—and his hand is healed. The pharisees are stymied. What can they say?

What did Jesus actually do? We do not know, but the Bible indicates that most of what He did was in the power of God the Holy Spirit. That being the case, how can Jesus be blamed for anything done here in the synagogue?

Many of us have studied the Scriptures or have known the information found in the gospels for a very long time. It is hard to place our minds back to this time and place, because we know that Jesus healed many people and we know that the religious hierarchy objected to what He did. However, try to imagine what was happening. Jesus was, on many occasions, taking a person who had been suffering for much of their life, and He instantly removes the suffering. Then a group of religious types come along and say, "You can't do that; You just broke the Law!" Do you see just how ridiculous the religious hierarchy was?



**Jesus Heals a Man with a Withered Hand** (a graphic); from [Group Bible Study](#); accessed January 28, 2022.

Luke 6:10 **And after looking around at them all he said to him, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored.**

Given what we have read, it is clear that this religious group placed this man before Jesus, hoping that He would heal him; and ready to fly into a frenzy if He did. And yet, *what exactly did Jesus do?* Jesus simply said, "Stretch out your hand." How can anyone say, *that is a work?*

Luke 6:11a **But they were filled with fury...**

The pharisees are angry. A man was healed right in front of them, and that should have been cause for celebration; but it angers them instead. They are upset because Jesus did it (or, more accurately, the man held out his bad hand publically and it became whole again). Clearly, Jesus did not do any work on the Sabbath—what exactly was the work that He did? They watched Jesus, they watched the man's hand become healed; but what did Jesus do other than to tell this man to hold up his hand? Furthermore, these religious types were there to watch Jesus carefully and to catch Him doing something wrong—so they themselves were working.

These pharisees are filled with rage because, what else do they have? What exactly can they claim that Jesus did here?

**Illustration:** We have seen this in the United States with people raging against President Trump (I began writing this chapter in 2019). They are angry at everything he says and at everything he does. There is no way to reason with these people. Trump could say the sky is blue and the leaves of a tree are green, and people would blow a gasket over that.

Luke 6:11b **...and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.**

No doubt they discussed the things which I just said. “He just did a work.” “What did He do?” “He just said some words.” “We all speak on the Sabbath; we would all get in trouble if that was illegal.” “But the man, he stretched out his hand and it was healed.” “When someone hands you a scroll, you stretch out your hand to take it.” You see? There is no reasonable charge that they can lay against Jesus. All they had to do was think about what they just saw and recognize that no work took place.

Luke 6:11b **...and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.**

The religious types were livid. Jesus has done nothing that they can take and use against Him. At some point, 3 years in the future, they will be forced to just lie about what Jesus has done in order to condemn Him.

**Illustration:** Let me provide you with a parallel situation. I began to study this chapter and write about it in 2019 during the presidency of Donald Trump. There are quite a number of Americans who have their minds made up as to who this man is. About 30% of Americans believe he is the worst president that we have ever had. About 30% believe that he is the best. For the first set of people, there is no going to them and saying, “What about this? What about that?” There is virtually nothing that he does or says which they will admit to approving of. Your words will not reach them when it comes to President Trump.

So it is with the pharisees and Jesus. The religious types apparently hate Him, and this appears to be early on in His ministry. But what exactly can they do?

Luke 6:11 But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

The problem is this: what Jesus just did in front of them—every single one of these men have done the same thing (apart from healing a man with a withered hand). Jesus spoke; these religious types spoke on the Sabbath; the man with the withered hand stretched it out; they stretched out their hand each Sabbath when taking a scroll to read.

Even if they accuse Jesus of healing on the Sabbath (something which does not break any law or regulation, Biblical or not), what exactly did He do in order to make that happen?

## Lessons 174–175: Luke 6:12–13

## Jesus Calls the Twelve (Part I)

We have been studying the healing of the man with the withered hand in the synagogue. We will now leave this situation and move onto something different.

Almost every translation includes verse 12 (which is Jesus praying) with the passage that follows, where Jesus chooses His 12 Apostles.<sup>60</sup> I believe that it is quite reasonable to include His night-long prayer vigil as a part of that process.

*The Passion Translations has this note: This was the pattern of Jesus in the Gospel accounts. Before he made important decisions and before great events in his life, he sought the Father. Once he saw what the Father wanted, Jesus obeyed as the perfect Son. See John 5:19.<sup>61</sup>*

When we read the thinking of the translator (s) of the Passion Translation, most would agree that Jesus knew God's will and God's plan and followed that. As to how He ascertained those things, we are not specifically told. I would argue that God the Father did *not* audibly tell Jesus, "Listen, I want you to choose Peter, John, James,...as Your disciples." My argument is this: such a prayer would take about two minutes. On any given day, if God the Father simply gave God the Son marching orders for that day, how long would such a prayer last? 10 minutes tops?

On the other hand, if Jesus is considering, say, 100 candidates, and He has to consider each one, all of their interactions, and stack this against the Word of God (which Jesus certainly knows), then spending the entire night in prayer makes much more sense.

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<sup>60</sup> Many translations organize Bible narratives into paragraph form.

<sup>61</sup> From <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+6&version=TPT> (V. 12) accessed October 19, 2019.



**Luke 6:12–16 Jesus Calls the Twelve** (a graphic); from [Mars Hill Church](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

Luke 6:12a **In these days he went out to the mountain to pray,...**

Throughout the Lord's ministry, we read of Him going off to be alone to commune with God. We may think that, since He only has a very short time on

earth, He should be out teaching and healing as often as possible. But that is not Jesus' approach to His ministry. It was beneficial to Him in His humanity and beneficial to His ministry to be able to spend a considerable amount of time with His heavenly Father. Despite having 4 biographies of the Lord, the exact nature of these prayers is never laid out for us.

Just as I am certain that there are healings and teaching sessions left out of the gospels (several chapters in John are devoted to Jesus teaching essentially over a period of a few hours). I also believe that there are many occasions where Jesus got away from all of the people and communed with God, and these sessions are not recorded either. I would make the assumption that Jesus, on most occasions, had similar access that we have. That is, we pray to God; and we do not expect to hear an audible voice respond, "That prayer will be answered; that prayer will not be. Also, here is something that you need to do..." That is not for our time period; and even though God the Father does speak on a limited number of occasions, there is nothing to indicate that He ever does when Jesus is in prayer.

Again, I have suggested that, if God was simply giving Jesus audible marching orders, then His prayers ought to last 1–10 minutes.

You may wonder, why don't we have any more details about Jesus praying? The writers of the gospels would have known that Jesus was going out to pray (two of them being actual eyewitnesses); but they would not have gone with Jesus and Jesus did not tell them what a *prayer session* entailed. Therefore, what Jesus said and what Jesus actually heard (if anything) is a matter of speculation.

This continual need or desire for the Lord to pray to His Father is completely consistent with the doctrine of Kenosis. That is, these prayers are completely consistent with the concept that Jesus does not access His Deity for most or all of His earthly ministry. If Jesus is functioning as God, then He would have no need to pray to God the Father. They would be perfectly aligned in all things. But, as a man, Jesus has great limitations which He has fully accepted and embraced. Jesus has chosen to function strictly as a man. Therefore, His humanity would want to be in close contact with God the Father, for guidance, strength, and fellowship.

Being creatures of God, all men—with or without the sin nature—require some sort of communion with God. Let me suggest that the bulk of our interaction with God is going to be with His Word (for most of us, being taught His Word regularly—I believe that daily teaching is the only way to go).

Luke 6:12b ...and all night He continued in prayer to God.

There are many occasions when Jesus prays throughout the night, setting sleep aside for prayer. This is a form of fasting, where normal and legitimate activities are set aside for spiritual pursuits.

We do not know the content of Jesus' prayer, or exactly how He prayed when He was alone. I would suggest that, in His humanity, He knew a great deal of doctrine. In the context of this particular prayer, Jesus has met dozens of men who are following Him. He has a good read on these men, and has watched them carefully as students, to see how they have responded to His teaching. I would think that, during the time the Jesus is praying, He is also thinking about each person in His entourage, knowing that these will be the men who represent Him after His death, burial, resurrection and ascension. He knows who has asked Him questions or has asked for clarification. He has listened to the men discuss various things. Therefore, I would suggest that Jesus thought about all of these men. He thinks about their interest in His teaching, their potential as teachers, their obedience, their thinking, as they reveal it by what they say.

Let me add, what would really be difficult is to be able to get a read on these men and see their potential. None of the men that Jesus is considering would be spiritually mature at this time.

The alternative to this kind of prayer is, God the Father said, "Okay, these are the guys you are going to choose." However, I do not see that as the case. God speaks at the beginning of the Lord's public ministry; and when Jesus is glorified before James, John and Peter—but there is no indication that God the Father speaks continually to Jesus. It would be my view that the Lord's prayers are much more in line with our own prayers than with two Entities (Jesus and God the Father) talking back and forth.

Another alternative is, Jesus draws upon His omniscience and decides on which men to choose. However, I believe that Jesus *choose* to function within the confines of His humanity. Furthermore, Jesus does not need to *get away* in order to access His omniscience (making the assumption that He does). In fact, one could make the argument that, if Jesus, from time to time, did access His omniscience, why would He pray? Logically, if Jesus is continually functioning within the realm of His humanity, then it would make more sense for Him to seek out His Father in prayer more often.

In the alternatives which I have suggested—Jesus interacts with God the Father much like a conversation or Jesus accesses His Deity for guidance—how long would his prayers be? 10 minutes, tops? But here, He spends the entire night in prayer. Sure, there are other concerns that He has and other kinds of guidance, but if the wall between His humanity



and Deity was taken down, then He would be praying for 20–30 seconds at most. So, again, logically, the wall between His humanity and Deity seems to remain up. This again suggests that, during His life, Jesus continually chose to maintain a wall between His Own Deity and His humanity.

When we consider the Lord's prayer and that it takes all night, then we need to consider what Jesus is praying and what He is thinking about and pondering. If He is functioning within the limitations of humanity, this all makes perfect sense.

Luke 6:12 In these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and all night He continued in prayer to God.

Jesus, as a man acting fully within His humanity, would logically spend an entire night in prayer. Jesus, as One Who accessed His Own Deity, would have no such need for prayers to extend for that length of time.

I believe that there is a solid connection between Luke 6:12 (where Jesus goes out and prays) and vv. 13–16 (where He chooses His disciples). Even though the specific disciples chosen is foreordained; this does not mean that Jesus knows, from His Deity, which men to choose. He is followed by perhaps 50 or 100 disciples (students)—maybe more. Jesus has taken time, apparently, to come to know these men. Many of them, He has called specifically to join Him. Many of them, of their own volition, heard Jesus speak, and followed Him, recognizing, “I have never heard a man who spoke like this before.” (see John 7:46).

I believe in v. 12, Jesus is praying for guidance in choosing His disciples. I don't think that there is any cheating involved here where Jesus the man knows what Jesus as God knows. I believe that, based upon His interactions with these men, based upon His knowledge of them, based upon things which they have said, that Jesus chose these men, from His humanity and completely apart from His omniscience.

One of the things that Jesus must consider is *potential*. Even after several interactions, how does one measure potential? This is something which leaders in an organization must assess quite often.

Let me suggest a simple example. There are large construction companies which specialize in the remodeling of homes. One job may involve the remodeling of an existing bathroom; another of a room addition which includes a bathroom; and another includes the addition of a suite of rooms. Does the company send out the exact same set of men to complete each project? No, of course not. The person overseeing the project and the number of people sent out is going to be different in each case. Jesus is selecting a team, the potential of these men to be able to complete a project is essential to determine.

This is why the book of Acts is so interesting. These men whom Jesus will choose function in the book of Acts without Jesus (but with the Holy Spirit). However, what is fascinating is, the book of Acts first focuses on Peter (which one might see as the lead person in



Acts 1–12). However, Acts then abruptly changes to a focus upon Barnabas and Paul from Acts 13 to the end. But I digress.

Luke 6:13a **And when day came,...**

Jesus has been praying all night; He has been communing with God all night. I think that this was related directly to what Jesus would do next—He would choose 12 specific disciples out of the many who followed Him.

Luke 6:13b **...He called his disciples...**

What appears to be the case is, Jesus traveled with a great many disciples. We do not know exactly how many, but in one passage of Scripture, He sends out 72 disciples; so that suggests that He had at least 72 disciples who went with Him.

Logically, Jesus would have culled specific men out from this group, which suggests that there were many more people following Him than just 72.

Logically, it also makes sense that Jesus had both men and women following Him; and there would be people who follow Him for a time, and then return to their lives.

It is reasonable to supposed that, from time to time, He had a great many more; and other times when He had fewer. And there were specific times—such as His night before the crucifixion, where He appears to have had just the 12 with Him.

Luke 6:13c **...and chose from them twelve,...**

From the disciples who are with Him, Jesus will choose 12 specifically, although in this context, He does not say, “I am selecting you 12 for these reasons.”

So, many of us think of Jesus as wandering about, from city to city, with 12 disciples in tow; but, there were apparently many disciples who followed Him.

So far, in the book of Luke, Jesus has specifically called a few men to follow Him: Peter, Andrew (we know that Jesus chose Andrew from parallel passages), James, John and Matthew. Apparently, they are not considered separate yet from His other followers. Assuming that Luke writes in some sort of chronological order, Jesus has called these 5 men specifically—very possibly some others—but now He is making a further differentiation between this set of 12 men and His other followers.

Just exactly what this means is not revealed to us, apart from giving them a very specific title.

Luke 6:13d **...whom He named apostles:...**

The only thing different is, Jesus specifies that these 12 will be known as Apostles. Although this designation had a somewhat different meaning at this time, it would become a person who Jesus sent forth with the gospel message; one who would represent Jesus to others.

The word used here is apostolos (ἀπόστολος) [pronounced *ap-OSS-tol-os*], and it means, *one sent forth, a delegate, an ambassador [of the gospel], a messenger [of Christ]*. Strong's #652. These men specifically were going to be the Lord's ambassadors or delegates.

*From the Passion Translation: Apostle means "ambassador," "missionary," or "sent one." The apostles were all different in their personalities and came from different backgrounds. The people Jesus chooses today don't all look, act, or sound alike.*<sup>62</sup>

*The Amplified Bible: An apostle was one who had witnessed Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:21, 22) or (in Paul's case) had seen the resurrected Christ (1 Cor 9:1, 2). They validated their apostleship by performing "signs and wonders and miracles" (2 Cor 12:12), and were the foundation of the church.*<sup>63</sup>

The word *apostle* (s) is actually rare in the gospels. It is only found in Matt 10:2, Mark 3:14, and six more times in Luke (here and Luke 9:10; 11:49; 17:5; 22:14; 24:10). Because Luke examines the nascent church in the book of Acts, where the authority is found with the Apostles, we would expect him to mention this word more often. This particular gift was not really central to the gospels, however (which we would expect, as Jesus is the central figure of the gospels).

The ESV (capitalize) is used below.

### **The Doctrine of Apostleship**

1. The Greek word is apostolos (ἀπόστολος) [pronounced *ap-OSS-tol-os*]. It means, *one sent forth, a delegate, an ambassador [of the gospel], a messenger [of Christ]*. It is transliterated, *apostle*. Strong's #652. This is originally an Attic Greek word which originally meant, *Admiral, supreme commander, one who has the highest rank*.
2. The Apostles exercised absolute spiritual authority over all local churches until the canon of scripture was completed. Today, the Canon is the absolute authority.
3. These two facts combine to tell us, the gift of Apostleship no longer exists because the gift is no longer necessary. Where do we go for absolute authority

<sup>62</sup> From <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+6&version=TPT> (footnotes), accessed October 20, 2019.

<sup>63</sup> From <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+6&version=AMP> (footnote), accessed October 20, 2019.

## The Doctrine of Apostleship

in this life? The Bible. That means that we cannot have various men who claim to be Apostles running around at the same time, exercising complete authority over all local churches. Today, that authority rests in the Scriptures, as taught by the local pastor-teacher, who is the man with the highest authority today in the Church Age. His authority extends over one local church, whether that is a congregation of 5, 50, or 5000. So that there is no misunderstanding, he has complete authority as your teacher. He does not have the authority to run your life. The pastor-teacher, from the pulpit, might tell you to go out and do X, Y and Z. You, as a congregant, can go out into the world and do not-X, not-Y and not-Z. It is not the pastor's job to follow you around and reprimand you or excommunicate you for doing the opposite of what he says.

- 1) As a footnote to this, the pastor does have some authority regarding activity in and around the local church building.
  - 2) Quite obviously, the pastor-teacher can enforce academic discipline inside of the auditorium where he is teaching.
  - 3) There can also be church policies enacted when necessary. For instance, when a prostitute comes to church, there ought not to be any regulation against that. However, if she begins to ply her trade in the parking lot, that is quite a different matter.
  - 4) Generally speaking, what a congregant does in the outside world is between him and God; but what they do on church grounds is something entirely different. To put it in a different way, a local church cannot have believers engaged in overt sins on church property.
4. What I have described above is mostly about the pastor-teacher. However, this same sort of authority existed in the Apostles over many churches. That is, Peter or Paul could walk into any local church in Antioch, Caesarea, or Ephesus and begin teaching with authority. If Paul wants to send a letter to the congregations in Corinth, then his letter has ultimate authority.
- 1) Let's say I sent a letter to a number of churches and decided to tell them what they should be doing and how they should be running things, do you think that they are going to pay attention to my mandates? Of course not!
  - 2) Many men with the gift of pastor-teacher were recognized in Berea Church under the ministry of R. B. Thieme, Jr. Would it be legitimate for him to contact these various men and tell them what they should and should not do? Of course not!
  - 3) 2000 years ago, Paul or Peter could do this. Today, there is no one who can do these things.
5. Jesus chose 12 Apostles during His earthly ministry. Although these men seemed to have additional responsibilities as disciples of His during His earthly ministry, their exact spiritual function is not clearly defined in the gospel records.
- 1) The chosen Apostles had some sort of leadership function, under Jesus. They continued to walk with Him and learn from Him.
  - 2) They certainly had an eternal future with Him (which was true of all those who believe in Jesus).

## The Doctrine of Apostleship

- 3) Some of them had specific privileges. Jesus chose Peter, James and John to go with him to the Mount of Transfiguration.
- 4) Some of the Apostles had specific duties. Judas (Iscaiot) handled the money.
- 5) The original chosen Apostles were specially Apostles to Israel, *not* to the church (as there was no church at this time). The church was first formed on the Day of Pentecost after the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord.
- 6) It is a misinterpretation that Jesus is building the church upon the foundation of Peter (see Matthew 16:18–19).
  - (1) First let's see the entire context of this passage:
  - (2) Matt. 16:15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
  - (3) Mat 16:16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ [or, *Messiah*], the Son of the living God."
  - (4) Mat 16:17–19 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father Who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter [which means, *a piece of a rock*], and on this rock [= *a large rock*] I will build My church [or, *a gathering or assembly of people*; here a reference to those who have believed in Jesus], and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
  - (5) Peter has given the testimony that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.
  - (6) It is upon this testimony that a large assembly of people (believers) will be formed.
  - (7) Peter is not the rock upon which this assembly is founded; his testimony is that rock upon which we are all founded.
  - (8) When Jesus gives the parable about building a house on the solid foundation of a rock, Jesus was saying essentially the same thing, but in another way. (Jesus is the Rock upon Which we should build our lives.)
- 7) In what appears to have been a limited gift, the disciples in Luke 6 are being chosen to be sent out to Israel to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 8) Although their function will actually have changed at the beginning of the Church Age, they still consider themselves sent out to the nation Israel to proclaim the gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ.
- 9) By Acts 12, it becomes clear that the Apostles have an equal responsibility to the gentiles.
6. The gift of Apostleship began to take shape and have specific function at the beginning of the Church Age.

## The Doctrine of Apostleship

7. The Apostles had a false start in Acts 1 where they cobbled together some Scripture, and decided that it was their job to elect a twelfth Apostle to replace Judas. At no time did Jesus suggest that they do this. They just came up with it on their own (I think this was mostly Peter's doing, but they all agreed to it). They elected a man, Matthias, who might have been a terrific man, to be the 12<sup>th</sup> Apostle. We never hear from Matthias again because he was *not* the 12<sup>th</sup> Apostle.
8. It is clear from Paul's writings and his dominance in the book of Acts that he is the 12<sup>th</sup> Apostle.
9. Apart from Paul, there are other men, not of the twelve, who are called Apostles. Let me offer two views on that:
  - 1) These may or may not have been full-blown Apostles. Maybe they were junior Apostles, whatever that title means.
  - 2) We actually can develop a roster of such men:
    - (1) Barnabas — Acts 14:14 Galatians 2:9
    - (2) James, the Lord's half-brother — 1Corinthians 15:7 Galatians 1:19
    - (3) Apollos — 1 Corinthians 4:6,9
    - (4) Sylvanus and Timothy — 1Thessalonians 1:1; 2:6
  - 3) I would assume that their close association with the other Apostles and their writings and their teaching gave them enough associated authority to teach in more than one church.
  - 4) Let me suggest that these men did not necessarily come up with any doctrine on their own, but that they learned from Peter or Paul or from whomever they were associated with. That doctrine was solid, and they would teach that.
  - 5) Today, on occasion, a pastor from one church might be invited to teach or substitute in another church. Let me suggest that these axillary Apostles were sort of like *guest pastors* in the sense that they functioned very much like the Apostles did. They could step in to teach in any church willing to hear them; and they could help guide a local church until a pastor-teacher was selected (and they might be that pastor-teacher).
  - 6) We cannot lose sight of the fact that we have books of the New Testament written by men who were not specifically chosen by Jesus as Apostles (John Mark, Luke, Jude and James, the Lord's half-brother). They, by the grace of God, had this kind of authority.
10. The gift of Apostleship was temporary, until the canon of Scripture was completed. What I mean is, the canon of Scripture was closed, but not necessarily recognized. Recognizing the canon of Scripture for the New Testament was a very organic process.
11. In any case, you cannot have two highest authorities. For a time, the Apostles could exercise authority over all of the local churches; but, after that, the Bible became that authority.
12. The gift of Apostleship is bestowed.
  - 1) Jesus, in this context, selects the 12 men to be called Apostles.

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- 2) Logically, because we are in the plan of God, those with the gift of Apostleship were originally determined to have that gift from God the Father.
- 3) The Holy Spirit gives various gifts at salvation, which can include the gift of Apostleship. 1Corinthians 12:8–11 Ephesians 4:8–11
13. The Apostles appear to have had many of the sign gifts of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, including tongues, healing, and signs (not really well-defined in the NT). These gifts established the authority of the Apostles to the world. They first came for the healing, but then they stayed for the message. Acts 5:15 16:16-18 28:8–9 2Corinthians 12:12
  - 1) Peter and the other Apostles did many signs and miracles. Acts 5:12
  - 2) Peter is miraculously freed from prison. Acts 12
  - 3) Paul essentially blinds a man. Acts 13:9–11
  - 4) Barnabas and Paul did signs and wonders in Iconium. Acts 14:3
  - 5) Paul healed. Acts 14:9–11
  - 6) However, there came a time when Paul apparently did not have the gift of healing. He leaves Trophimus sick at Miletus, and he suggests wine for Timothy's upset stomach. 2Corinthians 12:6-10 Philippians 2:27 2Timothy 4:20.
  - 7) As we would expect, once their authority has been well-established, the sign gifts are no longer necessary for the Apostles. There was a point at which, when Paul spoke in a church, no one asked his neighbor, saying, "Now, who is this guy again?"
14. Because we have the completed canon of Scripture, there is no longer a need for any person to establish their authority apart from the Word of God. Therefore, each local church should be self-governed under the authority of one pastor-teacher. That pastor-teacher will establish his authority through teaching the Word of God.
15. If the pastor teacher wants to have an assistant, another person to call in to substitute, or if he plans to teach the church with no one else, that is his choice. I do not find any clear established set of authorities in the local church apart from the pastor-teacher of that church.

### Lesson 176: Luke 6:13–16

### Jesus Calls the Twelve (Part II)

Luke 6:13 And when day came, He called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom He named apostles:...

Jesus has many students who follow Him. Some may follow Him for a few days or weeks; and some may have followed him for several months (we are still early in His ministry). But



now there are going to be 12 men whom He will specifically choose; and they will be differentiated from the rest.

Luke 6:14a ...Simon, whom he named Peter,,...

The first Apostle named is Simon Peter. Simon is his given name; Jesus gave him the name Peter. Now, logically, that has not occurred yet. However, Luke is not writing a diary; Luke is gathering information for this biography, and everyone knows, by this time (decades later), that Jesus gave Simon the name Peter. Therefore, Luke includes that bit of information right here; but Jesus has not given Simon this name quite yet in our narrative (although some quote Mark 3:16 to support Simon being renamed at this time; I do not believe that is the case).

Peter's name will always be first in any list of Apostles: Matthew 10:2 Luke 6:14 Acts 1:13; cf. 1Cor. 15:5–8.

Luke 6:14b ...and Andrew his brother,...

Andrew is Peter's brother. It is Andrew who first told Peter about Jesus. Andrew told Peter, "**We have found the Messiah.**" (John 1:41) Apparently, a few of the disciples go all the way back to John's ministry.

Luke 6:14c ...and James...

James is a part of the fishing business, which is composed of Peter, Andrew, John and James.

There are 4 men with the name *James* in the New Testament: 1) son of Zebedee, an Apostle and brother of the Apostle John, commonly called James the greater or elder. He is often referred to as *James, son of Zebedee*. He will be slain by Herod in Acts 12. 2) There is another Apostle named James, who is the son of Alphaeus. He is often referred to as *James the less*. 3) There is James the half-brother of Christ. He will become the head of the Jerusalem church. 4) Finally, there is an unknown James, father of the Apostle Judas (Luke 6:16).

Most Bible translations use the common name *James*, but a significant number favor the name *Jacob*. In both the Greek and Aramaic, the name here is actually *Jacob*. In the Greek, the name is *Iakôbos* (Ἰάκωβος) [pronounced *ee-AK-oh-boss*] (there is no *j* in the Greek or Hebrew, despite the dozens of saints whose names *begin* with a *j*). Strong's #2385.

Luke 6:14d ...and John,...

John is also a part of this fishing business. It appears that Simon, Andrew, James and John were all involved in a fishing business together. Peter and Andrew appear to own

one boat; James and John the other (certainly the boats may be owned by the business or specifically by just one of the brothers).

John is the Apostle who wrote the book of John, and he wrote it many years after the fact (circa A.D. 90). John's Greek is extremely simple (as compared to Luke or anyone else), which suggests that Greek was a language which John learned later in life. It is certainly possible that John was simply average or below average in intelligence. In any case, his gospel stands out from the other three, as being dramatically different from them.

I picture John as having had access to the other three gospels, at some point or another; and having a strong desire to give the record of the Lord's life as he saw it. Some things stayed with John for a very long time, such as the teaching which Jesus did on the eve of His crucifixion. What John remembered so many years out was extraordinary.

*The Amplified Bible: [James and John are the] sons of Zebedee and Salome.  
Salome is believed to be a sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus.<sup>64</sup>*

Salome is only mentioned by name in Mark 15:40 16:1. In similar lists of women, there is the mother of the sons of Zebedee named (Matt. 27:56); so many believe this to be a reference to the same woman, as both are references to the women going to the tomb of Jesus (see also Matt. 20:20).

Luke 6:14e ...and Philip,...

This is the first mention of Philip in the book of Luke. We know nothing about Philip from the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke); but John tells us a lot about him in John 1:43–48 6:5–7 and elsewhere.

Jesus apparently looked at Philip, evaluated him, and then simply said to him, "Follow Me." (John 1:43)

Philip is the disciple who once said to Jesus, "**Just show us the Father, and that will be enough.**" This the point at which Jesus famously responded to him, saying, "**Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know Me, Philip? Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?**" (John 14:9b; ESV; capitalized)

Luke 6:14f ...and Bartholomew,...

This is the first mention of Bartholomew in the book of Luke.

By process of elimination, most people believe this man to be equivalent to the Nathaniel mentioned in John 1:45-51. Not every reference to Bartholomew makes this same identification.

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<sup>64</sup> From <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+6&version=AMP> (footnote), accessed October 20, 2019.

From ISBE: *From the 9th century onward, Bartholomew has generally been identified with Nathanael, but this view has not been conclusively established.*<sup>65</sup>

ISBE: A "Gospel of Bartholomew" is mentioned by Hieronymus (Comm. Proem ad Matth.), and Gelasius gives the tradition that Bartholomew brought the Hebrew gospel of Matthew to India. In the "Preaching of Bartholomew in the Oasis" (compare Budge, II, 90) he is referred to as preaching probably in the oasis of Al Bahnâsâ, and according to the "Preaching of Andrew and Bartholomew" he labored among the Parthians (Budge, II, 183). The "Martyrdom of Bartholomew" states that he was placed in a sack and cast into the sea.<sup>66</sup>

Philip brought his friend, Bartholomew (Nathaniel), to meet Jesus, and Jesus told him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" (John 1:47b).

Nathanael [= Bartholomew] said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." (John 1:48)

Even though Jesus is a man operating apart from His Divine Nature, He was certainly a genius and He could both evaluate a person in a very short amount of time and remember virtually anyone whom He met.

This suggests that Jesus noticed Bartholomew before Bartholomew had given Him much thought, and Jesus had already formed some acute observations about him. This actually parallels Divine omnipotence, where God knows us before we are even born.

Most of the time that Bartholomew is mentioned, it is simply in one of the lists of the names of the Apostles (Matt. 10:3 Mark 3:18 Luke 6:14 Acts 1:13).

Luke 6:14 ...Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew,...

Peter, Andrew, James and John had been previously called. Philip and Bartholomew have not been mentioned before by Luke.

Luke 6:15a ...and Matthew,...

Matthew, a tax collector, has already been called by Jesus. He held a great banquet for Jesus and His other disciples. It is reasonable—in fact, necessary—for Jesus to have had some contact with His disciples prior to calling them.

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<sup>65</sup> *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Bartholomew.

<sup>66</sup> *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Bartholomew.

Matthew is also called Levi (Mark 2:14). He will write the gospel of Matthew, a biography of Jesus.

Luke 6:15b ...and Thomas,...

Thomas is named for the first time in Luke right here.

Thomas is called the *twin* (or, *Didymus*) in John 11:16. Most Bible students know him as *doubting Thomas*, as he was not going to believe that Jesus had been resurrected until he could verify this with his own eyes and hands.

When the other disciples told Thomas that Jesus had been raised from the dead, he said, “Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into His side, I will never believe.” (John 20:25b; ESV; capitalized)

Luke 6:15c ...and James the son of Alphaeus,...

James of Alphaeus suggests that Alphaeus is the father of this James. He is so identified to distinguish him from the other James.

In the Greek, both men are actually *Jacob*.

The Amplified Bible: *Also called James the Less or James the Younger. His mother Mary (Gr Maria) is believed to be a sister or sister-in-law of Mary, the mother of Jesus.*<sup>67</sup> I do not know that we have a reason for this, apart from tradition.

Luke 6:15d ...and Simon who was called the Zealot,...

There are two disciples named Simon; so this one is distinguished by being called the zealot. There is a specific religious group/cult known as zealots. It is not clear if Simon is from this group or not.

From the New American Bible: *[T]he Zealots were the instigators of the First Revolt of Palestinian Jews against Rome in A.D. 66–70. Because the existence of the Zealots as a distinct group during the lifetime of Jesus is the subject of debate, the meaning of the identification of Simon as a Zealot is unclear.*<sup>68</sup>

The NET Bible: *The designation Zealot means that Simon was a political nationalist before coming to follow Jesus. He may not have been technically a member of the particular Jewish nationalistic party known as “Zealots”*

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<sup>67</sup> From <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+6&version=AMP> (footnote), accessed October 20, 2019.

<sup>68</sup> From <http://www.usccb.org/bible/luke/6> (footnote); accessed October 20, 2019.

*(since according to some scholars this party had not been organized at that time), but simply someone who was zealous for Jewish independence from Rome, in which case the descriptive term applied to Simon means something like “Simon the patriot”.<sup>69</sup>*

Luke 6:15 ...and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot,...

In the Scriptures, we know a few things about Matthew and Thomas; but nearly nothing about James of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot.

Luke 6:16a ...and Judas the son of James,...

There are two men named Judas; this one has a father named James.

This man is also known as Thaddeus, as mentioned in Matt. 10:3 and Mark 3:18. Just like today, if a father and son have the same name, then the son is often given a nickname. Or a son receives a nickname in his youth.

Luke 6:16b ...and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

I believe that Iscariot refers to a tribe or group of people that Judas belongs to. This is Judas the betrayer. Obviously, at the time of this narrative, no one has any idea what Judas is going to do.

*From the Passion Translation: The name Judas is actually Judah. Iscariot is not his last name, but could be taken from the name of the town, Kerioth, twelve miles south of Hebron. More plausibly, it is from a Hebrew word meaning “lock”: Judah the locksmith. Most likely he was chosen to lock the collection bag, which means he had the key and could pilfer the funds at will. Sadly, he wanted to lock up Jesus and control him for his own ends.<sup>70</sup>*

*The NET Bible: There is some debate about what the name Iscariot means. It probably alludes to a region in Judea and thus might make Judas the only non-Galilean in the group. Several explanations for the name Iscariot have been proposed, but it is probably transliterated Hebrew with the meaning “man of Kerioth” (there are at least two villages that had that name).<sup>71</sup>*

Luke 6:16 ...and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

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<sup>69</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?luk6.htm> (footnote), accessed October 20, 2019.

<sup>70</sup> From <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+6&version=TPT> (footnotes) accessed October 20, 2019.

<sup>71</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?luk6.htm> (footnote), accessed October 20, 2019.

The last two men are named here. They are distinguished by one being the son of James (not the Apostles James) and the other is possibly named for his home down.

Jesus had been on a mountain praying and afterwards, He had called His disciples to Him (there may have been 50, there may have been more than 100) and chose from them 12, whom He called *Apostles*.

Given what is about to happen, the number of people with Jesus is either very large at this time; or, massive crowds have gathered to hear Him.

## Lesson 177: Luke 6:17–19

## People Come to Jesus to be Healed

Luke presents a number of vignettes throughout his gospel. In this chapter, he has presented Jesus as *the Lord of the Sabbath*; Jesus on another Sabbath very visibly heals the withered hand of a man in the synagogue; and He chooses His 12 Apostles.

In the rest of this chapter (vv. 17–49) is the sermon on the plain. The actual sermon will be preceded by Jesus healing a great number of people who come to Him (vv. 17–19). Such healings confirmed Jesus' authority as being from God.

Luke 6:17a **And He came down with them** [Jesus' 12 Apostles (and his other followers)]...

At this point, Jesus goes down from this mountain with His disciples.

Luke 6:17b **...and stood on a level place,**...

Jesus comes down to a level area, where I would assume that the ground is relatively level for a few football fields or more. This would allow people easy access to Him.

This level place is why this portion of the chapter is known as *the sermon on the plain*.

Luke 6:17c **...with a great crowd of His disciples...**

Jesus has many disciples. There are His 12 chosen ones, the other people who have traveled along with Him; and now many more who came to hear Him.

Luke 6:17d **...and a great multitude of people from all Judea...**

Even though Judæa was what remained of the united kingdom of Israel, Jesus did not go into Judæa very often. However, many people came out from there to see and hear Him. In fact we are told here that a great multitude of people from all over who had also come to Him. We do not know exactly how this came about, as certainly, notices were not sent out. But people knew where He was and they knew about Him, and they were coming to Him.



Remember that this is still very early in His public ministry.

A concept central to the faith of the Jewish people was Messiah, just as Jesus is central to the Christian faith. Because we stand upon Jesus as our righteousness; take away Jesus and there is no Christianity. The same was true of the Jewish faith at that time. If you removed the Messiah from their faith, there was very little left.

On the other hand, today, Jewish people are aware of Messiah and they have a variety of ideas as to who that is or what exactly that means, but Messiah is no longer the central feature of their faith.

But, at this time, circa A.D. 25, Messiah was central to the thinking of nearly every Jew. So when Charley Brown told Lucy about this Man Who is teaching and healing, many times the words, *I think that He is (might be) the Messiah*, were used (John 1:40–41, 45). This is why there were times when thousands of people came to Jesus to hear Him. Certainly, the promise of healing was important to those who needed to be healed, but more important was Who this Man might be.

Considering that Jesus was almost killed when He told that people of His hometown that He was the Messiah, this seems almost contradictory. However, Jesus is the ultimate divider of people. Some come to Him hoping or even believing that He is the Messiah; and many others see Him as something entirely different.

Luke 6:17e ...and Jerusalem...

Specifically, many people came to Jesus from Jerusalem, once the capitol of the sovereign nation of Israel (and it is again today).

Jerusalem is their national and religious capitol.

Jesus spent very little time in Judah (*southern* Israel). Most of His ministry took place in what was traditionally northern Israel, known at this time as Galilee or the Galilean region (the northern kingdom at its peak was much larger than the Galilean region).

Luke 6:17f ...and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon,...

People also came from north of Him, from up along the northern coast of the Mediterranean, from Tyre and Sidon. So, many gentiles were interested in what Jesus was saying and doing. There were some Jews who lived in these areas as well.

People just somehow seemed to know to come to Him and, somehow, they were able to figure out where to go to see this Man.

Luke 6:17 And He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon,...

**Israel at the Time of Jesus** (a second map); from [Christianity Today](https://www.christianitytoday.com); accessed February 25, 2022. Jesus is teaching in the Galilee region. North of Him are the cities of Tyre and Sidon. South of Him is Judæa.

The original author, Luke, did not divide his book up into chapters and verses. This occurred hundreds of years later. Sometimes, the division into verses was less than logical, as here, where the sentence of v. 17 continues into the first half of v. 18.

Luke 6:18a ...who came to hear Him...

The people came to Jesus for several purposes. Many came to hear Him speak, as it had been said of Him, “Nowhere have I heard a man like Him.” Jesus was a very interesting man, and His take on the Law was much different from that proposed by the pharisees and religious class. The religious class would focus upon strict adherence to the customs which had been developed by them over centuries which related to the Law of Moses. For instance, there were 39 categories of work/creative activity (known as the 39 Melachot) which were forbidden on the Sabbath.<sup>72</sup> This does not come out of the Bible, so Jesus did not teach any of that. Jesus’ fundamental text to teach from was always the Bible.



Luke 6:18b ...and to be healed of their diseases.

There were people from all over who had various diseases and ailments, and they heard that this Man could heal them. No doubt, many people came to Jesus for this reason specifically.

Jesus’ primary purpose was not to come and heal people, otherwise, Jesus could have snapped His fingers and everyone in the world would have been healed. These healings

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<sup>72</sup> Of the many websites, see [www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/95907/jewish/The-Shabbat-Laws.htm](http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/95907/jewish/The-Shabbat-Laws.htm) and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/39\\_Melachot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/39_Melachot) on this.

illustrated what occurred in a person's soul once they believed in Him. The soul was made whole, the soul was healed. The inner man was born again.

Luke 6:18c **And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.**

There were many people who were possessed by demons; and I would assume that there were various degrees of control; and various numbers of demons in each.

There are people today who hear voices, who are guided to do awful things by these voices. There are people today who are troubled in their souls in such a way that most of us cannot relate to. Whether these are demon possessions or influence, I would not know. It certainly sounds like demon-possession.

It often occurs that there are people today experiencing an entirely different objective reality than what we see around us. They hear things that we do not hear; they see things which we cannot see. They feel emotions and drives very different from what other people deal with. We are not talking about many people percentage-wise; but there are enough people who fit into this category that drugs have been developed for them.

Luke 6:18c **And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.**

Regarding this latter category, we would be driven to the conclusion that not all demon possession is the same. So far, in the book of Luke, there was been one case of demon possession which Jesus has dealt with (Luke 4:31–36). The demon-possessed man was in the synagogue. Although we do not get a full background of this man, he does not appear to have been full-on out-of-control (as others in later chapters will appear to be).

How these people with unclean spirits came to Jesus is not given. Did friends and family bring them there? Were they brought by force? Did some have enough free will in order to come on their own?

Based upon this verse and Luke 4, the logical conclusion is, demon possession can result in a variety of manifestations.

Luke 6:18 **...who came to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.**

Luke offers three categories of people who would come to see Jesus: those who wanted to hear Him speak, those who wanted healing, and those troubled by spirits.

Luke 6:19a **And all the crowd sought to touch Him,...**

Let me suggest that some—perhaps most of them—understood that contact with Jesus meant healing. I would not be surprised if many believed that contact with Him was some sort of good luck or blessing.

The parallel here is between physical healing and the healing of the soul. Any physical contact with the Lord (even with the hem of His garment) could result in a complete physical healing. Similarly, even the smallest amount of faith in Him would result in eternal spiritual healing.

Luke 6:19b ...for power came out from Him...

This I do not fully understand. Jesus Christ is guided by and indwelt by God the Holy Spirit. I would assume that it is the power of the Holy Spirit that heals. So, in some way or another, Jesus is able to feel the power going out from Him to heal someone. This does not mean that He is getting progressively weaker; but He is aware that it is happening.

This does not mean that there is power inherent in the humanity of Jesus; but that power could come through Him somewhat like a conduit. For instance, there is no inherent power in an electrical extension cord. However, when it is plugged into an electrical circuit, it then carries power or acts as a conduit for power. My suggestion is, the power of God worked through the Lord's humanity, in such a way that He was aware of it.

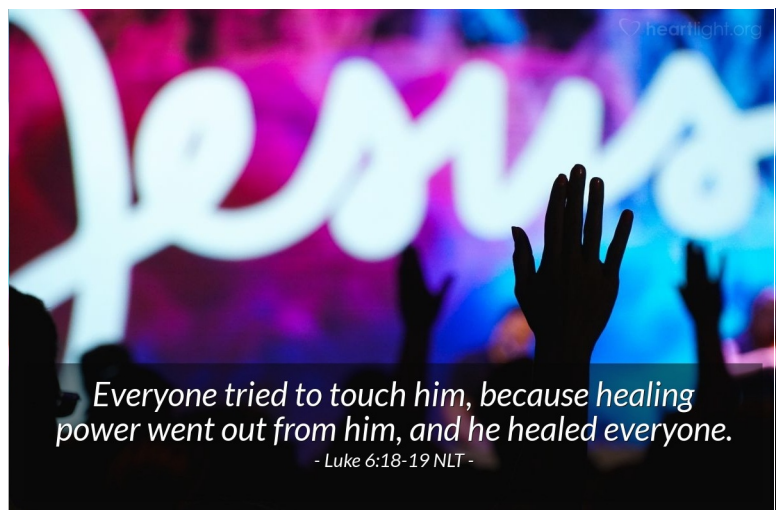
Luke 6:19c ...and healed them all.

People came from all over and Jesus kept on curing them.

Healing people from their diseases and casting out demons was a means to an end. It was not disputed that Jesus was able to do this. In fact, many came to Him specifically for this reason; and many who opposed Jesus understood that He could heal (although they accepted this without understanding or believing where the power came from). But this ability to heal indicated that Jesus was from God, that God is able to heal all and cure all. Furthermore, this was a representative analogy, that all those who come to Jesus would be healed completely—meaning, eternal salvation.

Luke 6:19 And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.

People understood that any sort of contact with Jesus either guaranteed their healing or at least gave them a good shot at being healed.



**Luke 6:18–19 (New Living Testament)** (a graphic); from [Heartlight](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

## Lesson 178: Luke 6:20–49

## Introducing the Sermon on the Plain

Introduction to teaching the Beatitudes:

From here to the end of the chapter, Jesus is teaching material which is very similar to the sermon on the mount (Matthew 5–7). This portion of Luke is known as the sermon on the plain. No doubt, there were many times where Jesus taught the same or similar material, but the sermon on the mount (in Matthew) is not the same event as the sermon on the plain (in Luke). So the parallel passages noted are parallel teachings, but taught at different times in different places.

Jesus very likely taught 5–7 days a week. Even though His public ministry was a scant 3–4 years long, the amount of teaching which He did must have been quite extensive and often repetitive (we do not feel the repetitive nature of His teaching in any of the gospels). Let me suggest that, once Luke recorded the beatitudes, he did not see a reason to record them again, even if Jesus taught them on a different occasion.

The gospels were clearly not designed to be exhaustive studies of the Lord's ministry. After all, John writes: **Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.** (John 21:25; ESV) Any of the gospel writers could have included that line at the end of their book.

Quite frankly, an exhaustive biographical book would be exhausting. Furthermore, if Jesus taught the beatitudes 20 times during His ministry, is there any reason why we would need to read them 20 times in a gospel? Although Jesus taught in a very small geographic area, He taught a variety of hearers. The crowd which He taught in Bethsaida would not know what He had taught recently in Capernaum, so Jesus cannot simply build upon what He has taught previously. He realizes that, wherever He teaches, there will be people there who have heard Him teach 100 times (the disciples who are with Him and travel with Him), there are people who have heard Him speak 4 or 5 times already (perhaps in the same town on previous days); and there are people there who are hearing Jesus teach for the first time. Therefore, just like a minister teaching today, Jesus ideally has material suitable for people in all these different categories.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. is a good example of this. I listened to his teaching of the Life of David decades ago, soon after he taught that material (circa 1980). Then many years later, I went back and re-listened to it (circa 2010), and it was like hearing a new series. The only thing that was striking in both times that I listened is, the series seemed up-to-date and on point for life in the United States at that time. What happened was, I heard and digested the material as a relatively new Christian the first time through; and the next time, I heard it as a believer who had enjoyed some spiritual growth. There was good information for



me both times that I heard the study. I got more out of it the second time, but that was mostly because I had a greater background for the material.

### **The Complete Teachings of Jesus:**

Jesus spent most of His public ministry teaching; and this is perhaps captured in the gospel of Luke more clearly than in any other gospel. With v. 20, we begin an extended set of lessons taught by the Lord, known by many as the *Sermon on the Plain*. This is similar to, but not exactly the same as the *sermon on the mount*. We might best understand this to be an expression of the Lord's beginning public ministry to Israel.

Whereas the sermon on the mount stretches out over 3 chapters, the sermon on the plain will continue from this point just to the end of the chapter. Was there more to this sermon? Probably, but this is all we have of it.

Jesus' teachings will be extensively featured in Luke 10–18. Most of those words will be in red (if you have a red-letter edition of the Bible, where all the words of Jesus are in red).

As an aside, all of the words of the Bible are inspired and we can learn from them. Very importantly, for current doctrine and understanding, we actually learn more from the Apostle Paul in his epistles (letters) than we learn from Jesus (I know that may sound vaguely blasphemous). Obviously, we learn a great deal from the Son of God; but, it is important to realize to whom He spoke and that He spoke during a very specific period of time (during the Age of the Hypostatic Union).

God speaks to Moses throughout much of Exodus and Leviticus. However, we do not go to those chapters and read in order to live our lives from day-to-day. The information in those chapters is important; but much of what is being taught—although directly from the mouth of God—is designed for believers in the Age of Israel. We don't offer up goats or lambs or rams to God; but they did. That was essential to their lives at that time. We can learn from those words spoken by God, but we do not offer up animal sacrifices. If we were to read the very words of God from those books, and then to do what He said to do (start observing the Sabbath and offer up lambs periodically to a priesthood of some sort), we would actually be accursed—not just by PETA but by God Himself. Those instructions were not directed towards us. We can learn from them and we can even apply that information to our lives—but only in a limited sense. But we are not to take those words and apply them directly as the citizens of ancient Israel did.

Now, what Jesus will do here, for the most part, is teach the Law of Moses. It may seem like it is all brand new; and too often it is portrayed that Moses taught the Law but Jesus taught love and grace, but that is not entirely true. Moses taught the Law; but he also taught love and grace. Jesus taught love and grace, but He also taught the Law. The Law of Moses is actually the Law of Jesus Christ for Israel.



Jesus is *not* correcting or updating Moses' teachings. He is correcting the false teachings of the Jewish religious hierarchy of that day. They were teaching their own traditions, not the traditions found in their Scriptures.

Jesus taught for just a sliver of time. Most of what He taught was specifically for the people of Israel, who had been incorrectly taught the Law by the pharisees. The pharisees have been teaching them legalism and the accumulated traditions of Jewish teachers. Jesus certainly taught more than this; but this is, without a doubt, much of what He taught during His public ministry.

What Jesus' disciples taught, as a result of being trained by Him, is very much colored by the fact that, many of those in that region hated Jesus—they hated Him enough to murder Him without a cause. And after Jesus rose from the dead and then ascended into heaven, the disciples were not rehashing or re-teaching what Jesus had taught. Primarily, the disciples were teaching Jesus (that is, they were evangelizing that region).

They did not know how much time they had remaining before Jesus would return; and they did not know how much time they had remaining before the state of Rome or the pharisees would grab them up and either kill or imprison them.

At some point, the disciples would begin teaching specifically Church Age concepts. This is the information designed for us, and it is not the same as what Jesus taught; and it is certainly not the Law of Moses. We do not find these teachings in the gospels or even in the book of Acts, but in the epistles which the Apostles and other disciples wrote.

It is important for the believer to have a thorough knowledge of the Law, the Prophets and Jesus; but it is more important for us to understand what is directed towards us; and what is simply historic. It is the same God, but He had a different program (surely you can understand what happens after the public ministry of Jesus and His crucifixion, resurrection and ascension is different from what takes place prior to His birth. We also need to discern that what Jesus taught was at a very specific time to a very specific people—not us.

### **The Spiritual Solution for the United States:**

Today, there is certainly limited teaching in the land (I am referring to the land of the United States). There is quite a lot of pap being taught in the churches today; with few churches even getting the most fundamental spiritual skill right (the naming of one's sins to God to restore us to fellowship). And since they get that wrong, they get so much of the rest of Scripture wrong as well (how many churches believe that their most important function of their local church is the teaching of the Word of God? 1 in 100?). How many supply enough teaching for a believer to actually grow spiritually? 1 in 100? If that.

I will always be thankful for the time I was able to spend in Berachah Church, when the pastor R. B. Thieme, Jr. was teaching 6 days a week, 9 different lessons per week (something which is unheard of, even today among the many excellent teachers spawned

by Berachah Church). And he caught no little flack for this dedication; and one can even go to the internet today and find people blogging about what a terrible man or pastor that he was. He caught it from all sides. But his teaching was exceptional; and thousands upon thousands of people learned from his ministry and, I believe, the intake of doctrine by thousands of believers saved our country from destruction at that time.

The United States has great enemies out in the world right now; enemies who, if they could, would topple our country. I believe that there is a reasonable chance that the United States might not survive the 22<sup>nd</sup> century as a world power—and certainly not as *the prominent world power*. Right now, as you read this, there are men throughout the world plotting the destruction of the United States (and some of them plotting against our country from within our borders). There are people in the United States trying to undermine our Constitution and our way of life. And as we move further and further way from the Word of God, we will see the fruits of the labor of evil men from within and without come to pass.

Just below the surface of all that we see is a great spiritual battle taking place. The United States, with all of its many imperfections, is a client nation. As a client nation, some of our churches teach the Word of God; and we send out missionaries to other nations to teach them about Jesus. We also have great work being done on the Bible taking place in the United States. Are those things happening in China or in Russia? We have little appreciation as to how much the governments of those countries would like to reduce the United States to rubble. The only thing that protects us is God Himself.

And no matter what period of time that you read this, the solution to our national problems is not electing the next Ronald Reagan or the next Donald Trump<sup>73</sup>, but in the evangelization of our country and the spiritual advance of as many believers as possible (R. B. Thieme, Jr. called these believers the *pivot*).

God has blessed this country unlike any other country in human history. I know my own life, the lives of my family, friends and associates, and many of us enjoy a life far and above what any generation has had before. We have great freedoms and great options for living and great prosperity. But there is one thing and one thing only that preserves this for the citizens of this country—our relationship to the God of the Bible. The more tenuous that relationship is, the more tenuous is the survival and prosperity of our nation.

### **The Spiritual Fall of Great Britain:**

Right now, God has blessed us in the United States like He has never blessed a country before; but, this could go away virtually overnight. If you don't believe this, look at Great Britain. At one time, Great Britain ruled the world. They were the dominant power all over the globe. It was said that the sun never set on the Union Jack (= the Union Flag, the flag of the United Kingdom). The union jack was the flag of Great Britain, which flew in dozens

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<sup>73</sup> I write this in 2018.

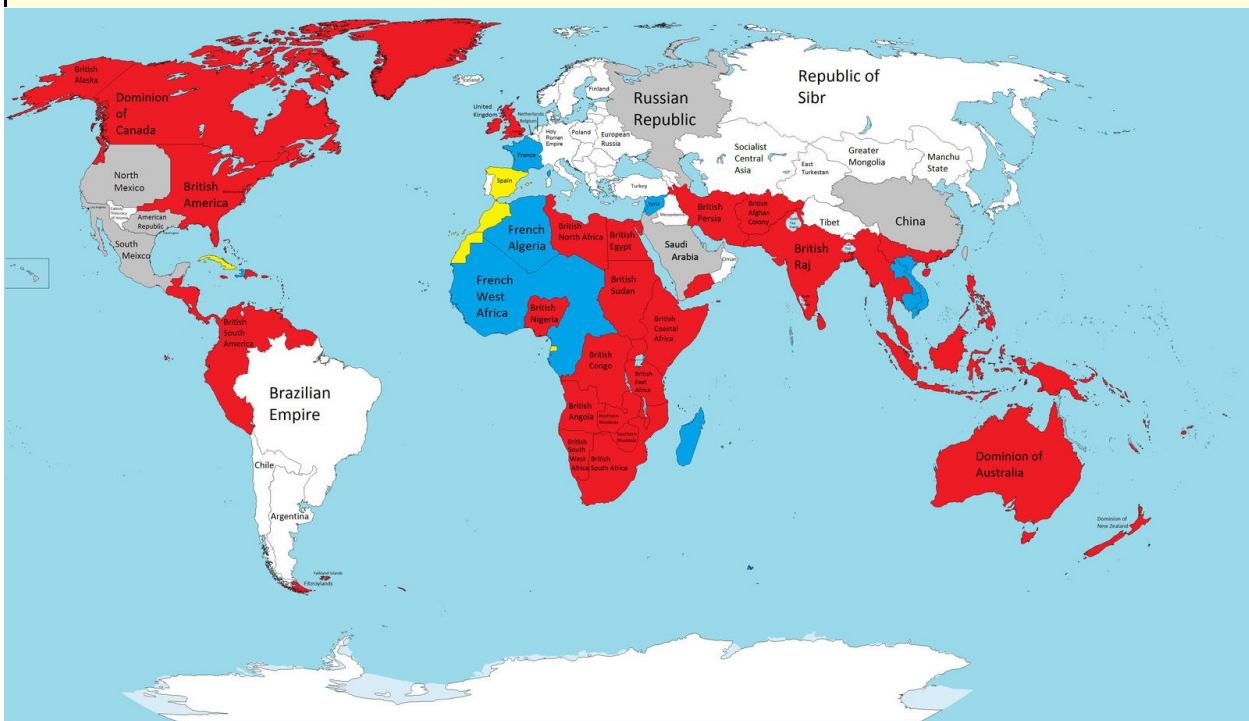
of countries around the world. As the sun's rays went from place to place, in that light, somewhere below, would be large populations who were blessed by their association with Great Britain, and the Union Jack proudly flew in that land.

**The Union Jack Flag** (a graphic); from [Walmart](#); accessed October 21, 2019. This is also known as the flag of Great Britain.



But, in less than a century, Great Britain went from being the premier power in the world—the greatest nation in the world up to that time—to being the tiny country of England that it is today, beset by economic woes and terrorism. They are certainly a great ally of the United States, but they are clearly a 2<sup>nd</sup> rate power as well.

**The British Empire Map** (by Duke-Nidhoggr); from [Deviant Art](#); accessed March 11, 2022. The regions in red were those controlled by the British Empire, which was one of the greatest entities in human history. However, as evangelism and Christian teaching in England decreased in Great Britain, so did her great empire.



What changed? Great Britain went from being the world's center of Christian teaching and doctrine to a nation which rejected God's Word.

Here is a little test: there are new translations of the Bible coming out each year. Now, easily, the most important and transformative translation of the Bible to date is the King James' Version, produced in England at the request of King James. For many people today, that translation is nearly unreadable; so what is the new transformative translation? The New International Version (the NIV) translated here in the US (as well as the New American Standard Version and the New King James Version). These are the foremost translations of the Bible today, and they were produced in the United States<sup>74</sup>. Furthermore, there are many translations into English, the largest majority of them being done in the United States.

This does not mean that no work is being done on translating the Bible in England and this does not mean that they do not send out missionaries. There is real spiritual activity in Great Britain today, but not like it was before. As a result, they are blessed, but not like they were before.

Today, this blessing from God that was upon Great Britain is now on the United States. But this could change; and the key is Bible doctrine. There are perhaps 350 million souls living in the United States. How many of those souls have their thinking saturated with Bible doctrine? It is that saturation level which will determine the future of our nation.

## **Lesson 179: Luke 6:20–21**

## **The Beatitudes**

From here to the end of this chapter, it will be very much like studying a New Testament version of Proverbs. Each thought will be relatively short, most of them spoken in 1 or 2 verses (or even a half a verse). Sometimes there is some sort of connection as we go from one thought to the next, but not always.

Luke 6:20a **And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples,...**

Personally, I believe that this is a signal to His disciples. “Settle everyone down, sit them down, for I am about to speak,” is what I believe is being said, but with the eyes.

I believe that His disciples acted as ushers, for all intents and purposes, and quieted the people down. They would signal for the people to take their seats (which would mean, sitting on the ground).

I don't believe that this was necessarily something which Jesus discussed with His disciples. It would be known that, at some point, He would speak to this large gathering of people. He cannot do this if people are meandering about or coming forward to be healed.

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<sup>74</sup> The NKJV was originally published by Thomas Nelson in Scotland; but now by Harper Collins in the United States.

**Application:** The same thing is true in a church. I have been in churches where people are checking their cell phones throughout the service, people are wandering in and out. On the one hand, it is understandable because the pastor is serving very little by way of actual food (Bible doctrine). For a pastor to do his job, he needs to teach with authority and the sheep need to be seated and listening. If that seems too harsh, bear in mind that entrance into a church is a choice. Nobody is forced to be there. Just as believing in Jesus Christ is a choice, attending a church is also a matter of free will. If the pastor is doing his job correctly, then this time spent in church will be the most important part of your day.

Jesus now begins teaching.

Luke 6:20b ...and said: "Blessed are you who are poor,...

There are comparisons made between this sermon and the sermon on the mount. There is no reason to think that Jesus gave completely different sermons everywhere that He went. Therefore, from time to time, there might be some overlap. A little bit which is taught here is also taught there.

These are not the same sermons, because Jesus was speaking on the mount to His disciples in the sermon on the mount; and here, He is surrounded not just by His disciples, but by thousands of others. Obviously, the crowd needs to be hushed so that He can be heard.

Luke 6:20b ...and said: "Blessed are you who are poor,...

Now to the content of His message:

Jesus uses the masculine plural adjective makarios (μακάριος) [pronounced *mahk-AHR-ee-oss*], which means, *blessings, happinesses; directed to those possessing the favor (grace) of God*. Strong's #3107.

Many of the people there were very likely poor, so He begins by saying, "Happinesses to the poor."

However, *poor* does not simply refer to those with very little money in their pockets. The Greek word is the masculine plural noun ptôchos (πτωκός) [pronounced *ptoh-KHOSS*], and it means, *poor (man, woman), beggar, pauper; miserable, beggarly, wretched; impotent*. Strong's #4434.

All of us, before God, are poor, but what we lack is not money, but access; we lack a relationship. For those who recognize this and understand that Jesus is the pathway, it is our faith in Him which provides us access to God, despite our inherent unworthiness.

Before God, we are inherently poor and unworthy; through Jesus, we are rich and greatly blessed.

Luke 6:20a-b **And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you who are poor,...**

Let's first look at the two verbs found here in v. 20a-b: *and He lifted...and said*. The first verb is the aorist participle and the second is the imperfect tense (even though both verbs appear to be translated from an aorist tense). The aorist participle always precedes or is coterminous with the main verb. So, first Jesus *lifts* up His eyes (a signal to His disciples); and then He *says*... The verb *to say* is an ingressive imperfect, meaning that *He began to say*.

Then Jesus offers this promise:

Luke 6:20c **...for yours is the kingdom of God.**

One has to understand that, someone does not inherit the Kingdom of God simply because they lived their lives without much money. Furthermore, all rich people are not condemned to hell (David and Solomon were two of the richest men in the world in their era). The idea here is, the poor have nothing, and, as a result, many of them look to God. Their relationship established with God (through Jesus) is what saves them.

Most of those who have come to Jesus at this time could be classified as poor. But what is key is, these people have come to Jesus because they trust in Him; they believe in Him. So they will inherit the Kingdom of God.

In that era, the people understood the kingdom of God to have a very earthly application. That is, they believed that the Messiah would establish His kingdom on earth (which Jesus will, but not immediately). The Jewish people at this time understood that, the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth, was a package deal. They expected the kingdom to immediately follow the Messiah. Earlier, when we studied Luke 4, where Jesus says, in so many words, that He is the Messiah, we looked at the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> advents of the Lord and how they appeared together in the Scriptures. The people then would not have separated these two things by time. Jesus will establish the kingdom of God on earth in the future after the Tribulation. We call that period of time the Millennium.

Luke 6:20 **And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.**

The poor often have a better understanding of God's grace than do the rich. However, this is not simply a blanket blessing on the poor, with an implied cursing for the rich. We come to God with nothing. We can offer God nothing. We come to God in search of grace and He gives us that.

If we take a less technical view of *the kingdom of God*, we can understand that those who come to God with nothing, through His Son, they will be given eternal life and that life will be with God.



**Luke 6:20 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Seek Grow Love](http://SeekGrowLove.com); accessed January 7, 2022.

The words *poor* and *rich* are both very relative terms. Those who might be classified as the working class poor in the United States today have many, many more conveniences that did David or Solomon. If some of them could be somehow placed into the life of Solomon for a week, there would be a great number of conveniences which they would sorely miss. Speaking for myself, it is probably the smells of the ancient world which would affect me the most. At first whiff, I would be clicking my heels together and saying,

“Get me out of here!” There would be certainly more obvious things, such as access to clean water, in whatever quantity I desire; and some form of climate control. If I were to compare my life at my poorest state, I would choose this over the life of Solomon any day of the week. Again, being poor and being rich are relative terms.



God does not, at the final judgment, separate the relatively rich from the relatively poor, and bring the latter group into His kingdom.

So how do we understand this? By far, the greater number of people who have come to Jesus are relatively poor. Their struggle, from day-to-day, is simply to have enough food to eat and some shelter over their heads. This is the life of perhaps the majority of people in the world today. However, for those who come to Jesus, that poverty is temporary. It may last all of their lives; it may define their existence for 60, 70 or 80 years—but our life on this earth is merely a drop in the bucket compared to eternity with God.

This promise that Jesus is making to this people is the assurance of a better life to come.

We come to God with nothing, and before God we are nothing. However, through Jesus, we have access to God and to His kingdom.

Luke 6:21a **"Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.**

Jesus continues speaking to those who have come to Him in positive volition. Many of them might be hungry or have endured hunger; but they will be filled. In fact, there is a future for all of those who believe in Him when hunger will not exist.

Luke 6:21b **Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.**

Every life has some tears; and in some lives, many tears. There is difficulty and pain and loss in this life. Although many of us weep now, in the future we will laugh. There is a better world coming.

Some who have come to Jesus have had difficulties in life, but He will wipe away their every tear.

Psalm 30:5 *For His anger is but for a moment, and His favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.* (ESV; capitalized)

As you can see, what Jesus is teaching can be found in the Old Testament. Jesus is offering the people hope for the future.

There is a consistency with the promises of God, in both the Old and New Testaments.

Revelation 21:4 *He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.* (ESV; capitalized)

This describes the future for all believers.

Luke 6:21 *"Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.*

V. 21 arbitrarily throws two beatitudes together. These words are assurances for the future. We live in a world of want and pain, a world of privation and tears. God, in the application of His perfect justice, will rectify this. There will be the millennial state followed by the eternal state. The believer will not be hungry and the believer will not be sad in either environment.



**Luke 6:21 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Open Life Church](https://www.openlifechurch.com/); accessed January 7, 2022.

We continue with Jesus' sermon on the plane.

Luke 6:22a "Blessed are you when people hate you...

Hatred would be an integral part of the lives of the people who followed Jesus. The establishment of the early church was not an easy process. The disciples would be harassed and even arrested. They would be hated for touting the name of Jesus. Of the remaining 11 disciples (after the crucifixion), most of them would be martyred. A considerable number of their converts would be martyred as well. Almost everyone who believed in Jesus would be forced out of Jerusalem.

The word for *blessed* here is the masculine plural of makarios (μακάριος) [pronounced *mahk-AHR-ee-oss*]. It means, *blessings, happinesses; those possessing the favor (grace) of God*. Strong's #3107. This hatred which the disciples of Jesus faced should be counted as happiness. In fact, it should be counted as a multiplicity of happinesses.

Jesus will continue this theme, as many of these people would face great difficulties.

Luke 6:22b ...and when they exclude you...

The word here is the aorist active subjunctive of aphorizô (ἀφορίζω) [pronounced *af-or-ID-zoh*], which means, *to set off by boundary; that is, (figuratively) to limit, to exclude; to appoint; to divide, to separate, to sever*. Strong's #873.

This is known as the constantive aorist, where the action is seen as a whole, taking no interest in the internal workings of the action. So, the believer may encounter this for his entire life; he may experience several instances of it, or this may happen once to the believer. The active voice means, those who do this to the believer are acting from their own volition. The subjunctive mood means, maybe this will happen and maybe it won't.

**Illustration:** When I made it clear that I viewed homosexuality as a sin on my facebook page, and that there were only two genders, I was unfriended by a few dozen people with whom, up to that period of time, had a reasonable relationship with (many of them were former students of mine). Don't misunderstand me—I am not saying that this is the same thing as what Jesus is speaking of here. However, things like this which start out small can become very large (depending upon the general direction of a society).

The disciples of Jesus would be shunned and excluded from normal activities. Sometimes, social ostracism can be quite powerful. Imagine living in Hollywood as an actor and people knowing that you are a Christian who views homosexuality as a sin. Do you think you would be hired to work there? Highly unlikely.

In Jerusalem, during the period of the book of Acts, many Christians will find it impossible to live a normal life in Jerusalem. They could not work, they could not worship; and they found themselves being hated and harassed. This will cause many Christians to leave Jerusalem (this exit from Jerusalem was divine protection for them).

Luke 6:22c ...and revile you...

*Revile* is the aorist active subjunctive of *oneidezô* (ὀνειδίζω) [pronounced *on-ī-DID-zoh*], which means, *to revile, to reproach, to defame, to rail at, to chide, to taunt; to cast in teeth, to (suffer) reproach, to upbraid*. Strong's #3679. The focus is on the action of the verb, rather than upon when it takes place or the number of times it occurs. The active voice means that the people actively revile you. The subjunctive mood means that this is a potential event (or set of events).

**Illustration:** Let's say, at a Black Lives Matter Rally, you shout out, *All lives matter*; or, *blue lives matter*. You will be reviled and reproached. Disapproval of your person might even go further than that.

The people of the religious class and those who followed them would reproach, revile and defame the disciples. Believers early on faced a lot of discrimination by Jews and gentiles. The Jews would get quite worked up (there are several examples of this in the book of Acts).

Luke 6:22d ...and spurn your name as evil,...

*Spurn* here is the aorist active subjunctive of *ekballô* (ἐκβάλλω) [pronounced *ehk-BAHL-loh*], which means, *to throw out; to drive out; to cast out; to lead forth with force; to expel [pluck out]; to take out [extract, remove]*. Strong's #1544.

Your name is actually a reference to your *name, title, character, reputation; person*.

They would see you as evil. Your name, your person would be treated as evil. In some cases, you are *thrown out, cast out* as a person whom they believe to be evil.

**Application:** We see this in politics today; those who hold to traditional values are held up as evil, prejudiced and hateful, by the very people whose souls are truly filled with hatred. Those who support a traditional family with parents of opposite genders and children belonging to those two parents—that is seen by many as bigoted, narrow-minded and provincial.

Luke 6:22e ...on account of the Son of Man!

Jesus specifies that people there would be cast out as if evil because of their relationship to Him.

The key in the Christian life is a relationship to Jesus. Both Matthew and Luke use the designation *Son of Man* often in their gospels. It is a reference to Jesus.

These negative experiences in your life are not based upon a political position which you have taken; or simply a result of you being a jackass; but the fundamental reason for this social ostracism is your relationship with Jesus Christ.

This is not something which, in my lifetime, has been much of a thing in the United States. However, as I get older, the seeds for vicious discrimination seem to be growing. I would not be shocked to see out-and-out persecution at some point in time during my lifetime.

The people who would adhere to Jesus during the early years of the Church Age would face angry and vicious persecution. Those perceived as leaders were often persecuted, beaten and even killed. Some of the regular believers found their economic lives affected.

For most of my life, being a believer has not been any sort of inconvenience for me. I have lived during the time of the 3<sup>rd</sup> great awakening<sup>75</sup> in the United States (spurred for the most part by the Billy Graham crusades). So, being a Christian did not, for the most part, separate me from others.

However, in the past decade or two, traditional values (that is, the divine institutions) are being rejected in the United States. Those who hold to these traditional values are being portrayed as haters and bigots. If we do not embrace gender-change as bold personal human progress and homosexuality as an absolutely normal and acceptable lifestyle, then we are portrayed as hateful and bigoted. There is actually an argument whether or not first, second and third graders should be exposed to alternate sexual behaviors as a part of their sex education. The response of most believers with doctrine and/or common sense is, *sex education for primary school children? When did that happen?* For many of us, the idea that anyone would openly support this sort of *education* seems insane. However, it is happening. Therefore, there arise sharp disagreements between those who are woke and believers with traditional values.

At this point in our lives (I write this in 2022), for most people, this simply means fewer facebook friends or not being invited to some parties, or a few people deciding to exclude you when it comes to social life. It is not that big of an inconvenience. The early disciples of Jesus felt this hatred and discrimination to a much greater extent. (Since we do not yet have widespread discrimination in the United States against Christians, I am simply giving parallel examples to make what Jesus is saying more relatable.)

For the disciples in Jerusalem, most of them had their lives upended for believing in Jesus Christ. These are people who, in many cases, saw the risen Christ and knew what they saw. They could not deny what they saw with their own eyes. They were reviled and excluded; their names were associated with evil.

Luke 6:22 "Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!"

Jesus tells His disciples (the followers of Jesus) that they will receive blessings and happiness when they are reviled by the religious class (and by those people whom they work up to hate you as well).

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<sup>75</sup> Many history books acknowledge the first two great awakenings in the United States. Most of these do not speak of the 1950's as a third great awakening.



This is a list of the 4 things that the religious class would do to Jesus' disciples. They would begin with the mental attitude sin of hatred, and that would motivate them. They would exclude believers (from the synagogues, from social life, from business life). This would lead to reviling the believer; which puts their thoughts and hatred into action. Finally, believers are specifically associated with evil. That is, others see you are literally being wrong, immoral and evil for believing in Jesus (and in the Bible).

Have you ever had people hate you, and yet they know nothing about you? That is the way of the world. The disciples, simply by being the followers of Jesus, would be hated by many throughout the Land of Promise.

Jesus does not actually specify the religious class here, although that would be the immediate application. However, those who revile the believer are not always from the religious class. Today, in the United States, there are a considerable number of atheists, as well as woke religious types, and many of them are actively opposed to those who believe in Jesus. They believe that we are gullible, stupid and dangerous. In the past year or so, I have seen many people arguing that teaching your child some form of Christianity or taking them to church ought to be seen as a form of child abuse. Depending on the direction that our culture goes, at what point do you think social services might take your children away from you for teaching them the Bible?

One of the most anti-Christian movements to arise in modern society is the LGBTQ movement, who are trying to [change what can and cannot be taught from the pulpit](#). Our current Constitution and the court as constructed would make this an impossibility at the moment; but in 10 years, that could change.

Nearly every church acknowledges, either from the pulpit or from their doctrine, that Jesus Christ has died for all mankind. Jesus died for all of the people in the LGBTQ movement. You can be a man, who changed to a woman, changed back and again, and then back to a woman; and you can have had sex with hundreds of people of various gender dysphoria; but, nevertheless, Jesus Christ died for you. Because of this, believers need to be careful in their interactions with the craziest of crazies—because they need Jesus just as we do. Jesus paid for all of their sins just as He paid for ours. A person may have 50 pieces of ornamental metal in their ears, face, lips etc.; but Jesus died for that person. They may dress and act like a dog; but Jesus died for them.

What the LGBTQ community wants is for these people to be accepted as they are, but the Christian faith does not allow for an unbridled acceptance of all lifestyles and sexual preferences. Nevertheless, anyone can come to Christ, no matter what their present state is. Therefore, anyone should have the freedom to come into a church and hear the Word of God taught. They just do not get to dictate what the Word teaches (people who want to change or influence what a pastor teaches is *not* confined to just the LGBTQ community). The Bible is very gender specific and it teaches that men are men and women are women; and that a marriage coupling is between one man and one woman.



One tricky thing for a pastor and a board of deacons to navigate is, when people who are sexually confused come into the church, how exactly do you treat them and what exactly do you expect of their behavior while in church? Obviously, what needs to be emphasized is, you have saved by faith in Jesus Christ, not by changing your behavior or dress. However, at the same time, it must be made clear to the congregation that these alternative lifestyles are not glorifying to God. A 14 year-old boy might get cheers and clapping when he stands before some audiences and says, "I am transitioning into a woman," as if that is some kind of great moral feat. But, we do not glorify debauchery in the church (Paul addressed this very thing twice in his two letters to the Corinthians).

As an aside, unless you are a deacon acting within the dictates of church policy, you do not get to tell somehow how they ought to dress for church.

**Luke 6:22 (KJV)** (a graphic); from [Eisakouo](http://eisakouo.com); accessed January 7, 2022.

Luke 6:23a **Rejoice in that day,**...

When all of these things come upon you; when the religious class treats you as a curse, then rejoice in that day.

Luke 6:23b **...and leap for joy,**....

Don't just rejoice, but leap for joy.



This means you are doing something right.

If the world accepts you, then you are doing something wrong.

Luke 6:23c **...for behold, your reward is great in heaven;**...

There is great reward in heaven for such a one. All that believers endure on earth when in fellowship is a rewardable function.

There will be many believers who, in the early years of the church, will be persecuted and many of them would lose their livelihoods as a result of persecution.

Jesus is telling them that this is a reason for celebration.

Luke 6:23d ...for so their fathers did to the prophets.

*Fathers* here refers to *ancestors*, as there have not been any prophets, besides John the Herald, for 400 years.

Those who will persecute the disciples of Jesus—they have ancestors who persecuted the prophets of God in much the same way. They are following in the footsteps of their fathers.

Luke 6:23 Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

**Luke 6:23 (FNV)** (a graphic); from [Lutheran Indian Ministries](http://Lutheran Indian Ministries); accessed January 7, 2022.

## Lesson 181: Luke 6:24–26

## Jesus Pronounces the Woes

In Luke 6:20–23, Jesus pronounced blessings to believers who endure a number of difficult circumstances. In vv. 24–26, He will pronounce the woes.

Luke 6:24 "But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

*Woe* is an onomatopoetic word. It is the interjection ouai (οὐαί) [pronounced oo-AH-ee]<sup>76</sup>, which means, *alas*, *woe*. It is a primary exclamation of grief. Strong's #3759.

I want to provide three possible interpretations to what Jesus is saying. There may be people listening to Jesus right at this time who are skeptical and are against Him; and who are wealthy. The religious class found a way to become wealthy. In the future, these men will be poor, devastated and/or in hell. All the comfort and good things is what they have right now; this will not be in their future.

Similarly, there are people who depend upon their wealth; and they assume that because they are wealthy, God is greatly blessing them—even if they have not placed their faith in the Lord.

Or, these are people who believe themselves to be completely self-sufficient, apart from God. They are wealthy and that is because they made it happen (this is how they see it). All spiritual aspects of life are set aside as unimportant or nonexistent. Jesus is saying that this is the best it will ever be for them.

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<sup>76</sup> I use Strong's pronunciations. When I am alone, I tend to pronounce this oo-ī, as that is how I first learned to pronounce the αι combination.

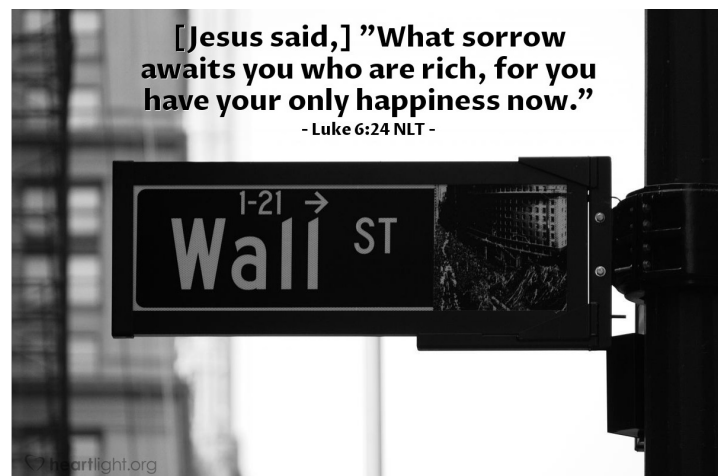
Most of you reading this understand that, if God wanted to, everyone in the world could be wealthy or well-off. Why doesn't God do that? Why not make life a little easier and give us all a little bit more money? The answer is simple—if a man does not have any actual needs, he will not look to God.

**Illustration:** Right now, the United States enjoys a great deal of prosperity. Although there are some impoverished people and some people with true financial difficulties, for the most part, we are really well-off, financially speaking. Two of the richest men in the history of Israel are David and Solomon. If you could be transported back in time and live like them, I guarantee you that you would hate it. You may drive a rust bucket and live in a relatively dumpy apartment, but what you have, compared to David and Solomon, is a very long list of great conveniences.

Nevertheless, are people in the United States happy? Do we recognize our great wealth and life of ease? I would say, for the most part, no. How many people want to drink alcohol every day? How many would like to spend the rest of their days on earth being stoned? How many want to chase after sex or other physical pleasures, because what is in their life right now is not enough? How many people are taking a number of psychotherapeutic drugs? Despite enjoying a great many material benefits, somewhere between 10–30% of Americans *medicate their psyches* in one way or another. Even people who are relatively successful in our society do this.

Now, how about our great number of suicides in the United States? I know people from other countries, many of whom have no idea when they will next eat, how they will provide for their family, or what their next move is to just survive. They look at our lives here in the United States as the greatest thing ever. And yet, a huge number of Americans are unhappy with their lives here. Easily, 30% of Americans believe that the system which provided us with all of this wealth is corrupt and should be replaced. This is why God does not give everyone an easy life in this world. Those who have this easy life (easy by comparison to other countries) do not appreciate it.

Let's go back to the time of Luke. Future from our narrative, Jerusalem would be plundered by the Romans and about a million Jews will die. A poor person, when it comes to being mobile, has an easy time of it. He has nothing to worry about; nothing to take with him; he can just go. When it becomes clear that Jerusalem is to be besieged, such a one can escape with their family and their lives. Those who are rich have a much more difficult time letting go.





How can you leave everything behind? But at the time, if a person cannot grab a rucksack (or less) and go, they will die.

**Luke 6:24 (NLT)** (a graphic); from [Heartlight](#); accessed March 25, 2022.

For those who depend upon their wealth—as opposed to depending up the Lord—that is their consolation in life. And you will not take any of it with you.

**Luke 6:24 (First Nations Version)** (a graphic); from [Lutheran Indian Ministries](#); accessed March 25, 2022.

These Woes, in Jesus' sermon, can sometimes be matched with the statements of blessing from before.

Notice how vv. 20 & 24 match up: **"How blessed are you who are destitute, because the kingdom of God is yours!**

**"But how terrible it will be for you who are rich, because you have had your comfort!" (ISV)**



**Luke 6:20, 24 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Slide Player](#); accessed March 25, 2022.

Luke 6:25a **"Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.**

Similar to the sentiments above, there are people who are satisfied now; they are full; they are not hungry in the least. However, in the future, they will suffer want.



**"Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God... But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort."**

(Luke 6:20,24)

The problem is not that everything become opposite day, where rich become poor, hungry become filled, sick become well. All of this is related to Jesus Christ. If you have the right relationship with Him, no matter what your current state of affairs, they will become better—if not in time, then in eternity. Similarly, for the person who has rejected the Lord based upon his own possessions and life blessings; he will lose all of this. His state, in all cases, will become worse.

Jesus expresses a similar sentiment in Mark 8:36–37 **For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?** (ESV)

Many believers—growing ones—can testify as to the direction of their lives before they believed in Jesus Christ and the direction of their lives after. I remember some of my short-term goals before I became a believer, and it is scary to me to look back at that version of me. I was filled with anger and frustration; as well as having a host of other problems. Today, I am far, far from perfect; but my eyes are on the Word of God (much of the time). My life is so different from what it might have been.

Luke 6:25b **Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.**

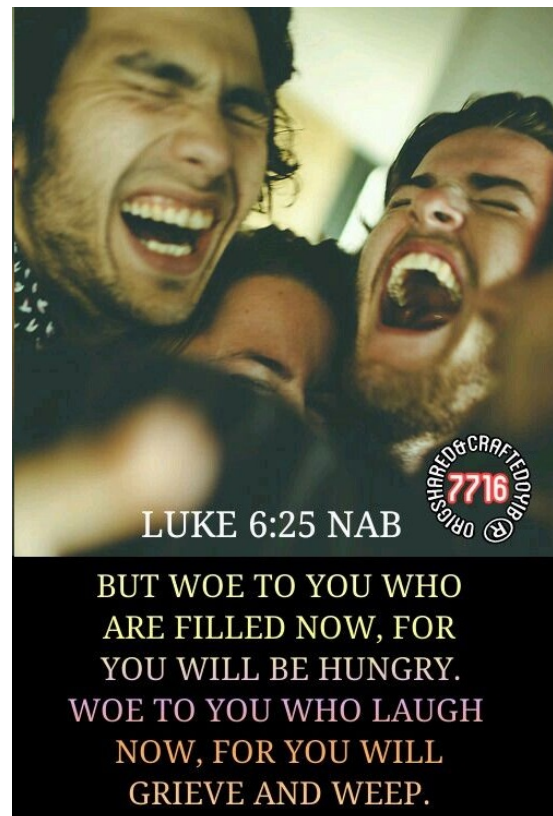
*Laughing* here indicates a person who is happy and satisfied with his life; but if this life is without the Lord, then, at some point, they will become filled with sorrow, as they did not put their trust in God's Son.

As you see, there is a similar theme which continues in what Jesus says.

Luke 6:25 **"Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.**

The woes being pronounced here are speaking of life and eternity, and what is our doorway into eternity? If it is simply death, then things become worse. If our doorway into eternity is Jesus, whatever we were and whatever we have, it all becomes greater. This is true, even for the worst believer who has ever lived.

**Luke 6:25 (New American Bible)** (a graphic); from [Image Bible](#); accessed March 25, 2022.



Now notice how Luke 6:21 & 25 pair up: **Blessed are those who are hungry. They will be satisfied. Blessed are those who are crying. They will laugh. How horrible it will be for those who are well-fed. They will be hungry. How horrible it will be for those who are laughing. They will mourn and cry.** (God's Word™)

Luke 6:26a **"Woe to you, when all people speak well of you,...**

Some people desire to be thought well of; they like public opinion when it favors them; and so many people think that they might enjoy fame—public recognition for whatever. This is also known as approbation lust, and there is no satisfaction or happiness in it.

This parallels the sentiment found in vv. 22–23, which reads "Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets." (Luke 6:22–23; ESV). However, this approaches that same thought from the opposite direction.

Israel's fathers reviled their own prophets. But, for the false prophets, they had regard.

Luke 6:26b ...for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

Their fathers spoke well of the false prophets. Their fathers revered the false prophets. This indicates that approbation by others is not necessarily a good thing.

Luke 6:26 "Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

People, in life, go after the wrong things. They chase after wealth; they look to fill themselves with the best foods; they desire others to look up to them, to be impressed by them. There is more to life than the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the money and possessions which we have.

Here, the key to life is not *all people speak well of you*; the key to life is the One speaking to this crowd.

Jesus matches each blessing with a woe. Be happy when people hate you and are cruel to you. Be happy even when they pull away from you as being evil and throw you out because you are my friend. How horrible it is when everyone says good things about you; their ancestors always did that to the false prophets! (Luke 6:22&26; Holy New Covenant Translation)



"Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets."

(Luke 6:22, 26)

**Luke 6:22, 26 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Slide Player](#); accessed March 25, 2022.

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The Free Bible Version is used below:

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## The Blessings and the Woes

### Luke 6:20b–23

How happy are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours.

How happy are you who are hungry now, for you will eat all you need. How happy are you who are weeping now, for you will laugh.

How happy are you when people hate you, exclude you, insult you, and curse your name as evil because of me, the Son of man.  
When that day comes, be happy. Jump for joy, for great is your reward in heaven. Don't forget\* their forefathers mistreated the prophets just like this.

### Luke 6:24–26

But how sad are you who are rich, for you have already received your reward.

How sad are you who are full now, for you will become hungry. How sad are you who laugh now, for you will mourn and cry.

How sad are you when everyone praises you. Don't forget that their forefathers praised false prophets just like this.

Jesus was setting up a set of parallel thoughts. All of the blessings (happineses) which Jesus proclaimed has its parallel in the woes which He pronounced.

## Lessons 182–183: Luke 6:27–32

## Love Your Enemies Part I

Introduction to loving one's enemies:

Jesus will continue saying some things which are very difficult to hear and to obey. The standards that He sets are unbelievably high. It is important to understand from the outset that Jesus is speaking to men who will take the gospel to the entire world. They cannot afford to have the message sullied or compromised. The message of Christ cannot be subject to petty differences and disputes.

We as believers are ultimately subjects of a heavenly calling; so we must always be mindful of overemphasizing earthly goods. The goods that we have will pass away; the life that we have will pass away. We must not overemphasize the value of our life and goods and give them equal standing with the eternal gospel message.

There has to be a balance struck in the life of the believer. None of this means that you must live a life of complete and utter poverty (although many missionaries live lives where they give up a great deal to spread the gospel message). Many men have a family; and as a believer in Jesus Christ you have a responsibility to that family. There must be a balance between your devotion to your family and earthly treasures. As Paul will later write, **a man who does not provide for his own is worse than an infidel**. So, you do not impoverish your family in order to show that you have no ties to earthly goods; but, on the

other hand, you do not give your family members every earthly good that you can afford because they are your family. There is a careful balance to be struck; and this balance is going to be different from family to family. For instance, many of those who labor in the gospel, like missionaries, live a life which is much closer to the economic level of those in other countries (which is far below the standard that we enjoy in the greatly blessed United States). Many ministers work second jobs and minister to a church of 20 or 50 or 100 people (I have seen as few as 5 in a congregation). They will not be living high off the hog; but their ministry is still a part of the plan of God. If you are a pastor-teacher and your congregation is only 5 or 10, that does not mean that you are doing anything wrong or that you need to pick up and move to where you might find a larger congregation to serve. Some shepherds have small flocks; but that does not minimize their importance in the plan of God. What happened in the 1970s in Berachah Church, when people might not get a seat unless they showed up early enough—that is a very rare thing to happen where the careful teaching of Bible doctrine is taking place.

Now, God has not put me in charge of overseeing your family and determining if you are spending your money correctly and finding the right balance. Nor is that the responsibility of any pastor. I have read posts of some believers who believe that it is their job to criticize pastors whom they believe to be too wealthy. That is not your job and you are setting yourself up for discipline from God to make any sort of remarks about the lifestyle that someone else leads (God will also bless the person whom you criticize).

The life of another believer is not your business. The salary of a pastor is none of your business unless you are on the board of deacons at that church. There is a very small percentage of pastor-teachers who get large salaries from their church. Let me say once again, that is none of your business. And for every pastor who receives a large salary, then are 1000 (or more) who get little or nothing.

Parade magazine every year would list the typical salaries earned by various professions. I recall that, whatever the average American salary was, a pastor/reverend/preacher would typically make about a third of that (and sometimes lower). Anyone who thinks that becoming a preacher is the key to financial wealth has not done his homework.

The disciples that Jesus was teaching—and they make up a considerable number of the crowd before Jesus at this time—would be presenting the gospel to a very hostile world and they could not afford to allow worldly goods keep them from making that message clear.

In this section (vv. 27–36), we have the maxim *love your enemies* stated twice (near the beginning and near the end—vv. 27, 35); with the golden rule (v. 31) right in the middle of this dissertation. V. 31 seems quite reasonable (*treat others as you would like them to treat you*); but the logical application of that is to *love your enemies*, which is nothing if not revolutionary.

Luke 6:27a "But I say to you who hear,...

Jesus was teaching a very mixed crowd, which is often the case for a pastor-teacher. Some knew a little; some knew nothing; many had come there simply to be healed; and some really wanted to hear what Jesus had to say.

Luke 6:27b ...Love your enemies...

When Jesus said, “Love your enemies,” He was not teaching something which was completely new; but it was lost in the Old Testament message (in part because of the mutual hostility between the outside world and the Jewish people).

Jonah is an entire book devoted to loving one’s enemies. He was supposed to speak to the Assyrians about his God and he would call upon them to change their minds about that God. This is exactly what Jonah did not want to do; as he hated the Assyrians. Therefore, when God told Jonah to go one way, Jonah went the exact opposite direction.

When it comes to our relationship with other people, there will be people who hate and scorn us because we believe in Jesus Christ. They may have all kinds of wrong or bad impressions about Who God is and about what church is or what being a Christian is (the first word that will come to many people’s minds is *hypocrite*). But, no matter how they feel about you personally, that is not the issue. They are people for whom Christ died. It does not matter how they feel about you or you feel about them. When an unbeliever exercises faith in Christ, who and what they are can (potentially) change—sometimes radically.

Luke 6:27b ...Love your enemies...

Love here does not mean that you develop some sort of surge of emotion towards your enemies, similar to the emotions that you feel towards your parents, brothers or sisters, friends or spouse. We as believers need to have a relaxed mental attitude towards such a person; we should not be harboring mental attitude sins towards them. We should not be contemplating ways to harm them, best them, or hinder them. We should not be jealous of them. We should not talk down to them and run them down behind their backs.

Luke 6:27c ...do good to those who hate you,...

In this life, there will be people who hate you; and some of them will hate you without a cause (some will hate you because you’re obnoxious). You do what is right towards them. You do not have one standard of behavior towards them, but a different and much better standard of behavior towards your friends.

You may have a neighbor who absolutely hates you. That does not mean that you don’t look out for them, that you do not offer them a helping hand; or that, if possible, you simply try not to anger them more. When you interact with them—no matter what they have done to you—you treat them just like anyone else, without rancor or sarcasm. No matter what they have said or done to you, we should be willing to give them a helping hand when they need it (I realize it is much easier to say this than it is to do it).

Luke 6:27 "But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,...

Bear in mind that it is not just the overt actions but the condition of your soul in the interaction with your enemies. This is more than simply gritting your teeth and saying to yourself, "I am going to be nice to them, no matter what." (Something you might say of certain relatives for a large family gathering).

In a music studio, there is often a lighted sign which says, *Recording*. In the past, that meant that all that happened in the studio was being recorded on tape (and today, it is being recorded digitally). A musician might do the greatest rendition of a particular song ever done, but, if the studio is not recording, then it is lost forever.

We must be in fellowship to fulfill these things spoken by Jesus Christ. We must be controlled by God the Holy Spirit. This is done by being up to date when it comes to the naming of our sins. We may be interacting with an enemy with the biggest, broadest smile on our faces, but thinking, underneath all of that, "You slimy, lying SOB." You are *not* fulfilling these mandates of our Lord; you are simply being civil. If you start to think such a thing, you quickly name that sinful thought to God. In a split second, you go from simply being civil to meeting the requirements of Luke 6:27.

**Luke 6:27 (ESV)** (a graphic); from [Knowing Jesus](#); accessed January 6, 2022.

Luke 6:28a ...bless those who curse you,...

There are people who curse you; they want you to fail. If given the chance to observe you failing, they might quite enjoy that.

When it comes to blessing another person, that is difficult for me to quantify; but it is the opposite of cursing them. You may have a neighbor that you want to badmouth to your neighbor on the other side—don't. You may have a co-worker that you dislike and who dislikes you, and you have some juicy gossip about them to spread around, don't. Whatever it is that they do to you that is wrong, do not respond in kind.

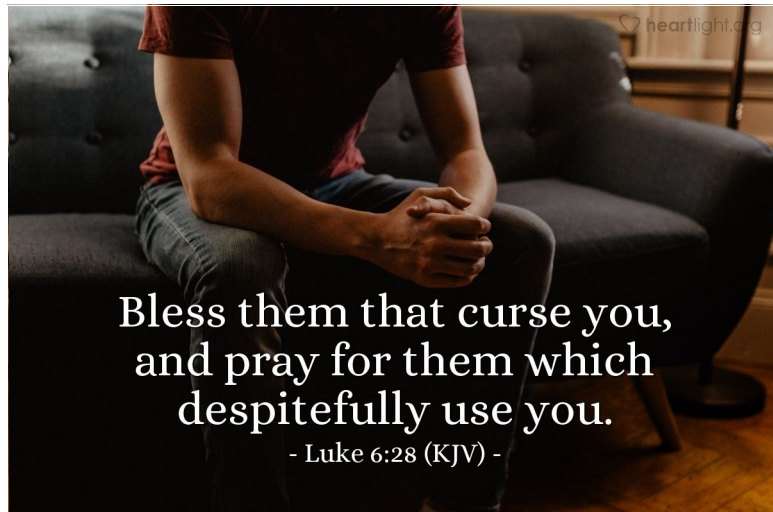
Luke 6:28b ...pray for those who abuse you.



People, you will find out, slander you all of the time. You may find out later that you are the temporary topic of conversation among other pairs or groups of people that you barely know—and, so it turns out, maybe they don't like you very much. As believers, we do not get to respond in kind. We don't run to the people they spoke to and give our side of the story; we don't find out embarrassing or unattractive things about them and spread that around. We do not go on the offensive, as the saying goes, *mess with the bull, then you get the horns!* We as believers do the exact opposite. No matter how unbearable a person is, Jesus Christ died for that person. He is a soul that God loves. He is no less loveable than we are; and if there is ever the right opportunity, then we share the gospel with that person.

Luke 6:28 ...bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

It cannot be overemphasized that Jesus has died for every person, and that we owe the world the gospel. That world includes our enemies.



I recently came across this quotation from Will Durant, the accomplished ancient historian. *There is no greater drama in human record than the sight of a few Christians, scorned or oppressed by a succession of emperors, bearing all trials with a fiery tenacity, multiplying quietly, building order while their enemies generated chaos, fighting the sword with the word, brutality with hope, and at last defeating the strongest state that history has ever known. Cæsar and Christ had met in the arena, and Christ had won.*<sup>77</sup>

How did this happen? The early Christians loved their enemies; they blessed those who cursed them and they prayed for those who abused them. They did not hold anti-government demonstrations; they did not put together great organizations to support emperors who were sympathetic to the Christian movement. They did not write scathing letters to the editor about this or that Cæsar. They followed these prescriptions laid out by their Lord.

**Luke 6:28 (KJV)** (a graphic); from [Emmanuel Baptist Church](#); accessed January 6, 2022.

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<sup>77</sup> Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization: Part III, Cæsar and Christ* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1944).



**Luke 6:27–28** (a graphic) from [A Little Perspective](#); accessed March 25, 2022.

Luke 6:29a **To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also,...**

Jesus then takes this whole concept up a notch. *If someone slaps you on one cheek, then offer them the other.* That is hard for any person to contemplate. But the idea is, we do not pursue revenge.

Now, this is not the situation where a thief (or whatever) threatens your family; you do whatever you can to protect your family (depending on the circumstances). This is not where you are struck and your life is being threatened. This verse is more facing a personal insult, a personal affront, a personal attack. Your response should not be one of revenge, either gotten right there on the spot or contemplated and taken later.



The Amplified Bible: *Luke 6:29 In this context the “slap” is not an act of violence, but more likely an insult or violation of one’s rights.*<sup>78</sup>

The NET Bible: *This command to offer the other cheek as well is often misunderstood. It means that there is risk involved in reaching out to people with God’s hope. But if one is struck down in rejection, the disciple is to continue reaching out.*<sup>79</sup>

The Alpha & Omega Bible: *In that day & time, a slap on the cheek was only an insult, not a major attack. Jesus is not saying that we have no right to self defense or that we should allow people to attack us. He is only saying that if someone insults us, that we are not to retaliate with insults. We should not take revenge or stoop to their level.*<sup>80</sup>

**Luke 6:29a (NASB)** (a graphic); from [Knowing Jesus](#); accessed January 6, 2022.

Luke 6:29b **...and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either.**

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<sup>78</sup> From <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+6&version=AMP> (footnote); accessed October 24, 2019.

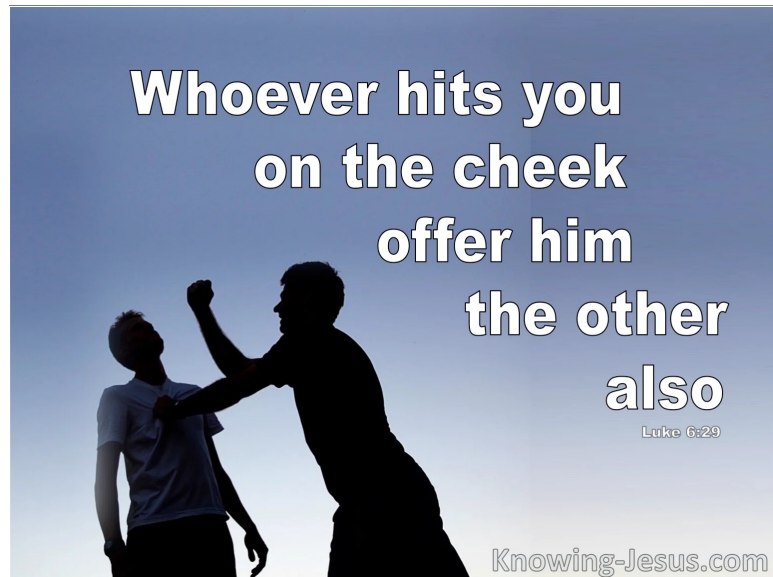
<sup>79</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?luk6.htm> (footnote); accessed October 24, 2019.

<sup>80</sup> The Alpha & Omega Bible, v. 29, from e-sword.



People will, in various ways, take personal items from you. Sometimes, they will even use the court system to achieve this. Now, I understand this to mean that, if this is a court battle, then you try to find a way to settle, even if you believe that you are being treated unfairly. If this is out in the world, a one-on-one situation, you simply have to assess the situation. Are you in physical danger? Are family members there in physical danger? These are real concerns. But, the key issue here is, there should be no item

or piece of personal property that should stand between someone else and the gospel message. Your possessions, when compared to the grace of God, are just not that important.



**Luke 6:29 To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either.**

The idea is to not give in to personal attacks or even to robbery, and respond in kind. It is not inconceivable that you might be robbed in the street or in the courtroom, and Jesus is saying here, “Do not seek personal justice or revenge. Do not allow personal items to stand between that other person and the gospel. Whatever you own can be replaced; and, in the grand scheme of things, it is nothing.

**Luke 6:30a Give to everyone who begs from you,...**

The disciples are told, “Do not let material goods stand in your way of presenting the gospel.” If someone asks for something that belongs to you, just give it to them.

What is important is Who Jesus is; and what He has done.

Furthermore, it is difficult to ask for something from others; and if it is within your ability to give them their request, then do it. Obviously, this has to be tempered with other considerations (you cannot give away money that you are carrying that is not yours; you cannot deprive your own family, etc.).

V. 30b is a separate thought:

**Luke 6:30b ...and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back.**

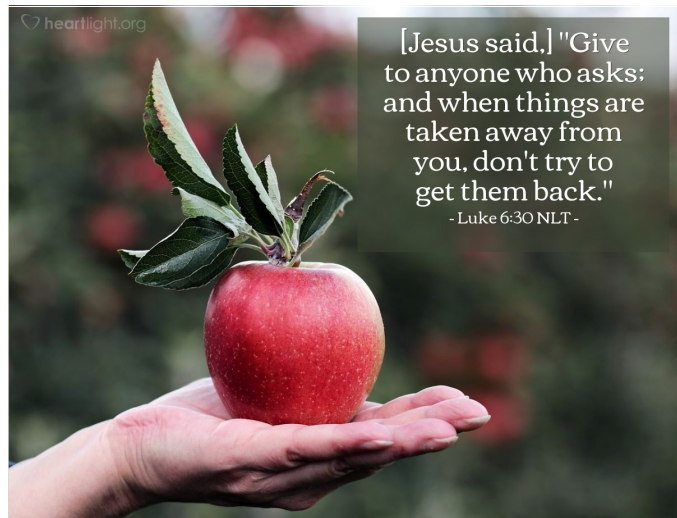
This maxim is separate from the one above. There is no connection between the two, apart from this being your stuff going into the possession of someone else.

Let's say you give something to someone. They asked, you gave it to them and now they have it. You do not ask to get it back; nor do you ask for remuneration.

Again, earthly goods should never stand in the way of presenting the gospel.

Let's say, someone takes something from you; do not demand it back; do not sue them in court to take it back. Again, this is within reason. You may represent or own a company; and stealing from that company could ruin the company. In that situation, you may need to take back what was taken, or even sue for it. However, there are limitations here; and you do not sue a believer, if you can help it. When you are merely cheated and this is a personal vendetta, you let it go. You do not escalate the situation.

Luke 6:30 Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back.



I should have possibly put the next verse all by itself. V. 31 summarizes what has just been said; and it is illustrated with the verses that follow.

**Luke 6:30 (NLT)** (a graphic); from [Heartlight](https://www.heartlight.org/); accessed March 18, 2022.

Luke 6:31a And as you wish that others would do to you, ...

The is the first half of a saying known as *the golden rule*.

Jesus then states a general principle to go by. Everyone has a standard by which they believe they should be treated. Having been in the classroom, I have heard many a student say, "She [referring to a teacher] cannot treat me this way!" Similarly, I have heard teachers bemoan, "Who raised these kids? How do they think that their actions are acceptable? How can they treat me [or others] this way?"

We all know what we expect in treatment; we know how others ought to treat us.

Luke 6:31b ...do so to them.

Jesus says, “Whatever your standard is for people treating you (with respect, with deference, with kindness); then you make certain that you treat others in exactly that same way.

Although many consider this to be the fundamental principle of the Christian life, it is not. Jesus Christ dying for our sins is that fundamental principle. However, this is a good illustration of impersonal love (or love for others, friends or enemies).

There is a specific type of arrogance that this verse makes me think about. There are people who expect respect and deference; but they do not give it to others automatically. You must earn it from them. This is very typical of the thinking of a 16 year old kid (where life is revolving around him). Having been a teacher for nearly 30 years, this is very much how some teens think. They are not going to give you respect *until* you earn it or they like you. However, if you disrespect them even slightly, and they may hold it against you for the rest of their days in your classroom. Don’t behave like a 16 year-old kid to others.

Perhaps we might name this, teen arrogance syndrome.

**Luke 6:31 (NASB)** (a graphic); from [Verse Images](#); accessed January 6, 2022.



Luke 6:31 *And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.*

This is very much the standard of behavior regarding impersonal love.

There is an overall structure to this dissertation, with *love your enemies* at the beginning and end; with the golden rule in the middle—which gives great prominence to this rule.

Jesus now will ask 3 questions of His audience, giving them the grace test, so to speak. Jesus uses the word *sinner* here, but *heathen* I believe better suits our understanding.

Luke 6:32a *"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you?"*

The first question Jesus asks is, “If you simply love those who love you, how is that an expression of grace? How does that distinguish you from anyone else?”

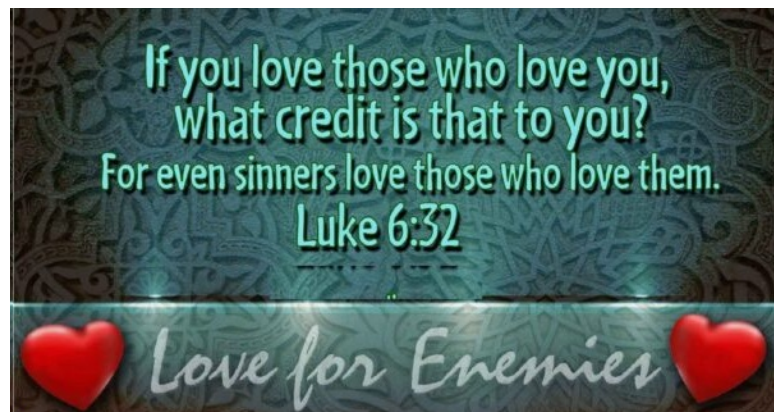
The word translated *benefit* by the ESV is the feminine singular noun *charis* (χάρις) [pronounced *KHAHR-ic*], which means, *grace, graciousness; acceptable, benefit, favour, gift*. R. B. Thieme, Jr. has even referred to this as *impersonal love*. Strong's #5485. More literally, this is, *If you [simply] love those who love you, in what way is [that] a gracious [expression]? Or, If you [simply] love those who love you, in what way is [that] impersonal love?*

Luke 6:32b *For even sinners love those who love them.*

Heathen (or, *sinners*) love the people who love them. So there is nothing impressive about this. There is nothing divine in this. Jesus loved those who hated Him; He loved those who were crucifying Him. Remember, He called upon God the Father to “...*forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing*”? As believers, we are to imitate divine love.

Remember, Jesus has just urged those listening to Him to love their enemies.

Luke 6:32 *"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.*



**Luke 6:32 (GNT)** (a graphic); from [Good News Text](#); accessed January 6, 2022.

## Lessons 184–185 Luke 6:33–36

## Love Your Enemies Part II

My assumption is that Buddy Dano learned a great deal of this information originally from R. B. Thieme, Jr.

### The doctrine of love: summary (Buddy Dano, R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

Summary of Personal and Impersonal Love; 1John 5:2–3

1John 5:2 *“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.”* (NASB)

1. Love is one of the most misunderstood concepts in our culture. It is often and usually confused with certain feelings, certain emotions, or with certain sentiments. Some people equate love with sex; other people today never equate love with sex. Others use the word love so much that it becomes trivialized and loses its real meaning. We have to let the Bible define love rather than let our



## The doctrine of love: summary (Buddy Dano, R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

- experience define love.
2. In the New Testament love is for the believer the highest expression of the spiritual life. Love summarizes the adult spiritual life. Spiritual infants don't love; they have not developed the spiritual character, integrity (or virtue) necessary for there to be love.
  3. Love is the unique mark of the disciple in the New Testament—not the believer but the disciple. There is a distinction between disciple and a believer in the New Testament; as a believer may not be a disciple. A disciple is a student, a person who is putting forth a tremendous amount of effort to fully understand everything that the Word of God teaches. It is certainly possible for a person to have believed in Jesus Christ, and yet go no further than that in the spiritual life. That is, the growth they experience is negligible. John 13:34–35.
  4. Jesus said in that commandment that we are to love **“even as I have loved you.”** Therefore, the standard for understanding divine love is what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross. This is substantiated by a number of verses in 1John, such as 1John 3:16 4:9–10. Love has to be based on something that never changes in order for it to have any integrity and value. It is only the character of God that never changes.
  5. Christian love is evidenced by obedience to the Word; it is not evidenced by feeling. John 14:21 1John 3:17–18.
  6. Those who love God love His Word. Love has to do with wanting to know all we can about a person: how they think, what they like, what they dislike, etc., and you want to be able to please them (what is being described here is *personal love*). The only way we can love God and demonstrate and demonstrate a knowledge of who He is and His value system so that we can live in a way that pleases Him is to know how He thinks. In order to know how He thinks, we have to know His Word, and the only way we are going to know His Word is by being involved in a consistent, dedicated systematic study of the Word of God, making it a priority in life over and above every other priority in life. To love His Word means having to learn His Word.
  7. As we learn God's Word and apply His Word in our life our love for God grows and strengthens. John 14:23 15:10 1John 2:5; 4:12, 16.
  8. The primary way for a believer to grow is under the guidance of a pastor-teacher in a local church. I realize that nearly every Christian organization tells you, “Read your Bible daily,” but that is not ideal; nor is that commanded by the Scriptures themselves. Now, I completely understand that, in some cities, a local church that teaches Bible doctrine is hard, if not impossible to find. God moved me to a place where doctrine is taught regularly and with authority. Because of technology, I have been primarily in churches where the pastor was not actually in front of me, but I am in a group and Bible doctrine is being taught.
  9. It is rare, if not nearly impossible, for a believer to grow spiritually outside of God's design for the believer (under the authority of a pastor-teacher who understands the importance of the teaching of the Word of God).
  10. Love—personal love towards God and impersonal love towards man—is often a

## The doctrine of love: summary (Buddy Dano, R. B. Thieme, Jr.)

- measure of just how far we have moved in the spiritual life.
11. Love, therefore, represents the believer who has advanced to spiritual adulthood because he is abiding with God. It is only in that state of abiding, when we are filled with the Spirit and walking by the Spirit, that that love that the Spirit alone produces in us is manifested.
  12. Love for God develops from our knowledge of Bible doctrine, and in no other way. It is the fruit of the Spirit and is the unique distinguishing mark of the disciple, it is not something that can be naturally generated.
  13. Love for God, then, motivates love for other believers and that is why John can say that, if someone says they love God and yet hates his brother, then he is a liar. There is an intricate and intimate relationship between loving God and loving other believers.
  14. Impersonal love for other believers is the evidence that we truly love God. So that becomes a barometer for spiritual adulthood.

In 1John 5:3a John says, “**For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments...**” Then there is a break so that “**and His commandments are not burdensome**” should go with the next verse. Verse 4 begins, “**For whatever is born of God overcomes the world...**” The English word “For” is the Greek word *hóti* (ὅτι) [pronounced *HOH-tee*] which is an explanatory or causal particle. In this case it is a causal particle and it is explaining the previous sentence. The sentence should read: “**And His commandments are not burdensome because whatever is born of God overcomes the world.**” That begins the next section which focuses on the key word *nikáō* (νικάω) [pronounced *nihk-AH-oh*] which means *to have victory* or *to overcome*. So whatever is born of God has victory over the world, and the words “even our faith” is not talking about salvation but the faith-rest drill.

From <http://www.divineviewpoint.com/sane/dbm/setup/1stJohn/1Jno76.htm>; accessed March 18, 2022 and edited.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. did the original work on this (although he learned a great deal from L. S. Chafer). However, his work is not as easily assessable on the internet.

### Doctrine of Impersonal Love Links

[Divine Impersonal Love](#) (Robert Dean)

[Doctrine of Impersonal Love](#) (Westlake Bible Church)

[Personal love for God must come before impersonal unconditional agape love for all mankind](#) (Robert R. McLaughlin)

[Characteristics of Impersonal Love](#) (Grace Bible Church of Baytown)



## Doctrine of Impersonal Love Links

[Personal and Impersonal Love](#) (Rick Hughes)

[Unconditional Virtue Love](#) (Rev. Thomas Tyree, Jr)

*The Unfailing Love of God* (a book or as a set of audio lessons) can be ordered from R. B. Thieme, Jr. Ministries (without cost):

<https://www.rbthieme.org/Publications/theunfailingloveofgod.html>

Luke 6:33a *And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you?* (ESV)

The English Standard Version, which I use as my basic text in this study, is usually excellent. However here, Jesus is *not* saying, “*What benefit is that to you?*” Let’s examine that final phrase in v. 33a.

We have the feminine singular pronoun; nominative case; interrogative of character of *poios* (ποῖος) [pronounced *POY-os*], which means, *of what sort, of what nature; which [one]; what manner of*. Here, this may be best understood to mean, *in what way or how exactly (is) that*. The morphology of this interrogative pronoun matches up with the key noun in this phrase.

Then we have the present indicative of the absolute status quo verb *to be*.

Also found here is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural pronoun *humin* (ὑμῖν) [pronounced *hoo-MEEN*], in the instrumental case, meaning, *by you [all]*.

Then we have the key noun, the feminine singular of *charis* (χάρις) [pronounced *KHAHR-ic*], which can mean, *benefit*, but it is far more often understood to mean, *grace, graciousness; (unearned, undeserved) favour*. Strong’s #5485.

This gives us, *If you do good to those who do good to you, how exactly is that a gracious [thing] [done] by you?*

Jesus is posing this question: *Let’s say you do good things to other people, but that is simply because they do good to you—how is that any sort of special grace act? How can you expect to receive any credit for that?*

Luke 6:33b *For even sinners do the same.*

What is described here is not some great spiritual accomplishment. Heathen do this all the time. They do favors for people who are nice to them; they do good to those who are good to them. Unbelievers build up *social credit* with other unbelievers all the time.

As R. B. Thieme, Jr. said many times, *if an unbeliever can do it, then it is not the Christian way of life*. The life of the mature believer must go beyond this.

Luke 6:33 *And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you [better, how is [that] a gracious [act] by you]? For even sinners do the same.*

Being good/nice to someone who is good/nice to you, is just normal human behavior. It is nothing special. This is common social exchange among family members and friends.

Luke 6:34a *And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you?*

Now, you lend money out, but you expect to get it back. How is that an example of grace?

Today, when money is loaned, interest is expected as well. It is not an act of special grace to loan out money and expect interest.

We need to caveat this—sometimes you teach your children about borrowing and lending money by lending them a little money, ahead of their allowance (or whatever you pay them, whether for work or whatever<sup>81</sup>). Before age 10, I learned about borrowing money and paying it back from my mother. It was a valuable set of lessons which informed me for the rest of my life. There was not any spiritual growth going on here; it was simply lessons for life. When I borrow money, I paid it back. If I engaged with someone for their services, to repair this or that, I made certain that they were paid. This is simple, normal social interaction which takes place on the human level.

It was quite common among the Jewish people to lend money to other Jewish people and not to collect interest. Now, that has become such a normal expectation today, that lending money and charging interest is not any sort of a spiritual issue.

Now, you might stake a friend or a relative in a business; but being business-minded as I am, I would expect a repayment with interest. I think this helps others to learn good business sense.

There are going to be some instances—perhaps many—where your money is not a personal investment for you, but a gift of charity. When you give, make certain that it is without strings and without any future expectation of anything.

When you give without expectation of anything back, that is grace.

As a person who has been on both sides of giving, I would much rather be the giver than the getter. Unfortunately, as our society becomes more and more degenerate, some people try to receive more benefits from the government than they put in. The more people who make this a goal in life, the more unstable our government becomes.

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<sup>81</sup> I am a big believer in parents requiring work to receive an allowance.

Luke 6:34b **Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount.**

In that era, when it was common to loan money without interest, heathen did this as well.

Luke 6:34 **And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount.**

Again, if unbelievers do something, then that something is not the Christian way of life.

**Luke 6:35–36 (NKJV)** (a graphic); from [Pinterest](#); accessed April 22, 2022.

In vv. 35–36, Jesus sums up the previous verses. This is both the conclusion and application of what He has been teaching.

Luke 6:35a **But love your enemies, and do good,...**

The same principle applies. Unbelievers are generally nice to their friends and members of their family whom they like. The believer who is nice to their friends and family—this is not really very revolutionary. It is normal human interaction.



**Love your enemies.** What exactly does that mean? Do you find people that you cannot stand and work up some sort of positive emotion towards them? That means to exercise impersonal love towards your enemies; it means that you should treat them in the way that you want to be treated. Your thoughts and words and actions towards them should be the same as those towards your friends and relatives (the ones you like).

**Application:** I belong to a fb site named *Christianity vs Atheism* (or something like that). In these debates, which I have taken part in, those who do not believe in God have, as one of their goals, to bring Christians down to their level. They want Christians to attack them, call them names, and insult them. If they can achieve that goal, then they have proven again, in their own minds, that Christians are no different than anyone else. Therefore, when talking with unbelievers, you cannot get down on their level; nor can you act self-righteous and superior to them (by saying, for instance, *I am not going to get down on your level*). Even in a debate, the believer is not looking to out-debate the unbeliever; he is looking for the opportunity to tell them more about Christ Jesus.

Luke 6:35a **But love your enemies, and do good,...**

Believers need to do good to their enemies.

No matter who you are, you will have enemies in life. I know that you don't want any; nor do I; but every believer is going to have enemies. Most unbelievers have enemies in life. Sure, sometimes we are the ones to blame for some of the enemies that we have, but even on our best behavior, we will still have enemies.

You cannot spend your time plotting vengeance against your enemies. You will have enemies who will do some really lousy things to you. They may cause you to lose your job, they may impact your life negatively in some way (cause you financial grief or social problems). Nevertheless, you do not figure out, *how can I get them back?* Instead, you pray for them; and you pray for them to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. When given the opportunity, you do good to them.

Luke 6:35b ...and lend, expecting nothing in return,...

There are times when the believer should give out his money without expecting in return.

Jerusalem in particular, but all of Israel, would face some very desperate times over the next 4 decades. Many of the people who came to hear Jesus will find themselves in the middle of that. They are to act as God's emissaries and offer up help whenever they can.

**Application:** It is much better to give than to receive. If God puts you in a position where you are able to give, that is grace. Do not squander that grace.

Luke 6:35c ...and your reward will be great,...

People who listen to what Jesus says and then act upon it will enjoy a great reward. Now, bear in mind, this is directed towards those who have believed in Jesus, who are trusting Him. There is no reward distributed to those who reject Him, no matter what they do.

Luke 6:35d ...and you will be sons of the Most High,...

Those who believe in Jesus, and therefore, follow what He says, they will be considered sons of the Most High (that is, the sons of God).

Positionally, we become sons of the Most High by faith in Christ Jesus (this is called positional truth or salvation adjustment to the justice of God). However, experientially, when we reveal God's nature through our own thoughts, word and actions, then we are revealing the characteristics of our Heavenly Father.

Luke 6:35e ...for He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

God is gracious to those who are ungrateful and to those who are evil (or hurtful). Prior to salvation, this is who we are. We are evil and ungrateful; we are in a state of rebellion

against God. The NIV tells us: *...while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him...* (Romans 5:10a).

This is very much who we were (ideally speaking, no believer should be either of those things; but that is not always the case). We reflect the character of God by being gracious towards those who do not deserve grace or kindness. Obviously, this is much easier said than done.

Luke 6:35 *But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.*

So there is no excuse, Jesus then explains what His disciples need to do—they need to love their enemies, not just their friends and family. He is telling them, “Do good to those who are not your friends and family; and *lend* (here, in the context, this really means, *give*) with no expectation of a return on your investment.”

As a believer, you should reflect the character of God.

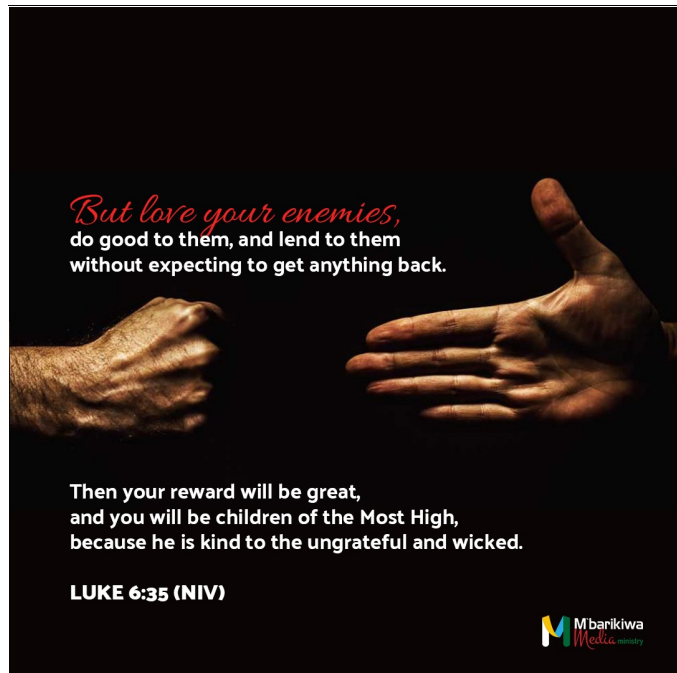
Let me put this another way: if your father raised you right, then this should be reflected in your life. When a person knows the right thing to do—he learned this from his father—and he does that, he reflects the character of his father. Ideally speaking, this is what every good son should do.

I have worked with many people over the years where it is clear that they have a strong sense of morality and ethics. Their word is their bond; what they say they will do, they do.

The same applies to our Heavenly Father. He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil (for such we ourselves were). Our compassion should extend beyond our circle of friends and relatives.

**Luke 6:35 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Mbarikiwa Media](https://mbarikiwa.com); accessed January 7, 2022.

Luke 6:36 *Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*





As sons, we should reveal the characteristics of our father; He is merciful and, therefore, we ought to be merciful as well. He is compassionate, and we ought to show compassion as well.

Luke 6:36 **Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.**

As you learn more and more about the Christian life and about what Jesus has done for us, this verse asks us to act towards others as Jesus acted towards us. That amount of love and compassion is impossible, apart from the filling of the Holy Spirit. Especially when you are surrounded by people you just want to bop in the head.

Therefore, you need to know how to access the Holy Spirit. There is but one way—you name your sin or sins to God after you sin. This will restore fellowship with God; and therefore, you will be controlled by the Holy Spirit once again (R. B. Thieme, Jr. designated this *the rebound technique*). Apart from *rebound*, you have no spiritual life. We all get out of fellowship, and naming our sins puts us back into fellowship.



**Luke 6:36 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [KCIS 630](#); accessed January 6, 2022.

## Lesson 186: Luke 6:37

## Judge Not, Lest You be Judged

Luke 6:37a **"Judge not, and you will not be judged;...**

This particular phrase is designated by some liberal theologians and by some unbelievers as being the heart the soul of what Jesus taught; and they completely misinterpret it. They often interpret this to mean, *do not be critical of anyone else*. Or, they understand this to mean, *everyone has their own truth; respect the Charley Brown's truth*. But that is not at all what this passage means.

When you assign sins to the life of someone else and judge him based upon these sins, that is the sort of judging that Jesus speaks of here. We are not allowed to assign, for



whatever reasons, sins to others, not really knowing what is occurring. In fact, in most cases, sins committed by others are really not our business. Certainly, depending upon the proximity and the nature of another person's sin, they might be considered our business, but that is the exception and not the rule. 99.9999% of all sins committed are not our business. Don't misunderstand me here. Let's say you witness a hit-and-run, then certainly you participate in the legal process. You don't say, "I didn't see a thing" when you actually did. My point here is, you do not get involved with other people's sins; you do not try to run the life of another person. Apart from your own children—and you do run their lives to some degree—you do not get involved with the sins committed by other believers.

Religious types constantly assigned sins to Jesus, or implied what He was doing was wrong or not well-thought out. Part of the reason why Jesus was first sent to Pilate was the accusation that Jesus was some sort of revolutionary (which He was not). Jesus did not commit any crimes; but He was persecuted by others nonetheless.

So that we have a balanced approach in our social interactions, we are allowed to evaluate who and what people are—particularly when they present themselves as such. When you hire people, you are allowed to evaluate them, based upon their application, verified in all of its points, and based upon their presentation of themselves to you.

When someone asks you for a recommendation, that recommendation should be honest. You should not say *X* about someone else, when you know *not X* to be the truth. You should not include information which you suspect is true or have heard by gossip. You say what you know to be true about that person; what you have witnessed. You speak to your interactions with them.

As a parent, you have responsibility for your children, and, from time to time, that will involve evaluating their friends and their actions. You also will evaluate relatives with whom they spend time. Sometimes, you provide guidance and your own observations regarding the actions of relatives; and sometimes, you allow your child to figure it out for himself (depending upon his age and what you have taught him up to that point in time). Sometimes, relatives can be excellent illustrations of principles of doctrine and divine establishment.

As a young person, I had a relative with whom I spent a great deal of time. For most of my life—without anyone telling me—I recognized that person was my bad example. Most of the time, what he said was incorrect and what he did was wrong.

Quite obviously, it is tricky when a parent considers his own children and their interactions with relatives. How much do you say? What do you say? When do you say it? There are no simple answers; and bear in mind, whatever you say to your child is probably going to be said to that relative. It takes Christian maturity. Sometimes, teaching your children spiritual principles but without using your relatives as living examples is best.

In a church, there should be a careful approach of the board of deacons and the pastor. R. B. Thieme, Jr., for instance, did not like long hair and beards; however, he recognized

that some people, who know nearly nothing, would wander into his congregation and they might have long hair and/or a beard (the first violates a norm of Scripture and the second does not). However, despite the Colonel's predilections, no one was ever hassled on the basis of that (or, they were not supposed to be).

The long hair aspect often took care of itself. The believer with the long hair, assuming that he kept coming to Berachah, might cut his hair (1) on the basis of hearing the pertinent Scripture taught or (2) out of simple conformity. Sometimes, when a person sees people look the way that they ought (and at Berachah Church, that was how people ought to look), they sometimes in their own observation saw for themselves a better way.

However, the privacy of the priesthood works like this: no one in the church was ever supposed to go up to someone like that and tell him how to dress or cut his hair. No one, having believed in Jesus Christ, immediately accepts all of the Biblical norms and standards. That takes time. You do not keep a person out of church until they conform to all of those norms and standards that they would learn in church. Do you see how that is illogical that is? There is no Biblical authority for making out a list of things believers should and should not do, and handing this list to every new believer. There is no authorization for some sort of intrusive mentorship where you follow a new believer around, and criticize his life (a practice called mentoring in some churches).

Now, two males (or two females) may show up together all of the time for Bible class. *Judging* would be assuming that there is a relationship there which is suspect. However, if such a couple *puts on a show*, so to speak, of great affection, then that problem needs to be addressed. To be clear, it is not wrong for a gay man or a gay couple to go to a church; because every one of us who walks into a church sins. We have to be careful of holding a particular set of sins against someone else as being much worse than our own. On the other hand, if that person is coming into church to advocate for homosexuality, that is something different altogether (this would be along the lines of people coming into the church to rally for Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton<sup>82</sup>).

*The NET Bible: As the Gospel makes clear, with the statement do not judge Jesus had in mind making a judgment that caused one to cut oneself off from someone so that they ceased to be reached out to (Luke 5:27-32; 15:1-32). Jesus himself did make judgments about where people stand (Luke 11:37-54), but not in such a way that he ceased to continue to offer them God's grace.*<sup>83</sup>

Luke 6:37b ...condemn not, and you will not be condemned;...

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<sup>82</sup> I write this in 2018. Electioneering, even when the choice of crystal clear, has never been allowed at Berachah Church. Bobby Thieme maintains this position, being careful not to tip his hand toward this candidate or that.

<sup>83</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?luk6.htm> (footnote); accessed October 29, 2019.

You do not get to pronounce someone guilty of a suspected sin. If a person advocates a sin in church (such as, adultery), that cannot be tolerated. However, if you suspect a person of adultery, you cannot condemn them for that. There are times you might be pretty darned sure about a sin that someone has committed; but unless they are out-and-out advocating for something that is wrong (in public in and around the church), then it is not an issue. This is even if they advocate for sinful things away from church. It is not our place to police the actions of other believers.

All of this is a case-by-case situation. Sometimes an usher can call it; sometimes the pastor-teacher can call it; and sometimes, it may take a meeting with the board of deacons in order to make a church policy.

One of the examples which we have is from 1Cor. 5:1–6—a man was said to *have* his father's wife. We generally understand this to mean that this man lived with and cohabited with the wife of his father (not necessarily the man's mother). There are several details missing—did he bring his father's wife and parade her in the church as his girlfriend? Was this occurring on the side? We do not know, but apparently everyone knew about it. In fact, the Corinthians were proud that they were so grace-oriented as to tolerate such a one. Paul did not see this as acting in grace; this was a clear moral boundary that had been broken; and the man was given by Paul over to Satan for the sin unto death.

Interestingly enough, the people of Corinth responded with so much enthusiasm that Paul later had to tell them to back off. Paul had delivered the man over to Satan, he responded with obedience to God, and the matter was closed. It was not up to the Corinthians to continue to hold this man in contempt (2Cor. 2:5–11).

Several points are to be made here: (1) it is valid to judge a person for their overt behavior and to exclude them from church if they continue in that behavior. (2) When a person is handed over to Satan, you get out of the way. (3) Once God is done with a person, and they are still alive, they can be welcomed back into the congregation. There is no reason that this man remain punished forever.

Now, regarding a person's overt behavior—this is certainly a judgment call. The example given—a man walks into church with long hair or a woman shows up looking kind of trampy—this is a place where they are simply given their privacy. No one needs to tell them how they should groom or dress themselves. However, electioneering—like wearing a red Trump cap or a *build-back-better* cap<sup>84</sup> (if such a thing exists) has no place in a church. A person wearing clothing or buttons which advocates for anti-Christian or anti-establishment viewpoints needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

There are movements which, on occasion, will target a church; and these movements will see what they can get away with. One week, they may show up with rainbow themed attire; the next they are wearing buttons with obscure sets of initials, and the next, they are showing physical affection for someone of the same sex (which has to be distinguished

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<sup>84</sup> I wrote this portion 2020–2021

between two pre-teen or early teen girls who are good friends and sometimes run from point A to point B holding hands).

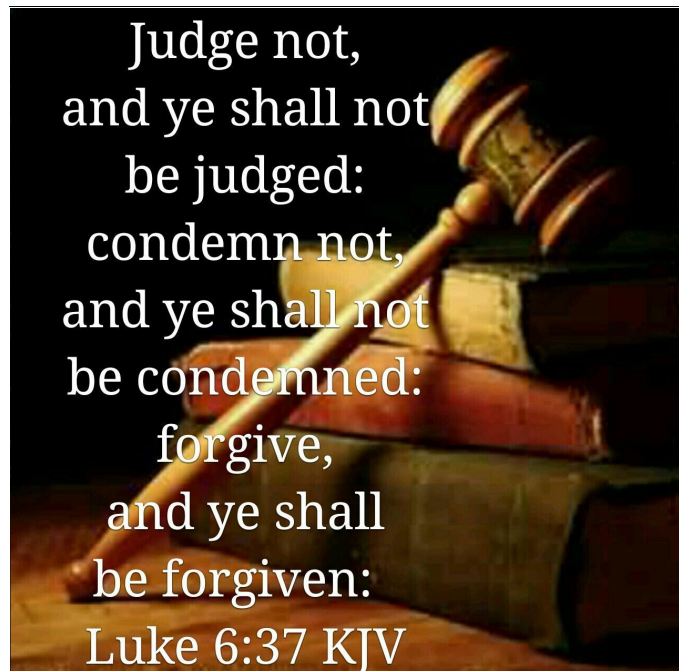
When such things occur, the church needs to have a policy, and deacons have to be careful not to assume anything. Sometimes, verse-by-verse exegesis that goes on for 45 minutes to an hour is enough to discourage anyone from showing up simply to make some sort of human viewpoint social statement. Some unbelievers who are attempting to tweak members of a church find this not being worth their time. Others, hearing truth for the first time, may have an entirely different response.

Luke 6:37c ...forgive, and you will be forgiven;...

Christianity is fundamentally about God forgiving us because Jesus Christ died for our sins. So, we need to be willing to forgive others for wrongs they have committed against us. If God can forgive us, then we ought to forgive others.

So that there is no confusion here, we are forgiven by God when we believe in Jesus. Charlie Brown may have stolen from me, and I forgive him for that; but God does not forgive me *unless* I have believed in His Son. Forgiving another person does not mean that God forgives me.

Luke 6:37 "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven;...



It is not our place as believers to spend our time judging other believers (or unbelievers, for that matter) and condemning them. God is the Perfect Judge; God is able to correctly judge and He is able to correctly condemn. We are in no position to do that.

The teachings of the Old Testament had become a club to beat others with. The religious hierarchy would judge those whom they did not approve of; and they would condemn those who did not meet their standards. Jesus was a prime example of that misapplication of the Mosaic Law.

**Luke 6:37 (KJV)** (a graphic); from [Pinterest](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

We studied v. 37 last time:

Luke 6:37 "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven;...

In the parallel passage in Matthew, Jesus went off on a completely different direction on that day. That was a different day, a different sermon, and Jesus began the that part of the sermon in the same way, but then took His teaching into a different direction:

Matthew 7:1–5	
Scripture (ESV)	Commentary
Matthew 7:1 "Judge not, that you be not judged.	You will note just how similar these two sections of the sermon begin. Nearly the exactly same words. In both cases, the concept of judgment is the same—you assign a sin or sins to someone else—you may know this to be a fact and you may not have any real idea.
Matthew 7:2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.	Here, Jesus begins to explain the consequences of judging another person.  You may, yourself, determine what sort of punishment they ought to receive (a public dressing down), but this punishment will be carefully measured out (by God) and given back to you.
Matthew 7:3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?	We all sin. What Jesus suggests is taking place here is, we see this tiny spec of dust in the eye of another (which represents the sin we are accusing them of), but we have this massive log in our own eye (which represents our sins).
Matthew 7:4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye?	Now, if you have a log in your own eye, how is it possible for you to see well enough to remove the spec which is in the eye of the other person?
Matthew 7:5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.	"You are a hypocrite," Jesus says. "Remove the log in your own eye first." How do we do that? We rebound that sin (we name it to God). Once we acknowledge our own wrongdoing to God, we may not be so inclined to worry about the sins (real or imagined) of someone else.



The log that is in your eye might even represent your sin of judging.

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Later in the sermon on the plain, Jesus will cover these same principles as are found in Matthew, but He will talk about some other things first.

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In contrast to the sermon record by Matthew, the sermon recorded by Luke goes off in a completely different direction. Next, Jesus says that a man must give of his own resources:

Luke 6:38a ...give, and it will be given to you.

A contrast is being set up here: the giving of one's substance is contrasted with giving one's judgment.

The believer has a lot to give—maybe it is time, money or the gospel—but every believer should have a habit of giving of his substance. God certainly blesses us, but that does not mean that we hoard our blessings. After all, at death, how many things are you taking to heaven with you?

We are not saved because we give a tithe to the church or a hot meal to a hungry family; we are given salvation if we believe in Jesus.

Jesus had His disciples there on both occasions (in the Matthew and Luke accounts), and He, no doubt, mixed up the content and the emphasis to some extent for their benefit. Jesus may have thought that a slight change in direction was called for in the different sermons. The same principle can lead you in a myriad of directions, depending upon how you want to apply it. In Matthew, Jesus taught about the hypocrisy of judging; here in Luke, He teaches that giving of one's substance is far better than giving one's judgment.

In our passage, we will eventually go to the place where Jesus went in Matt. 7, but in a slightly different context (see [Luke 6:39–42](#)).

On many occasions, the religious crowd judged Jesus, attributing to Him false motives or sins which He did not commit. That is wrong-headed judging, which Jesus has spoken of in previous times. However, here, Jesus is making a different point.

Luke 6:38b Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over,...

In that era, there was a lot of exchanging in the market place that occurred. There were proper ways to measure out dry goods (like flour or wheat grains), and it is so described in this portion of v. 38.

*The NET Bible: The background to the image pressed down, shaken together, running over is pouring out grain for measure in the marketplace. One often poured the grain into a container, shook it to level out the grain*

*and then poured in some more. Those who are generous have generosity running over for them.*<sup>85</sup>

The meaning of this is, when you give (while in fellowship), then you receive back far more than you have given, so that it is overflowing. God is the ultimate Giver; and He expects us to reflect His graciousness.

Luke 6:38c ...will be put into your lap.

When a person gives out legitimate measures, then it is normal for him to receive legitimate measures in return.

Here, when a person has freely given, then what he receives in return has overflowed out onto the lap of his garment.

When God is the Giver, we receive far more than we ought to.

Luke 6:38d For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

This phrase does not refer specifically to measuring out dry goods, but basically, that believers set the standards in their interactions with others; and then, quite often, they receive the same back.

The New Living Testament expresses this as, The amount you give will determine that amount you get back. This is strictly reward for the believer. This is unrelated to unbelievers.

Luke 6:38 ...give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

One of the best arguments for giving is, God will give back to you, and far more than what you have given. Now, this is a principle, subject to the other principles of the spiritual life. First of all, let's say you donated \$100 to a homeless person, does this mean that you will go back home, and there will be \$200 in your mailbox? There are two considerations here. As a believer, we need to be *in the Spirit* (or in fellowship with God) in order for our actions to have any eternal meaning. That is achieved via 1Johin 1:9 (when you name your sins to God and God forgives you all of your sins and restores you to fellowship). Secondly, although God gives far more than what you give, He may give you something altogether different than what you gave. Let's say, you gave money; God may give you an entirely different sort of blessing (spiritual blessing, vocational blessing, family blessing).

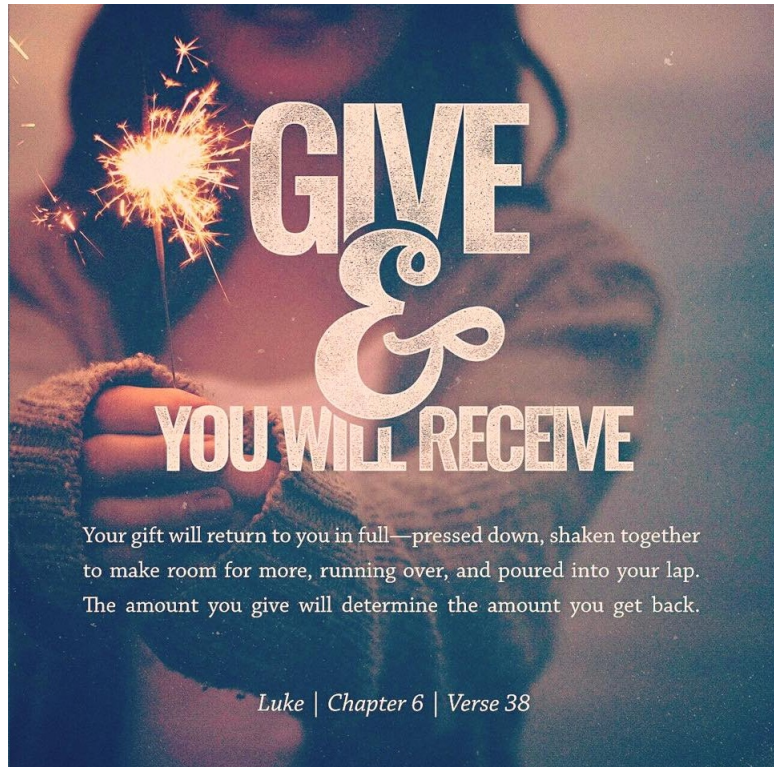
As R. B. Thieme, Jr. often said, “God is not a genie and God is not a slot machine.” Therefore, your motivation needs to be in check when you give. When you give simply to

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<sup>85</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?luk6.htm> (footnote); accessed October 29, 2019.

get back from God, your motivation is wrong. If your motivation is wrong, then your actions are not divine good.

So that there is no misunderstanding, two people can do exactly the same good deed, and the first person is performing divine good while the second is doing human good. It is not just the deed itself, but your actual state of being when you perform that good deed. If you are in fellowship (and therefore, filled with the Spirit), then you are performing divine good. If you have any sin in your life, including wrong motivation, then you are performing human good (and all human good will be burned at the final judgment).



**Luke 6:38 (New Living Testament)** (a graphic); from [Facebook](#); accessed January 6, 2022.

Now let's take vv. 37–38 as a whole:

Luke 6:37–38 "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

The believer is not to spend his life judging others, condemning others, and refusing to forgive others. The Christian life is better spent by giving (while in fellowship). God the gracious Giver will appropriately respond.

## **Lesson 188: Luke 6:39–40**

## **The Blind Leading the Blind**

Jesus continues to teach in His sermon on the plain.

Luke was not there for this sermon. Someone who was there told Luke what Jesus said. Even with the help of God the Holy Spirit, it is clear that we do not have Jesus' entire sermon here. He likely did not jump from v. 38 (*Judge not...*) to 39 (*The blind leading the*

*blind...*) in His sermon. This is simply another topic which He covered that was remembered by a witness interviewed by Luke.

Luke 6:39a **He also told them a parable:...**

Jesus is going to explain some more principles to His disciples and the others who are there. He first states this as a parable; an illustration which people pretty much have to agree with. That is, on the surface, virtually everyone in Jesus' audience will agree to the content of the parable itself.

Then Jesus will explain exactly what the underlying meaning of the parable is (if someone asks for an explanation). On other occasions, He simply lets the parable stand without explanation (or, without a recorded explanation).

The word *parable* is actually a transliteration. The Greek word is *parabolê* (παραβολή) [pronounced *par-ab-ol-AY*], which is a compound word made up of *para* (παρά) [pronounced *paw-RAW*], which means *along side, next to* (Strong's #3844) and *ballô* (βάλλω) [pronounced *BAHL-low*], which means *to throw* (Strong's #906); and therefore, *parable* means *to throw along side of, to throw something next to something else*. Strong's #3850. A parable is story, which may be simple or complex. However, the surface meaning of a parable is something that everyone in the audience is familiar with. It is a part of their lives; they understand it; they relate to it. But thrown along side that story is the point that Jesus is trying to make with that story—its underlying meaning, if you will.

Luke 6:39b **..."Can a blind man lead a blind man?**

It ought to be clear that one blind man cannot lead another blind man around. They will both walk into walls, or out in the middle of a busy street, or into a ditch. It would make no sense. A blind person must only be guided by someone who is able to see.

Luke 6:39c **Will they not both fall into a pit?**

The result of a blind man leading another blind man is, they both fall into a ditch. Everyone understands this; this makes perfect sense. In this particular era, this pit probably refers to a well or a pit dug in order to find water (or a dried up well). This is more than them stumbling and falling; this can be a very devastating fall, meaning that is imperative that the blind man have a sighted man to guide him. In Texas, we might say, *Will they not both fall into a drainage ditch?*

Considering the parable and its surface meaning, this is something that no one in the audience would argue with. It is self-evident. However, sometimes what a parable means is not so easily accepted by the people in the audience. In fact, this is the reason that Jesus often used parables. He tells them something which is true, something that they all agree with. And then, while they are nodding their heads up and down, Jesus explains his

underlying point (or He allows for those in His audience to later revisit this parable and to reflect upon its meaning).

Luke 6:39 He also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?"

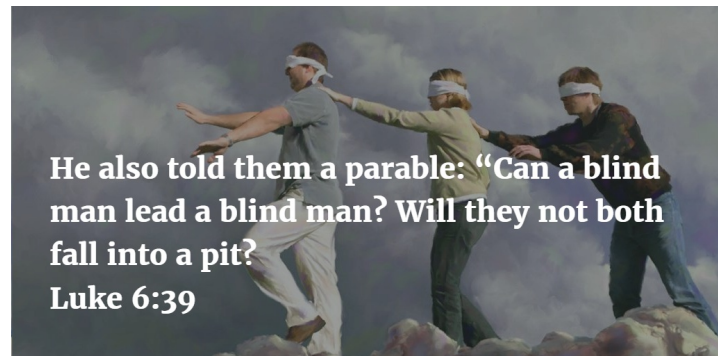
Jesus is able to see. Jesus has the wisdom of the entire Old Testament. The teaching of an unsaved pharisee is like a blind man leading another blind man. The teaching of Jesus is analogous to a person with sight leading around a person who is blind.

**Luke 6:39 (ESV)** (a graphic); from [Ola Tubi](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

Next Jesus explains exactly what He is teaching.

Luke 6:40a A disciple is not above his teacher,...

A disciple is not above, or better than or greater than his teacher. The teacher will guide him, just as a man with sight guides a blind man. The teacher has knowledge in a particular area; the disciple (that is, the student without portfolio) does not.



The teacher is analogous to the man with sight; the student (disciple) is analogous to the blind man. The student finds it necessary to depend upon the teaching of a learned man to guide him.

There is this confused notion today that anyone can read the Bible, give their interpretation, and what they think a passage says is just as valid as the opinion of any pastor-teacher. That is simply wrong. If a pastor-teacher has had some training in the original languages (extensive training is best), if he knows something about the history of the Biblical era, if he is able to put together a cohesive, dispensationally correct summing up of what the Scriptures teach, then 99 times out of 100, he is going to understand and explain a passage better than a student who has read a couple of books or commentaries.

People, like myself, who got to attend Berachah Church in its heyday, enjoyed 7 or 8 classes of intense teaching every single week (a typical class ran for 55 minutes to 1 hour 25 minutes). Even though that is not quite as intense as a seminary, bear in mind that easily a third of what is taught in a seminary (or more) is wrong or worthless. Thousands of Berachah students, like myself, received that teaching over a period of 20–40 years (and more!).

I know that many pastor-teachers went out from Berachah, and were quite discouraged. Instead of starting a church where the parishioners could not find a seat (as was true for



Berachah Church for most of two decades), many pastors who came out of Berachah found themselves overseeing congregations of 5 or 10 or 30 believers (sometimes more). No one had the packed house that Berachah had. These pastors also found out that teaching more than 3 or 4 classes a week was not just really hard to do, but that their congregations were rarely interested in more than 3 or 4 classes (huge numbers often felt that attending one lesson a week on Sunday was paying homage enough to God).

My point is, many excellent teachers came out of Berachah Church with an excellent theological background, but found themselves facing down a study schedule that they could not match; and a small congregation which was a lot less enthusiastic than they were hoping for.

Nevertheless, what Jesus is teaching here is correct:

Luke 6:40a **A disciple is not above his teacher,...**

Remember, this talk of disciples and teachers is all related to a blind man leading another blind man around.

If you are the student, then do not think that you are equal to your teacher in knowledge.

Luke 6:40b **...but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.**

This second point is very encouraging—the disciple can learn, they can be prepared, their souls can be renovated. There potentially will come a time when their ability to teach others will be equivalent to the teacher who taught them. A disciple can be like his teacher (not in terms of mannerisms or personality, but in terms of his doctrinal understanding).

Prepare yourself for this: the believer taught by Jesus can, with training, teach as well as Jesus. In fact, it is possible that, in any given era, we can have some of the greatest Bible teachers in the history of man. It is even possible that a Bible teacher today can know more than the Apostle Paul did and teach it better.

I believe that R. B. Thieme, Jr. was one of those men. Few men have labored in the Word as he did; and few men have been able to prepare others for their future as believers as Bob did.

One of Bob's many great contributions to theology was a new vocabulary which made his teaching come alive to a new generation. The staid vocabulary from the King James Version had served its purpose, but was no longer reaching a people who lacked that vocabulary (admittedly, I am one of those people, who always thought that Shakespeare could be improved if he was translated into English).

The vocabulary and sentence structure of the King James Version is very similar to the writings of Shakespeare. Some young people can enter into a church, and it is almost as if the pastor is speaking Latin, when he quotes the KJV.



R. B. Thieme, Jr. provided a new spiritual vocabulary when one was sorely needed.

Back to the sermon on the plain:

Luke 6:40 **A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.**

The person with authority and knowledge teaches. However, this will be a point at which the disciple can become fully trained. Do not expect this to take place after a few years, or 5 years or even 10 years. That all takes time.

**Luke 6:40 (New Living Translation)** (a graphic); from [A Satisfied Spirit](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

Now let's read v. 40 when taken in the context of v. 39:

Luke 6:39–40 **He also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.**



The blind man leading the blind man is one disciple, without knowledge, leading another disciple, without knowledge. When young people meet for a home Bible study, and they all read a passage, and everyone says, "This is what I think it says." That is a prime example of the blind leading the blind.

This parable can also refer to an unregenerate teacher of the Law attempting to teach the Law. God's Word was designed to be taught by teachers who have a fundamental understanding of it—and the second birth is fundamental to the spiritual life. A person must believe in God as He has revealed Himself; and, in the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union, God has revealed Himself in His Son. The person who has not believed in Jesus Christ is the blind man. The disciple who is newly born again, he is also considered blind. However, under a well-prepared, well-qualified teacher, he can come up to the level of his teacher (the seeing man who guides him).

With v. 41, Jesus launches into a new topic.

Luke 6:41a *Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye,...*

In the book of Matthew, this topic was a continuation of *“Judge not, so that you are not judged.”* Here, in this sermon, it is presented as a new topic.

Jesus, at any time, had perhaps 50 or 100 disciples who traveled along with Him. They heard all of His sermons. Therefore, even though He often taught very similar principles in neighboring towns, He also mixed things up enough to keep the interest of His most faithful disciples.

This particular principle is not unlike the blind leading the blind. They are related in such a way as to cause the Lord to go from one to the other.

There is a speck—probably referring to a small sin—in the eye of your brother (a fellow believer). This could even refer to a sin which the brother has not committed but you think is there (Jesus is addressing members of His audience using 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular verbs). So, there is you and there is this other believer and he appears to have (according to you) some small deficiency in his life.

As is a fundamental truth of human nature, it is much easier to run the life of someone else than it is to regulate your own life. Their defects, mistakes and sins are much easier to spot, and the solution for their wrongdoing is much clearer to another person. How many times have we observed another person and thought to ourselves, “Well, here’s your damn problem...”? That is so much easier to do than to sort out our own lives.

Luke 6:41b *...but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?*

Jesus says, “By comparison, you have a log in your eye.” The idea is, the log is so great that how can you see anything else? What this means is, you have a much greater defect or deficiency in your life; and that ought to be what stands out to you. Not this tiny little speck that someone else has in their eye.

It is also human nature to tend to overlook, downplay or not even recognize our own sins. It is human nature to want to tell other people what to do in order to improve their spiritual lives. Looking at ourselves with the same critical approach is not nearly as much fun.

Luke 6:41 *Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?*

Jesus asks, “How is it that you can see that tiny speck in the eye of another believer? You have a log in your own eye! Surely that log obscures your vision.”

Jesus continues:

Luke 6:42a *How can you say to your brother,...*

You are overly concerned about your brother, so you talk to him about what you see as a problem, which is a minor problem (compared to you).

Luke 6:42b ...'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,'...

Here you are offering to rid that speck in your brother's eye. What you are saying is, "Let me help you out with this minor sin or deficiency in your life." But how can you even see it, if you have a log in your own eye?

Now, there is such a thing as helping a fellow believer to rebound. There are two ways that this can be done. Many believers do not even know 1John 1:9 or, if they know it, they think that it is somehow tied to salvation (or they do not really understand it). It is certainly possible that you will interact with believers who do not understand how to get back into fellowship, and you help them out by telling them, "You simply name your sin or sins to God, and you are restored to fellowship." You may know a Catholic, and perhaps they are open somewhat to truth (some actually are); and you can show them 1John1:9, explain it to them, and then let it go. They may use this information in the future (and they may not).

The second way that you can help a believer to rebound is to help to identify a sin for him. For instance, I have done some horrendous stuff in the past where, these are sins from 40 or 50 years ago, that I still remember, and still feel bad about. I also recognize that those sins were forgiven me a long time ago, so that it is sin for me to dwell on these past sins or to feel guilty for doing them (I have even apologized to some people, and still feel guilty about what I did).

Some believers do not realize that dredging up sins from the past in order to feel bad about them—that in itself is a sin. So you name that sin (the sin of dredging up old sins) and move on. **Whatever is not of faith is sin.** Faith is understanding that your sins from the past—no matter what they were—have been forgiven by God. Feeling guilty for those sins, days, months or even years later is *not of faith*; it is sin. So you name that guilt to God. Now, I can guarantee you that you may feel really bad about the sins of your past, but you don't feel guilty about feeling bad. Yet the sin you don't feel bad about is what you name to God, rather than the sin you feel bad about (the sin that God forgave you for years ago).

Let me give a specific example. Let's say that you committed the sin of adultery and you are aware that, for decades, that sin has impacted the entire family of the person that you committed adultery with. From time to time, you will see a member of the family, be reminded of the pain and devastation that you caused, and feel bad about it all over again. Or you may simply remember what you did, and how it interfered with the lives of others, and you feel guilty for doing that.

To be clear, that you are feeling bad about committed that sin is itself a sin. Now, you do not feel guilty about reliving that sin and feeling the devastation which you caused all over again; but you feel guilty about the original sin. You do not have to confess the sin of adultery again (I get you have confessed it a half-dozen times, just in case). But, you feeling bad about having committed that sin a long time ago—well, that is a sin as well.

And you do need to confess that to God (even though you may find remembering that sin from your deep dark past to almost be a cathartic experience).

Okay, let's say I have just described something that you do on a regular basis. Does that mean that you have been out of fellowship the first time that you felt guilty about the original sin? No! Because, at some point, you committed another sin—something else which you clearly understood to be a sin—and God forgave the sin that you confessed and He forgave you for your pangs of guilt. Remember what 1John 1:9 says: *If we name our sins* [sins which we are aware are sins], *He is able and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* [unknown sins]. Those final 7 words tell us that, even if you did not confess some things that you did not recognize as being sin (such as, pangs of guilt for a sin of long ago), you still got forgiven by God for those guilt pangs, the moment you named your known sins to God.

Let's get back on topic:

Luke 6:42c *...when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye?*

So, you offer to help out another believer with a problem that you see in his life; but you are unable to see the major problem in your own life (and the parable that Jesus is using here suggests that your sin is far worse than the sin of your spiritual brother).

In many cases, the speck that you see in the eye of another believer might not even be a sin, but it is something which you have assumed is occurring in his life. In other words, you are judging this other believer and assigning a sin to him which he may not even be committing. This judging which you are doing is the log in your eye. The speck in the eye of the other believer might not even exist.

Luke 6:42d *You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye,....*

Jesus calls you a hypocrite. "You're the one with the problem; take care of your own problem first," Jesus says.

Well, why and how do we take care of our own problem? We name that sin to God, and that sin is forgiven. We might take a moment and recognize, *I don't even know if my own brother has sinned; I am judging him!* And just like that, acknowledging your sin results in God forgiving you temporally and restoring you to fellowship in time. At that point, you can determine whether or not you would be any help to the other believer. You may even recognize that the speck that you thought you saw, wasn't really there.

Luke 6:42e *...and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.*

Once you solve your own major problem—removing the sin in your life via rebound (1John 1:9), then you are able to offer help to someone else (or, by doctrinal discernment recognize that this believer you had intended to help does not really need your help).

Luke 6:42 How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

This can also be about a person who is overly worried about the sin of another. It is not our business, in general, to get wrapped up in the sinful behavior of others. This does not mean that when the Bible teaches X is sin, that the pastor-teacher should ignore teaching that; or that we as believers, ignore what is sinful in Scripture (when applying the Scriptures to ourselves). We do tend to minimize our own sins, but become shocked by the sins of others. This is because we all have different areas of weakness. If I am self-righteous and religious, the sins I commit might be, for the most part, hidden from others (sometimes, even from myself). But if I see another believer at a wild party or with a bottle of beer in his hand, I might think to myself, *this guy is obviously getting drunk and hanging out with the wrong crowd—maybe I will speak to him about it*. Well, before I do that, I might want to remove the log in my own eye.

This does not mean that we ignore the sins of others or that we should not teach our children about what is sinful and what is not? You may know that John the Herald spoke to one of the Herod's about taking his brother's wife as his own. A person who is a celebrity (and rulers would be celebrities in this era) can affect the general population with his sins which are out in the open like that.

There are movements today which glorify transgenderism or homosexuality and as believers, we oppose those. That does not mean that we march against them or have counter demonstrations, but we certainly can protect our children from them, as best we can; and when necessary, explain to them that these things are wrong and represent the confusion of an unregenerate mind.

**Application:** As an aside, it is not wrong for a believer to be involved in counter demonstrations or to support groups which support the natural family or to advocate for political candidates who are conservative. However, the thrust of your life is to live the spiritual life. That means, you need to be in fellowship, you need to take in doctrine, and you need to support spiritual causes first (primarily to maintenance of your own local church and the salaries of those who work in and about the church). What I mean by that statement is, you may want to support this or that political candidate, send money to this or that cause—and there is nothing wrong with that—but spiritual matters ought to be in the forefront.

**Application:** It is certainly possible for you to be a believer in Jesus Christ, and for no one at work or in your family to know your political leanings or your philosophical beliefs. However, ideally speaking, they should know that you believe in Jesus Christ.

**Application:** It is even possible for a believer to be a political candidate or to work on a political campaign. However, what takes place in your spiritual life and family life takes precedence.



Luke 6:41–42 **Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.** NKJV

The short summary of this verse is, *do not worry about the sins of others; worry about your own sins first.*

**Luke 6:41-42 Deviant Art** (by Parastos); from [Deviant Art](#); accessed January 7, 2022.



Now, Jesus appears to go in another direction, but this is still the same topic, but from a different approach.

## Lesson 190–191: Luke 6:43–45

## The Good and the Bad Tree

In the next three verses, Jesus teaches another parable. Obviously, Jesus does not have to say, each and every time, “I am going to teach you a parable.”

Luke 6:43a **"For no good tree bears bad fruit,...**

When a tree is healthy and strong, it produces good fruit. Most of the time, this can be determined visually.

Luke 6:43b **...nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit,...**

Along the same lines, trees which are sickly are often eaten up with various pests—these trees do not produce good fruit.

Do you see how the basic statement of the parable is immediately accepted? No one questions Jesus at this point, saying, “I don’t think that is really true.” They all accept the basic facts of the parable (s) taught by Him.

It is not said here, but elsewhere Jesus points out, “**Such a tree is cut down and thrown into the fire.**” There is no need to preserve a fruit tree which produces bad fruit.

The cutting down of a tree that produces bad fruit is parallel to this is the sin unto death. The sin unto death is the maximum discipline put upon the believer, wherein he is removed from this life (but he retains his salvation).

Luke 6:43 **"For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit,...**

This is obviously a parable. The unbeliever automatically produces bad fruit. The believer can potentially produce good fruit. The growing believer in fellowship produces good fruit; the believer who is not growing or is out of fellowship does not produce good fruit.

**Application:** Churches need to emphasize spiritual growth and provide the environment in which spiritual growth can occur. This would mean that, Bible teaching, above all else, is emphasized. We do not grow through rituals nor do we grow through signs and wonders (otherwise, the Exodus generation would have been the greatest generation of believers in the Old Testament). We do not grow through singing or through listening to a choir (or to a Christian rock band). These things might be entertaining, but spiritual growth from them is somewhere between negligible and nonexistent.

We grow spiritually exactly as the humanity of Jesus Christ grew—through knowledge and wisdom (Luke 2:40, 52). Jesus spent a great deal of His life growing spiritually. His actual ministry—during which time He produced a massive amount of divine good—did not begin until He was about 30 years old. We do not have the appended gospel, *Jesus, the Young Years*. We have one incident recorded. How many stories have you read in the gospels about what Jesus did at age 8 or age 10? I say this because you are not going to like some of the things which I write for this lesson.

**Illustration:** When I was three years old, my father built the house that we lived in for most of my youth. My understanding is, at one point, while my dad was building the house, I found a piece of scrap wood and nailed it to the sub-floor. Even though I had access to the tools (a hammer and nail) and building materials, this did not mean that I was even slightly helpful at age three to my father. What I accomplished at age three describes most so-called Christian production today. When the Christian is out of fellowship or has not grown spiritually, then all the great things that he does are equivalent to me nailing a piece of scrap wood to the floor of a house under construction. What I did accomplished nothing; and what most Christians do accomplish is also nothing.

**Application:** For most believers, best conforming to the laws of divine establishment is what they consider to be spiritual growth. There are a boatload of Christians out there who, on the exterior, seem to be doing alright as believers. They are moral, they take care of their family, they don't get drunk or use drugs, they don't gamble; they are good fathers or mothers. These things represent common sense morality and believers should reflect common sense morality in their lives (that is, conform to the laws of divine establishment—which laws are for all humanity, not just believers). But living a moral life

according to the laws of divine establishment is not the Christian life; nor do these things necessarily reflect spiritual growth. It simply means, you used to be immoral (or less moral) and now you are quantifiably more moral. I am not saying that there is anything wrong with morality. Morality is a good thing. The United States would be far better off if more people were moral. However, morality is not the Christian way of life.

Many people have the false concept that morality is spirituality. They do not distinguish between the Filling of the Holy Spirit and morality. There are many socially respectable moral unbelievers. If a person is moral, that does not mean that he is saved. Therefore, we should look at this doctrine:

## The Doctrine of Morality

(by Roy A. Cloudt and slightly edited by Gary Kukis)

1. Christianity is not morality, but a relationship with God in Christ. 2Cor. 5:17 **Therefore, if (1<sup>st</sup> class condition) anyone be in Christ, he is a new creature old things are passed away** (spiritual death is passed away by means of spiritual birth, Rom. 5:12) **behold all things are become new.** The emphasis of this passage is not what man does but what God does.
  - a. The adjective *new* is *kainos* (καίνος) [pronounced *kahee-NOSS*]. In this context, it means, *a new species*. This reveals our being in union with Him by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.
  - b. The adjective *old* is *archaios* (ἀρχαῖος) [pronounced *ar-KHAH-yoss*]. It means, *ancient, old; or that which existed in the beginning*, spiritual death.
2. Morality is a by-product of Christianity and spirituality. Ephesians 5:3 **But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.** (ESV)
3. Morality has no spiritual dynamics. Spiritual dynamics are related to the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Galatians 5:16 **(But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.—ESV)** See also Galatians 4:21-31. Being moral does not advance a person to salvation who is lost, or advance a person in maturity who is saved. Morality is what man does and is incompatible with grace in the attainment of regeneration or in Christian development.
  - a. That is, we are saved by grace, not because we are moral people.
  - b. We advance in the spiritual life by grace (what R. B. Thieme, Jr. has called the grace apparatus for perception), not because we are moral people.
  - c. This does *not* mean that a Christian ought to be striving for a life of immorality.
4. The dynamics of Christianity are found in the Filling of the Holy Spirit and the consistent intake of Spiritual food.
  - a. See Ephesians 5:18.
  - b. Romans 8:2-4 **For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order**

## The Doctrine of Morality

- that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (ESV)
- c. Ephesians 4:20–24 But that is not the way you learned Christ!—assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self [= the thinking of Christ], created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (ESV; capitalized)
5. The basic function of morality is the preservation of the human race. A society without law and order is headed for discipline and/or destruction (often, self-destruction). Anarchy and immorality always go together. Morality is absolutely necessary in the preservation of a nation specifically; and humanity in general.
6. Morality cannot provide salvation or spirituality. In Matt. 19:18-20, the rich young ruler is very moral but lost. See also Titus 3:5 Galatians 3:2
- a. Changing the pattern of lifestyle does not save or make a person spiritual.
- b. People can be overtly moral and have minds saturated with sin.
- c. Some people are self-righteously moral. Along with this, there is bitterness, viciousness, and cruelty. Often a person is slanderous, a maligner, a gossip and a backbiter.
7. Morality is God's plan and in the born-again believer, it can be produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit and by the saturation of the thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the unbeliever, morality is produced by the sinful nature from the area of his strength.
8. God has designed morality to protect the human race. Morality and human freedom is the very foundation for responding to the Gospel. Freedom and morality make evangelism possible!

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No doubt that many of these points were made by R. B. Thieme, Jr. when he developed this doctrine.

Much of what Jesus is speaking about here, in disguising the production of good and bad fruit trees is the concept of producing divine good as over against human good.

A lot of believers really have no idea what human good is or what it is all about.

## The Doctrine of Human Good

1. Human good is the good that unbelievers do and the good that believers do when not filled with the Holy Spirit.
- a. This can include some of the great works of philanthropy. In some cases,

## The Doctrine of Human Good

the glorification of man is obvious. *60 Minutes* often does segments on rich people who give their money away to various philanthropic causes. One such segment had one of these men putting his name to various buildings to immortalize his own philanthropy.<sup>1</sup>

- b. Believers do the same thing. Believers who are not filled with the Spirit or do not know how to be filled with the Spirit often do good things, like giving to the church, working in a soup kitchen, seeing a touching cause on television and sending them money. These are all good things, but they are not a part of the eternal plan of God. 1Cor. 3:10–15
2. Because human good is dead within the plan of God; it is called dead works in Heb. 6:1.
3. All human good is repulsive to God. God does not appreciate, accept, encourage or condone human good. Isaiah 64:6 (*All of our righteousness acts are as filthy rags in His sight*) Gen. 4:4
4. Human good has no value in the plan of God. 2Tim. 1:9: *Our Lord saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of His own purpose and grace, which He gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.*
5. Human good is not the same as legitimate morality under the Laws of Divine Establishment. Rom. 13:1–7
  - a. A society must be moral in order to survive.
  - b. A society which is immoral but filled with human good could easily self-destruct. This describes a significant portion of the culture of the United States today.
6. The production of human good will not save man. In fact, no amount of good works (human good) will save man. Titus 3:5 Eph. 2:8–9
7. The human good of believer will be both revealed and destroyed at the Judgment Seat of Christ. 1Cor.3:10–16
8. In the final judgement of Rev. 20:12–15 (which is not the same as the Judgment Seat of Christ), the basis of the indictment against unbelievers will be human good. Sin has been paid for on the cross, which means that God does not punish the unbeliever for his sins. Just as it would violate God's justice to ignore sin, it would also violate His justice to judge sin twice. The only sin in play, is the sin of rejecting Jesus Christ as Savior. John 3:36 Rom. 2:6–8
9. Human good often results in human glorification. Rom. 4:2 Eph. 2:9
10. Human good is the good the believer produces when he is not filled with the Spirit. This can include things that believers associate with divine good, such as, giving money to a church, visiting the sick, missionary activity, etc. If you are not filled with the Holy Spirit, then whatever you do will not have eternal impact, but it will be burned at the Judgment Seat of Christ. 1Cor. 3:11–16
11. Human good is also the good which unbelievers produce. This may include any of the activities listed above (unbelievers do go to church) or things like, picking up a piece of trash, buying compact fluorescent bulbs for your house to save the environment, being nice to someone they do not like, etc.
12. We believers remain on this earth, after salvation, for the purpose of producing



## The Doctrine of Human Good

divine good. Divine good glorifies God and is represented by *gold, silver and precious stones* in 1Cor. 3:12. Eph. 2:10

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7363716n>

See also <http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/humangood.html> which doctrine was originally taught by R. B. Thieme Jr.

<http://www.gbible.org/files/pdf/022700.pdf>

Luke 6:44a ...for each tree is known by its own fruit.

This is how a fruit tree is truly known: based upon its fruit, it is known to be a good or bad tree. A fruit tree is known based upon its type of fruit. If the fruit is bad, the type of fruit is not really that important.

The analogy being drawn here is, a good tree is the mature believer in fellowship. What he produces is divine good which lasts forever. He produces works which stand the test of time and which are rewardable.

The bad tree which produces bad fruit can refer to any one of three things: (1) the unbeliever is the bad tree. The unbeliever produces no edible fruit at all. (2) The believer out of fellowship produces bad fruit. You might, as a believer out of fellowship, give millions of dollars away to this or that great cause. But it means nothing if you gave this money when out of fellowship. (3) Finally, the believer who has not grown is also one who produces bad fruit. He may have the *want to*, but he simply lacks the spiritual knowledge to know what to do. He is a three year old child

nailing a random piece of scrap wood to a subfloor. Again, such a person is often very moral and he adheres to the laws of divine establishment. That is good in and may even reflect some spiritual growth; but morality does not make a person a mature believer. Many unbelievers are moral; and whatever the unbeliever can do is not the spiritual life.



**Luke 6:44a (NIV–UK)** (a graphic); from [Howard Carter Blogspot](#); accessed June 3, 2022.

Luke 6:44b For figs are not gathered from thornbushes,...

Jesus then continues to state the obvious: “When gathering figs, one does not go to a thorn bush for that.” If you want figs, you go to a fig tree.

Luke 6:44c ...nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush.

Similarly, when one looks to harvest grapes, they don’t find a bramble bush and look for grapes there.

I grew up around fruit and almond trees, so all of this makes perfect sense to me. If I wanted an apricot, I did not climb up the cottonwood tree to look for apricots.

Today, we might say, *no one goes to a bakery in order to buy fresh vegetables; and no one goes to the produce department to buy meat. Or, no one goes to Taco Bell to buy French Fries and no one goes to Subway if they want a hamburger. Or, I could offer a greater contrast by saying, no one goes into a Jiffy Lube in order to buy a chicken sandwich.* (I offer these alternate approaches, as some people may have never picked fruit before.)

That which cannot produce fruit will not produce fruit. In life, there are two kinds of people who cannot produce fruit: the unbeliever and the believer who is out of fellowship. The unbeliever can never produce anything of permanent value (although they may produce something, in rare cases, which may last for centuries, such as, a piece of art or literature). Believers out of fellowship are imitators of unbelievers. Therefore, they cannot produce fruit (permanent and rewardable production) either.

Luke 6:44 ...for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush.

Obviously, what we read here is analogous to the Christian life. Jesus is not teaching the disciples how to be fruit gatherers, but He is talking to them about producing divine good.

When it comes to permanence in the Christian life, the key is producing divine good rather than human good. In order to produce divine good, the believer must be growing spiritually and be filled with the Spirit (or, the flip side of that coin, be *in fellowship*).



**Luke 6:43–44 (FNV)** (a graphic); from [Lutheran Indian Ministries](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

Luke 6:45a **The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good,...**

The good man is the believer in Jesus Christ. We are good because we share His righteousness (Jesus' righteousness is imputed to us at the moment of salvation). The good heart is the heart filled with Bible doctrine. Maximum production comes from a heart filled with Bible doctrine. Such a person produces divine good.

The use of the word *heart* means that motivation is key when it comes to producing divine good. And divine good is only produced when the person is filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is what makes a man's production good.

Luke 6:45b **...and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil,...**

Similarly, the evil man—the unregenerate man, the person who has not believed in Jesus Christ, he produces evil.

The word translated *treasure* may surprise you. The Greek word is *thêsauros* (θησαυρός) [pronounced *thay-sow-ROSS*], and, if you do any writing at all, you recognize this word by its modern transliteration, *thesaurus*. For 50+ years, I have owned one or more thesauri at any given time. Although I have not often used the book form as of late, within arm's reach of me is an excellent, but barely used, thesaurus.

Now, just in case you don't know what that is... A writer may be searching for a word that is on the tip of his tongue; or, let's say that he has used the same word five times in the same paragraph and wants a similar word in order to break up the monotony. In either of those situations, he turns to a thesaurus. He looks up a word, and he might 5, 10 or 30 synonyms for that word (as well as a number of antonyms).

Thayer gives these definitions for a *thêsauros* (θησαυρός): 1) *the place in which good and precious things are collected and laid up; 1a) a casket, coffer, or other receptacle, in which valuables are kept; 1b) a treasury; 1c) storehouse, repository, magazine; 2) the things laid up in a treasury, collected treasures*. Strong's #2344.

How does our transliteration of this word relate to the actual meanings of this word? A thesaurus provides us a treasury or a storehouse of words.

Luke 6:45b **...and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil,...**

Now, to what *treasury* is Jesus referring? He is talking about the soul. The soul filled with scar tissue is the evil treasury; and the soul filled with Bible doctrine is the good treasury.

Good trees produce good fruit; the soul filled with Bible doctrine is a good treasury which produces good works. Bad trees produce bad fruit; the unregenerate soul or the soul which has rejected Bible doctrine—that soul is the bad treasury.

Luke 6:45c **...for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.**



Whatever is in a man's heart, that is revealed by what he says.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century New Testament expresses this: **For what fills a man's heart will rise to his lips.**

The Free Bible Version also expresses this well: **What fills people's minds spills out in what they say.**

When you talk to another person; or when you listen to what you yourself say—that is often an indicator of what is in the soul.

Luke 6:45 **The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.**



I like the way that the Bible in Worldwide English puts this: **A good man has stored up good things in his heart, so he says good things. A bad man has stored up wrong things in his heart, so he will say wrong things. The mouth will say what is in the heart.** So often, a Bible written in simple 5<sup>th</sup> grade English captures the essence of what Jesus said.

The Contemporary English Version is also simple but excellent here, focusing upon the deeds of a person: **Good people do good things because of the good in their hearts. Bad people do bad things because of the evil in their hearts. Your words show what is in your heart.**

**Luke 4:45 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Live for Jesus](https://liveforjesus.com); accessed January 7, 2022.

We have been studying the sermon on the plain. This will be the final passage from this chapter.

Luke 6:46 **"Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?**

Jesus has already spoken to hypocrisy; and this is the ultimate in hypocrisy—you call to Jesus, “Lord, Lord,” (a word that indicates authority); and yet you do not do what He says.

Certainly here, I hang my own head in shame.

Luke 6:46 "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"

What good is it to say the empty phrase, *if Jesus is not Lord of all, then He is not Lord at all*? Regarding the believer's state in life, he is on or off (in fellowship or out of fellowship), and he is growing or retrogressing (growing means that the rate of intake of Bible doctrine exceeds the rate of forgetting). When you are in fellowship, Jesus is your Lord; and when you are out, then you have rejected His authority. It does not matter one whit spouting this or that Christian slogan.

If you attend church once or twice a week, and hear perhaps two 15 or 30 minute sermons, there is very little chance that you are growing spiritually. Every waking hour of the day, we are exposed to human viewpoint. You may watch the news or watch sitcoms or drama series on television (or wherever), and it is all human viewpoint (for instance, so many television dramas may have two or more homosexual relationships/love stories occurring at any point in time). Maybe you are on social media 2 hours (or 5 hours) a day. It is saturated with human viewpoint (although when Facebook was policing its pages heavily for the expression of “incorrect” opinions, what consistently got in under their radar was Bible verses).

If a political event or topic was trending, and FB did not like it, you would see almost no posts on that event or topic; but you would get a plethora of Bible verses (as FB typically green lights those).

Perhaps you work in an office, perhaps at a retail store, perhaps at a public school. What do you hear in these places all day long? Human viewpoint thinking.

On most days, if you are awake for 16 hours, you have heard 15 hours of human viewpoint. To combat human viewpoint thinking, you do not have to hear equivalent amounts of divine viewpoint; but 45 minutes to an hour a day of divine viewpoint is what it takes for you to stand up to the human viewpoint which you hear day in and day out.

Quite obviously, the further a society moves from God, the more crazy it becomes. Accepted liberal thinking today is moving at the speed of satire. That is, no matter how crazy satire is today, real life is going further than that. Satire today is the accepted thinking of (liberal) society tomorrow. Or, to put it another way, the distance between satire and real life today is 0.00001 mm.



And just so there is no mistaking the concept of human viewpoint, this is expressed by people who are on the left and on the right. There are two standout incorrect points of view expressed consistently on the right: (1) we need to elect Charley Brown (or whomever) in order to fix the mess we are in. Or (2) the only true option to those on the right is an armed revolution. Now, it is perfectly consistent with being a believer and voting for people who share divine establishment thinking. However, believing this to be our political solution is human viewpoint thinking.

**Luke 6:46 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Amazon](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

Luke 6:47a **Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and does them,...**

These appear to be Jesus' closing words for this particular sermon.

Jesus will divide up the crowd into two groups. There are those there who will hear what He says and does them; and the second group is made up of those who won't do them. V. 48 is all about those in group #1; v. 49 is all about those in group #2.

Luke 6:47b **...I will show you what he is like:...**

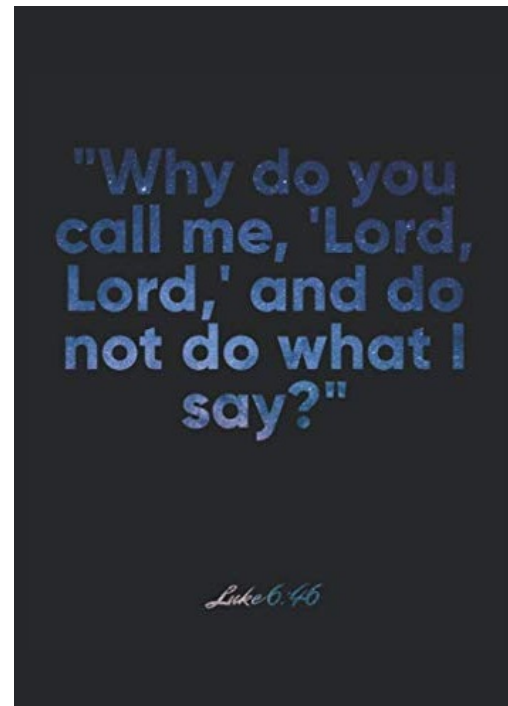
Then Jesus draws another analogy; or presents a parable to explain the difference between the two (groups of) men and how their lives are affected by how they react to the Lord's words.

Luke 6:47 **Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and does them, I will show you what he is like:...**

We can look at this as the contrast between two men; or as a contrast between two types of men.

Luke 6:48a **...he is like a man building a house,...**

This is man #1, the one who listens to the Lord's words and does them. Now, *doing the Lord's words* does not necessarily mean that you go out there and do something (like join a church, say 5 nice things about people that you really do not like, get baptized). Doing what Jesus says could simply be exercising faith in Him; believing in Jesus. Doing what Jesus says is believing the words which He speaks (bearing in mind that Jesus taught during the Age of the Hypostatic Union).



Jesus compared these things to situations and circumstances that people know. Everyone knows people who have built a house (or, people who have recently purchased a home).

Luke 6:48b ...who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock.

There is a proper way to do a foundation. There must be a connection to the rock below. Here, Jesus suggests that a person digs and digs deeply in order to connect with the stone below.

Homes where I live, because we are on gumbo soil, are often placed on large, thick cement foundations, with rebar running throughout the cement, to hold it all together. In the ancient world, there needed to be a connection between the house and the solid rock below—no matter how far down that rock was.

In places where there are mudslides, like California, a house built on a hill cannot simply be sitting on top of the ground. A well-made cement foundation which is laid on top of mud may slide down a hill in California. Its foundation must sink deep into the ground in order to hold it in place. It must connect to something solid—rock—which is beneath the house. The rock below the ground often is stationary; and therefore, a house connected to that rock (through pillars, or whatever) is also stationary.

For a building like the Temple, a heavy thick cornerstone would be the first thing laid out. So, for the Temple, the stone was brought in to become the solid foundation.

Luke 6:48c And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house...

When a house is properly connected to a foundation of solid rock, it can withstand heavy rains and even a flood. Jesus, here, uses the illustration of a house facing a flood.

In life, there is the charge of the mosquito and the charge of the elephant,<sup>86</sup> which we must all face. The flood hitting one's house is equivalent to the charge of the elephant (a house under a few hours of rain is facing the charge of the mosquito). .

Luke 6:48d ...and could not shake it,...

The flood waters could not disturb such a house. These flood waters could not move a house from where it is placed.

This is analogous to a person facing a great difficulty in life, and living through them unscathed or nearly unscathed.

Luke 6:48e ...because it had been well built.

The key is having the proper foundation and doing it right.

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<sup>86</sup> This is the illustration from R. B. Thieme, Jr.

The house holds up because it was built on a solid foundation; a person's life holds up to catastrophes, because our solid foundation is Jesus Christ. We have believed in Him; and we then (by choice) grow spiritually (not every believer does). The mature believer is able to withstand the great difficulties of life with strength. Our strength is Jesus Christ and the Word of God. We stand upon both (Jesus first, and then the Word of God embedded in our souls).

Luke 6:48 ...he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

The believer, mature or not, has begun his foundation upon Christ Jesus. No matter how much we screw up our own lives, that foundation assures us of eternal life. The truth of Scripture aids us even more. The spiritual growth from Bible doctrine gives us the wherewithal to live our lives. Even when we face national disaster—and that could be coming for the United States—the believer having doctrine in his soul is like a house built on a solid rock foundation. That house is going to stay right there.

**Luke 6:47–48 (The Passion Translation)** (a graphic); photo from [Howard Carter Blog Spot](#); accessed January 7, 2022.

Luke 6:49a But the one who hears and does not do them...

This is the second group; those who hear Jesus but do not do what He says to do. Jesus will make a similar analogy.

Luke 6:49b ...[he] is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation.

The other way to build a house is to simply build it upon the ground with no foundation. It just sits on top of the dirt. The house is not tied to anything solid.

Luke 6:49c When the stream broke against it,...

Let me describe the one who truly follows me and does what I say. He is like a man who chooses the right place to build a house and then lays a deep and secure foundation. When the storms and floods rage against that house, it continues to stand strong and unshaken through the tempest, for it has been wisely built on the right foundation. (Luke 6:47-48 -- TPT)



If there is a great flood, where a torrent suddenly hits the house, then it is devastated. There is nothing holding it in place. It has no foundation upon which to stand.

Luke 6:49d ...immediately it fell,...

The sudden burst of a torrent knocks down the house. Again, it is not connected to a solid foundation.

Luke 6:49e ...and the ruin of that house was great."

The end result is a great ruination of the home.

I have been involved in construction for many years, and I can affirm that, if you do not do a job fundamentally right from the beginning, then the end result is going to be disastrous. I recall building a fence—and it was one of the first fences which I built—and I did not use nails that were long enough or sturdy enough (some of the mistakes I made early on were based upon my lack of common sense in construction). Not unsurprisingly, that fence failed early on.

There are fundamentals which are absolute when it comes to building anything. Similarly, there are fundamentals which are absolute when it comes to building the spiritual life.

You do not get to advance in your spiritual life in whatever way seems right to you. The spiritual life is very well-defined, just like the principles of setting the foundation of a house are well-defined. If you have a pier and beam constructed house, and you use wood designed for interior use only, that wood will be rotted in 5–10 years (depending upon the conditions of where you are building). Or, if you have a cement foundation, you cannot use poor cement, a bad mixture of cement, a foundation which is too thin, or a foundation built without the interior steel rods which hold the foundation together. Now, I have seen many houses built without any concept of doing things right. I have bought several homes on land, where the original owner possibly built or oversaw the building of a house without any concept of how it ought to be done. Many times when you buy such a house, you have to be prepared to see the worst constructed stuff in the world.

The analogy here is the unbeliever who does not believe in Jesus; and also to the believer who does, but never advances spiritually in his life. The unbeliever has no solid rock upon which to stand in his life, and when the catastrophes of life hits him, he falls apart. Life becomes too much for him. All of his smart ideas and his derogatory facebook posts will not stand up to the great pressures of life.

The believer has the solid foundation of Jesus Christ (no matter what, he will spend eternity with Jesus Christ); but he is not connected to the Rock by means of Bible doctrine. After salvation, we know almost nothing, apart from *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved*. But we understand little about Jesus Christ, about God's justice, or why we are alive and breathing. That person will also face catastrophes and he will fare no better than the unbeliever. Life will slam into him and he will fall apart. The believer without Bible

doctrine, who is out of fellowship, imitates the unbeliever (he potentially walks like the unbeliever in Ephesians 4:17).

The strength and power of the unbeliever after salvation is the Bible doctrine embedded in his soul.

Almost every believer, immediately after salvation, has some ideas of his own about salvation and about the spiritual life (which ideas are nearly always wrong). Pretty much every new believer needs to shut up and listen; and the pastor-teacher ought to clearly teach the Word of God, often covering entire chapters and entire books of the Bible. The last thing a new believer ought to do is develop his own concepts of what spiritual growth looks like, and how he will achieve it. That is fine to learn that sort of thing from Scripture; but it is not something which you can make up on your own (and, unfortunately, too often, pastor-teachers have no idea what the spiritual life is about either).

Luke 6:49 **But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great."**

The key to *doing the word of Jesus* is first believing the word of Jesus, and then acting accordingly. His words are the foundation for our lives. Obviously, in order to do the Word of God, we must first hear the Word of God. The proper way to hear the Word of God is in a local church as taught by a well-qualified pastor-teacher.

Luke 6:47–49 **Everyone who comes to hear Me and does what I say, he is like a man who builds his house on a solid foundation. He dug down deep and made the solid rock below his foundation, so that when a flood came and the torrent struck his house, it was not able to shake it, because the house had been built well. But, the man who hears Me but does not do what I say, he is just like a man who builds his house on the ground, without a foundation; and when a torrent bursts upon the house, it immediately falls and its ruination is devastating."** (Kukis paraphrase)

The Easy English translation makes an excellent observation (in its commentary): the storm happens to *both* homes. However, one was able to withstand the storm and the other was not. This is the differentiation between mature believers and immature believers (or between mature believers and unbelievers).

People do not automatically grow in the spiritual life. You don't believe in Jesus Christ and then start automatically growing, spiritually speaking. You have to make certain choices to facilitate that growth (even though spiritual growth is a grace process).

How do you grow physically? As a baby, we start on a liquid diet of milk and graduate to solid food. If we do not eat nutritious meals, our bodies and even our minds do not properly grow and mature. For spiritual growth we need spiritual food.



The first step, obviously, is to believe in Jesus Christ. There is no spiritual growth experienced by the unbeliever. Then you learn the rebound technique.<sup>87</sup> The rebound technique is, you have sinned, and to recover from that sin, you name it to God. How you feel about the sin is inconsequential; whether you name the sin aloud or think it when speaking to God is inconsequential. This is described in 1John 1:9 **If we confess [acknowledge, name] our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** (IAV; capitalized)

There is no regret or emotion involved in 1John 1:9 (you may feel terrible about what you have done, you may feel nothing at all about what you have done). Whatever the sin was you name it (or, if there are sins, you name them). John writes that *God is faithful*; that means, *He does the same thing every time*. We can depend upon God here when we name our sins, because He will respond in the exact same way when we say those sins (either aloud or in our heads). What God does every time is, *He forgives us our sins*. He does not say, "Listen, you have sinned some pretty bad sins, but this one is a doozy and there is no forgiveness for it. Sorry about that, but you really screwed up this time." 1John 1:9 tells us that God forgives us. He is faithful; we can depend upon His forgiveness. Now, God does not forgive our sins because He is a nice guy, but because *He is just*. Because we have believed in Jesus Christ, every sin that we have committed, past, present or future, has been paid for on the cross. Therefore, it does not violate God's just character to forgive us. God does not look at believers comparatively when it comes to forgiving sins. He doesn't look at me and say, "Now that Kukis, he's an alright fellow; I think I'll forgive him this time." After which, God does not say to you, "You've sinned just one too many times, I am sick of forgiving you. There is no forgiveness this time around." When we name our sins, those sins are forgiven. This is a certain promise upon which we can stand, regardless of how we might be measured by others.

Now, what about the sins that we have committed, but we don't know that they are sins. We gossiped about someone the other day, or we hated someone or we felt a tinge of jealousy because someone has something we want? Those sins are also forgiven, even if we do not realize that we should name them. God *cleanses us from all unrighteousness*; meaning that we are back in fellowship and functioning properly in the Christian life. Apart from an extensive study of hamartiology (the study of sin), we commit sins that we do not realize are sins. God forgives those sins as well.

Rebound only gets us back into fellowship; but our spiritual growth is based upon learning and believing Bible doctrine. For that, we need (99% of the time) a well-trained pastor-teacher to guide us spiritually. There are people who have no connection to a pastor-teacher because there is not one in their periphery; and God makes some provision for those people. But, the average person needs to let God guide him to a church where Bible doctrine is taught. For me, the bare minimum is hearing the rebound technique at the beginning of every teaching session (it may not be called *rebound*). The second bare minimum is at least a 30 minute teaching sermon based upon the Word of God. 45 min

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<sup>87</sup> A term developed by R. B. Thieme, Jr.; who developed a great many new terms to explain the Christian way of life.

to an hour or longer is better. 3x or 4x a week Bible classes would be a bare minimum. The believer needs spiritual food *every day*.

In this electronic age, there are ways to access the teaching ministry of a pastor, even if he lives on the other side of the world from you. Berachah Church makes Bobby's lessons available without charge; and R. B. Thieme, Jr. Ministries makes the teachings of R. B. Thieme, Jr. available without charge. There are many other excellent doctrinal teachers who have come out of Berachah and have a teaching ministry.

At one time, many Baptist churches could be depended upon for accurate doctrinal teaching. That appears to no longer be the case (so many denominations have been corrupted over the past 50–100 years).

Regarding finding a pastor: automatically reject any cult gathering (Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses are two prominent ones). Look for a church which emphasizes privately naming one sins to God, a church which does not invade your privacy; and a church where entire books are regularly taught from the pulpit (where the pastor demonstrates some knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew, as well as some understanding of ancient history).

If no such church exists, seriously consider moving to a city where there is a pastor-teacher whom you have identified as accurately teaching the Word of God. I have put out a list of churches where there are well-qualified teachers whose lessons can be accessed online (to give that church a trial run, so to speak). **The List** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

You may think, *isn't that a bit much, moving to find a good church? Couldn't that be considered cult-like behavior?*

Let me answer the second question first. Churches which specifically attempt to divide you from friends and family is misapplying the concept of separation and such a church might be a cult. A church which intrudes on your personal business in any way is cultic. Just because you live in one state and there is a good church in a different state, that does not make that church a cult. A Bible-believing church should feature teaching the Bible, and I suggest at least 4 or 5 lessons per week (ideally, 45–75 minutes per lesson). You should be able to walk into a local church and enjoy anonymity (obviously, if there are 20 members or less, you are not going to remain anonymous). No one from that church should be asking personal questions of you (your phone number, address, salary; or even first and last name).

No one from that church, after you have come to church a few times, should be instructing you personally on things you should be doing or not doing. Bear in mind, the church—given today's world—may have a minimal dress code (for instance, foundation clothing for women; gender-appropriate clothing; etc.). However, many churches allow these things to sort themselves out naturally. There may be some regulations regarding a person's behavior in church (obviously, academic discipline is important where Bible doctrine is being taught). However, modern American culture has given churches a whole new set of challenges. For instance, a church would not forbid a prostitute from attending

church; but they would disallow that same prostitute plying her trade in the parking lot. Similarly, a church would not forbid a homosexual from attending services; but overt homosexual expressions of affection would be discouraged. In the churches where I grew up, there were virtually no issues regarding dress and behavior on church grounds. In today's world, there are obviously challenges which each local church determines on their own.

Now, to the first question: *isn't moving to another city or state an overreaction to not finding a Bible-believing church within driving distance of your home?* It is not, and let me explain why: do you want to live in an area where there are no mature believers? If there is no local church capable of providing spiritual growth, then there are no mature believers there (unless they moved from somewhere else). There are alternatives in such a city, such as establishing a church that meets around a computer, and listens to lessons from a teacher in another state. There are groups who still meet and listen to the teachings of R. B. Thieme, Jr., even though he passed away in the early 2000s.

However, if there is no such group to gather to; and if you are unable to establish such a group, then you are living in an area which could face sudden historical disaster. In a city with no doctrinal churches, you may find yourself in a modern-day Sodom or Gomorrah situation. Given the events taking place in the United States, do you think various sorts of historical disasters could take place? I think such disasters have already taken place in the United States, and I suspect that they will get worse. I feel much safer living in a city where there are dozens, perhaps hundreds, of mature believers.

I believe that most people recognize that the United States is teetering on the brink at this time. Whereas, I do not believe that we are close to seeing the destruction of the United States; I do believe that we will see great local disasters. Could the United States be destroyed before the close of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? I don't see that as being out of the realm of possibility. We have seen high inflation, out-of-control forest fires (which have now extended beyond California), a widespread invasion of foreigners, a pandemic, and devastating weather events. There is no reason to think that the United States is on the verge of entering into a decade or two of calm. For that reason, living in an area where there are many mature believers seems like sound-judgment to me.

## **Lessons 194–196: Luke 6:1–49 (LSV)**

## **An Overview of Luke 6**

With this very long lesson, we close out our study of Luke 6, an amazing chapter in the Word of God.

The translation I will use here is the Literal Standard Version Copyright © 2020 by Covenant Press and the Covenant Christian Coalition. Briefly, their claim is to be the only literal translation written in modern English.

I have begun to make a chapter overview a standard part of this study. I have also begun to feature a variety of Bible translations. I am thinking that it may be helpful to also give you some background on the translations which I choose for this section

## What the Literal Standard Translation Says About Itself

### Literal

A modern, literal, word-for-word (formal equivalence) English translation of the Holy Scriptures.

### Elegant And Easy To Read

Significant improvement over previous literal translations, including Robert Young's excellent Young's Literal Translation.

### Accurate Translation

Preservation of verb tenses and consistent use of words wherever possible. The most literal English translation of The Holy Bible.

Regarding point #2, you may be unfamiliar with Robert Young's translation. It is more consistent than the KJV, but it retains the old English sort of translation.

Taken from <https://www.lsvbible.com/> (Under the *translation* heading)

**Literal Standard Version graphic;** from the [LSV website](https://www.lsvbible.com/); accessed March 4, 2022.


2 billion of the world's 7.6 billion inhabitants speak English<sup>1</sup>



73 out of 83 English Bible translations are in modern English



61% of American Bible readers prefer word-for-word translation<sup>2</sup>



55% of American Bible readers use the 400-year old KJV



Only 24% of Americans believe the Bible is the literal word of God<sup>3</sup>



Only 5 out of 83 complete English translations are literal



0 translations are strictly literal and in modern English—*until now*



- <sup>1</sup> From [Cambridge University Press](#); accessed March 4, 2022.  
<sup>2</sup> From [Dr. Claude Mariottini](#); accessed March 4, 2022.  
<sup>3</sup> From [Gallup Polling](#); accessed March 4, 2022.

I must say, I am surprised if 55% of believers today use the KJV. I think this is a big mistake and it is one reason why there are not a lot of young people in our churches today.

Let me approach this in a different way: some people love Shakespear and other cannot stand him because of the language. It makes no sense. This is how some people react when they walk into a KJV-only church. The pastor appears to be speaking a foreign language. Some people won't mind adjusting to that; but most will pass it by.

Again, this comes directly from the LSV website.

### **Distinctive features of the Literal Standard Version:**

- A modern, literal, word-for-word (formal equivalence) English translation of the Holy Scriptures utilizing English word rearrangement when necessitated for readability. The LSV is the most literal translation of The Holy Bible, with significant improvement over previous literal translations, including Robert Young's excellent Young's Literal Translation.
- Preservation of verb tenses wherever possible.
- Utilization of the transliterated Tetragrammaton in the Old Testament. All uppcase LORD is used in the New Testament when a reference to YHWH is likely.
- Generally consistent approach to formal equivalence translation; most English translations use a broad set of words when translating a single Greek or Hebrew word based on context. We are striving to only use varying words when the context demands it.
- Removal of many Hebrew and Greek transliterations; remember, transliterations are generally not translations.
- Unlike most translations, justified typographic alignment consistent with the style of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek biblical autographs. The ancient caesura mark is used for easy readability of poetic literature such as the Psalms.
- Inclusion of the verses found in older English translations such as the King James Version (KJV) that are not found in many modern translations; and inclusion of the alternative LXX Genesis chronology set next to the MT. These are contained within bolded double brackets for distinction.
- Capitalized pronouns and other nounal forms when referring to God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit. References to the Messenger of the LORD are also capitalized when the subject appears to be a clear reference to God or the Messiah (as found in translations such as the NKJV).

From <https://www.lsvbible.com/p/the-preface-to-literal-standard-version.html> accessed March 4, 2022.



Surprisingly enough, there is no information about who translated and worked on the LSV on their webpage. This is the information which they sent to me by email.

### Those who worked on the LSV

Gary Ray - Abilene Christian University; General Editor / Committee Chair  
Jeff Eldredge - Dallas Theological Seminary; Vice Chair  
Matthew Morrow - Administration  
Ivan Veller - Proofing; also worked on NASB 2020 and BSB 2020  
Ken Kania - In-house Bible reader; interlinearization  
Steve Oh - Greek contributions; theology  
Anne Kelly - Audio  
Michael Paul Johnson - Interlinearization; WEB General Editor  
Greg Matovich - Design and supply

In an email from Covenant Press.

One of the things which I have observed with the LSV is, they retain the lengthy sentences which are found in the book of Luke. So, it is not unusual for a single sentence to go on for 4 or 5 verses (the same is true for the Book of Acts).

There is a correct way in English to do quotation marks and an incorrect way, and I do it incorrectly, as does the LSV. Rather than, within lengthy quotation to begin each new paragraph with quotation marks, I place a quote at the beginning and at the end of the quotation, regardless of its length or the number of paragraphs. The LSV does the same thing. I personally find that simpler to follow—particularly when there is a quote within a quote.

vv.	1–5	<a href="#">Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath</a>
vv.	6–11	<a href="#">A Man with a Withered Hand</a>
vv.	12–16	<a href="#">The Twelve Apostles</a>
vv.	17–49	<a href="#">The Sermon on the Plain</a>

Like much of Luke, this chapter is a selection of vignettes, probably presented in chronological order. When they came to the end of the enough verses, the ones who divided up the chapters decided, “Time to start a new chapter.” (In the original manuscripts, there are no chapter or verse divisions.)

Luke 6 is a series of vignettes, which is very much the case for most chapters in the book of Luke. There are 49 verses in this chapter and it covers a lot of ground.

Now, even though Jesus has not been teaching for a very long time (maybe 6 months or so doing the sort of teaching with which we are familiar<sup>88</sup>), He is known well enough for the

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<sup>88</sup> The is a portion of His ministry prior to having any disciples and prior to performing many miracles. Maybe this lasted 2 months; and maybe it lasted a year.

religious class to take notice of Him. However, the religious hierarchy out of Jerusalem is beginning to watch Jesus carefully. “Where is the chink in His armor?” they may have been asking themselves.

It is a Sabbath morning; the disciples are very hungry; and they walk through a wheatfield and pick some stalks of grain (which is legal for them to do). They rub the heads of grain with their hands, and some pharisees seem to be right there, watching them and taking notes. Jesus will ask these pharisees a question (which they cannot answer) and then claim to be the Lord of the Sabbath (that is, Jesus is claiming authority over the Sabbath).

Later, on another Sabbath, Jesus encounters a number of scribes and pharisees in a synagogue, and also in this synagogue is a man with a withered hand. What will Jesus do? And is healing on the Sabbath an actual infraction of the Law?

Luke then records the calling of Jesus’ twelve Apostles. Although Luke gives all of their names at once, we know from the previous chapter that Jesus called these men to follow Him at different times.

The final section of this chapter is known as the Sermon on the Plain. There are many parallels between this sermon and the more famous *Sermon on the Mount* (found in the book of Matthew). 33 verses of this chapter are given completely to Jesus’ words.

As we move further along in the book of Luke, there will be fewer historical incidents and more extensive sermons from Jesus.

The section headings from E-sword are retained in the text below:

### **Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath**

Luke 6:1–2 **And it came to pass, on a Sabbath, as He is going through the grainfields, that His disciples were plucking the ears, and were eating, rubbing with the hands and certain of the Pharisees said to them, “Why do you do that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbaths?”**

The pharisees who are apparently following the Lord and His disciples around, accuse them of doing exactly what the pharisees themselves are doing. The pharisees, on the Sabbath, are following the Lord and His disciples around, men whom they are coming to hate. They are watching them carefully to see where they violate some traditional regulation. That sounds exactly like work to me.

Another aspect which is worth noting is, the pharisees are following these men around in order to find something to accuse them of. This is an historic example of, *show me the man and I will show you the crime*. In their minds, the pharisees have decided that Jesus is a *wrong guy*; so now they are following Him in order to find something to back up this evaluation of His character.

Luke 6:3–4 And Jesus answering said to them, “Did you not read even this that David did when he hungered, himself and those who are with him, how he went into the house of God, and took the Bread of the Presentation, and ate, and gave also to those with him, which it is not lawful to eat, except only to the priests?”

Jesus often answered a question (or accusation) with another question. He could certainly find something which the pharisees could not explain because this is something that they themselves do not understand.

David and his supporters were on the run from King Saul. They were starving. They were not far from where the Tabernacle was, and David was aware that there was fresh bread to be found in the Tabernacle itself. So he went to the city, robbed the Tabernacle of this bread, and shared it with his men. See 1Samuel 21 ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) for more information about this incident.

If the pharisees are going to condemn Jesus and his disciples for eating when they are famished, then they must condemn David as well. They are not ready to do that. They may not be able to explain this incident in the life of David; but they can at least see some of the parallels.

Luke 6:5 And He said to them, “The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.”

Then Jesus makes this most remarkable statement, which indicates that He is the One with authority over the Sabbath (not them). This is clearly a statement of Divine authority.

How did Jesus slip this statement in without being challenged? The pharisees were still stuck trying to figure out how to explain David’s actions. I don’t think they really heard and understood what Jesus just said, because their minds were back thinking about David.

### **A Man with a Withered Hand**

Luke 6:6–7 And it came to pass also, on another Sabbath, that He goes into the synagogue, and teaches, and there was there a man, and his right hand was withered, and the scribes and the Pharisees were watching Him, if on the Sabbath He will heal, that they might find an accusation against Him.

The pharisees and other religious types were continually setting up the Lord, so that they might accuse Him of doing something wrong.

There is a man with a withered hand in the synagogue on a Sabbath day. It makes perfect sense that the Pharisees, in some way, engineered things for this man to be there (and they are expecting Jesus to be there as well).

Again, the people who are clearly working on the Sabbath are the scribes and pharisees, who are trying to trap the Lord (*that* is work). And they plan to be right there and accuse

Him of doing wrong (healing on the Sabbath—which is nowhere prohibited on Saturdays—not even in their own traditions).

Luke 6:8 And He Himself had known their reasonings and said to the man having the withered hand, “Rise, and stand in the midst”; and he having risen, stood.

There is some humor as to what takes place here, and exactly what the Lord does. Every movement is done specifically to frustrate the religious types.

First of all, Jesus tells the man to rise up and stand. Every person who was to read from the Word of God (the Torah and the Prophets) in that synagogue would also rise up and stand. So this man is not doing anything wrong and he certainly is not performing some sort of work.

Luke 6:9 Then Jesus said to them, “I will question you something: is it lawful on the Sabbaths to do good, or to do evil? To save life or to kill?”

The pharisees and the scribes are there, and Jesus, knowing He is being set up, asks them a simple question: “Is it lawful to do good or evil on the Sabbath? Is it lawful to save a life on the Sabbath or kill?” They are setting Him up, so He sets them up. What can they answer?

There is no answer forthcoming from these men.

Luke 6:10–11 And having looked around on them all, He said to the man, “Stretch forth your hand”; and he did so, and his hand was restored whole as the other; and they were filled with madness, and were speaking with one another what they might do to Jesus.

Jesus looks around at them all, waiting for a response. There is no response.

In the synagogue, on a Saturday, men would rise up and stand, and put out their hand to take one of the sacred scrolls to read.

Jesus tells the man to reach out with his hand—exactly what every reader in the building had done and will do. When he holds out his hand, it is restored, meaning, there is a great physical change which takes place. There is no denying what just happened.

What did Jesus do? He said a few words. Everyone who stood up to read would say a few words. And what did the man with the withered hand do? He stood up and then put out his hand. These are things which had been taking place all day already in the synagogue. There is nothing which Jesus did; and nothing that this man did that could be faulted. Then God healed the man’s hand. Everyone saw it. And what could the religious types say or do? Nothing; nothing at all. They must have been so frustrated.

## **The Twelve Apostles**

Jesus probably had 50–200 followers by that time. Some men he had called; some people simply chose to go along with Him. All this time, Jesus has been analyzing these people. I do not believe that God the Father gave Jesus a list from heaven; I do not believe that Jesus, in His humanity, knew specifically who to choose. But the time had come for Jesus to require some men close to Him to take care of a variety of responsibilities. One of the things that was needed—and I don't believe is talked about in any of the gospels—is crowd control. Several times, it is alluded to, but without using those words. If a few hundred or a few thousand people come to hear Jesus, there must be some kind of order established. These 12 would be able to see to that. There is much more involved with this choice, but that is a purely practical reason.

Luke 6:12–13 *And it came to pass in those days, He went forth to the mountain to pray, and was passing the night in the prayer of God, and when it became day, He called near His disciples, also having chosen twelve from them, whom He also named apostles:...*

It is easy to get the wrong impression about how Jesus chose His disciples. There are times in some gospels where it appears as if Jesus sees some random dude walking down the street, and He calls out, “Hey, you—come here; follow Me.” If you study the text carefully, you can tell that Jesus, in His humanity, carefully chose the men whom He would designate as His Apostles.

Now, do you think that God the Father said aloud to Jesus, “Okay, these are the men I want you to choose.” I do not think that happened. I think there is a good chance that for most of the Lord's decisions, there was no specific command coming from God the Father, telling Him what to do. And yet, Jesus adhere perfectly to the plan of God.

Jesus chose the following men:

Luke 6:14 *...Simon, whom He also named Peter, and his brother Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,...*

Most people know a third or a half of the Apostles chosen by Jesus. This is to be expected, as about half of them are not described in any way apart from their name and some identifying title.

Peter we know as the impulsive disciple; but he is simply a man of action, and a man of great enthusiasms. He makes a great many mistakes. Andrew is Peter's brother who first told Peter about Jesus (Andrew was baptized by John the Herald).

James and John are brothers who own a fishing vessel; and they work in tandem with Peter and Andrew. Peter, James and John will see the glorified Jesus. James will be the first Apostle to be martyred.

James is not to be confused with the half-brother of Jesus, also named James. This second James was the pastor at the church at Jerusalem; and he wrote the epistle entitled *James*.



John, of course, wrote the gospel of John, 3 epistles and the book of Revelation.

Philip is the disciple who will ask Jesus, “Just show us the Father; that would be sufficient for us.” (Which elicited a very famous response from Jesus.)

Luke 6:15 ...Matthew and Thomas, James of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zealot,...

Matthew is the tax collector and the one who wrote the book of Matthew. Thomas is the Apostle who will insist on actually touching the resurrected Jesus in order to recognize that He had risen from the dead.

We only know James of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot from their names.

Luke 6:16 ...Judas of James, and Judas Iscariot, who also became betrayer.

The first Judas is known by name only. The second Judas is the one who betrayed Jesus.

### **The Sermon on the Plain: Jesus Ministers to a Great Multitude**

Luke 6:17–18 And having come down with them, He stood on a level spot; and a crowd of His disciples, and a great multitude of the people from all Judea, and Jerusalem, and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases, [gathered]. And those harassed by unclean spirits [also gathered] and were healed.

It would be fair to say that most of those who came to Jesus here wanted to be healed of whatever physical ailment that they suffered from. However, based upon this and other information that they collected, some of these people believed that Jesus might be the Messiah spoken of throughout the Old Testament.

Even though Jesus was just beginning His ministry, people came from all over to see Him and to be healed by Him.

Luke 6:19 And all the multitude were seeking to touch Him, because power was going forth from Him, and He was healing all.

No doubt some became impatient, and they recognized that all they needed to do was touch Jesus and they would be healed.

### **The Beatitudes**

Luke 6:20 And He, having lifted up His eyes to His disciples, said: “Blessed the poor—because yours is the Kingdom of God.

Jesus first lifts up His eyes to His disciples. Let me suggest that this is a signal. He is about to begin teaching, so people cannot be wandering all over the place, sneaking up beside Him to touch His robe.

Most of the people who came to Jesus would have been poor, hungry, and possibly weeping (since many of them came with physical maladies).

We have to be careful in this section not to simply assume, poor people will be rich in heaven; and rich people may not be in heaven at all. That is not what Jesus is teaching, simply because it would contradict the teachings of the Old Testament.

When we stand before God, we are impoverished with nothing whatsoever to offer God. When we come to Him in the name of Jesus, standing upon Jesus, we are blessed and eternally saved.

This is quite the opposite of the religious type who comes to God, and he fasts every week, and comes to the synagogue each Saturday, and lives a righteous life. He brings these things to God in exchange for eternal life. They are not poor; and they do not see themselves as poor. The Kingdom of God is not for them.

Luke 6:21 **Blessed those hungering now—because you will be filled. Blessed those weeping now—because you will laugh.**

Life is a temporary proposition. We are hungry at times in this life; there are times when we weep. All of this is temporary for those who come to Jesus.

Luke 6:22–23 **Blessed are you when men will hate you, and when they will separate you, and will reproach, and will cast forth your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake— rejoice in that day, and leap, for behold, your reward [is] great in Heaven, for according to these things were their fathers doing to the prophets.**

The people who were there, who would choose to follow Jesus, would face extreme pressures and persecutions. Jesus is promising them great rewards from God the Father.

### **Jesus Pronounces Woes**

Luke 6:24 **But woe to you—the rich, because you have gotten your comfort.**

So that there is no misunderstanding, a person who is rich is not automatically destined for hell. The deciding factor is Jesus. Unfortunately for the human race, too often people will not turn to God if they are prosperous. The poor have few places where they can turn, so often, they turn to God.

Luke 6:25 **Woe to you who have been filled—because you will hunger. Woe to you who are laughing now—because you will mourn and weep.**

Again, it is not wrong that you have had a healthy and filling meal. Nor it is wrong to see or hear something and laugh out loud. Now, is it possible that these same people, at some point, will hunger or weep? Certainly. However, it is those who depend upon these things,

and believe that these things mean blessing from God—they are the ones who should be careful. We are saved by faith in Christ; and not by any other means.

Luke 6:26 **Woe to you when all men will speak well of you—for according to these things were their fathers doing to false prophets.**

Other people place some importance upon their social standing. In fact, China actually rates people socially, in order to gain certain behaviors from their people and to discourage other behaviors. However, holding a popular opinion or siding with the majority does not make you right.

Israel, throughout the Bible, has a history of persecuting God's prophets. Apparently, they often celebrated and followed false teachers.

### **Love Your Enemies**

Luke 6:27–29 **But I say to you who are hearing, Love your enemies, do good to those hating you, bless those cursing you, pray for those maligning you; and to him striking you on the cheek, give also the other, and from him taking away from you the mantle, also the coat you may not keep back.**

Jesus then suggests behavior which will seem odd to many Jews. They are told to love their enemies, do good to those who hate them, bless those who curse you, pray for those who malign you, etc.

Jesus' disciples will very much fall into this set of behaviors when the Church Age begins. They will have their enemies and those enemies will persecute them unmercifully. Jesus and His disciples will many times give the gospel to people who revile them and pray for their salvation at other times.

Luke 6:30–34 **And to everyone who is asking of you, be giving; and from him who is taking away your goods, do not be asking again; and as you wish that men may do to you, do also to them in like manner; and—if you love those loving you, what grace is it to you? For also the sinful love those loving them; and if you do good to those doing good to you, what grace is it to you? For also the sinful do the same; and if you lend [to those] of whom you hope to receive back, what grace is it to you? For also the sinful lend to sinners—that they may receive again as much.**

What sets people aside who are Christians is not their behavior and attitude towards their friends and relatives, but towards those who are hostile towards them.

The overall principle is this: we are, by nature, hostile to God. We act against God in nearly all that we do. Nevertheless, God sent His Son to pay for our sins; and through Him, we have access to God—something that we are completely undeserving of.

Jesus has not only paid for our sins, but He has paid for the sins of every person that we know, friend and foe alike. We ought to pray for those treat us with contempt, and, when given the chance, give them the gospel.

Throughout the latter half of the book of Acts, Paul finds himself persecuted by Jews and gentiles alike. He did not respond to his persecutors with anger or arrogance. In fact, in the many hearings where Paul faced off his enemies in court, he gave the gospel, that they might be saved. When held unlawfully by two different governors of Judæa, Paul gave each of them a clear delineation of the gospel, that they might be saved, if they placed their trust in Jesus.

Luke 6:35–36 **But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Highest, because He is kind to the ungracious and evil; be therefore merciful, as also your Father is merciful.**

You will encounter atheists, agnostics, and people who worship false gods. It is not up to us to set ourselves apart by attacking these people. We set ourselves apart from others by our concern and interactions with these people. We do not reject them; we do not throw them out. We do not insult them when online, trading insult for insult. We present to them Jesus, and Him crucified. If God is kind to the ungracious and evil, can we be anything other than that?

We all have personal enemies in life. We have enemies in life, even if we are not obnoxious. How do you treat them? How do you respond to them? Anger for anger, insult for insult?

## **Judging Others**

Luke 6:37 **And do not judge, and you may not be judged; do not condemn, and you may not be condemned; release, and you will be released.**

If we do not judge others—and by this, Jesus means to assign a sin or wrong motivation to someone else—then God will not judge you in this regard. That is, you will not be under God's judgment for the sin of judging others.

So that there is no misunderstanding, this is *not* the same as evaluating others or using good, common sense. If you are a boss or a manager, it is not judging to evaluate a person's work habits; and it is not judging to carefully review a work application. When someone wants a reference, it is not judging to provide an accurate evaluation of their work and work habits. If you are a landlord, it is not judging to give an honest reference, good or bad or mixed.

Not judging others does not mean that you accept and even embrace all lifestyles and all points of view. For instance, you protect your own children from criminal and deviant lifestyles. You evaluate their friends and activities, and act upon those evaluations. You

do not want your children hanging out with thugs, criminals, druggies or sexual perverts. This is not judging; this is common sense (which there is very little of today).

Jesus says, “**Do not condemn and you may not be condemned.**” We do not get to assigned sins and bad motivation when we don’t actually know. I recall some leftists who constantly criticized Donald Trump, assigning *greed* as his motivation to be president. There are a great many politicians who appear to be motivated by greed; but there is no actual evidence that Trump is anything like this (he gave his salary away, for goodness sake—had any president at any time before done that?).

There is always an asterisk when it comes to your own children and who they hang with. Obviously, you do want them running with criminals or alcoholics or sexually confused people. In many cases, a parent can make simple observations and then act on those. There are times that a parent might be mistaken, but that is okay.

As a teacher, at a teacher conference, I pointed out that the problem student at hand had drawn marijuana leaves all over his folder. I suggested at the time, “Perhaps this is a key to your child’s problem.” Had I seen this in the capacity of being a parent, that kid would not have been allowed to hang with my kid.

The third thing that Jesus said was, **...release, and you will be released.** The Greek word here means to pardon or to forgive; and we as believers must be willing to forgive others, despite the actions of others being quite annoying or damaging.

Furthermore, we forgive as Christ forgave, not in order to secure our own salvation (that is secured by faith in Christ), but to demonstrate the character of Christ.

Luke 6:38 **Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed, and shaken, and running over, they will give into your bosom; for with that measure with which you measure, it will be measured to you again.**”

We are to give generously of our money, time or whatever it is that God has given to us. God will give to us (in a variety of ways) so that our blessing is overflowing.

There is always a balance in the Christian life. That is, you do not give away so much money (for instance), to the point where you deprive your family. You do not donate so much time to Christian organizations, that your family does not get any of your time; or that your work is substandard when on the job.

The believer with a family has multiple responsibilities which must be attended to.

Luke 6:39 **And He spoke an allegory to them, “Is blind able to lead blind? Will they not both fall into a pit?”**

V. 38 seems to be a jump to another topic. The blind teachers of that era were the scribes and pharisees, who were not regenerate and did not have a correct understanding of the



Law. They had been taught legalism; and, as a result, they taught legalism. Those whom they were teaching were blind; and they themselves were blind. The blind pharisees would guide their blind congregation into a drainage ditch where they would all fall in (Jesus was speaking metaphorically here).

Luke 6:40 **A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone perfected will be as his teacher.**

The key to growth, according to Jesus, is a teacher (but, obviously, not a blind teacher). Believers are brought to spiritual maturity through a teacher who knows the Word of God. In fact, the proper teacher can bring those under him to his level.

Although Jesus does not allude to the concept of a local church, it is clear in the epistles that God's classroom for the believer is the local church. Our primary focus in the local church ought to be the teaching of the Word of God.

Luke 6:41 **And why do you behold the speck that is in your brother's eye, and do not consider the beam that [is] in your own eye?**

It is very easy for a believer to have a great desire to run someone else's life (again, there is the exception of parents and children here). It is not your job to run someone else's life. It is not up to you to look people over, decide what they are doing wrong, and then tell them all about it. It is not up to you to follow others around and to scrunch up your face when you see them sin.

There is a place for one believer to help another when it comes to restoration of fellowship, but this is not by being nosy, pushy, overbearing, or interfering.

Some people do not understand 1John 1:9 or even know that it exists. Sometimes when you present that to another believer, this gives them the mechanics to get back into fellowship. Sometimes when you explain 1John 1:9, that helps a person to understand exactly how to apply that verse to their own lives.

On the other hand, it is not our job to follow other believers around and then shout out "1John 1:9" when we think now is a good time for them to apply it.

As Jesus puts it, "You cannot see a tiny speck of dust in another person's eye if you have a log (or beam) in your own eye." That is, if you are judging and condemning another believer, that is a sin and that is the log in your eye.

Luke 6:42 **Or how are you able to say to your brother, Brother, permit, I may take out the speck that [is] in your eye—yourself not beholding the beam in your own eye? Hypocrite, first take the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that [is] in your brother's eye.**

One believer out of fellowship cannot help another believer who may or may not be out of fellowship. Removing the *beam* in your own eye is the personal application of 1John 1:9 (If we acknowledge our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all wrong-doing). Once we have been restored to fellowship, then we determine what role we ought to be playing in the life of a brother—and it is never our place to try to run his life or to interfere with his volition.

In the time that Jesus spoke, this exactly describes the religious types of that era. They continually criticized the Lord for some tiny speck, yet were guilty of far worse. Remember at the beginning of this chapter, the religious types following Jesus and His disciples around and accusing them of working on the Sabbath? The very fact of these religious types following them around on the Sabbath and criticizing their actions—that was clearly work.

### **A Tree and Its Fruit**

Luke 6:43 For there is not a good tree making bad fruit, nor a bad tree making good fruit; for each tree is known from its own fruit, for they do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they crop a grape from a bramble.

The good tree which produces good fruit is the maturing believer who is in fellowship and applying Bible doctrine. The bad tree is the believer out of fellowship; the believer who has not grown spiritually; or the unbeliever. People who fall into those classifications cannot produce divine good.

Too often, new believers are pressured into producing some sort of fruit. New believers should be helped or guided towards spiritual growth; not bullied to witness or to participate in some form of spiritual works.

Luke 6:45 The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which [is] good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which [is] evil; for out of the abounding of the heart his mouth speaks.

The believer who has Bible doctrine in his heart is able to produce divine good. The believer with human viewpoint in his thinking can only produce human good (at best).

We may understand *heart* to refer to the human spirit and human soul. Too often, when we read the word *heart*, we think of our emotions (which is not the case for the Biblical use of that word).

### **Build Your House on the Rock**

Luke 6:46 And why do you call Me, Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?

When you hear the teaching of Jesus Christ, and do the opposite, then why do you call Him Lord? He is obviously not your Lord if you disobey Him.

Sometimes, our lifestyle reveals a rejection of Jesus Christ. Fundamental to the Church Age are local churches and pastor-teachers. Is that fundamental to your life? Is there a pastor-teacher to whom you look for the teaching of Scripture?

We have to be careful about the application here, because all believers sin, and that means, all believers disobey Jesus Christ. So, when we have sinned, we name that sin to God and we are back in fellowship with Him.

Luke 6:47–48 **Everyone who is coming to Me, and is hearing My words, and is doing them, I will show you to whom he is like; he is like to a man building a house, who dug and deepened, and laid a foundation on the rock, and a flood having come, the stream broke forth on that house, and was not able to shake it, for it had been founded on the rock.**

The believer who hears the word of Jesus and does them is compared here to a wise man who builds his house on a solid foundation, affixing that house to bedrock down below. There is nothing more solid in this life than the Word of God. The principles of Bible doctrine should be the foundation of your thinking.

Luke 6:49 **And he who heard and did not, is like to a man having built a house on the earth, without a foundation, against which the stream broke forth, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house became great.”**

Both believers and unbelievers face storms. Bible doctrine gives the believer the inner resources to stand up to the storm. Believers without Bible doctrine and unbelievers are damaged and even taken out by life's storms.

## **Lesson 197: Luke 7:1**

## **Introduction to Luke 7**

There are four great narratives in Luke 7: (1) the appeal of the centurion on behalf of one of his slaves; (2) the widow whose son who died; (3) messengers from John the baptizer; and (4) the woman anointing the Lord's feet during a dinner given by Simon the pharisee. Two of these sections contain parables given by the Lord.

Luke 7 begins with a centurion sending a delegation of Jewish elders to appeal to Jesus to heal the man's servant. As Jesus heads in that direction, the centurion sends friends to Jesus to tell Him that he is not worthy to have Jesus come to his home. However, he knows that Jesus merely needs to make the command and his servant would be healed.

What Jesus said as a result is quite remarkable, and, like much of what He said, has an impact today.

In the second episode of this chapter, Jesus encounters a funeral procession for a young boy, a widow's only son. Jesus is with His followers and he comes face to face with the funeral procession. Jesus raises this boy from the dead.

Meanwhile, John the Herald begins to have some second thoughts about Jesus. Is He the promised Messiah, David's Greater Son, the One sent by God to rule over Israel? So far, in His public ministry, Jesus does not appear to be portraying the role that John expected. Therefore, John will send two of his disciples to ask Jesus if He is the Messiah, or if they should look for another. Interestingly enough, Jesus does not say, "Of course I am the Messiah, and here is why..." What Jesus does instead is, He has the disciples of John spend a few hours with Him, to watch what He does (He is healing people, giving them their sight back, casting out demons). Then Jesus sends John's disciples back with that information.

After John's disciples leave, Jesus speaks highly and powerfully of John and his place in human history.

In the final episode of Luke 7, Jesus attends a dinner party held by Simon, a pharisee. While Jesus is reclined at a table, a woman—a sinner (possibly a prostitute)—comes and washes and anoints Jesus' feet with ointment, using her tears and her own hair to complete the process. When Simon questions this, Jesus upbraids him for his own lack of hospitality. But, most importantly, at the very end, Jesus forgives the sins of this woman.

In this chapter overall, Jesus speaking occupies only about 40% of it.

Luke 7:1a **After He had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people,...**

In the previous chapter, Jesus had just given the sermon on the plain, which had some elements in it in common with the sermon on the mount. They were clearly not the same sermon and they clearly did not occur in the same place. However, have an historical access to both sermons suggests to us that Jesus probably gave similar sermons to many different groups of people.

When Jesus moved about, there were His basic 12 disciples with Him, a number of women (who are specifically named by Luke), and other various disciples of varied attendance (some may have traveled with Jesus as much as the twelve). By the time we come to the final chapters of Luke, it will be clear that Jesus' followers grew in size to where there were certainly hundreds, if not thousands of them.

Nevertheless, it is inevitable that Jesus had new listeners everywhere that He went. Therefore, Jesus had to make bits and pieces of His messages reach every group that might be there. Whereas His disciples were always there, they did not always get the point that Jesus was making; and sometimes, they did not ask questions when they should have. There would have been new people showing up to hear Jesus where they first needed the gospel (the good news) that their faith in Him would result in salvation.

This is not unlike the teaching of any pastor-teacher. In his congregation, he is going to have people who are brand new believers and people who have been studying the Word of God for 30 years. The message of a pastor-teacher ought to have aspects of his

teaching which reach all levels (and, now and again, the pastor ought to give the gospel message, just in case there is anyone attending who has not yet believed in the Lord).

There was a lot of tricky navigation that Jesus had to do as well, given that period of time. For instance, He basically was teaching Age of Israel doctrines. However, from time to time, He needed to present Church Age doctrine, so that the disciples might know what they were to look forward to. In addition, Jesus lived during a unique dispensation, the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union (Jesus is the Hypostatic Union). So there were a few things at that time which were unique to this very short dispensation.

Luke 7:1b ...**He entered Capernaum.**

One of the things which I find most amazing about the Lord's ministry was the small amount of area that He covered; along with the brevity of His public ministry. Much of His public ministry took place around the Sea of Galilee, mostly north and west of the sea. There should be no reason that any of us, a half a world away, 2000 years later, know anything about Him. Yet we do.



**The Sea of Galilee** (a map); from [Bible Odessey](#); accessed December 14, 2018.

Nazareth is where the Lord was brought up. Cana is found early in the book of John where Jesus turns water into wine. Magdala is the home of Mary Magdalene. Jesus healed a blind man in Bethsaida. Capernaum is where Jesus is right now in this narrative.



Everywhere that Jesus went (along with His disciples), He went to on foot. The cities that He went to which could not be gotten to on foot, He would travel to by boat. And if a city was too far out, then the people from that city would have to come to Him (recall Luke 6:17). Jesus' actual ministry to the people of Palestine only lasted for 3–4 years. That we even know Who this Man is, is a testimony to His divinity and to the importance of His ministry (and to His death, burial and resurrection).

Capernaum, where Jesus is at this point in the narrative, is on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Luke 7:1 **After He had finished all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum.**

We do not have any information as to the location of the Sermon on the Plain except right here, where Jesus finishes His sayings (that is, He concludes His sermon on the plain), and he enters into Capernaum next. Between Magdala and Capernaum there is a valley, and Jesus could have been at a higher elevation and then moved down into that plateau region.

But now, He is in Capernaum. Vv. 1–10 will take place in or around Capernaum.

Throughout the book of Luke, we will find a great many details about some of the incidents which occurred in the life of Jesus. I have suggested that Luke had access to the books of Mark and Matthew; and these narratives may have been quite interesting to Luke—enough to find out more details and to include these details here.

Although I believe that Luke wrote most of the Lord's biography by interviewing firsthand witnesses; he may have read something interesting in Mark, and asked people about it during these interviews.

It is quite clear that there was no attempt to square all of these accounts of Jesus' life. In fact, many critics will point to these different accounts and allege that they are filled with contradictions (they are not).

Matching this narrative with the one in Matthew takes a bit of doing to accomplish. Later, I will take the time to do this.

## **Lesson 198: Luke 7:1–3**

## **A Centurion Asks Jesus to Heal His Servant**

Luke 7:1 **After He had finished all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum.**

After the sermon on the plain, Jesus went into Capernaum.

Luke 7:2a **Now a centurion had a servant who was sick...**

This is taking place in Capernaum. A centurion there has a slave and his slave is sick. We find out in Matthew that the servant is paralyzed.

Although [Conservapedia](#) suggests that this is an *aide-de-camp* (a confidential assistant to a senior officer), that is, by far, the minority view. Most commentators and translations accept that this is a bought and paid for slave.

In today's culture, there are some who make out slavery to be the original sin of the United States. This reveals a total lack of understanding of this institution as well as a misunderstanding of culture.

### A Few Points on Slavery and the Bible

1. Slavery has been a part of mankind since very early on. Although we do not know exactly when it began, I would suspect as soon as one army conquered another army (or a city or whatever), someone decided that making use of this human resource might be better than simply killing them. It is also possible that slavery began as a completely voluntary institution (that is, a person completely without resources offers himself as a slave to well-to-do man or family).
2. The first use of the word *slave/servant* is in Genesis 9:25–27. Ham showed such disrespect for his father Noah, that Noah cursed Ham's son, saying, "[Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers.](#)" (Gen. 9:25b; ESV) The sons of Canaan would be lower than slaves; they would be slaves of slaves. This would suggest that slavery existed even before the flood (as Noah lived for 600 years prior to the flood).
3. The Bible's position on slavery is nuanced.
  - 1) Although we find no prohibitions against slavery in the Mosaic Law, there is a prohibition against man-stealing, which is one of the most common forms of slavery. When a free person is captured and then sold into slavery, that is known as *man-stealing*. Exodus 21:16 1Timothy 1:10
  - 2) In fact, an Israelite who takes another Israelite and forces him into slavery, is to be executed. Deuteronomy 24:7
  - 3) Man-stealing could also be understood to stealing the slave of another.
  - 4) The Mosaic Law might be the only codified law which gave rights to slaves and concerned itself with the treatment of slaves. Exodus 21
  - 5) There are slaves today throughout the world in very large numbers. There are certainly far more slaves in existence today than was known in the days of our Civil War.
  - 6) The Bible is not designed to make huge, social changes. That is, believers are not instructed in the Bible to eradicate slavery or to rise up in large political groups to effect political change. Potentially, these things can happen, but that is not a specific goal of believers outlined in Scripture. God did not save us to whitewash the devil's world. People's lives are changed by faith in Christ and by Bible doctrine on an individual level. This takes place, no matter what sort of society the believer finds himself. Can there be any doubt that, wherever people believe in Jesus

## A Few Points on Slavery and the Bible

- Christ, the society around them is going to have failings.
- 7) Believers are not called upon by God to start changing society as a part of the Christian experience. On the other hand, if a large portion of society believes in Jesus, that society will change.
  - 8) The concept of slavery was used often in the Bible to illustrate spiritual principles. Mankind is born into slavery (we are slaves to our sin nature) and Jesus Christ frees man from this slavery. The book of Exodus, where God frees the Israelites from slavery to Egypt, is typical of what God does on our behalf (meaning that parallels can be drawn between God freeing the Israelite slaves in Egypt and God freeing unbelievers from the slave market of sin).
4. The New Testament example of Paul, Philemon (slave owner) and Onesimus (slave):
- 1) In the Church Age, there came to be circumstances where one believer might end up owning another believer as a slave. Paul, without issuing an order, suggests—and this is a matter of free will of the owner—that he set free his slave who has believed in Jesus (this is found in the book of Philemon). Paul actually does urge Philemon to set this particular slave free, but Paul does not mandate this of Philemon (the owner). Although Paul had the power to proclaim the theology he knew in any church, he was not supposed to run individual lives.
  - 2) Onesimus had run away from his master Philemon and had come to Paul. Paul sent Onesimus back to his master with this letter written to him.
  - 3) Paul told Philemon, the slave owner, that his slave, Onesimus, had become quite useful to him as a brother in Christ.
  - 4) Paul, Philemon and Onesimus were all brothers in Christ. Nevertheless, Philemon owned Onesimus, and it was his decision, as the owner of Onesimus, of what to do, knowing that Onesimus was now a believer.
  - 5) At no time did Paul issue the edict, “If you have a slave and he believes in Christ, then set him free.”
5. Keeping these things in mind, and understanding that slavery occurred worldwide, the Bible had a rather enlightened view of slavery, understanding slaves to be people with souls and free will, even within the confines of their slavery.
6. There is a political movement in the United States which flares up from time to time, where the most important thing in the world is to tear down some confederate statue (or, a statue of someone who owned slaves). Such political theater does absolutely nothing besides feed into the self-righteousness of the persons trying to tear the statue down (the underlying intention is to destroy our history as a nation). Furthermore, there are more human slaves today than during the time that our nation approved of slavery.
- 1) If these people are so concerned about slavery, perhaps they should concern themselves with the slavery which is occurring today.
  - 2) In nearly every case, those who attack these statues are socialists or communists, which is the greatest form of slavery in modern history. This

## A Few Points on Slavery and the Bible

- irony is no doubt lost on them.
7. Being a slave in the ancient world did not mean that life was over and that the slave could never advance or improve his circumstance.
    - 1) Joseph, the son of Jacob, was taken into slavery in Egypt; and he rose to the second highest position in the land of Egypt.
    - 2) Close and caring relationships between slaves and their masters is also something which has occurred throughout history in most cultures. In many ways, a slave become a part of family. What we are studying here is an example of such a relationship.
    - 3) It was not unusual for there to be close relationships between masters and slaves in the United States. Such relationships have existed wherever slavery has existed.
    - 4) In the south, in the United States, before the abolishment of slavery, many slaves became believers in Christ as a result of their masters teaching them the Bible.
    - 5) This gave many slaves the ability to endure their own slavery and then to later deal with being suddenly set free (at that point in time, the slaves who were set free had never been free before).
  8. Slavery is the ultimate example of being paid a living wage. A slave must be provided for—food, shelter and clothing. A free employee is never guaranteed any of those things.
  9. Present-day applications:
    - 1) Rule of thumb is, the more free you are, the fewer guarantees in life that you have.
    - 2) If a government guarantees you everything, then you are a slave to that government.
    - 3) The United States government was originally designed with the idea of limiting government and preserving freedom.
    - 4) We are clearly a long ways away from our founding.

Slavery in the United States was not unique or remarkable in any way.

Luke 7:2a **Now a centurion had a servant [= a slave] who was sick...**

*The NET Bible: A centurion was a noncommissioned officer in the Roman army or one of the auxiliary territorial armies, commanding a centuria of (nominally) 100 men. The responsibilities of centurions were broadly similar to modern junior officers, but there was a wide gap in social status between them and officers, and relatively few were promoted beyond the rank of senior centurion. The Roman troops stationed in Judea were auxiliaries, who would normally be rewarded with Roman citizenship after 25 years of service. Some of the centurions may have served originally in the Roman*

*legions (regular army) and thus gained their citizenship at enlistment. Others may have inherited it, like Paul.*<sup>89</sup>

This centurion was very concerned about his servant; and he was clearly aware of Jesus. Bear in mind that, Jesus' public ministry began in Luke 4, and it is rather amazing how many people are aware of Him at this early point in His ministry.

Luke 7:2b *...and at the point of death,....*

It is very clear that the suffering endured by the servant would end in death. The verb used here is *teleutaō* (τελευτάω) [pronounced *tel-yoo-TAH-oh*], and it means, *to finish life, to expire, to suffer demise, to be dead, to be deceased; to finish, bring to and end*. Strong's #5053.

The concern of the centurion appears to be much deeper than the loss of revenue.

Luke 7:2c *...who was highly valued by him.*

This servant was highly valued to the centurion. This adjective is *entimos* (ἐντιμος) [pronounced *EN-tee-moss*], and it can also mean, *held in honour, prized, precious*. Strong's #1784. My point being that, this is not necessarily an economic calculation on the part of the centurion. There is clearly a relationship here between slave and slave-owner (I do not mean a sexual relationship but a familial bond). Such bonds between slave master and slave were not unusual then; nor were they unusual during the early founding of our nation.

Luke 7:2 *Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him.*

The centurion had a slave, and this slave was sick, knocking on death's door. The person was highly valued by the centurion, which suggests a good relationship between master and slave.

**The Centurion and His Servant** (a graphic); from [Seeds of Faith](#); accessed July 29, 2022.

Luke 7:3a *When the centurion heard about Jesus,...*

At this point, we are 6 months to a year into Jesus' ministry.



<sup>89</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?luk7.htm> (footnote); accessed November 2, 2019.



What Jesus was capable of doing was broadcast throughout ancient Palestine. In fact, the Lord's sermon on the plain attracted people from all different directions. According to the map, there are people who came to see Jesus who were more than 70 miles away. This was very early on in His ministry, and people came from Jerusalem to see the Lord (the distance of between Capernaum and Jerusalem is 79 miles). So people miles and miles away from Jesus often knew what He had done and where He was traveling to.

What would people have heard? Obviously, people would have heard that Jesus was able to heal the sick of a variety of ailments. People were told, "Never have I heard a man like this speak before." And no doubt, many who believed in Him also believed that He is the promised Messiah. Any of these testimonies would have brought people to Him. Making such a trip to see such a man would have been quite difficult; yet thousands made such a trip.

On the other hand, many people made a long trip to see Jesus to attempt to derail His ministry.

Luke 7:3b ...he sent to Him elders of the Jews,...

The centurion knows some Jewish elders—perhaps those who are highly respected in the community, and he sends them to Jesus. This would presuppose that the centurion had a good relationship with these elders; and, therefore, probably with the Jewish population there.

How much did the centurion know about Jesus? I would guess that he did a reasonable amount of research in a short time, and had access to a fair amount of information, based upon his relationship with the Jewish elders and other soldiers.

Now, what seems to be prudent on the part of this centurion is, he does not try to strong arm Jesus in any way, nor does he send soldiers or his own servants, but he sends Jewish elders to Jesus. Does he understand that Jesus is the Messiah to the Jews? That appears to be the case. In fact, as we go further in this narrative, it appears that this centurion has a better understanding of Jesus than many of Lord's followers.

Luke 7:3c ...asking Him to come and heal his servant.

The elders came to the Lord and asked Him if He might cure the Centurion's servant.

For the centurion, Jesus was his only hope of finding a cure for his slave.

Although, no doubt, many people treated their slaves as no more than property; some people were quite dependent upon their slaves and they placed great responsibility in the hands of their slaves. There was clearly a love of some masters for their slaves (or from members of the master's family toward their slaves), just as we would expect for any person brought up in this or that home with slaves who attend to them or to the needs of the household.

The Centurion Heard Of  
Jesus And Sent Some Elders  
Of The Jews To Him,  
Asking Him To Come And  
Heal His Servant.

Luke 7:3

BibleWordings.com

**Luke 7:3 (NIV)** (a graphic); from [Bible Wordings](#); accessed July 21, 2022.

**Luke 7:3** When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to Him elders of the Jews, asking Him to come and heal his servant.

There is a centurion who lives in or around Capernaum. He has a servant who is near death, and he is aware of Who Jesus is and that Jesus is in his vicinity. The centurion speaks with some Jewish elders (with whom, the centurion has a good relationship) and he asks them to appeal to Jesus.

As an aside, not all Jewish leaders had an immediate negative reaction to Jesus and His ministry.

The Lukian account of this incident has far more details in it than Matthew has. Perhaps hearing about this incident, Luke was intrigued and wanted to know more. One of the details which caught my eye was, the centurion sends Jewish elders to Jesus. Now, that is a fascinating detail.

**Luke 7:1–3 (ESV)** (a graphic); from [Slide Player](#); accessed July 21, 2022.

**Luke 7:4a** And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with Him earnestly,...

### Luke 7:1-3

- <sup>1</sup> After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum.
- <sup>2</sup> Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him.
- <sup>3</sup> When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant.

This delegation of Jews come towards Jesus and they are calling to Him with a note of urgency in their voices. They certainly knew that there was little time remaining in the life of the servant they had hoped to save.

The fact that these Jewish elders would plead with Jesus about this matter indicates a good relationship between the centurion and these Jewish elders. Remember that these

centurions were essentially the local police to the people in their community. They kept the peace; and many of the centurions would have been highly respected by the people of that community (as this one was). Those who are correctly oriented to establishment appreciate the law and order provided by the police.

Luke 7:4b ...saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him,..."

This delegation of Jewish elders have found Jesus, and they call to Him and then come before Him. They, no doubt, explained the situation, and quickly added, "This man is deserving of Your attention." Now, *why* would they say this? Why is this an important consideration? In the Jewish faith, there was little thought given to grace (a concept clearly taught in the Old Testament); but there was a great emphasis on a person deserving this or that. So, this is what we might expect from a group of elders.

That being said, I am not minimizing what the centurion has done for the Hebrew people. He has, from his own pocket, funded the building of their local synagogue, which would have been a considerable expense (this is revealed in v. 5). Therefore, this man did not simply tolerate the Jewish people; he had a great love and respect for them.

Let me speculate that, the centurion had done some research on Jesus—had talked to several people—and determined Him not to be a phony, but the real thing. Further, the centurion understood that the Lord's ministry on earth was primarily directed towards the Jewish people. Therefore, the centurion sends to Jesus a delegation of elderly Jewish people with whom he is associated.

Let me suggest that the centurion understood that he, as a gentile, was asking a big favor from Jesus.

In essence, these elders are saying, "Look, we know that this man is a Roman, but he is a decent guy and we are asking that you give him consideration." On top of that, the centurion was asking for help not for himself but for his slave.

Luke 7:4 And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with Him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him,..."

The Jewish delegation who came to Jesus apparently held the centurion in high regard. There was mutual respect between them and the centurion. These elders also appear to have a respect for Jesus as well (elders are simply the older men who are seen as the civil authorities in the Jewish society).

In the gospels, Jewish religious leaders and Jewish elders appear to get a bad rap. Obviously, from what we read here, that was not always the case. These elders did not mind acting as go-betweens for a Roman centurion and Jesus. This suggests that they were authority orientated and possibly believers or unbelievers with positive volition toward God.

Luke 7:5a ...for he loves our nation,...

The Jewish elders have told Jesus that this man is deserving. Now they explain why. "He loves our people." The verb is the present active indicative of *agapaō* (ἀγαπάω) [pronounced *ahg-ahp-AH-oh*], which means, *to love, to esteem, to regard with strong affection; to love and serve with fidelity; to regard with favor [goodwill, benevolence]*. Strong's #25.

Who the centurion loves is the accusative neuter singular noun *ethnos* (ἔθνος, οὐς, τό) [pronounced *EHTH-noss*], which means, *a people; Gentiles; a people [as distinguished from Jews]; people [from Samaria]*. Strong's #1484. Now, the word *ethnos* is often used to mean *gentile, gentile nation*; but in this context, spoken by Jewish elders who add in the personal pronoun *our*, it is clear that they are saying he loves *our nation (our people)*, which is the Jewish people. If they are in a gentile-majority or gentile-controlled city, then this is the exact proper word to use.

In the Old Testament, it was very common to refer to the Hebrew people as simply *the people*. However, this is not always the case in the New.

These Jewish leaders themselves are not overtaken with hatred toward the Romans. They do not have a grudge against the centurion simply because he is a Roman soldier. They are all born into this situation and they apparently have chosen to make the most of it. No doubt, there is a mutual respect and open-mindedness which began this relationship between the centurion and the Jewish leaders of his city.

This is a difficult thing to do in some cases—difficult for the elders to consider this Roman centurion with an open mind; and difficult for him to not simply view these as a conquered people. A genuine mutual respect had developed and, apparently, a friendship between the Jewish elders and this man.

That fact that these Jewish leaders are able to have this sort of relationship with the centurion also suggests that they might have an open mind towards Jesus. Religious elders coming from Jerusalem often had their minds made up before even seeing Jesus. However, this was not the attitude of these elders.

Luke 7:5b ...and he is the one who built us our synagogue."

In evidence of his love for the Jewish people, this centurion built their synagogue. So, he was not the sort of man who just came into the town throwing his swaggering authority around. He saw that they needed a synagogue (or that their synagogue was in disrepair), and he built a new one or restored the one that they were using (the verb here could mean either *to build* or *to restore*). Whether the centurion saw to the remodeling of the local synagogue or built them one from scratch (I would assume to replace the decaying one which they already had), this would have been a great expense to him. How many of you reading this could afford to pay for the building of a church—even a small one?

We should be careful here. This is not a matter of the centurion sending messengers to Jesus saying, "Listen, Lord, I deserve this!" This is him asking for consideration by the King of the Jews, even though he is a Roman. The centurion understands that this is a big ask.

Luke 7:5 ...for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue."

By these words, the Jewish elders appeal to Jesus.

### **Jesus rarely, if ever, accesses His Deity:**

There are a great many things about the Lord's ministry and the interplay of His Deity and humanity that we are unaware of. Based upon my study, I believe that, throughout most (and possibly all) of the Lord's life, He willfully shut down His Deity. That is, when this man's delegation came to Jesus, Jesus did not necessarily know who the man was, or whether or not He should deign to honor his request. Jesus, from His Deity, is omniscient, so that, potentially, He could have known every single moment of His life and life events in advance. However, I do not believe that Jesus did that. I believe that Jesus evaluates each situation and every person from His humanity (using the Bible doctrine in His human spirit), and from there He made whatever decision was the right decision.

When entering a city, Jesus did not know what would happen once He arrived. I believe that most of this can be justified by the text that we will study. Furthermore, this is very much indicative of the Lord's earthly ministry.

We often think of Jesus as God—all-powerful, all-knowing—sort of trapped within a physical body; but (1) this is completely the Lord's body; He will never be separate from it (apart from the 3 days which followed the crucifixion); (2) Jesus clearly allowed for His humanity to overshadow His Deity throughout all or most of His ministry. (3) Because Jesus is our example in the spiritual life, it is possible that He never accessed His Deity (essentially, Jesus test-drove the spiritual life for us). (4) Finally, bear in mind that, the most difficult thing that Jesus would do is die for our sins. He has to bear these sins in His humanity, not in His Deity. Deity cannot have any connection with sin (if Deity could have contact with sin, then God would not have had to become a man in order to redeem us). If Jesus did the most difficult thing that He had to do—die for our sins—without His Deity, then why would He have needed His Deity to function for much lesser acts?

As an aside, I am not, in any way, moving in the direction of making an argument that Jesus is not God. I am simply making the argument that Jesus did not access His Deity during His incarnation; or very rarely (and I do not have an example where He did).

My explanation for how this can possibly be—that is, how could Jesus be God and yet, somehow, not access His Deity—can be illustrated by our own physical bodies. Now, I might will myself to walk from point A to point B, but I do not will my heart to beat, my blood to flow, or any of the millions of physical processes which occur every single day. This



stuff happens, and the master computer board which directs all of this is my brain, the same brain which I use to think, speak and wander about. Now, I am completely unaware of these other processes being directed by my brain apart from my will as I live out each day, even though the commands to do so emanate from the exact same brain. I use this brain to direct myself from day-to-day, to have an occasional thought or two; yet this brain also does a myriad of things which I am only aware of because of my understanding of biology. That is, my body is going to take in air, distribute oxygen and circulate blood; and there is never a time when I can make the decision to stop my blood flowing, even for a few seconds.

Between the functions of my body over which my volition has no control and the activities which my volition controls, there appears to be a great gulf fixed. Theoretically, I could hold my breath and temporarily alter some of these processes; but I would eventually pass out and everything would return to normal again.

I believe that the Deity of our Lord was very much like my brain which directs these millions of processes which I don't seem to have a say in. Somehow, all of this is compartmentalized, separated—yet fully functioning even to the point of holding the universe together—but without the humanity of the Lord consciously willing any of it to happen or even being aware of it any more than I am aware of these various automatic bodily functions. I know in theory that these processes are taking place, I know my brain is directing them, but this is intellectual information only. So, I believe that the Lord's Deity is something like this in relation to His humanity.

I am setting up an analogous situation; but there is a key difference. If the Lord wants to access His Deity, He is able to do that, in an instant. I obviously could not choose to suddenly shut down my heart beat by willing that to happen. I do not have a way to access that part of my brain. Now, based upon my studies, the Lord *chooses* not to access His Deity throughout most (or all) of His life and public ministry.

This reason that these things come to mind is, Jesus has been approached by a small delegation of Jewish elders, perhaps 2 or 3 or 4 of them. Jesus is aware that the pharisees are not very happy with Him; so, does it ever occur to Him that this could be a trap? (Obviously, if you know this story, you know that it is not.) Let me suggest that Jesus moves and functions about day-to-day based upon the guidance of God the Holy Spirit and the doctrine which is in His soul. I do not believe that He accesses His Deity to determine, by means of omniscience, whether this request is on the level or not. I believe that He simply takes each situation as it comes and makes an evaluation based upon all of the relevant factors.

Let me further suggest that Jesus is a genius when it comes to reading people. That is, He can look at these people and determine—without anything supernatural going on—that they are sincere; and that this is all a very real request.

As a further digression, there are two pertinent questions: *why do I think this* and *why is this important?* As taught by R. B. Thieme, Jr., Jesus is our model of the spiritual walk. In fact, Jesus test drove the Christian life for us today. He has the same resources that we have and all that the Lord had that He used is the same as what we have. In fact, we have the entire New Testament as well, which is quite helpful in our daily walk. In order for all of this to be true, Jesus must be self-limited. See the doctrine of **Kenosis** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). In [Lesson #115](#), we had one approach to explaining kenosis; along with two links where the doctrine has been more fully examined. Luke 3 ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) has also been posted, which contains that same information.

The idea of Kenosis is, just as we cannot access the portion of our brains which cause our hearts to beat or our blood to flow, Jesus chooses not to access the Divine aspects of His Own Person. This in no way makes Him any less Divine.

## Lesson 200: Luke 7:2–8

## Jesus Goes with the Jewish Elders

**Jesus healing the servant of a Centurion** (by the Venetian artist Paolo Veronese, 16th century); from [Wikimedia](#); accessed July 29, 2022.

Luke 7:2–5 **Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to Him elders of the Jews, asking Him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with Him earnestly, saying, "He is**



**worthy to have You do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue." (ESV; capitalized)**

So what is happening is this: the centurion has sent for Jesus to come to him; and he sent off Jewish elders to persuade Jesus to come to him (vv. 2–5). But, he then begins to think this over, and he realizes, he does not necessarily need for Jesus to come all the way to his home and into his house. In fact, even making such a request might be rather presumptuous (this is what we will study in vv. 6–10).

Luke 7:6a **And Jesus went with them.**

Jesus evaluated the request made by the centurion and those making the request (the Jewish elders), and He chose to go along with them.

So, the Jewish elders begin to lead Jesus to the home of the centurion. As Jesus approaches, the centurion is doing a lot of thinking. The centurion is beginning to understand the magnitude of what he has asked.

Luke 7:6b **When He was not far from the house,...**

When the procession is fairly close to the home—which suggests to me possibly that the centurion can see them coming—the centurion begins to think about what he has asked for and he reconsiders.

Or, if the centurion does not see them, he is able to determine by the time which has transpired that they are likely on the way to his home.

Luke 7:6c **...the centurion sent friends,...**

The centurion has some friends at his house, and he does some quick reevaluation of the situation. He realizes that he is not worthy to have the Lord come into his house. That really is expecting too much from Jesus. Therefore, he sends out friends of his to convey this.

Why doesn't the centurion come himself? I suspect that he does not find himself worthy to even be in the presence of the Lord. After all, he is a gentile and he realizes that Jesus is come to the Jewish people. Additionally, he is at the side of his sickly servant.

Luke 7:6d **...saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself,...."**

The centurion asks that his friends speak on his behalf, so they speak as though the centurion is speaking directly to Jesus.

The centurion recognizes that Jesus need not even come into his house in order to effect a cure.

Luke 7:6e **...for I am not worthy to have You come under my roof.**

The centurion recognizes that he is clearly not worthy for the Lord to come into his house.

Let me suggest that the centurion understood the concept of the Jewish Messiah and that he also believed Jesus to be that Messiah. Therefore, how could he, a gentile, suppose that it would be okay for Jesus to come to him and to come into his home? What he is asking is a gracious favor from the Lord.

Luke 7:6 **And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy to have You come under my roof."**

I do not believe that there is any false modesty at work here. I believe when this man began to consider what he was asking and Who he was asking, he recognized that he was completely undeserving. So, despite the Jewish elders saying how deserving this man is; in his own heart, he knew that he wasn't.

Furthermore, he is a gentile, and he is make a big request from the Jewish Messiah. Why should the Messenger to the Jews take time to come to him, a gentile?

Furthermore, there is a quick and simply solution to all of this, which allows the Messiah to return to His mission.

The Translation for Translators adds a lot of additional words, but they present this same understanding of v. 6: **So Jesus went with them. When he was near the officer's house, the officer decided that it was not necessary for Jesus to come to his house. So he summoned some friends. He told them to go to Jesus and tell him this: "Lord/Sir, do not bother to come. Because I am a non-Jew, I am not worthy for you (sg), a Jew, to come into my house [MTY] and associate with me.**

Luke 7:7a **Therefore I did not presume to come to You.**

He tells Jesus that he is not worthy to even meet with Him face to face.

We are all sinners and the centurion knows that he is; and as such, he is unworthy to even be in the Presence of Christ. The centurion fully understands his own deficiencies.

Now, bear in mind, the centurion sees himself in this way, despite all of his good works, some of which have already been acknowledged.

Luke 7:7b **But say the word, and let my servant be healed.**

The centurion recognizes that Jesus need only say the word. There is nothing magic about Jesus being physically there, seeing the servant, as He is the Lord. Jesus is able to direct the healing of the young slave from anywhere. The Jewish Messiah needn't spend His time coming to the home of a gentile.

The centurion does not just understand authority; he understands layers of authority. Let's say that I actually need the government to do something for me. Do I get on the phone with President Trump (I began writing this chapter in 2018) and ask him to come out and take a look at my problem and deal with it? Of course not! For one thing, I could never even get him on the phone or anyone on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> tier of authority under him. Let's say I am having a problem with my federal taxes and I have a question. Even though this agency is under President Trump's<sup>90</sup> authority, I do not even contact the head of the tax office in Austin. I call whatever the number it is and speak to whomever answers and go up the chain of command when necessary (which usually is not necessary). Even though

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<sup>90</sup> Or, *whomever*, when you read this.

that chain of command eventually goes on up to President Trump, there is someone a lot lower in the authority chain who will deal with my question or problem.

This centurion understands these layers of authority (and he will speak of them in the next verse). He does not need Jesus to come out to his home; that would be a very presumptuous thing to ask of the Lord. He simply wants Jesus to give the word to whomever and that very word will take care of the problem.

Luke 7:7 **Therefore I did not presume to come to You. But say the word, and let my servant be healed.**

The centurion understands that Jesus has great authority and that he need only say the word, and his servant would be healed.

The centurion now explains exactly how and why he understands that Jesus need only give the word in order for his servant to be healed.

Luke 7:8a **For I too am a man set under authority,...**

Jesus, as the Jewish Messiah, has great authority. The centurion has authority over 100 soldiers (give or take). The centurion understands the concept of authority. A centurion is not the highest authority. He has authority over him.

Luke 7:8b **...with soldiers under me:...**

The centurion also adds that he had soldiers under him; and those men obey his orders.

The concept of authority is clearly taught throughout Scripture. Would we not expect the world to reject that? Would we not expect the rebellious nature of man to reject that?

However, the centurion has a life which is defined by higher and lower authorities. The centurion has men under him. He gives some short examples.

Luke 7:8c **...and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes;...**

He tells one man to go, and he goes. For whatever reason, the centurion requires a man to go to this or that place, and the centurion need only give the order.

Luke 7:8d **...and to another, 'Come,' and he comes;...**

He tells another man, "Come in here" and the man comes in.

Luke 7:8e **...and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."**

The centurion also has slaves. He simply tells a slave what to do, and the slave does it.



The centurion is recognizing one more thing that many Christians do not understand today—that Jesus Himself was not doing the actual curing or the actual miracles. For this reason, Jesus did not have to be there in the home of the centurion. Jesus did not have to be right there in order for His orders to be obeyed. Jesus also worked through a system of authorities. These authorities are unseen. Over Him is God the Father and the plan for man's salvation. Under Him are the angels of God who will do His bidding.

If you studied the Exodus and the plagues which Moses and Aaron seemingly inflicted on Egypt—you would have noted that Moses and Aaron did not of themselves do anything which caused this or that plague. They did not manufacture billions of frogs at some undisclosed location and then arrange transport for these frogs to suddenly be in Egypt all at once. God told them to do this or that overt sign, but it was God through His angels (probably) Who inflicted these plagues upon Egypt. When God was going to perform a miracle, Moses had to make sure to point out where this miracle would be taking place (often by lifting up his staff and pointing it in the correct direction).

The centurion recognized that Jesus had the authority to call for this or that thing to happen, and it would happen. He did not have to be right there in order for His orders to be heard and obeyed. The centurion explains:

Luke 7:8 **For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."**

The centurion understood layers of authority. He understood that he could tell the soldiers under him, or his servants under him, what to do, and they would do it.