

## Introduction to bible studies and Luke 1-6.

You are holding nine studies that will help you look through the first 6 chapters of Luke's Gospel. More studies for the rest of the book will come later.

These studies work best when you carefully read all the verses in each chapter, not just the sections you're directed to in each study. That will require your own reading before each growth group meeting. Full preparation at home, with thoughtful prayer and reflection is crucial to gain the most from these studies. If you hit a question you can't answer, skip it and move on. You can compare notes, ask questions, and share what you've learnt each week in your Growth Group.

By the time we reach the book of Luke we see that the nation of Israel were desolate, having lost their kingdom and identity as God's people as a direct result of their sin and rejection of the King, God. Babylon had wiped them out, and carried them far away from their Temple and land, despite continued pleas to change their ways.

The book of Jeremiah warns the people of that time that such desolation will come due to their sin and unfaithfulness. However, in his message of doom Jeremiah points to great hope. The key verse of hope in Jeremiah was 31:31-34. God promised here to restart his people --- giving them new hearts that love him and know his word.

During the reign of King Cyrus of Persia, Ezra the prophet brings people back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and resettle the land. This seemed a good start to the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy.

But sadly, people's hearts were not changed. They still strayed away from obeying God. The last prophet in the Old Testament is Malachi, again bringing God's message of judgement on unrepentant sin. Then it seems God goes quiet. 400 years of struggle in both religious and political arenas follow. God's smaller nation still lives in the land, but it is just a shadow of what it was at its glorious peak.

MAP GOES HERE

Jesus' arrival punctuated history - all time was divided and is measured from his birth. Things happened either before he got here (B.C. = Before Christ), or happened after (A.D. = Latin Anno Domini - year of our Lord).

The four books at the start of the New Testament are known as the Gospels.  
(Note: 'Capital G' Gospel means a book while 'lower case g' gospel means the entire MESSAGE about Christ.) But both words mean good news - and it is!

Tradition has it that a doctor named Luke wrote this book, even though he is not named within it. This Gospel was written as part 1 of a two volume work, the second being the book of Acts. Have a look at and compare Luke 1:1-4 & Acts 1:1-2. Luke was well known to the Apostle Paul (See Colossians 4:14) and from Acts 16 we know Luke sometimes accompanied Paul on his missionary journeys.

This Gospel was written in about AD 65 for a man named Theophilus, who is thought to have been a non-Jewish person. Luke wrote his Gospel to explain who Jesus is and God's plan of Salvation. His book of Acts was written to show the emergence and spread of Jesus' church in the world.

Page

*Is this the king?*

**Study 1: Luke 1:1-80**

## **GOD'S WORD COMES TRUE !**

*The Word of God can always be trusted, and its fulfilment brings great joy.*

**Key verse** 1:68 "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people."

**Pray:** That through your study of God's Word you'll gain a broader and better understanding of just how great it is to know Jesus, the King.

### **Kick Off**

If someone (like Oprah) watched every aspect of your life for three days, what would they say you were most joyous about?

### **Read Luke 1:1-4**

1. What does Luke do before he writes out his Gospel? v3
2. Where does he gain his information? v2
3. Who does Luke write this Gospel for? v3
4. Why does he say he wrote it for him? v4

***No one knows who Theophilus was. His name means 'lover of God', and because Luke calls him 'most excellent' we assume he was possibly a Roman, a political power, a wealthy or noble person of the time. It's clear that Luke wants Theophilus to be confident that what he's already been taught has been accurate. This shows a commitment by Luke not only to truth, accuracy and an orderly account but also to the content of, and response to, that Truth --- salvation through belief and trust in Jesus Christ.***

### **Read 1:5-25**

5. Who are Zechariah and his wife? v5

6. What does Luke tell you about their character in v6?
7. Why didn't they have any children? v7
8. What does the angel say about the role of the son to be born to Zechariah & Elizabeth? vv14-17
9. How does this fit with God's words spoken over 400 years earlier in **Malachi 4:5-6**?
10. What happened when Zechariah got home? v23-25

### **Read 1:26-38**

11. What does Mary hear from the angel? v30-33
12. What the significance of Mary's virginity? v34-35
13. How does this fulfil God's words recorded in the Old Testament many centuries earlier? **See for example Isaiah 7:14 and 2 Samuel 7:11b-17.**

***God doesn't forget promises --- even if it takes several centuries --- God will always 'remember' what he has promised and DO IT! Luke helps us see how the arrival of these two babies is clearly and rightly understood by faithful people waiting on their covenant-keeping God.***

### **Read 1:46-56.**

14. How does Mary view God's work:
  - a) in relation to herself? vv47-49
  - b) in relation to all people? vv50-53
  - c) in relation to his promises? vv54-55

### **Read 1:67-79**

15. Why does Zechariah praise God? v68
16. What has God 'remembered'? v70-73
17. What is the appropriate lifestyle now the Saviour has come? v74-75.
18. How is John's role restated here? v76-79
19. How will Jesus "shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, and "guide our feet into the path of peace"? v79
20. How do you think the arrival of Jesus Christ affects our world today? What difference has his arrival made to you?
21. Does the spreading of Jesus Christ through the message of the gospel bring joy to you? Why/why not?

***Pray that you will appreciate the greatness of what God has done in the arrival of Jesus Christ, and pray that you'll strive to live a holy and righteous life before him as a result.***

### **Study 2: Luke 2:1-52**

## **THE SAVIOUR ARRIVES**

*The Birth of Christ the Lord is a happy, noisy occasion.*

**Key verse** 2:11 "Today in the town of David, a Saviour has been born to you".

**Pray:** That the wonder and awe of the Saviour God being born as a baby will strike you.

**Kick-off:** Ever been around when someone had a long awaited baby? What was it like?

## **Read 2:1-20**

1. What's the significance of Jesus being born in Bethlehem - the town of King David? v4
2. How did the shepherds react to the angels' arrival? v9
3. In contrast, what reaction did the angel wish for from all people? v10, v14.
4. How did visiting Jesus change the shepherds' attitudes? v20
5. Why did God choose shepherds to get a visit from angels?

## **Read 2:21-40**

6. Why did Joseph and Mary take Jesus to the temple? v21-24, 39. What does this clearly tell you about them?
7. Who was at the Temple waiting for Jesus? vv25-27
8. What was Simeon's reaction to the boy Jesus? vv29-32
9. Simeon knew Jesus was God's Salvation - a light to the Gentiles and a glory to the Israelites. But what does he mean in verses 34-35?
10. Who else at the Temple bears witness to the greatness of this baby boy? vv36-38
11. Why would Joseph and Mary go to such lengths to fulfil all the requirements of the Law with their baby Jesus?
12. How do the testimonies of Anna and Simeon help fill out the greatness of who Jesus is?

## **Read 2:41-52**

13. What happened this Passover?
14. What was Jesus doing in the temple courts? v46-47
15. How does Mary address the boy Jesus? v48
16. How does Jesus correct her thinking in v49?
17. Why do you think they didn't understand who Jesus is, even after all the shepherds and angels, Simeon and Anna?

***Like Mary and Joseph, we've heard the story so often it just doesn't hit us! But God sent a flock of angels to a bunch of shepherds to shout about the birth of Jesus. These other-worldly beings stepped out from behind the curtain to help celebrate his arrival. The shepherds tear off and see for themselves the splendour of the child and begin their own noise-making around town about Jesus. Simeon and Anna, two old God fearing people recognise who Jesus is too and join in declaring the greatness of it all.***

18. Why is it such a happy thing that a Saviour is born? Why does God seem so proud and noisy about what's going on?

19. How often do you praise God for the arrival of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ?
20. What kind of 'Saviour announcements' would be appropriate today where you live?
21. What can you do to better appreciate Jesus, and help others to appreciate him too?

***Pray for clear understanding of who Jesus is, a real conviction to live a life of following Jesus and an open desire to declare his praises to others.***

**Study 3 Luke 3:1-38**

## JOHN PREPARES FOR JESUS

*John points the way to the greatest one: Jesus.*

**Key verse:** 3:16 "John answered them all 'I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.' "

**Pray:** That you'll understand how important it is to see who Jesus is.

**Kick-off:** If the person on the seat next to you on the train to Sydney was the Prime Minister of Australia and you didn't realise it at the time, how would you feel later when you found out?

### Read 3:1-20

1. John begins his public ministry by baptising people. What kind of baptism did he preach? v3.
2. How does this prepare the way for the Lord as Isaiah prophesied? v4-6
3. What does John call people to do in v8? What does he warn them NOT to do?
4. If they are claiming Abraham as their father - what are they relying on to be right with God?
5. What's God going to do with people like that in v9?
6. The people want to know what exactly to do. What does John tell them in verses 10-14? Can you notice what's missing?

***Some people would read this to say that you need to work hard at being good and you'll be saved. But John is preparing people's hearts. Repentance is needed first - but faith in the Son of God is needed as well. (e.g. John 3:16, 36)***

7. How does verse 16 show they haven't got the full story yet?

8. Why is trusting in your good behaviour not the full story?

### Read 3:21-38

9. Jesus is sinless. He needs to repent of nothing. Why did he get baptised? **Read Matthew's account in chapter 3:13-17**

10. In chapter 2 we heard angels, godly people and Jesus himself testify to who he is. What two people bear witness in 3:22, and how does this properly answer the people's question in v15?

11. Luke now inserts a family tree of Jesus. Where does the genealogy lead you back to? How does this help to explain who Jesus is too?

***Jesus wasn't really Joseph's son (v23) - remember Mary was a virgin when she conceived. But Jesus IS a human being too. His "earthly" ancestry can be traced back through the stories and characters of the Old Testament: King David, Boaz, Abraham, all the way to God himself, pointing us in the same direction as the immaculate conception.***

12. Why is repentance the beginning of a person's salvation?

13. What things are we tempted to trust in instead of Jesus?

14. Why does God look for fruit in our lives?

15. Do you understand who Jesus is?

***John's ministry brought Jesus into the spotlight. It's important to see the greatness of Jesus - that all things point us to him. Our hearts must have the right attitude to sin so that we can live a life in response to the great One - Jesus Christ the King who dies to save his subjects.***

***Pray that you'll see that only Jesus is the way of salvation. Repent and believe the good news and keep on repenting.***

**Study 4: Luke 4:1-13**

## THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

*Jesus was fully tempted but without sin.*

**Key verse:** 4:4 Jesus answered "Man does not live on bread alone."

**Pray:** That you will see clearly the strength of God's Word

**Kick-off:** Is it bad to be tempted? Why/why not? What sort of situations make temptation all the more present?

### Read 4:1-13

1. How long did Jesus spend in the desert before the devil came to tempt him?
2. What is the devil's first temptation? v3
3. What's wrong with a bit of bread when you're hungry?

4. How does Jesus answer? v4 **Read Deuteronomy 8:1-5** (and leave a bookmark there.)

***Jesus' state of hunger was from fasting --- a deliberate giving up of food to please God in Heaven. For Jesus to make bread that day would have been to exchange God's will as the standard for living, for the devil's will. Man lives on more than bread --- in this life and in eternal life man lives by hearing and obeying God's Word. Jesus perfectly keeps all the Old Testament expectations of a man who is truly God's man.***

5. What is the devil's second temptation for Jesus? v5-6

6. Can the devil give such things? Is he lying to Jesus as he lied to Adam and Eve? **See Ephesians 2:1-2, 1John 5:19, Revelation 13:2, John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11.**

7. What does the devil ask Jesus to do to get it? v7

8. What painful part of God's salvation plan would be avoided if Jesus caved in?

9. What does Jesus answer in v8? **Read Deuteronomy 6:10-15.**

***Jesus knows that God will bring about his Kingship anyway. But our salvation is at stake here, riding on Jesus' obedience to God's plan! The devil would have won if Jesus had caved in here and changed allegiance from God. We would have no chance of beating sin and death.***

10. What is the devil's third temptation for Jesus? v9

11. What aspect of Jesus' identity is he challenging?

12. Why does the devil quote from God's word?

13. How does Jesus answer? **Read Deuteronomy 6:13-16.** (Read what happened at Massah in Exodus 17:1-7)

***This kind of testing is NOT good --- "let go and let God". It is doubting God's protection and provision. It is testing God's patience with disobedience. It is demanding miraculous protection when it is not needed. It is sin. Jesus is God's Son --- God shouted this at his baptism. Jesus establishes himself as the perfect man --- and as the perfect Son of God. Where Israel and all before him failed in the desert, Jesus succeeded.***

## **Read Hebrews 4:14-16**

14. How is it encouraging to know that Jesus faced temptation?

15. How is it encouraging knowing that Jesus didn't sin --- even when it was the devil tempting him at his most vulnerable points?

16. How can we not give in to the temptation to ignore God's word, to test God's protection and forget his provision?

17. How can praying help you to stand strong in the face of your own temptations? **See 1Cor10:13, James 1:12-18.**

18. Why is it important that we resist temptation?

19. What hope do we have if we do fall into sin after being tempted? **Read 1John 1:8-2:2**

20. How will memorising God's word help us follow the model Jesus used?

***Praise God for our glorious Saviour! Pray that you'll copy Jesus: do God's will, and walk in God's ways,***

*even if that means suffering and self denial.*

Study 6: Luke 5:1-11

# LEAVING ALL TO FOLLOW JESUS

*God transforms unwilling sinners into willing servants.*

**Key verse:** 5:8 When Simon Peter saw this he fell at Jesus' knees and said "Go away from me Lord; I am a sinful man!"

**Pray:** That Jesus' authority would become clearer to you as you study this passage.

**Kick-off:** Does Jesus ask every believer to be a 'fisher of men'? Does he ask everyone to leave everything and follow him? Does he ask you to do both?

## Read 5:1-11

1. Who was there with Jesus that day? v1
  2. What were the fishermen doing at the edge of the lake? v2
  3. Why does Jesus get into Simon's boat? v3
  4. When Jesus tells Simon to go fishing again (v4), what does Simon say? v5
  5. This professional fisherman knows that there aren't any fish there. But, simply because he respects Jesus' authority, he does what Jesus says. What's the result? v6-7
  6. How can Jesus know more about fishing than the fishermen?
  7. How does this show that Jesus' instructions can be trusted even when they don't make a lot of sense?
  8. How does this show Jesus' access to divine power?
  9. Why does Simon ask Jesus to go away from him? v8
- Because of the catch (v9), Simon sees that Jesus is someone to be held in awe as Lord. And rightly, Simon sees his own sinfulness as something to be afraid of in the Lord's presence. Simon has a right view of Jesus as Lord, and a right view of himself as human sinner.***
10. What does Jesus say to Simon? v10
  11. How does saying "Don't be afraid" show Jesus' acceptance of Simon the sinner?
  12. What new job does Jesus call Simon (and probably James and John too) to do now? v10b
  13. What does Simon's acceptance of the call to follow Jesus say about his understanding of Jesus' grace?
  14. What's the significance of Jesus choosing sinful people to help him 'catch men'?
  15. Why do you think they left everything and followed Jesus?
  16. How is this different to the reactions of some people back in 4:28-29?
  17. What's your reaction to Jesus as Lord?

18. Are you afraid of being in his presence? What would he say to you? Why?

### **Read Luke 9:23-24, Matthew 28:18-20.**

19. Is Jesus calling you to help fish for men? Is Jesus calling you to leave everything and follow Him? How do you know?

20. Are you prepared to give things up for the sake of following Christ, and calling others to follow him too? What things?

21. What changes are involved in your life to carry out spreading the message about Jesus?

*This passage is about a particular group of men at a particular stage in God's salvation history. Their call is in some ways unique. But in other ways it is a mission statement for all Jesus' followers. We too are sinners in the presence of Christ. We too are called to trust Jesus' word, to respond to him when he calls us, and let him transform us. We too have the opportunity to share in God's task. That will always mean new lives for all who believe in Jesus - sometimes even new vocations.*

*Pray that you will respond to Christ as Simon did, with trust, and a willingness to leave all to follow Jesus and catch people for him.*

Study 7: Luke 5:12-32

## **COMING FOR THE SICK**

*Christ has authority to forgive sins.*

**Key verse:** 5:24 "But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"...he said to the paralysed man "I tell you, get up, take your mat & go home."

**Pray:** That you'll understand Jesus' purpose and authority to forgive you of your sins.

**Kick-off:** George W Bush wants authority to stop terrorism because of the Sept 11 attack on Washington. But when do you need authority to **forgive** someone?

### **Read 5:12-16**

1. Who does Jesus meet on the road? v12
2. This man would have been a complete social outcast, banned from any public place. What incredible thing does Jesus do as he heals the man? v13
3. Jesus is willing to make himself ceremonially unclean by touching the leper. What two things does he ask the leper to do in 14?
4. Why is this 'a testimony to them', the priests? Testimony about what?
5. Jesus asked the leper to keep quiet about it! Why? v15-16
6. Jesus often had to withdraw to lonely places to pray. Why?

### **Read 5:17-26**

7. Who comes this time for healing? v18
8. What does Jesus say to the man? v20
9. Could this mean paralysis is caused by sinning? Why/ why not?
10. Who is Jesus clearly claiming to be here?
11. How does v21 show the Pharisees & teachers of the Law pick up on this? What do they say?
12. How does Jesus prove he is indeed the Lord? v24

## Read 27-32

13. Who does Jesus see next, and what does he tell him to do? v27.

*Tax collectors paid the government in advance for the right to collect taxes from people as they travelled roads, as they reaped harvests, and as they bought and sold goods. They could basically charge any amount they wanted to recover their expenses, and to make a tidy profit. So they were considered offensive and lowly in society, especially by the Jews, who excommunicated anyone who took on this position.*

14. What is similar about Levi's response and that of Simon and his partners? v28, v11

15. Why would Levi leave his job to do this?

16. What does Levi do next? v29. How is this just like Simon's new job description of being fishers of men?

17. What do the Pharisees and teachers of the Law say about Jesus hanging out with sinners at a banquet? What do they think should be done?

18. What does Jesus say to them? v31 How does he view himself?

19. Would the Pharisees and teachers claim to be well or sick? Righteous or sinners? How are they different to Levi and Simon? What about you?

20. How does Jesus restate his mission? v32. How does this reinforce and expand on 4:43, 4:18-19.

21. Why is it so important to keep stating it?

*Jesus has proven his Lordship and power by curing diseases, and taken that a step further by putting himself in God's place by forgiving sins. This Lord, Jesus, calls people to follow him. And they answer and join in the work of calling others.*

22. Levi had the first 'evangelistic dinner' at his house. What can you do to help bring others face to face with Jesus the Lord, the forgiver of their sins?

23. What role can our growth groups play in this?

24. What role can our Sunday services play in this?

25. Jesus' had a priority to withdraw from distractions and pray (5:16). In what ways does prayer help in this task of fishing for people?

*God's Kingdom is going to be different to the old one. It will be a kingdom of people who see Him as Lord, and who fall at HIS feet as sinners, asking for forgiveness. This kingdom will be one that asks subjects to join in it's spread right across the world, leaping the boundary out of Israel to reach all people.*

*Pray that you will properly see Jesus as Lord, and pray that you will move into relationships and events with a view to bringing people face to face with the great Lord Jesus.*

Study 8: Luke 5:33-6:11

## LORD OF THE SABBATH

*Jesus is God's whole new way of dealing with people.*

**Key verse:** 6:5 Then Jesus said to them "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

**Pray:** That you'll clearly understand this part of the bible that shakes all religious foundations.

**Kick-off:** Jesus is not afraid of controversy. How do you respond when controversy raises its head? Should Christians avoid controversy?

## Read 5:33-39.

1. Why do the Pharisees criticise Jesus? v33 What's the contrast?

***Fasting was a significant part of first century Judaism, regarded highly as an act of worship. Fasts were tied to the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16), four day long fasts recalling the destruction of Jerusalem (Zechariah 7&8), used for penitence (1 Kings 21, Joel 1 &2, Isaiah 58), and mourning (Esther 4). The Pharisees further fasted every Monday and Thursday. John's followers copied him and fasted too. We know from Luke 4:2, 22:16 &18 that Jesus fasted, but it was rare and not like the Pharisees. Fasting was a highly prized activity, used to aide prayers to God for deliverance.***

2. What reply does Jesus give? v34 What does he shift the focus to from fasting?

3. Jesus sees himself as the bridegroom. Now that he is here fasting is not needed. This is a time of great joy. What do verses 36-38 say the real issue is?

4. With the arrival of the King and the new Kingdom, it's a case of 'out with the old, in with the new'. How does v39 show that some will reject the new?

## Read 6:1-5

5. What are the Pharisees unhappy about in vv1-2.

***The Sabbath was a day of rest instituted by God. People could work six days and then have a day of rest. But the Jewish 'Mishnah' developed a list of 39 things prohibited on the Sabbath. The disciples broke four of those rules: reaping, threshing, winnowing and preparing food! This was a terrible affront to the Pharisees' customs.***

6. What does Jesus ask them in v3? **See 1 Samuel 21:1-7**, which would have been familiar to the Pharisees.

7. What precedent has King David already established? v4

8. Why does that make it OK for Jesus as the new King?

9. What is Jesus saying about his authority when he says that he is 'Lord of the Sabbath'? v5

***Jesus is here to deliver God's people as the new King, Anointed One, Lord over all things.***

## Read 6:6-11

10. How are the Pharisees treating Jesus now? v7

11. What does Jesus ask them in v9?

12. Which do you think God's Law would allow for?

***The religious authorities considered it wrong to heal on the Sabbath because that would be doing work. A person was not permitted to do any medical work on the Sabbath except if: a life was in danger, a baby was being born, or a circumcision was being done. This man's withered hand fitted none of the three.***

13. What does Jesus do, and what method does he use? v10

14. How do the Pharisees react, and what's their desire? v11

15. Why isn't Jesus diverted from his mission to preach the good news by this controversy?

16. Jesus doesn't obviously fast, he lets his disciples pick grain on the Sabbath, and he even heals non-urgent cases in the synagogue on the Sabbath! What is this saying about the old order of things?

17. Why is that so hard for the Pharisees to understand? Why would their hearts be so hard?

18. How much of the 'old' has Jesus replaced in your life?
19. Are you someone who prefers to live with lots of rules and regulations? Why/ why not.
20. What does Jesus' commitment to serving others teach you about the place of rules?

***Pray that you will be a person who is clear about and appreciates the greatness and newness of Jesus the King and his grace to you. Pray that will be very clear in your fellowship and dealings with others also.***  
Study 9: Luke 6:12-49

## WALK THIS WAY.

*Jesus teaches about life in new wineskins.*

**Key verse:** 6:49 "...the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."

**Pray:** For understanding of what it means to put Jesus' words into practise.

**Kick-off:** What would our world look like if there were no guidelines to live by? What guidelines should we use --- and who should get to say what they are, or aren't?

### Read 6:12-16

1. What does Jesus do all night before he chooses his Apostles? v12
2. Why is prayer so important to Jesus as he goes about his mission? See 5:16, 4:42.
3. Why should Jesus' followers imitate this reliance on God?
4. How prominently does prayer figure in your own life?

### Read 6:17-26

5. Who was there to hear Jesus teaching this day? v17-19
6. Those who might be poor now, or hungry or sad or persecuted because of "the Son of Man" (vv20-22) can look forward to what in the future? v23.
- 7 Why are they being treated as the prophets before them were? v23
8. There's nothing inherently wrong with being rich, or well fed, happy or having a good reputation! How could these things exclude people ("woe to you" vv24-26) from God's Kingdom?

### Read 6:27-38

9. What attitude is to mark Jesus' followers? Who are they called to love? v27, 35
10. What is the 'golden rule' in v31?
11. Loving some people is easy, but Jesus demands love for those who are hard to love. Why is loving a clear display of family likeness with Jesus? v35-36.
12. What real benefit comes to those who love the way Jesus describes here? vv37-38

### Read 6:39-45

13. What caution does Jesus give in v39?

14. Why is blindness a stumbling block in discipleship?
15. What possible fault in disciples is pointed out in verses 41-42?
16. Why is it hypocrisy to see others faults but not your own?
17. How does seeing your own faults prevent legalism and hardness of heart, and promote love?
18. So, what kind of 'fruit' should we look for in ourselves?
19. When a person is co-operating with Jesus in being changed into his likeness, what will his heart 'store up'?

**Read 6:46-49.**

20. What hypocrisy does Jesus point out in v46?
21. Why would he close this teaching section with that?
22. To make sure they get the point, what does Jesus say is the only lasting foundation to build a life upon?
23. How can we keep Jesus' words in the forefront of our thinking and speaking?
24. How can we help one another to seek God's kingdom in Jesus and look forward to our reward there rather than seek it in this life?
25. How can we help each other to love our enemies, be gracious and not judgemental?
26. How might praying to God as Jesus did help us in these goals?

*Pray that God will empower you to live a life of love that is founded on, and responding to our great King Jesus and his Words.*

Introduction...

1

2

3

4

6

7

8

9

5

**Study 5: Luke 4:14-44**

## THE GOOD NEWS HAS ARRIVED!

*The message is more important than the miracles.*

**Key verse:** 4:43 (Jesus) said 'I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent'.

**Pray:** That through studying this chapter God will help you see the broad impact of the Jesus Christ and the gospel message.

**Kick-off:** Imagine you're a reporter with a microphone. Go around your town, street, or work place and ask people "What did Jesus come to earth for". What sort of answers would you get?

### **Read 4:14-30**

1. Jesus goes to the synagogues - places where God's people met each week to pray and to have men read

and explain the scriptures. This had become Jesus' 'custom' by 4:16. Why would he begin his ministry there?

2. What does he say about himself in v21?

3. What do they say about him in v22?

4. Verse 24 has become a modern proverb. What's the significance of the events of Elijah & the widow (1Kings 17), and Elisha & Naaman (2Kings 5:1-19)? vv25-27

5. Compare reactions of people in v15 to v29. What is the problem?

***Jesus has come to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. And he warns them that God's wonders can be limited still, as in the days of Elijah and Elisha. Consequently, you see people begin to polarise --- those who like him and those who want him dead. Either way he's the fulfilment of all the Old Testament prophecies!***

### **Read 4:31-44**

6. What impresses people about Jesus at Capernaum? v36

7. What resulted from this visit to synagogue? v37, 40.

8. What does Jesus do for Simon's mother in law, and for all the people who came to the house (v39, 40)?

9. Why does Luke say Jesus made the demons keep quiet? v35, 41.

10. Why shouldn't people know Jesus is the Christ at this stage?

11. What expectations did people have of the Messiah --- God's chosen One? How is that different to what Jesus read from Isaiah 61:1-2? (vv18-19)

12. How might crowds impede Jesus' mission? v42

13. What is uppermost in Jesus mind? v43. Why is that his purpose?

***Jesus Christ has incredible authority. As a bible teacher, over evil and over sickness. He attracted huge crowds wherever he went because of that. But his authority also made him a few enemies --- his teaching pointed out that God was concerned with saving Gentiles and not just Jews. And he wouldn't get sidetracked from his mission to keep on proclaiming this good news in as many places as he could.***

14. Do you identify with those who accept Jesus and the message of hope he brings, or do you side with those who reject Jesus?

15. What difference does it make to you knowing that Jesus saw his main role as preacher of God's good news?

16. What can you do to help to make it clear to people what Jesus real mission is?

17. How does his power and authority reassure you that Jesus can deliver what he offers in his message?

***In this passage you can see the beginning divergence between what people expected of the Messiah, and***

*the humble reality of what he came to do. Jesus' incredible authority over all aspects of life was always in line with his mission purpose --- to proclaim the good news. He is the powerful Son of God, perfect in obedience to God, bringing in God's new Kingdom through the spoken word --- a message of good news.*

*Pray that you'll see clearly that Jesus used his authority to bring in the Kingdom of God --- through a message of good news to the poor and the weak. Pray that it will make a huge difference to how you think, speak and act.*