

# HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

Luke 14<sup>25</sup> – 17<sup>37</sup>

Leader's Guide



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## Leaders guide

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Web Edition

Published by Nigel Barge, Torrance, 2017  
**ISBN 978-1-912209-52-1**

(Matching Workbook ISBN 978-1-912209-53-8)

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### Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Phil and June Malloch, whose tireless editing, reviewing and pulling together of materials has enabled the ‘Hearing the Word’ resource to be shared with the wider church.

*Nigel Barge, June 2017*

### Scripture Quotations taken from

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### Resources

The *New Bible Dictionary* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, published by Inter Varsity Press  
The *New Bible Commentary* 21<sup>st</sup> century edition. A commentary on every Bible book, IVP  
[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)

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# *Hearing the Word: A Tool for Bible reading*



## **LOOK** – What does it *say*?

- 1) The Text
  - a) What questions does it raise - *Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?*
  - b) What surprises you?
- 2) The Context?
  - a) the surrounding text
  - b) the Book of the Bible
  - c) the whole Bible
  - d) the place in the Bible Story



## **LEARN** – What does it *mean*?

- 1) What type of writing is it?
- 2) Answer the questions
- 3) Summarise the passage



## **LISTEN** – What is the *message*?

- 1) Which is the main point?
- 2) Which is the key verse?



## **LIVE** – How should we *respond*?

- 1) What does it show about God, (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) :
  - a) His nature and character?
  - b) His grace\*
  - c) Jesus / his salvation\*\*
- 2) What should I do?

\* God's undeserved generosity is evident throughout the Bible, and it is perfectly expressed in Jesus.

\*\* The Bible, from 'the Fall' onwards, describes God's plan of salvation through his Son. Thus, *all* the Scriptures speak in some way of Jesus (Luke 24:27).

# Reading Narrative

In seeking to hear the Word of God throughout the Bible, we need to take into account the *type of literature* in which each part is written. Luke is mainly *narrative* (story), the most common type, seasoned with *teaching* and *parable*. To approach narrative correctly we need to keep these principles in mind.

## 1 In General: It is *God's story*

The whole Bible recounts the story of God's dealings with humankind. After creation and the fall in Genesis, the rest describes how God works out his unfolding plan of salvation for humanity in Jesus. The OT prepares for the arrival, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The NT recounts these and looks forwards to his return at the end of time. It is *all* about Jesus. Therefore:

a) Every part relates to Him (Luke 24:27; John 5:39).

So as we read, we should be asking – 'what does this show about Jesus; what is He doing?'

b) Everything is relevant.

In a film every scene plays some part in the overall story. Often we are shown things in the early stages that make no sense until later. The Bible is the same. So as we read Bible narrative – knowing how it ends – we should be asking 'what relevance has *this* part of the story to the *main* story?'

## 2 In particular: 'Follow the camera angle'

A film director focuses the viewer's attention on particular shots to tell 'his story'. In the same way each narrator in the Bible is selective about what to tell us. They leave out much general detail, only giving us what is relevant to what they are trying to convey.

As we read we should therefore be asking the question, 'Why is he telling me this and in this particular way?'

## 3 Warts and all

Human beings often get things wrong. The Bible narrative faithfully records errors, even by people who are elsewhere commended. For instance, Moses murdered a man, King David committed adultery, and Peter, who was praised for realising Jesus was the Christ, was minutes later roundly scolded when he tried to stop Jesus being the Christ through suffering! (Exodus 2:12; 2 Samuel 11; Matthew 16:16-23)

So we can't treat every thought or action in a narrative as something to copy, just because 'it's in the Bible'. We must ask the Holy Spirit to use the rest of Scripture to discern good examples to follow, and bad ones to avoid.

# Background to Luke's Gospel

## The Author

Luke was a doctor and friend of the apostle Paul, who calls him 'the beloved physician' and 'fellow worker' (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24). He began to travel with Paul at Troas (Acts 16:10). He was close to Paul near the end of his life (2 Timothy 4:11).

He may have come from Antioch in Syria, or Troas, or Philippi in Macedonia. He was a Gentile (i.e. not a Jew). Indeed he is the only non-Jewish writer in the New Testament.

He had carried out careful research (see Luke 1:3, 2:51). He also wrote the story of the early church in the 5<sup>th</sup> book of the New Testament, whose full title is: 'The Acts of the Apostles'. It takes us up to Paul's imprisonment in Rome but not his trial, suggesting Luke finished writing it before that event.

## The Date of writing

Luke wrote his gospel before writing Acts (see Acts 1:1) probably before 63AD

## The structure

A	The introduction	(1: 1 - 4)
B	The birth of Jesus	(1:5 - 2:52)
C	The start of Jesus' ministry	(3:1 - 4:13)
D	Jesus in Galilee	(4:14 - 9:50)
E	From Galilee to Jerusalem	(9:51 - 19:44)
F	Jesus in Jerusalem	(19:45 – 21:38)
G	The death of Jesus	(22:1 – 23:56)
H	The resurrection of Jesus	(24:1 - 53)

So this volume of *Hearing the Word* falls in Sections E

## Its purpose

Matthew and Mark probably wrote their gospels before Luke. Unlike them Luke had not himself witnessed Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection, but he'd had personal contact with many eyewitnesses who had. He addresses both his Gospel and Acts to someone called Theophilus. This may have been a real individual: could he have been an official in Roman government?... Someone who wanted details of Christianity before Paul's trial in Rome?... Someone who paid Luke's expenses while writing? Actually, the name means, 'friend of God', so it might refer to anyone, in any time or place, who *wanted to know the Gospel and be a friend of God*.

# The Themes

Five themes keep re-occurring in Luke's Gospel:

## 1 Salvation

- a) a historical event

Jesus Christ's coming to earth as a man is the centre point of history. Luke points out the exact time and situation of Jesus' birth. (Luke 2). Jesus sets his face towards Jerusalem (9:51) where he completes his work, commits his Spirit to the Father, and dies (23:46). On the third day he rises from death. Forty days later, having promised to return, he ascends to heaven (Acts 1:9-11). Meantime, the Good News of this salvation is offered to all by the power of the Spirit (Acts 2:38,39).

- b) for all mankind

From the announcement by the angels of 'good news ... for all people' (2:10) to the genealogy of Jesus stretching back to Adam (3:38), it is clear the non-Jews are included too. This does not deny the importance of Israel. Luke begins and ends his Gospel with people in Jerusalem and shows it to be the ultimate destination of Jesus' earthly ministry (1:8; 2:22, 36; 9:51-53; 13:22; 17:11; 18:31; 19:28).

## 2 The 'outsiders'

Luke shows that people seen as 'weak' are equally welcome in the Kingdom of God, by recording Jesus' interaction with them. This includes:

- a) Women

Women are central to the story. At the beginning, the angelic announcement of His birth was to Mary (1:26-38) and at end, the truth of His resurrection was given first to the women at the tomb (24:1-11). He ministered to women in various settings (7:11; 7:37; 13:11; 21:1-4) and it was women who helped finance Him and His apostles (8:2-3).

- b) Children

The accounts of Jesus' birth show the importance and value of a child from the womb (1:41!). At various times he intervenes to heal the child of a distraught parent (7:12; 8:42; 9:38).

- c) The poor

Jesus himself was from Nazareth (4:16) – a poor, insignificant town (John 1:46). His birth was to an unmarried girl and witnessed by the 'outcasts' of society, the shepherds (2:8-20). The offering at His birth was that of the poor (2:24; Leviticus 12:8) and the message he preached was for the poor (4:18; 7:22). He died with common criminals (23:32,41).

#### d) Gentiles

Luke, himself a Gentile, is writing to another Gentile, Theophilus (1:3). He records the faith of a Gentile Roman Centurion: of him, Jesus says he had 'not found such great faith in Israel' (7:9). Possibly out of deference to his non-Jewish readership, Luke seldom quotes the Old Testament.

### 3 The Holy Spirit

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is explicit throughout the Gospel, in:

- a) the birth of John the Baptist (1:15,41,57)
- b) the conception of Jesus (1:35)
- c) Simeon's prophecy about Jesus (2:25-27)
- d) John's promise that Jesus would 'baptise with the Holy Spirit' (3:16)
- e) the baptism of Jesus (3:22)
- f) the temptations of Jesus (4:1)
- g) the power of Jesus' ministry (4:18)
- h) the joy of the Spirit (10:21)
- i) the promise of the Spirit for His followers (11:13; 12:10-12; 24:49), fulfilled at Pentecost, as Luke records in Acts 2.

### 4 The humanity of Jesus

There is no clearer way of demonstrating Jesus' humanity than noting his recourse to prayer. Through this he shows:

- a) his own dependence on the Father through prayer (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28, 29; 10:21; 11:1; 22:39-46; 23:34, 46).
- b) his identification with his disciples, as He similarly instructs them in prayer through
  - i) parables - the friend at midnight (11:5-13) the unjust judge (18:1-8); the Pharisee and the tax collector (18:10-14)
  - ii) teaching on prayer (6:28; 11:2; 22:40, 46)

### 5 The deity of Jesus

Luke presents Jesus as God in an *oblique* way. This fact was not acknowledged at that time. This is the key theme of the first 5 chapters:

1:17 John prepares for the Lord	4:41 the Son of God
1:32 called Son of the Most High	5:8 the Holy presence
1:43 Mary mother of 'my Lord'	5:13 able to cleanse an individual
2:11 Saviour who is Christ the Lord	5:20 a forgiver of sin
2:49 in 'His Father's house'	5:32 (righteous one) calling sinners to repentance
3:22 God says 'you are my Son';	5:34 the bridegroom
4:34 The Holy one of God ^	

## The cost of being a disciple

### Background

Luke does not say *where* Jesus gave this teaching. It is possible he was going through Perea (to the right of the river Jordan); as far as we know He had not been there before. Jesus knew He was on his way to Jerusalem and the cross; whereas the crowds travelling with him assumed He was on his way to an empire.

The two illustrations are similar but make slightly different points.

The tower in the first is probably a vineyard tower, built to keep watch against thieves who might steal the harvest.

### Word List

25 <i>hate</i>	Hyperbole, with the sense of 'loving less'
26 <i>disciple</i>	Committed follower
27 <i>carry his cross</i>	Accepting death i.e. renouncing <b>all</b> rights, total commitment, prepared to go to any lengths
28 <i>tower</i>	Such as a vineyard tower built to keep watch against thieves who might steal the harvest
34 <i>salt</i>	There are many types of salt, not just Sodium Chloride as in our table salt. 'Salt' in 1st century Palestine was used for preserving and flavouring food, and for fertilising. It was far from pure to begin with, and if it got damp, all the various soluble chemicals in it could be leached out. At that point it was useless for flavouring or preserving food, or fertilising land.

### Bible Connections

25 <i>hate/loving less</i>	<i>see</i> Genesis 29:31; Deuteronomy 21:15 <i>c.f.</i> Matthew 10:37
27 <i>carry his cross</i>	<i>see</i> Luke 9:23 <i>c.f.</i> Matthew 10:38
33 <i>cost of discipleship</i>	<i>c.f.</i> Philippians 3:7-8

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 25 *Why large crowds?*  
*Why were they travelling with Jesus?*
- 26 *Why would they come to him?*  
*Why 'hate' his father?*  
*How do you hate your own life?*
- 27 *Why carry his cross and follow him?*  
*Who is he talking to?*
- 31 *Why does he repeat it with another example?*
- 33 *How is 'carrying his cross' equivalent to 'giving up everything'?*
- 34 *Who is salt?*

What surprises or confuses you?

*Jesus is so 'brutal'?*

### 2) The Context

- a) surrounding passage,
  - 35 *Thrown out -tenants killed (20:16)*  
*Those invited – no taste (14:24)*  
*He who has ears (8:8)*
- b) individual book,
  - 26 *Peter James and John gave up livelihood (5:11) but not fishing? (John 21:29)*  
*Cannot serve God and Mammon (16:13)*
  - 30 *Begin but not finish c.f. seed amongst thorns and rocks (8:13,14)*
  - 35 *Thrown out – no taste of the banquet (14:24), kill tenants (20:16)*
- c) whole Bible,
  - 26 *Come to me... (Matt 11:28)*  
*Honour father and mother (Deuteronomy 5:16; Exodus 20:12)*  
*I .. am a jealous God. (Exodus 20:5)*
  - 35 *Throw him outside (Matthew 22:13)*  
*Neither hot nor cold – spit you out (Revelation 3:16)*

d) Bible story

*God and humanity have been separated by sin.*

*God's requirements of the Law have been given but not met.*

*God's solution is about to happen as He sends His Son, Jesus.*

## LEARN

1) What kind of literature is this?

*Gospel / narrative*

2) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

25    *'Large' because there were many there for a variety of reasons.*

*They may have been there for excitement, food, healing, interest.*

26    *'Come' implies submission.*

*'Hate' implies by comparison.*

*'Hating your own life' would imply willingness to die.*

27    *'Carry his cross' implies a death.*

*He is talking to the 'large crowd'.*

31    *He repeats it for emphasis.*

33    *'Giving up everything' – even your own life.*

34    *His listeners are the 'salt'.*

3) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

*He is brutal, so as to shock His listeners into understanding the seriousness of His call to follow Him.*

4) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

*Jesus told the crowd that devotion to Him would be so intense that, in comparison, it would be like hating your family and your own life. (25-27)*

*He gives two examples for His would-be disciples to consider- a tower with the builder ensuring he is able to finish before starting and a king ensuring he has the manpower before he wages war. (28-32)*

*Following Jesus involves total self-denial. Any compromise is unacceptable. If you understand – take note. (33 – 35)*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *Following Jesus involves all or nothing.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 33**

**KV** *Any of you who does not give up everything cannot be my disciple.*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

25 *Jesus attracts people.*

26 *Jesus does not worry about being misunderstood!*

27 *Jesus demand absolute loyalty.*

33 *God demands that would-be followers surrender their rights*

35 *God rejects those who have lost their salt.*

b) His grace

34 *God gives us the ears to hear.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

28 *Jesus requires that we share with Him in taking up our cross / die.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

26 *Note - Discipleship of Jesus is the highest call – it takes precedence over all other.*

27 *Note - Disciples of Jesus must be willing to die for him.*

28 *Any would be disciples should weigh the prospects very carefully before committing themselves.*

33 *Note - Discipleship of Jesus requires all that you have and are.*

35 *Listen carefully to the warning Jesus gives about his requirement of absolute commitment.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## The parable of the committed shepherd

### Background

Shepherds in Judea had a hard, dangerous task. The narrow central plateau was only a few miles wide before plunging down *via* dangerous cliffs to the barren desert. There were no restraining fences to keep grazing sheep in or wild animals out, except when the flock was in a walled sheepfold at night, the shepherd lying across the opening. With no sheep dogs, shepherds used a sling to land a stone *beyond* a straying sheep or to drive off a predator. The shepherd was personally responsible for the sheep. If one was lost, he must at least bring home the fleece to show how it had died.

n.b. The three stories all finish - 'Rejoice' with me I have found my lost: sheep ...coin..., son... (6,9,32) (n.b. in Greek - 'be glad' (32) is same word as 'rejoice').

### Parables

A parable is a story told to make a **single main point** (unlike an Allegory, where many or all of the features may hold a hidden meaning). It is a round-about way of speaking, which can either *illustrate* (shed light), or be a way of *hiding* truth in plain sight from those not ready to follow it (Matt 13:13-17).

Many parables begin, 'the Kingdom of God is like...' (Mark 4:26, 30). But in a sense, *all* parables are 'of the Kingdom', in that they all describe in some way the relationship between God and people - the King and his subjects. So we can find God and ourselves within *all* of Jesus' parables, and identify the subject as some aspect of our relationship to 'the King'. *To reflect this, the questions under 'LEARN' overleaf are slightly different when we study parables.*

v1-2 describe the situation that gave rise to these 3 famous lost-and-found stories. These are all part of the same parable- 'Jesus told them this parable' (3))

## Word List

1 *tax collectors* despised by most for collecting money for the occupying Roman army, and getting rich themselves in the process.

‘*sinners*’ derogatory term used by Pharisees to refer to anyone who did not observe their version of the law in all its petty details. (e.g. shepherds at work *could* not observe their Sabbath rules.)

2 *Pharisees* ‘the separated ones’, known for their very strict interpretation of the Law. They added multiple details to the basic ten commandments, e.g defining ‘work’ forbidden on the Sabbath. They thought *eating* with ‘sinners’ implied approval of their sins.

3 *suppose* lit. ‘What man of you’. (‘what woman’ (8))

## Bible Connections

2 *Jesus eating with ‘sinners’* *see* Matt 9:10-11; Luke 5:29-30; 19:5-7

4 *seeking the lost sheep* *see* Psalm 119:176; Ezekiel 34:11-16  
Luke 19:10; Matthew 15:24  
*The Good Shepherd is Jesus.* *see* John 10 e.g. v 10-

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 1 *Why tax collectors and sinners?*  
*Why 'all'?*
- 2 *Why 'muttered'?*  
*What was the problem with welcoming sinners?*
- 3 *Who is 'them'?*
- 4 *Why does he tell this parable (about keeping sheep) to religious leaders?*  
*Why open country?*
- 6 *Why call his friends to celebrate over one sheep in a hundred?*
- 7 *Who are 'the righteous ones'?*  
*Why does he suggest that the Pharisees are righteous?*  
*Why does he suggest that they do not need to repent?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 7 *Why does he not confront the Pharisees etc as hypocrites?*

### 2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 1 *The tax collectors etc 'hear him' - 'He who has ears...' (14:35)*
- 3 *Parable – series of three - lost coin (15:8), lost son (15:11)*

b) individual book,

- 1 *Suppose (11:11; 12:25; 14:28; 17:7) ie 'can you imagine that...'  
Eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners (3:12; 5:29ff; 7:29ff)  
Levi, tax collector called to follow Jesus (5:27) / Matthew (9:10)*
- 4 *99 sheep left / not the healthy that need a doctor (5:31)*
- 7 *Not call righteous but sinners to repent (5:32)  
Excluded – gentiles (7:9); women (7:37), children, (7:11) the poor (7:22).  
Those confident of their own righteousness (18:9)*

c) whole Bible,

- 2 *Not every pharisee (c.f. John 3:1)  
Jews unwilling to associate with Gentiles / the ungodly (Acts 10:28)  
Muttered – for fear of the people*
- 4 *seek the lost sheep (Ez 34:11ff)  
The Lord is my shepherd (Ps 23:1)*

He will feed his flock like a shepherd (Is 40:11)

7 The Holy Spirit alone convicts of sin, righteousness and judgement (John 16:8)

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

## LEARN

1) What type of literature is this?

*Parable*

2) Using the context of the passage, how do you answer the questions the passage raises?

1 *They were the social spectrum of the ‘unclean’ – those though not to be valued by God.*

*‘All’ c.f. the Pharisees (2) general characterisation.*

2 *They were unwilling to confront Jesus, publicly.*

*Sinners were unclean and association with them made you unclean.*

3 *‘Them’ is the Pharisees and teachers of the Law.*

4 *It is confusing / shocking!*

*Open country is safer.*

6 *It seems very extravagant.*

7 *‘the righteous ones’ are the Pharisees*

*He allows the suggestion that the Pharisees are righteous – it us up to the Holy Spirit to convict*

*The parable is only making one point.*

3) Given that a parable describes the relationship between God and man

a) Where is God represented?

*God is the shepherd seeing the lost sheep*

b) With whom are we meant to identify?

*The lost sheep*

c) What is the subject?

*God’s attitude to the lost.*

4) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

*As Jesus welcomed ‘sinners’, ‘righteous’ religious leaders muttered (1,2).*

*He told a parable of the shepherd of 100 sheep, searching for a lost one then, on finding it, rejoicing with his friends (3-6)*

*In heaven, he said there will be more rejoicing over one repentant sinner than over 99 righteous people. (7)*

## **LISTEN**

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *God searches for and delights in repentant sinners.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 7**

**KV** *There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous person who do not need to repent.*

## **LIVE**

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

6,7 *God delights in repentant ‘sinners’*

7 *God is prepared to leave us in self-delusions of righteousness*

b) His grace?

4 *God searches for His lost sheep*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

1 *Jesus attracts ‘sinners’*

*Jesus welcomes ‘sinners’*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

1 *Whoever you are, you are welcome to draw near to Jesus*

2 *Do not ‘judge’ those who God welcomes*

7 *Note- you are capable of effecting joy in Heaven!*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Study 3

Luke 15:8-10

### The parable of the careful woman

#### Background

See study 2 for general introduction to parables, and about Pharisees and 'sinners'. This second story is still answering the objectors in v1,2.

Palestinian houses had no windows or at best very small ones, high up, so were always dark. Even in daytime, she would need a lamp to search by. The floor was beaten earth, covered with dried reeds and rushes, so looking for a coin was very like 'looking for a needle in a haystack', as we would say.

'Ten silver coins' may refer to a head-dress of ten silver coins linked together by a silver chain which was the mark of a married woman. If so, it was vested with emotional meaning for her. Losing one was like a bride today losing her engagement ring. If not, at least the value to a poor person was considerable.

The Rabbinic writers before Jesus also use a lost coin as an illustration: 'If a man seeks for a lost coin, how much more should he seek for the Law'. But nowhere do the Rabbis say, *God* seeks *sinners*. Jesus broke the mould. His audience of outcasts had never heard anything like it.

#### Word List

8 <i>ten</i>	Decimal system used in Palestine. Ten signifies human completeness c.f. 10 powers that can't separate us from God's love (Romans 8:38ff) 10 sins that exclude from God's kingdom. (1 Corinthians 6:10)
<i>silver coin</i>	Greek <i>drachma</i> , the only time the New Testament uses this exact word (but see below). Roughly equivalent to the Latin <i>denarius</i> , the wage a labourer could earn for one full day's work.
10 <i>I tell you</i>	Phrase reported in all four Gospels – used for emphasis

#### Bible Connections

8 <i>coins:</i>	<i>widow's gift</i>	Mark 12:41-44
	<i>two-drachma coin</i>	Matthew 17:24-27
	<i>mina –about 3 months wages</i>	Luke 19:13
10 <i>seeking what is lost, e.g. Zacchaeus</i>		Luke 14:21; 19:5,10

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

8 *What does 'or' signify?*

*Why a woman?*

*Why 'ten' coins?*

*Why silver coins?*

*Why light a lamp?*

9 *Why call in her neighbours?*

*Why should they rejoice?*

10 *What way is 'the same'?*

*Why 'I tell you'?*

*Why 'the angels of God'?*

*Why 'in the presence of' not simply 'by'.*

What surprises or confuses you?

10 *How is the coin being found (passive) equivalent to the sinner repenting (active).*

### 2) The Context

a) surrounding passage

8 *Suppose (4)*

b) individual book,

8 *Woman - widow's son (6:46) anointed by sinful woman (7:36ff) dead girl & sick woman (8:40) Mary and Martha (10:38) crippled woman (13:11ff); persistent widow (18:1ff), widows offering (21:1ff)*

10 *Angels of God (12:8)*

c) whole Bible,

8 *Woman c.f. God made himself nothing (Philippians 2:7)*

10 *Coins (Matthew 18:28)*

*Cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1)*

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

## LEARN

1) Using the context of the passage, how do you answer the questions the passage raises?

8 *By using 'or', he is illustrating the same principle in another way*

*A woman is weak / has not rights in society.*

*'Ten' coins is a complete human number.*

*A silver coin was worth a day's wage.*

*Lamplight was needed in the dark house / shows she is serious.*

9 *Call in her neighbours to mark the extent of her own joy.*

*Rejoice with me for you too should share in the benefit.*

10 *'The same way' is that the neighbours / angels share in the joy.*

*'I tell you' is for emphasis.*

*'The angels of God' = messengers among the company of heaven.*

*'In the presence of' because they are witnesses.*

2) Surprised?

*The common theme is not in how the lost 'item' is found but in what the heavenly reaction is.*

3) Given that a parable describes the relationship between God and man,

a) Where is God represented?

*The Woman who has lost the coin stands for God.*

b) With whom are we meant to identify?

*We are the lost coin / the repentant sinner*

c) What is the subject?

*The value of the lost coin / the repentant sinner to God*

4) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

*Like a woman who hunts for and finds a lost coin and rejoices, the company of Heaven rejoices when one sinner repents.*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *All heaven celebrates when one sinner repents.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 10**

**KV** *In the same way, I tell you there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents.*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

**8** *God is prepared to identify with the weakest form.*

**10** *God is emotional – He rejoices in His people*

b) His grace?

**8** *God searches for us.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

**1** *Jesus was prepared to identify with people who were religiously, nothing.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

**10** *Be aware that heaven watches us*

*Repent of our sin*

*Marvel at God's value of you - that your repentance causes God to rejoice.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Study 4

Luke 15:11-32

### The parable of the forgiving father

#### Background

Jesus is not dealing here with the whole gospel message but with the one great fact of the Father's pardoning love. In contrast, the Pharisees thought God would rather see a sinner destroyed than saved; that's what *they* wanted!

The younger son asks for 'my share of the estate'. This is a technical formula. A man might leave his goods to his heirs in his will (*c.f.* Hebrews 9:16-17) in which case he was bound by the provisions of the Law *i.e.* the first born received two-thirds of the estate. (Deuteronomy 21:17) But he could make gifts before he died and this gave him a freer hand.

To a Jew, the pig was an unclean animal (Leviticus 11:7) and under normal circumstances he would have nothing at all to do with it.

#### Word list

16	<i>pods</i>	the seeds of the carob tree.
18	<i>sinned</i>	done what is wrong.
19	<i>hired men</i>	day labourers, the lowest rank of slaves.
20	<i>ran</i>	unusual for an elderly Middle Eastern man.
	<i>kissed</i>	Greek compound word ( <i>kata + phileo</i> ) may mean 'kissed many times' or 'kissed tenderly'.
22	<i>best robe</i>	sign of position.
	<i>ring</i>	conveyed authority.
	<i>sandals</i>	slaves went barefoot; freemen wore sandals.
	<i>fattened calf</i>	animal bred for a special occasion.
25	<i>music and dancing</i>	performed by entertainers not those feasting.

#### Bible Connections

20	<i>warm welcome</i>	<i>c.f.</i> Genesis 45:14-15
21	<i>sinned against heaven and against you</i>	<i>see</i> Psalm 51:4
22	<i>robe</i>	<i>see</i> Zechariah 3:4; Revelation 6:11
	<i>ring</i>	<i>see</i> Genesis 41:42
23	<i>was dead ... is alive again</i>	<i>see</i> Ephesians 2:1,5; 5:14
28	<i>older brother angry</i>	<i>c.f.</i> Jonah 4:1
32	<i>younger brother's status</i>	<i>see</i> Malachi 3:17
	<i>be glad (greek rejoice)</i>	<i>see</i> 15:6,7...9,10

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 11 *What did he continue from?*  
*Why only two sons?*
- 12 *What was 'his share'?*  
*If the Father divided his property – what did he live on?*
- 13 *Why did the younger son not leave immediately?*
- 15 *How did he, a Jew, end up feeding pigs?*
- 17 *What does 'came to his senses mean?*
- 18 *Why 'against heaven'?*
- 20 *Why 'to his father' and not 'home'?*  
*How did his father see him a long way off?*  
*Why was he 'filled with compassion' for him?*
- 21 *Why did the father not let him finish his speech?*
- 22 *What does the best robe and ring signify?*
- 24 *How was he 'dead'?*
- 26 *Why did he call the servant and not go in and find out for himself?*
- 28 *What made the older son angry?*
- 29 *Why did he say 'slaving for you' when he owned the estate that was left?*
- 31 *What did he still have?*
- 32 *Who is 'we' who had to celebrate?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 32 *Why does He end the parable without giving the older brother's response?*

### 2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 11 *...to Pharisees ..... this parable... (2,3) – 3 parts*
- 24 *They began to celebrate (15:6, 9)*
- 28 *The older brother became angry (15:2)*

b) Book

c) whole Bible,

- 11 *Two sons (Matthew 21:28-32)*
- 13 *Pleasure in sin for a season (Hebrews 11:25)*
- 17 *Sanity was restored (Daniel 4:36)*

18 *Against you only have I sinned (Psalm 51:4)*  
*Honour your father (Deuteronomy 5:16)*

20 *Compassion (Mark 6:34; 8:2)*  
*c.f. King David and son, Absalom (2 Samuel 14:33)*

21 *Sinned against God (Psalm 51:4)*  
*All have sinned (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:10)*

22 *A ring (Genesis 41:42; Esther 3:12; 8:2,8,10)*  
*What manner of love ... that we should be called the sons of God? (1 John 3:1)*  
*Robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10)*

24 *Not ashamed to call them brothers (Hebrews 2:11)*  
*The son was dead (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1)*

28 *Pleaded with God (Deuteronomy 3:23; 2 Samuel 12:16; Daniel 9:3)*

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

## LEARN

1) What type of literature is this?

2) Using the context of the passage, how do you answer the questions the passage raises?

11 *He continue from telling the parable of the committed shepherd and the careful woman.*  
*The two sons describe an illustration of the response to one point.*

12 *'His share' may have been a half or a third? (Dt 21:17)*

13 *He tried living at home with his money but was dissatisfied so he tried going to a distant country.*

15 *It was the ultimate disgrace for a Jew.*

17 *'Come to his senses' meant there was an obvious choice of death or life.*

18 *'Against Heaven' because he had disobeyed God's command to honour his father and mother(?)*

20 *'To his father' because his wrong had been against him.*  
*His father saw him a long way off for he had been looking for him.*  
*He 'filled with compassion' for him for he loved him.*

21 *The father did not let him offer payment / recompense?*

22 *The best robe and ring signifies honour – the place of sonship.*

24 *He was 'dead' in that he was starving to death inevitably.*

26 *He did not go in as he wanted to remain apart from the celebration.*

- 28 *The older son was angry as his brother was not paying for his sin.*
- 29 *He was still acting (wrongly) as though he was still and 'employee'.*
- 31 *He still had the presence of his father and the value of half the estate.*
- 32 *'We' is the father's household (the angels of heaven?).*

3) Surprised?

*He ends it 'openly' because he is seeking a response from His hearers.*

4) Given that a parable describes the relationship between God and man

- a) Where is God represented

*The father.*

- b) With whom are we meant to identify?

*One of the sons*

- c) What is the subject?

*The acceptance by God the Father / His people of the repentant sinner*

4) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

*The younger son rejects his father and goes his own way, while the older son stays. In desperate adversity, the younger returns to his Father and is welcome unreservedly by him. The elder brother rejects his brother refuses so the father pleads with him to rejoice as the lost 'dead' son was now alive.*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *God rejoices when a sinner repents and wants His people to in.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 32**

**KV** *But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; was lost and is found.*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

12 God honours and respects our free will.

20 God longs for our return to Him.

*God welcomes the returning sinner unreservedly.*

*God has compassion for us.*

24 God is not ashamed of us.

32 God celebrated when sinful people return to Him

b) His grace?

21 God does not permit us to offer repayment.

22 God lavishes his favour on the repentant sinner.

31 God shares all that He has, with His people.

c) Jesus and His salvation?

20 In Jesus, God ran towards lost mankind.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

12 Be careful of what you wish / ask God for – he may respect your wish

13 Be aware – there are pleasures in sin for a season

17 Come to your senses by thinking of God

24 Receive the grace of God

29 Do not compare yourself to others / resent the grace of God

31 Enjoy the riches of God – don't 'slave'

32 Join the celebration when the lost return to God

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## The parable of the shrewd manager

### Background

The Greek of the opening sentence indicates that this parable followed the telling of the three in ch.15 without any change of scene.

A master possessed a slave, and possessed him exclusively. A slave had no spare time; every moment of his day belonged to his one master.

### Word List

1	<i>manager</i>	Greek <i>oikonomos</i> , steward or factor of a household
6	<i>800 gallons</i>	Greek <i>100 batous</i> , (about 3,000 litres)
7	<i>1,000 bushels</i>	Greek <i>100 korous</i> (the yield from about 100 acres)
8	<i>Dishonest</i>	Greek <i>adikias</i> , unrighteousness
9	<i>worldly wealth</i>	Greek <i>mamona tes adikias</i> , unrighteous mammon
13	<i>servant</i>	Greek <i>doulos</i> , a household slave
	<i>serve</i>	Greek <i>doulein</i> , serve as a slave

### Bible Connections

8	<i>people of this world</i>	<i>see Psalm 17:14</i>
	<i>people of the light</i>	<i>see Isaiah 9:2; John 12:36</i>
9	<i>use of our possessions</i>	<i>see Matthew 19:21, Luke 12:33</i>
10	<i>criteria for greater responsibility</i>	<i>see Matthew 25:21,23; Luke 19:17</i>
13	<i>cannot serve God and money</i>	<i>also in Sermon on the Mount - Matthew 6:24</i>

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 1 *Why did Jesus tell this to his disciples?*  
*Why did He tell it in parable form?*
- 2 *Why did He want an account if he couldn't be manager anymore?*
- 5 *Why 'his master's debtors'?*
- 6 *Why are these numbers chosen?*
- 8 *Why did the master commend him for costing him money?!*  
*Why 'the people of the light'?*
- 9 *What are 'the eternal dwellings'?*
- 10 *What is the 'little' and 'much' to which Jesus is referring?*
- 12 *When might we be given property of our own?*
- 13 *What does it mean to serve God and mammon?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 8 *The manager is commended for being dishonest.*

### 2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 1 *Jesus had been speaking to Pharisees and teachers of the Law. (15:3)*
- b) individual book,
- 1 *Jesus told his disciples. (18:1)*  
*Rich man found it hard to enter the Kingdom of God. (18:24)*
- 8 *Zacchaeus gave away half of what he owned. (19:8)*

c) whole Bible,

- 4 *It is appointed to man to die once and then judgement. (Hebrews 9:27)*
- 9 *'In my father's house are many rooms.' (John 14:2)*  
*Worldly wealth – treasures in Heaven (Matthew 6:19-21)*
- 8 *He ... will forgive us our sins... (1 John 1:9)*  
*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. (Isaiah 9:2)*  
*I am the light of the world (John 8:12)*
- 12 *'Everything comes from you....' (1 Chronicles 29:14)*  
*Come, you who are blessed .... For I was hungry... (Matthew 25:34-35)*
- 13 *Mammon (Matthew 6:24)*  
*Put to death whatever .... your earthly nature.. greed. (Colossians 3:5)*  
*Chose this day whom you will serve (Joshua 24:15)*

d) Bible story

See Study I

## LEARN

1) What type of literature is this? *Parable*

2) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

1 *Jesus told it to his disciples, to establish that serving Him had eternal not just temporal rewards.*

*He told it in parable form because the Pharisees were listening.*

2 *He wanted his manager to "clear his desk"!*

5 *They owed money to his master, not him.*

6 *100 – 50; 100 – 80 are substantial, variable, parts of the tithe.*

8 *The stress was on his action rather than on his honesty.*

*'The people of the light' are those believing in Jesus.*

9 *'The eternal dwellings' is heaven.*

10 *'Little' are temporal earthly possessions and 'much' are eternal heavenly possessions.*

12 *We will be given 'property' of our own in Heaven*

13 *'To serve God or mammon' means to make either your priority?*

3) Given that a parable describes the relationship between God and man

a) Where is God represented?

*The master.*

b) With whom are we meant to identify?

*His 'dishonest' servants who will have to account to Him*

c) What is the subject?

*The view of his disciples of earthly possessions*

4) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

*Jesus told His disciples a parable of an inefficient manager who, before he was fired, wrote off his master's debts by 50% and 20% so he would have friends when unemployed. Likewise, they must employ passing worldly wealth in the light of eternal life. (1-9) He stressed that they should use of earthly possessions wisely / generously anticipating a reward in Heaven, and observed that if you can't be trusted with earthly possessions, why with Heavenly ones (10-12)*

*He summarised - Your God is either money or the Lord (13)*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *Serve God by using temporal worldly wealth generously so that in Heaven you will be rewarded*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 13**

**KV** *You cannot serve both God and mammon.*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

*1 God owns all things and so will receive an account from everyone*

*8 The master commends shrewd behaviour.*

*9 God's people are people of the light – they have seen*

*10 God will judge justly / on the basis of what we have done in this life*

*13 God will entertain no other priorities in your life but Himself*

b) His grace?

*8 The master commends his manager despite his dishonesty*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

*8 Jesus is the light – we are His*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

*4 Note – we will all 'lose our job' here / die*

*Note - Use our lives / possessions in such a way that we will be welcomed in the next life*

*5 Acknowledge that all of us are in debt to God*

*10 Reckon things in this life are 'little'.*

*12 Note - We are only stewards of the things in this life.*

*13 Chose to serve God not money*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

# Study 6

Luke 16:14-18

## The central teaching!

### Background

The Law allowed men to divorce their wives (Deuteronomy 24:1ff) though women could not divorce their husbands. Pharisees of the Rabbinic school of Hillel, who were very meticulous in trying to keep the Law, held that anything displeasing to the husband was grounds for him to divorce his wife.

### Word List

15 <i>abomination</i>	(‘detestable’ NIV) Only used 4 times in NT – also A. that causes desolation (Dan 11:31;12:11 - Matt 24:15; Mk 13:14); A. excludes from book of Life (Rev 21:27) implies violence (Acts 5:26; 21:35)
16 <i>force</i>	<i>the Law and the Prophets</i> the whole of the Old Testament
<i>John</i>	John the Baptist, <i>see Luke 3</i>
<i>kingdom of God</i>	the rule of God in all of life. Luke, writing mainly for Gentiles, most often uses this phrase, rather than ‘ <i>kingdom of heaven</i> ’ often used by Matthew, whose Jewish audience would have understood.
17 <i>least stroke of a pen</i>	the old translations say <i>tittle</i> , a small projection on some Hebrew letters to distinguish them from others.

### Bible Connections

17 <i>jot or tittle</i>	Matthew 5:18 AV. ‘Jot’ is the smallest Hebrew letter <i>yodh</i> , not much bigger than our apostrophe: ‘
18 <i>God instituted marriage</i>	<i>see Genesis 2:24</i>

*divorce* *see Deuteronomy 24:1; Matthew 5:31; 19:1-9; Mark 10:1-12; 1 Corinthians 7:10-16*

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

14 *How could the religious leaders 'love money'?*  
*How did they 'hear all this'?*  
*Why were they sneering?*

15 *What does 'justify' mean?*  
*What does he mean 'in your hearts'?*  
*How does God 'know our hearts'?*  
*How did they justify themselves 'in the eyes of men'?*  
*What is highly valued among men?*  
*Why 'detestable'?*

16 *What does 'proclaim' mean?*  
*Why 'John' and not Jesus?*  
*What is 'the Good News of the Kingdom'?*  
*How/why are the 'forcing their way in'?*

17 *What does it say about the Law (not a least stroke..)?*  
*Why focus on the Law and not the prophets?*

18 *What did this 'divorce' mean then?*

What surprises or confuses you?  
*How does this link the two parables?*

### 2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

14 *Eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee .. carefully watched (14:1)*  
*Pharisees muttering (15:2)*  
*You cannot love / serve God AND money. (16:13)*

b) individual book,

14 *'Take no money' was said to disciples going out. (9:3)*  
*sneered (23:35)*

15 *The expert in the Law... wanted to justify himself. (10:29)*

c) whole Bible,

15 *Your righteous deeds are as rags. (Isaiah 64:6)*  
*You know me – before a word is on my tongue. (Ps 139:1-4)*  
*Without holiness no one shall see God. (Hebrews 12:14)*

16 Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith. (Galatians 3:8).

*Not the smallest letter ... from the Law (Matthew 5:18)*

*Enter with confidence the most Holy place. (Hebrews 10:19)*

17 The Law of the Lord is perfect. (Psalm 19:7)

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

14 It meant that money was their prime motive.

*They 'heard all this' as Jesus was speaking to His disciples in the context of a crowd.*

*They were sneering because they didn't believe / resented them.*

15 To 'justify' means to make or render someone right or just.

*'Hearts' stands for the Jewish mind, therefore their thoughts.*

*God knows everything!*

*They justify themselves 'in the eyes of men' by pretending they were perfectly righteous.*

*Highly valued among men are: status, power, money.*

*'Detestable' implies total rejection.*

16 'Proclaim' means enforced for all to see(?)

*'John' because it ended with his ministry.*

*The Good News of the Kingdom' is that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus.*

*'Forcing' because those with faith in Jesus are given the right.*

17 The Law is absolute; there are no circumstances where it can be changed.

*The Law lays out the requirement of a righteous God>*

18 'Divorce' meant breaking the tie / responsibility of a man for his wife.

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

*The two parables are about judgement after death. This section between speaks of what God requires of people.*

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

*Jesus warned the self-satisfied Pharisees that God would judge people according to His own different standards. (14,15)*

*Gods Law, which is absolute, kept people out of His Kingdom until John came. (16,17)*

*You, ‘Law-keeping’ Pharisees commit adultery when divorce (18)*

## **LISTEN**

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP** *In the coming of God’s Kingdom, He meets the requirements of the Law and Prophets for any who would enter.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 16**

**KV** *Since that time the Good News of the Kingdom of God is being preached and everyone is forcing his way into it.*

## **LIVE**

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

**15** *God knows our hearts.*

*God detests some human values.*

**16** *The Lord is King.*

*God’s Word / His Law is irrevocable.*

b) His grace?

**16** *The Good News is that God gives gracious welcome in Jesus!*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

**16** *Jesus divides people*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

**14** *‘Do not love money’*

*Do not try and make your self-righteous.*

**16** *‘Force’ your way into the Kingdom through faith in Jesus.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Study 7

## Luke 16:19-31

### Believe in the Jesus of the whole Bible

#### Background

This parable appears only in Luke. Lazarus is the only person given a name in Jesus' parables. The rich man is sometimes referred to as 'Dives', which is simply the Latin for 'rich man'.

The people who normally wore 'purple and fine linen' were the priests, but that does not necessarily mean the rich man *was* a priest.

#### Word List 19

	<i>purple</i>	cloth, dyed with a very costly dye (from shellfish <i>murex</i> ).
	<i>fine linen</i>	undergarment
20	<i>Lazarus</i>	from Hebrew <i>Eleazar</i> which means, 'God has helped'
	<i>gate</i>	The word denotes a large gate or portico like that of a city or palace.
22	<i>Abraham's side</i>	a visual way of alluding to heaven, Imagine people at a feast, reclining on left elbow, so the person sitting to the right of Abraham had his head close to the chest of the great patriarch – a picture of bliss.
23	<i>hell</i>	Greek, <i>Hades</i> , place of the departed. Here it seems to be equivalent to <i>Gehenna</i> , (12:28) the place of punishment.
26	<i>great chasm...fixed</i>	i.e. 'in the afterlife, there is no passing from one state to the other. The Greek implies this is the <i>purpose</i> , not simply the <i>result</i> of the chasm.'
29	<i>Moses and the Prophets</i>	i.e. the whole of the Old Testament <i>as in</i> v16

#### Bible Connections

19	<i>neglecting the poor</i>	<i>see</i> Ezekiel 16:49
20	<i>beggar at gate</i>	<i>see also</i> Acts 3:2
26	<i>great chasm</i>	<i>see also</i> Parable of sheep & goats, Matthew 25:32-46 - compare v34: 'the kingdom prepared <i>for you</i> since the foundation of the world,' with v 41: '... into the eternal fire prepared <i>for the devil and his angels</i> .'

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 19 Who is Jesus speaking to?  
Why purple and fine linen?
- 20 What does Lazarus mean?  
Why is Lazarus lying at his gate?  
How aware was the rich man?
- 21 Why was he not given scraps?  
What does it mean 'even' the dogs?
- 22 Why did the angels carry him?  
Why was the rich man buried?
- 23 Why was it 'Abraham' and not 'Jesus'?
- 24 Why send Lazarus?
- 25 Why did Abraham call him 'son'/'child'?  
What are the 'good things' and the 'bad things'?
- 26 Who has fixed the chasm?
- 27 Why 5 brothers?
- 28 What would their warning be?
- 29 What did Moses and the Prophets say?
- 30 Why did they hope someone who is from the dead be listened to?
- 31 Why would they not be listened to?

What surprises or confuses you?

Why no mention of 'faith'?

### 2) The Context

- a) surrounding passage,
  - 19 Rich man (16:13)
  - 22 Angels rejoicing over repentant sinner (15:10)
  - 31 Moses and the prophets (16:16) the prophets (18:31)
- b) individual book,
  - 23 See Abraham... but you are thrown out (13:28)
  - 29 Love God and love your neighbours as yourself (10:27)

c) whole Bible,

19 *Purple, fine linen implies 'religious' - Tabernacle (Exodus 25-39); Wealthy - Mordecai (Esther 8:15) c.f. Jesus crucifixion (John 19:5; Mark 15:17)*

20 *Who sinned ...that he was born blind? (John 9:1)*

22 *Abraham was Father of the faithful (Genesis 15:6)*  
*Abraham's side at the feast (Matthew 8:11; c.f. John 13:23)*

27 *6 brothers – number of the beast 666 (Revelation, 13:18)*

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions the passage raises?

19 *Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees who were ridiculing Him (14)?*  
*Purple and fine linen were the wealthy / royal finery.*

20 *Lazarus is from the Hebrew – 'God has helped'.*  
*Lazarus is lying at his gate, begging.*  
*The rich man was completely unaware (?)*

21 *He was not given scraps as he was totally ignored.*  
*Even the dogs', meant everyone else totally ignored him / his sores.*

22 *The angels are the messengers, the implementers of God's will.*  
*the rich man buried as the rich had a grave, the poor didn't – the were cast on the rubbish dump - Gehenna*

23 *It was 'Abraham' as this man was a Hebrew*

24 *Lazarus was the one recognised with whom he is contrasted(?)*

25 *Abraham call him 'son'/child as he also was a Hebrew*  
*'Good things' = home & food and the 'bad things' = no home & food*

26 *God has fixed the chasm?*

27 *5 brothers means the rich man was one of 6 – imperfect number. Short of the Godly seven*

28 *Their warning would be – watch out for your brothers fate – Hell.*

29 *Moses and the Prophets said 'Love God and love your neighbour as yourself'.*

30 *They hoped someone who is from the dead would be believed when he warned them.*

31 *They would not be listened to, if they wouldn't even listen Moses and the Prophets .*

3) Given that a parable describes the relationship between God and man

- Where is God represented?

**God is the judge – Father Abraham is in His place**

- With whom are we meant to identify?

**Richman or Lazarus**

- What is the subject?

**Believing in / receiving Jesus as Messiah**

3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

**There were 2 Jewish men - a fabulously rich man and a desperately poor man Lazarus, who knew each other but no aid was given (19-21)**

**Both died - the poor man went to heaven, Abrahams bosom. the rich man went to hell. From hell he appealed for aid – a drop of water from Lazarus.**

**Abrahams refused this and there was an impassable chasm anyway. (22-26)**

**The rich man asked to warn his 5 brothers to repent, but was refused on the basis that, if they didn’t believe Moses and the prophets, they would not believe if someone should rise for the dead. (27-31)**

## **LISTEN**

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

**MP Those who understand Moses and the Prophets will believe in the resurrection of Jesus.**

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 31**

**KV If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead (31)**

## **LIVE**

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

- His nature and character?

**26 God’s judgement is final.**

b) His grace?

**31** *Jesus gives life to those who believe in His witness in the Old Testament.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

**31** *The resurrection of Jesus is the defining point of our faith.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

**26** *Reckon on the final judgement – Heaven and Hell.*

**31** *Believe in Jesus and His resurrection.*

*Note - If you listen to Jesus, you listen to the whole Bible.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Forgive as you have been forgiven.

### Background information

Connections between these paragraphs are not immediately obvious.

The Rabbis had a saying that if any man forgave another *three* times, he was a perfect man.

It was thought that the roots of the black mulberry tree would remain in the earth for 600 years, so it would be very difficult to remove!

v7-10 refer to standard practice with slaves in his day. Compare Jesus' own attitude in 12:37 and 22:24-27.

### Word List

1	<i>Disciples</i>	Luke uses 'disciples' synonymously with Apostles / the twelve (9:10,12,15)
		<i>things that cause people to sin</i> – gk <i>skandalon</i> . giving the English - 'scandal' meaning: 'bait in a trap' or a 'stumbling block'.
2	<i>millstone</i>	massive, heavy stone used for grinding grain into flour.
	<i>little ones</i>	very <i>young</i> believers; or <i>new</i> believers whatever their age.
6	<i>mustard seed</i>	proverbial for its small size.
10	<i>unworthy</i>	Greek 'achreioi'; a negative? May mean 'not yielding gain'. <i>c.f.</i> ' <u>worthless</u> servant' (Matthew 25:30)

### Bible Connections

4	<i>seven times</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 18:21,22
6	<i>mustard seed</i>	<i>see also</i> Matthew 13:31-32
10	<i>our best service does not give us a claim on God</i>	<i>c.f.</i> 1 Corinthians 9:16

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 1 Who was Jesus speaking to?
- 1&4 What sort of 'thing' was a sin?
- 2 Why would it be better...?  
Who are the little ones?
- 3 Why 'watch yourselves'?
- 4 What if he doesn't repent?
- 5 Why did the apostles ask to increase their faith?  
Why a mustard seed?
- 6 Why a mulberry bush?
- 7 How does the 'ploughing servant' follow on from 'faith'.
- 10 Why 'unworthy'?  
What is 'our duty'?

What surprises or confuses you?

It appears disjointed?

### 2) The Context

- a) surrounding passage,
  - 1 Been talking to disciples (16:1) then Pharisees (13) now disciples
  - 3 No ... if someone from the dead...they will repent (16:30)
- b) individual book,
  - 3 Unless you repent .. (13:3,5,7)  
Ninety nine righteous who do not need to repent (15:7)
  - 4 'If he comes back - ' no 'if' in Lord's prayer (11:4)  
6 woes to Pharisees. (11:37ff)
  - 8 Jesus is among us as one who serves! (12:37; 22:27)
- c) whole Bible,
  - 2 Millstone (Matthew 18:6; Mark 9:42)
  - 4 Forgive how many times? Jesus said, '70 x 7'! (Matthew 18:21f)
  - 6 As a mustard seed (Matthew 17:20)
  - 10 Unworthy (Matthew 25:30)

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

1 *Jesus speaking to his disciples / the Apostles (4)/*

1,4 *The sin just talked about was that of not believing Moses and the prophets / in the good news of the kingdom / Jesus' resurrection/*

2 *It would be better because the implication is hell?*

*'The little ones' are those who might believe in / trust Jesus/*

3 *This is a warning not to mislead others to disbelieve.*

4 *An integral part of forgiveness is repentance.*

5 *The apostles said 'increase our faith' because repeat forgiveness seemed impossible?*

*A mustard seed was the smallest of seeds.*

6 *A mulberry bush was the most secure / had deepest roots.*

7 *They are told to forgive - Understand the issue, faith - Are told it is their 'duty' to forgive/*

10 *Unworthy as they have done nothing to deserve gratitude.*

*'Our duty' is to forgive as we have been forgiven.*

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

*The link is belief in Jesus' resurrection; forgiveness by God lays on believers the duty of similar forgiveness of fellow human beings.*

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

*The disciples are warned not to distract others from believing in Jesus (1-3)*

*They are told to forgive the repentant sinner completely (4)*

*They therefore ask for more faith (5) and are told that it is not the quantity (but where it is placed) (6) An illustration shows that it is their duty to forgive (as Jesus, their master), has forgiven them. (7-10)*

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

*God's forgiveness of us (seven times) instructs our forgiveness of others.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 4**

*"If (your brother) sins against you seven times in a day and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent', forgive him."*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

1 *Jesus is willing to teach his disciples.*

*God is a righteous judge.*

3 *God warns us, because He cares for us.*

4 *God has forgiven us - completely*

5 *God is willing to respond to our requests.*

b) His grace?

10 *God welcomes us into his household, unworthy as we are*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

3 *Forgive as Jesus has forgiven you – completely / perfectly.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

3 *Reckon on the seriousness of misleading people about Jesus and His resurrection.*

4 *Forgive others completely (as God has forgiven you).*

5 *Be honest and direct with your requests to God.*

6 *Reckon – it is not how much faith we have but rather where that faith is placed.*

10 *Know that my position in Christ is purely by grace.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

## Obedience to Jesus heals; Faith in Jesus saves

### Background

Leviticus 14 gives us the regulations for cleansing from infectious skin diseases. The priest acted as a kind of public health inspector to certify that a person really was cured and no longer infectious.

In Jesus' day, Jews and Samaritans normally had 'no dealings with one another' (John 4:9,22). Israel was once a United Kingdom, but it had split under two kings, with 10 tribes in the North retaining the group name, *Israel*, and 2 tribes in the South, known as *Judah*, in a land area known as *Judea*.

The Northern kingdom (*Samaria* was both the capital and the area) had been conquered, exiled, dispersed, and had intermarried with non-Jews, adopting their religious practices. Later, the southern kingdom (capital, *Jerusalem*) had also been conquered and exiled but its people had kept their identity and returned to Jerusalem. So, Jews (people from *Judah*) saw themselves as the authentic people of God, and Samaritans as renegades.

### Word List

11	<i>Jerusalem</i>	Capital of Judea, site of Temple; Jesus was heading there to celebrate Passover.
	<i>Samaria</i>	Area north of Judea and south of Galilee.
12	<i>leprosy</i>	Greek word used for various skin diseases.
	<i>at a distance</i>	The Law required them to do this.
13	<i>master</i>	Unusual word, usually used by disciples (5:5; 8:24) means 'one who stand by' c.f. a master or a doctor
14	<i>cleansed</i>	Outwardly/ ceremonially pure (c.f. 11:41)
17	<i>'healed'</i>	<i>Greek sozo</i> also translated as 'save' (19:10)

### Bible Connections

16	<i>giving God thanks</i>	<i>see</i> Psalm 103:2
18	<i>this foreigner</i>	Other verses which portrayed Samaritans in a good light: <i>see</i> Luke 10:29-37, John 4:4-30, 39-42

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 11 *Why add that He was on his way to Jerusalem?*  
*Why go along the border between Samaria and Galilee?*
- 12 *Why ten men?*  
*What is Leprosy?*  
*Why stand at a distance?*
- 13 *Why called out ‘in a loud voice’?*  
*What did ‘master’ mean?*  
*How could he have pity on them?*
- 14 *Why saw and not heard?*  
*Why show self to priest?*  
*Why does he not heal them on the spot?*  
*What was the Samaritan meant to do?!*  
*What does ‘as they went’ imply?*  
*(Did they get to the priest?)*
- 15 *When did he see the priests*  
*Why praise God and not Jesus?*
- 16 *What did ‘throw himself at Jesus feet’ imply?*  
*What is the significance of him being a Samaritan*  
*Why were the Jews and Samaritans together?*  
*Why is it mentioned at the end of the sentence?*
- 17 *Why was Jesus surprised?*
- 18 *What did he mean by ‘foreigner’?*
- 19 *What did Jesus mean ‘arise...’ Was it a command or observation?*  
*What had made the other nine well?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 16 *A Samaritan was together with other lepers, who were Jews?*

### 2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

b) individual book,

- 11 *He had set his face to Jerusalem. (9:51)*
- 12 *Man with leprosy (5:12)*  
*Widow and ten silver coins (15:8) ten servants and ten minas (19:13)*

13 Mercy – c.f. the good Samaritan (10:37)  
Jesus had reputation amongst crowds of healing. (9:11)

c) whole Bible,

13 God is merciful. (Deuteronomy 4:31)  
Be merciful to me (Psalm 30:10)

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

## LEARN

1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

11 He added this to show it was a new section?

He went along the border because that's where the road was / as a Jew he would not be expected to enter it.

12 Ten is a humanly complete number.

Leprosy is a name for an antisocial skin disease.

'At a distance' because they were not allowed nearer.

13 They cried out as they believed in His power and this was their chance.

'Master' means 'one who is set over'.

He could have pity on them by healing them.

14 He heard their plea but saw their need.

The priest would declare them as fit for society.

Show themselves to the priest is a way of expressing faith in Jesus?

The Lord did not expect them to get there; it was just to show faith(?)

'As they went' implies that it happened in the act of expressing faith.

(No - they did not get to the priest?)

15 He didn't see the priests(?)

He believed that it was God who was at work through Jesus(?)

16 It implied that He recognised God was at work through Jesus.

Samaritans were 'enemies' of the true Israelites, the Jews.

They were together because both were 'unclean' / unacceptable.

It is mentioned at the end to show surprise that it was so.

17 Jesus was surprised because they had not returned to give thanks to God (i.e. Himself).

18 'Foreigner' meant non-Jew.

19 It was a statement.

Their actions rather than their belief in Jesus / God made them well.

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

*Both were unclean and therefore excluded from the Temple / society.*

3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences.

*Heading for Jerusalem along the Galilee / Samaria border Jesus is hailed by ten lepers who ask for mercy. (11-13)*

*Jesus tells them to show themselves to the priest and as they go, they are healed. (14)*

*One of ten, a Samaritan, returned to praise God and thank Jesus. (15,16)*

*Jesus told him that his faith had saved him. (17 -19)*

## **LISTEN**

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

*For anyone, it is grateful faith in Jesus that not only heals but saves*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? *v.19*

*Then he said to ('the foreigner') rise and go; your faith has made you well.*

## **LIVE**

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

*13 God is merciful.*

*14 God looks for us to exercise faith.*

*15 God is the author of all good things.*

*17 God expects gratitude from those who believe.*

b) His grace?

*19 Jesus gives to all who come to Him and ask.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

*19 Jesus gives salvation as well as healing to the faithful.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do

13 Be bold in expressing your need to Jesus.

14 Obey Jesus commands.

15 Praise God / thank Jesus for all his good gifts.

16 Don't let anything keep you from coming to Jesus.

17 Don't be afraid, with Jesus, to be the odd man out.

19 Put your faith in Jesus to heal you and most importantly to save you.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

# Study 10

# Luke 17:20-37

## Be ready - Receive the Kingdom by giving up your life.

### Background information

Luke here has some sayings peculiar to this Gospel and some shared with Matthew 24.

Noah was a faithful man chosen by God to build an ark so that some would be saved from the flooding which would come because of man's wickedness.

Lot was Abraham's nephew. He was saved when God destroyed Sodom because of its wickedness. Despite being warned not to, Lot's wife looked back; because of her disobedience/delay, she was turned into a 'pillar of salt'.

### Word List

21 <i>within you</i>	Or <i>among you</i> , i.e. present in the person and ministry of Jesus
22 <i>Son of Man</i>	An ambiguous title Jesus used to refer to Himself before it was time to declare His Messiah-hood, openly. It could have meant just an ordinary human being; with hindsight, we realise he was alluding to the divine figure in Daniel 7.
34 <i>taken</i>	i.e. taken to be with Jesus

### Bible Connections

22 <i>Son of Man</i>	<i>see</i> Daniel 7:13
23 <i>false expectations about the Son of Man's coming</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 24:23; Luke 21:8
26 <i>Noah</i>	<i>see</i> Genesis 6:5-23
28 <i>Lot</i>	<i>see</i> Genesis 19:1-28
32 <i>Lot's wife</i>	<i>see</i> Genesis 19:26

## LOOK

### 1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

20 *Why were the Pharisees asking?*  
*What is the Kingdom of God?*

21 *What did he mean that the Kingdom of God was ‘within/among’ you?*  
*Why would the Kingdom of God not come with our observation?*

22 *When would the time come?*  
*What is ‘the day of the son of man’?*  
*Why use the term ‘son of man’ here?*

23 *Who is ‘He’?*

24 *How would the son of man appear like lightening?*

25 *Why ‘first’ – is it timing or priority?*

26/29 *What is the point being made?*  
*Why repeat it?*

31 *Why should no one go inside / go to the field to retrieve?*

32 *Why ‘remember Lot’s wife’?*  
*What does he mean – lose life/gain life?*

34 *Where will they be taken to?*

37 *Why do they ask, ‘where’?*  
*What does the vulture reference mean?*

What surprises or confuses you?

33 *Why does this sentence appear here about losing one’s life? – it seems isolated.*

### 2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

20 *Pharisees (16:14)*  
*Kingdom of God (16:16)*

22 *Disciples means the apostles(?) (17:1,5)*

b) individual book,

20 *Kingdom of God (4:43 etc)*  
*Kingdom to come (11:2)*

22ff *The Son of man forgive sins. (5:24)*  
*Lord of the Sabbath (6:5)*  
*Will be rejected (9:22)*

- 25 *Suffer (9:22; 22:15; 24:26,46)*
- 30 *Hidden things revealed (10:21)*
- 33 *Save his life will lose it (9:24)*
- 37 *Anyone who doesn't take up his cross can't be my disciple. (14:27)*

c) whole Bible,

- 24 *Lightning (Exodus 19:6)*

- 34 *two men in the field one taken the other left (Matthew 24:10)*

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

## LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?
- 20 *The Pharisees were asking negatively / to catch him out.*  
*The Kingdom of God is where' God rules as King, unchallenged.*
- 21 *It means that the Kingdom of God was contemporary.*  
*The Kingdom of God cannot come with observation as it wasn't visible.*
- 22 *The time would come when Jesus was not here, i.e. after his resurrection but before his return in Glory.*  
*'The day of the son of man' is when Jesus will return in Glory.*  
*'Son of man' stresses the humanity of Jesus.*
- 23 *'He' is the Son of Man / Jesus.*
- 24 *He will be visible for all to see.*
- 25 *'First' – is timing (answering 'when' (20) .*
- 26/29 *Jesus' return will be sudden and unexpected.*  
*He repeated it to stress His importance.*
- 31 *They ought to do nothing but give Jesus the priority.*
- 32 *Lot's wife looked back – not forward to God.*  
*Not looking back means not losing life*
- 34 *They will be taken to be with Jesus.*
- 37 *The Pharisees had asked 'when?' The disciples asked 'where' would this Kingdom come.*  
*Vultures prey on dead bodies – the Kingdom comes when people 'die' to self(?)*

2) How do you resolve issues that surprised or confused you?

33 *losing his life means 'dying' which leaves a dead body which attracts vultures. (?)*

3) Give an overall 'picture' of the passage in a few sentences.

Pharisees asked Jesus about when the Kingdom of God would come. He said it was already among them (20,21)

He told his disciples the day was coming when they would long to see the Son of Man but, despite rumours, He would be seen by all but after he had suffered. (22-25)

This would be as sudden and devastating as in Noah and Lot's time. (27-30)

Only those who are prepared to give all / lose their life will be saved - the rest lost. (31-36)

It will be evident where this has happened in a person's life. (37)

## LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

*The Kingdom of God, received by faith now will be evident to all when Jesus returns in Glory to only receive all who have 'lost their life' to Him.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 33**

*Whoever tries to lose his life will keep it. Whoever loses his life will preserve it.*

## LIVE

1) What does it show about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)?

a) His nature and character?

20 *God rules as the King*

*God's Kingdom is evident for all of us to know.*

22 *God does not give physical proof of His operation*

33 *God is willing to give life to those who are willing to lose it for Him.*

b) His grace?

25 *God gave his son before we understood or responded.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

25 Jesus had to 'suffer and be rejected by this generation' (25)

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

21 Note - We have all we need now; the Kingdom is among us.

22 Note - It is of God that we long for the day of the Lord.

26-29 Be ready for the return of the Lord.

31 Do not let anything or anyone keep you from the Lord.

33 Lose your life to Jesus.

34 Be warned – some are lost and some find Jesus.

37 Note - There is evidence of a life that has died in Jesus

Now underline the application of the Main Point.



# Sharing the Word

## Use

*Hearing the Word* can be used alone, with one other person, or in a group

## Preparing for a group

Time put in alone beforehand will greatly benefit time spent together.

Work through the stages - LOOK, LEARN, LISTEN, LIVE.

Write down your own questions and answers. \*

## Format

- a. LOOK - Any questions? (If answer is known or not!)  
Relevant cross references in rest of the Bible?
- b. LEARN - Answers to questions?
- c. LISTEN - Key verse and Main Point?
- d. LIVE - What does it show about God /His grace/ Jesus?  
What should I do

**n.b.** Leave plenty of time for the LIVE section!

By also eating together and a time of prayer, you will have shared something of the life of the early church! (Acts 2:42-47)

## Remember!

As we gather round God's Word -

- a) Listen to the views of others.
- b) Make room for the novice. (They can join in too when you start by listing 'Any questions'.)
- c) Don't let the 'knowledgeable' dominate. Encourage everyone to think for themselves.
- d) Try to include others, especially 'seekers', in your time together.

\* The **process** is explained and practiced in a four-hour course, suitable for all, called '**An Introduction to 'Hearing the Word'**

<https://hearingtheword.org.uk>



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9 781912 209521