

HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

Luke 18¹ – 19¹⁰
Leader's Guide

Hearing the Word Luke 18:1 – 19:10

Leaders guide

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Nigel Barge, August 2018

Scripture Quotations taken from

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Resources

The *New Bible Dictionary* 3rd edition, published by Inter Varsity Press
The *New Bible Commentary* 21st century edition. A commentary on every Bible book, IVP

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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 5th 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* comes last in Section 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	

Study 1

Luke 18: 1-8

Pray faithfully for the King to return.

Background

Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem. (17:11) and the confrontations with the Pharisees are building up. In ch.17 he tells the disciples they will not know in advance the time of his second coming.

The judge in the parable is not a Jewish judge (disputes were normally taken before the elders and not into public courts.) He would have been a paid magistrate appointed either by Herod or by the Romans. Such judges were notoriously corrupt. **n.b.** The parable does not *liken* God to the unjust judge; it *contrasts* God to such a person.

The Jewish custom was to pray only three times a day at the most, as did Daniel (Daniel 6:10), in case they wearied God.

Word List

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--|
| 3 | <i>'justify'</i> | Greek <i>ekdikeson</i> root same as greek <i>dikaios</i> - 'righteous'
Luke 23:47; <i>c.f.</i> Romans 3:10; 4:3,5 |
| 4 | <i>wear me out</i> | literally 'give a black eye' – used here metaphorically! |
| 7 | <i>'keep putting them off'</i> | The Greek is difficult. It may mean 'though he bear long with them' or may be from a Semitic expression, 'He postpones his wrath'. |
| 7 | <i>'Chosen ones'</i> | Unusual word – refers to 'children of Jacob'
(1Chronicles 16:13, Psalm 105:6) |
| | <i>day and night</i> | The only use of this phrase in all 4 Gospels |
| 8 | <i>quickly</i> | In terms of God's time – see 2 Peter 3:8 |
| | <i>Son of Man</i> | Title Jesus used of himself, emphasising his humanity. |

Bible Connections

Story with a similar point - Luke 11:5-8

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | <i>persistent prayer</i> | <i>see</i> 11:5-8; Acts 1:14; Romans 1:10, 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17 |
| 2 | <i>not fearing God or man</i> | <i>contrast with</i> 2 Corinthians 8:21 |
| 3 | <i>widow</i> | <i>see</i> Deuteronomy 16:11; Psalm 68: Luke 21:1-4 |
| 7 | <i>God listens to those who cry to him</i> | <i>see</i> Exodus 22:23; Psalm 88:1; Rev 6:10 |
| 8 | <i>coming of Son of Man</i> | <i>see</i> Matthew 16:27 |

LOOK

1) The Text

- 1 What is 'then' after?
What might they be praying for?
Who are 'his disciples'?
Why is he teaching about persistent prayer now?
- 2 Why did he say 'he neither feared God or man'?
- 3 Why a widow?
Why an adversary?
- 4 What did she mean by 'justice'?
Why would he say, 'he did not fear God or man'?
- 6 What did the unjust judge say?
Why is God being compared with an unjust judge?
- 7 Who are His 'chosen ones'
(What about justice for the rest?)
What does 'day and night' infer?
- 8 When does God ever 'put His chosen ones off'
How quickly will God give 'justice'?
Why does Jesus call himself 'son of man' here?
What kind of faith will He be looking for?

What surprises or confuses you?

'Always pray'? – 'What happens if it is not the will of God?'

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 2 The Kingdom is among / within you. (17:21)
- 3 Confident of their own righteousness (18:9)
- 8 Increase our faith. (17:5)
Faith as a mustard seed (17:6)
Rise, your faith has made you well. (17:19)
The (second) coming of the Son of Man (17:24)

b) individual book,

- 1 Parables disguise the news of the Kingdom of God. (8:10)
Teaching on prayer (11:1; 21:36; 22:40,46)
Prayer in context of the Second Coming (21:36)
Prayer for the Kingdom to come (11:2)
Who appointed me a judge? (12:14)
Pure religion ... visit the ...widows (Jas 1:27)
- 3 Raising of Widow of Nain's dead son (7:12)

Pharisees neglect the justice and the love of God. (11:42)

Adversary and judge (12:58)

4 *Fear of God (12:5; 3:40)*

8 *Pardon / righteousness is given quickly. (23:43)*

c) whole Bible,

1 *God is not ashamed to call them, brothers. (Hebrews 2:11; 11:16)*

2 *Judge who did not fear God (c.f. 2 Corinthians 8:21)*

3 *Adversary in the Law (cf Romans 7:25-8:1)*

4 *Justify c.f. righteous (Genesis 15:6; Psalm 23:3)*

7 *Chosen ones (Ephesians 1:4; John 15:16)*

Children of Israel / the chosen ones (1 Chronicles 16:13)

Day and night mean continuously (Psalm 1:3)

8 *Quickly – one day is as a thousand years? (2 Peter 3:8)*

Immediate righteousness (Luke 23:42,43)

The righteous shall live by faith. (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17)

To everything there is a time and a season. (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

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?

Parable

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

1 *'Then' is after Jesus speaking about the coming of His Kingdom and His return.*

'His disciples' are the twelve, plus other followers. (6:13, 17)

'Always pray' means persist / don't give up / don't fall away.

The Pharisees have asked Him about the coming of the kingdom – it may be some time but he wants believers to persist / not give up?

2 *He had no outer influences on Him.*

3 *A widow had no personal power / leverage.*

4 *'Justice' means declared righteous / vindicated.*

He meant none had outside influence on Him.

- 6 *The unjust judge says that that he will ensure she is declared righteous to stop himself being worn out.*
- 7 *His 'chosen ones' are the children of Jacob.
'Day and night' infer, incessantly.*
- 8 *God never 'puts his chosen ones off'
God will instantly give 'justice'.
Jesus call himself 'Son of Man' here stressing His humanity.
What kind of faith will He be looking for?*

- 3) Given that a parable describes the relationship between God and people
a) Where is God represented?

God is represented by the unjust judge.

- b) With whom are we meant to identify?

The persistent widow

- c) What is the subject?

Faithful prayer for righteousness before God

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

Jesus continues tell them to pray unceasingly for the Kingdom to come. (1) He tells a parable of the weakest successfully wearing down the judge as she seeks justice against her adversary. (2-5)

He concludes that God will give justice/righteousness immediately to His chosen ones who simply ask Him. When Jesus returns this saving faith is what he will look for. (6-8)

LISTEN

- 1) What is the lesson or the main point?

Believers in Jesus should pray persistently, with faith for the gift of righteousness.

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

And will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones who cry out to Him day and night.

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

1 God wants us to persist in prayer.

2 God is not 'coy' about whom He likens Himself to!

7 God will bring righteousness to His people.

8 God responds quickly to faithful requests for righteousness.

b) His grace?

7 God is sovereign – He chooses.

c) Jesus and His salvation?

8 Jesus is coming back looking for faith in Himself.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

1 Disciples - Listen to what Jesus wants to show us!

Pray (for the Kingdom) for righteousness.

Pray persistently / continuously.

7 Expect God to answer your prayers quickly for righteousness.

8 Be ready for Jesus's return by putting your faith in Him.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Be humble!

Background

Luke does not identify by name any particular group to whom this parable applied. The error is typical of the Pharisees but by no means confined to them. It would be normal to see a Pharisee in the temple but surprising to see a tax collector there. Tax collectors were regarded as dishonest and betrayers of their own countrymen.

Word List

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--|
| 9 | <i>righteous</i> | Greek, <i>dikaios</i> , same root of words as ‘justice’ (3,5,8,14) |
| 11 | <i>stood</i> | This was the normal posture for prayer <i>see</i> Mark 11:25. |
| 12 | <i>fast twice a week</i> | Although the Law (Torah) only required fasting on the Day of Atonement ie once a year. |
| | <i>give a tenth</i> | Law only said that certain crops be tithed. Pharisees tithed even tiny crops like garden herbs (Luke 11.42). |
| 13 | <i>look up to heaven</i> | Normal in Jewish prayer then |
| | <i>beat his breast</i> | The verb is continuous, <i>kept beating</i> ; a sign of sorrow. |
| | <i>have mercy on me</i> | Greek <i>hilastheti</i> meaning ‘be propitiated’ or ‘let your anger be removed’ i.e. He knows he deserves judgment for his sins. |
| 14 | <i>justified</i> | reckoned as righteous, ‘acquitted of his sins’ |

Bible Connections

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 9 | <i>confident of own righteousness...</i> | <i>see</i> 16:15, Isaiah 65:5 |
| | <i>going to the temple to pray</i> | <i>see</i> Acts 3:1 |
| 12 | <i>fasting required</i> | <i>see</i> Leviticus 16:29 |
| | <i>tithing required</i> | <i>see</i> Deuteronomy 14:22 |
| 13 | <i>beating breast, sign of repentance</i> | <i>see</i> Isaiah 66:2; Jeremiah 31:19; Luke 23:48 |
| | <i>God have mercy on me.</i> | <i>see</i> 5:32; 1 Timothy 1:15 |

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 9 *Who were the 'some'?*
Who were everyone else'?
What was 'their righteousness'?
What did 'their own' mean?
Why did they look down on everyone else?
- 10 *Why a Pharisee and a Tax collector?*
Why did they go to the temple to pray?
How could the tax collector go to the Temple at all?
- 11 *What did 'standing up' mean?*
What does it mean 'he prayed about himself'?
- 12 *Why did he give a tenth?*
- 13 *Why did the tax collector stand 'at a distance'?*
What was it 'at a distance' from?
Why would he not look up?
Why did he 'beat his breast'?
Why did he call for mercy?
What did he mean 'a sinner'?
How did he know he was a sinner?
- 14 *What does 'justified' mean?*
How did he know he was justified?
What does 'exalt' mean?
What does 'humble' mean?
How will they be exalted / humbled?

What surprises or confuses you?

- 14 *Why 'went home'? Why not justified on the spot?*

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 10 *Pharisees had been asking about the Kingdom of God. (17:20)*

b) individual book,

- 9 *This man welcomes and eats with sinners. (15:2)*
- 13 *Take the lowest place (14:10)*
Sinner (7:39; 15:7,10; 19:7)
- 14 *For everyone who exalts themselves will be humble and those who humble themselves will be exalted (14:11)*

c) whole Bible,

9 *This mob that knows nothing of the Law; there is a curse on them. (John 7:49)*

Unless your righteousness exceed that of the Pharisees, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 5:20)

10 *Went to Temple to pray (Acts 3:1)*

11 *Stand in prayer (Mark 11:25)*

Who may stand in His holy place – clean hands and a pure heart. (Psalm 24:3,4)

13 *The Holy Spirit convicts of sin. (John 16:8)*

I know that nothing good lives in me – that is my sinful nature. (Romans 7:18)

14 *Jesus humbled himself and was exalted to the highest place (Philippians 2:8,9)*

Saw they had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13)

Moses face shone. (Exodus 34:29ff)

“Look, Lord. Here and now I give” (Luke 19:8)

”Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33)

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

LEARN

1) What kind of literature is this?

Parable

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

9 *‘Some’ were the Pharisees of (17:20).*

‘Everyone else’ were those who were not confident about their righteousness.

‘Their righteousness’ was their purity / acceptability before God.

‘Their own’ the merit was to themselves.

They look down on everyone else because they felt superior.

10 *A pharisee and a tax collector were the extremes of religious purity and impurity.*

They went to the temple to pray as God’s presence was there.

The tax collector was unable to enter the temple courts.

11 *‘Standing up’ was the proscribed posture for prayer.*

It meant that he was taken up by himself, not God nor his fellow man.

12 A tenth was what the Lord proscribed.

*13 The tax collector stood 'at a distance' as he was ashamed before God.
'At a distance' was from the presence of God.*

He would not look up as he was aware of his sin and he feared God.

He 'beat his breast' as an act of repentance.

He called for mercy as he could offer no 'mitigation'.

'A sinner' was someone who did not adhere to the Law.

He knew he was a sinner because of the work of the Holy Spirit.

14 'Justified' means declared righteous (forgiven).

He knew as he believed what God was saying to Him.

'Exalt' means lifted before God.

'Humble' means brought low before God and men.

God will humble and exalt.

What surprises or confuses you?

14 It was not a religious experience but a living reality

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

a) Where is God represented?

God

b) With whom are we meant to identify?

Either the tax collector or the Pharisee

c) What is the subject?

Righteousness before God

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

Jesus' parable was for those who were confident of their own righteousness. (9)

At the Temple, a pharisee, thanked God that he was so good while a tax collector in repentant shame cried for mercy (10-13) The Lord said the latter left declared righteous by God for life (14a)

He concluded those proud of themselves will be humbled; those who are humble will before God and man, will be lifted up. (14b)

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

Those proud of their own 'righteousness' will be humbled but those who humbly look to Jesus will be given His Righteousness.

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 14**

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

9 *God alone is righteous – he will brook no competition.*

b) His grace?

14a *God gives righteousness to repentant sinners.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

14b *Jesus humbled Himself and was exalted to the highest place.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

9 *Do not be proud and consider yourself righteous.*

Do not 'look down' on any person.

11 *Beware of gratitude that we don't sin like other people!*

12 *Don't mistake religious practice for faith in God.*

13 *Put yourself 'at the back'.*

14 *Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Receive Jesus like a child.

Background

Jesus was talking to those who were confident of their own righteousness (18:9) and follows on from the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. It gives a contrast to the Pharisee by speaking of babies and little children.

It was the custom in Palestine for mothers to bring their child to some distinguished rabbi on their first birthday that he might bless them.

It is not clear here why the disciples rebuked those who brought the children. Jesus shows that he welcomes them.

Word List

15 *touch them* In the sense of 'lay hands on them', a natural action in blessing

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 18:2-4; 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16

15 *Jesus' rebuke* Fever (4:39), Demons (4:41; 9:42), wind (8:24) James and John's vengeance (9:55)

17 *I tell you the truth* (KJV – 'verily) In Luke associated with Jesus' second coming, judgment, glory (4:24; 11:51; 12:37; 13:35; 18:29; 21:22; 23:42)

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 15 *Why 'also'?*
Why babies?
Why touch them?
Why does Jesus rebuke His disciples?
- 16 *Who were the disciples?*
Who were 'children' (c.f. babies)?
Why call the children to him but then speak to the adults?
How were they hindering them?
What is 'the Kingdom of God'?
How does it 'belong'?
Why 'such as these'?
- 17 *Why 'I tell you the truth'?*
What does 'receive the Kingdom' mean?
How does a little child receive it?
Where will those be who are 'outside the Kingdom'?

What surprises or confuses you?

Why the change of word 'baby' (15) to 'children' (16)

2) The Context

surrounding passage,

- 17 *I tell you the truth ... leave home for sake of kingdom (18:29)*
Rich man entering the kingdom of God (18:25)

individual book,

- 15 *Disciples (large crowd) (6:17) {c.f. apostles 6:13; 9:10; 11:49; 17:5; 22:14; 24:10}*
Touched Jesus (6:19; 8:44)
- 16 *Thy kingdom come (11:2)*
- 17 *Weeping and gnashing of teeth from those outside of the kingdom (13:28)*
Never enter the banquet (14:24)

whole Bible,

- 15 *Rebuking c.f. James and John (Mark 9:38)*
- 16 *Tends flock, gathers lambs in arms, carries close to heart, leads those who have young (Isaiah 40:11)*
- 17 *Outer darkness – gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30)*

*To those who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)
What is 'truth'? (John 18:38)*

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

LEARN

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

15 *'Also' - contrasting the extremes – pharisees confident of their own righteousness before God and their social place in the community and children, no place in society at all.*

Babies were the weakest and most helpless.

His touch imparted good.

He rebuke them because they were deciding who was 'worthy'.

16 *The disciples in Luke were the larger crowd following Jesus.*

'Children' (c.f. babies) were older – capable of 'being called'.

He called the children as a demonstration of His welcome to them.

They hindering them by 'rebuking' their parents for bringing them.

The Kingdom of God' is where Jesus rules unchallenged.

It belongs in that it is their home.

'Such as these' were children who responded to the call of Jesus.

17 *'I tell you the truth' underlines a key truth is about to be taught.*

'Receive the kingdom' means - believe, act, accept.

A little child believes, acts and accepts.

Those 'outside the Kingdom' are those who do not believe, act, and accept.

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

Babies were brought (and welcomed) but children were able to come of their own choice – c.f. adults.

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

In the context of babies being brought to him, Jesus said that only those who received the Kingdom like children would enter it.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

Only those who believe in Jesus and receive His Kingdom like a child, will be allowed to enter it.

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 17**

Anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it.

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

17 God is willing to share his Kingdom.

b) His grace?

16 *The Kingdom of God is given to the 'child like'.*

17 *Receiving the King(dom) is a response to grace.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

15 *In Jesus, God is willing to 'touch' the weakest.*

16 *Jesus calls us to Himself.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

16 *Note - We may not only enter but possess (own) the Kingdom of God.*

17 *Reckon on the importance of how we approach the Kingdom*

Receive the Kingdom as a child

Note – Being childlike means accepting /believing/accept in an 'innocent' and non-self-conscious manner.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 4

Luke 18: 18-30

Count the cost/Receive the Lord

Background

In his gospel, Luke uses the term 'rulers' for a group of people that differed from the elders, scribes and high priests.

Jesus replies to the ruler's question with one of His own (a recognised method of teaching) to invite the man to think more deeply about what he was saying and asking.

The rabbis held that the Law could be kept in its entirety. It was also commonly held that riches were a sign of God's blessing, so the rich had the best chance of good things in the next world as well as enjoying them in this life.

Word List

18	<i>ruler</i>	A very general term denoting Roman and Jewish officials of all kinds
	<i>good teacher</i>	Thoughtless flattery, a term not used by the rabbis because it ascribed to man an attribute possessed only by God
	<i>inherit</i>	<i>i.e.</i> Receive the 'gift' from another (n.b. - not earned)
26	<i>who</i>	<i>i.e.</i> 'who (of any kind)?' not 'what rich man?'
28	<i>Peter</i>	One of the 12 disciples, Jesus' close followers

Bible Connections

c.f. with Luke 10:25-37

20	<i>Commandments 5-9</i>	<i>see</i> Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20; Romans 13:9
22	<i>sell ... give to the poor</i>	<i>c.f.</i> Acts 2:45
	<i>treasure in heaven</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 6:19-20
24	<i>hard for rich to enter heaven</i>	<i>see</i> Proverbs 11:28
28	<i>Peter and apostles. left all...</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 4:19-20
29	<i>God supplies all our needs</i>	<i>see</i> Philippians 4:19

LOOK

1) The Text

- 18 Why 'a certain' ruler?
Why 'inherit' the Kingdom of God?
- 19 What did he mean 'good'?
- 20 Why no command about loving God?
- 21 Why no coveting?
- 22 Why only 'one thing'?
What would happen if he gave all to the poor; would he go to heaven?
- 23 Why did he go away sad?
- 24 Why is it hard for a rich man to enter heaven?
- 26 Why does Peter assume that none can be saved?
- 27 Why is it possible?
- 28 Why does Peter say – 'We left all...'?
- 29 Why 'and' eternal life?

What surprises or confuses you?

- 20 Why 'no coveting' in the list?
- 29 Why leaving people not possessions?

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 25 Kingdom of God (17:20; 18:17)

b) individual book,

- 18 Certain (7:41; 11:1; 18:2)
Inherit eternal life (10:25)
- 22 Sell your possessions ... treasure in heaven (Lk 12:33)
Barnabas sells a field (Acts 4:36,37)
Follow me. (5:27; 9:23, 59; 14:27; 18:22)
Cost of following Jesus (9:57-62; 14:25-35)
He has filled the hungry with good things but sent the rich empty away.
(1:53)
The rich man and Lazarus (16:21ff)
- 23 You cannot serve God and Mammon. (16:13)
- 27 Nothing is impossible with God. (1:37)
- 29 I tell you the Truth – judgement in (Luke 9:24; 11:51; 12:37; 13:25; 21:32; 23:43)

c) whole Bible,

- 18 Fell on his knees ... 'Good teacher,...' (Mark 10:17)
Inherit = not far from the kingdom of God? c.f. (Mk 12:34)
- 19 The Word (Jesus) was God (John 1:1f)
- 20 10 commandments (Ex 20:3-17)
Order not as in 10 commandments adultery Murder c.f. (Mark 10:19)
- 22 (The Son) only does what he sees the Father doing. (John 5:10)
- 30 Eternal life (John 3:16)
Love God or mammon (money). (16:13)

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

LEARN

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

- 18 A certain ruler is a phrase in story telling - c.f. once upon a time?
'Inherit' recognised the Kingdom of God was something given.
- 19 Good' must have implied perfection.
- 20 No command about loving God because Jesus sought to expose his devotion – he could just have said that he loved God)
- 21 No coveting for that was the sin that Jesus would expose.
- 22 'One thing' was not the only thing but that which Jesus highlighted.
Yes. He would have gone to Heaven as he would have believed in Jesus.
- 23 He went away as he wanted both - ' to follow Jesus and have his money but he couldn't do both so he rejected Jesus.
- 24 It is hard because riches and Jesus call for absolute devotion
- 26 Peter assume that non can be saved because riches were thought to be reward for goodness.
- 27 it is possible because God is omnipotent
- 28 Peter said – 'We left all...' as he had nothing more to give
- 29 Why did Jesus say leaving people – not things because ultimately people count.
'And' eternal life because Jesus underlined the gain was first in this life.

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

- 20 'No coveting' in the list to underline – this was his 'besetting sin'.
- 29 Leaving people because ultimately it is about relationship – God or any others.

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

A well to do leader sought eternal life through Jesus ('good teacher'). Jesus asked him if this meant he believed He was God. (18,19)

He continued asking him if he had kept all the commandments, except do not covet. He replied 'always'. So, Jesus told him one thing more – sell all you have and give to the poor and follow me (20-23)

He balked at this and Jesus observed it was hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God (24,25)

Hearers replied 'none can be saved' Jesus replied that God could do it. Peter observed they had left all to follow him. Jesus responded that all who had sacrificed relationship for the Kingdom would be rewarded likewise many times in this world and in the next be given eternal life. (26-30)

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

Put Jesus first and you will have His family in this life as well as eternal life in the next.

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 29,30**

No one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life. (29,30)

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

19 God alone is good / perfect.

27 God is all-powerful.

30 God will never be any man's debtor.

b) His grace?

27 God does the impossible – He declares the sinner righteous.

29 God gives - 'many times more and eternal life'.

c) Jesus and His salvation?

19 Jesus is God.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

18 Do not try and patronise God.

21 Be honest before God in self-assessment.

23 Count the cost of following Jesus.

26 Consider the most important question – can you been saved?

28 Be honest in self-assessment.

30 Enjoy the riches of the Kingdom, now!

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Listen to God and seek understanding from Him

Background

Jesus tells the twelve disciples what is going to happen to Him in Jerusalem. They do not understand because they did not know/realise the meaning of much of their Scriptures (our Old Testament).

They thought from Psalm 110 that the Messiah would be a conquering hero; they had not grasped He was also the suffering servant of Isaiah 53.

On *six* previous occasions, Luke has recorded Jesus predicting his sufferings: Luke 5:35; 9:22,44-45; 12:50; 13:32-35; 17:25, but even now they still do not get it. This is the first time He explains that His suffering will involve being handed over to the Gentiles.

Word List

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|--|
| 31 | <i>the Twelve</i> | Jesus' close followers, whom he had chosen to be with him |
| | <i>Jerusalem</i> | The capital and centre of religious life and government |
| | <i>the prophets</i> | Our Old Testament Scriptures |
| | <i>Son of Man</i> | Title Jesus often used of Himself, emphasises His humanity |
| 32 | <i>Gentiles</i> | <i>i.e.</i> The Romans, the non-Jewish rulers of the country |
| 33 | <i>third day</i> | Marks a complete change in general terms |

Bible Connections

See also Acts 2:22-24

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|--|
| 31 | <i>going up to Jerusalem</i> | <i>see</i> Luke 9:51; Matthew 16:21 |
| | <i>written by the prophets</i> | <i>see e.g.</i> Psalm 22; Isaiah 53
Jonah 2/Matthew 12:40 |
| | <i>Son of Man</i> | <i>see</i> Daniel 7:13 |

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 31 *Where did He take them aside from?*
Why did He take them aside?
Why did He say 'go up'?
What was written about the Son of Man?
Why did he describe himself as 'Son of Man'?
- 32 *Who were the gentiles?*
Where does it say this – mock, insult, spit, flog, kill?
Why does it say this so graphically?
Where does it say He will rise on the third day?
- 34 *How could they not understand / was the meaning hidden from them?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 31 *Why 'the twelve' not the disciples (c.f. 18:1,34)*

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 31 *Jesus resolutely set his face towards Jerusalem. (9:51)*
Son of Man title used here in connection with the second coming (17:24, 26, 30; 18:8)

b) individual book,

- 34 *The Son of Man's betrayal is hidden. (9:45)*
Knowledge of secrets of Kingdom are given to you. (8:10)

c) whole Bible,

- 32 *Before Gentiles / led off to Pilate (23:1)*
- 33 *As Jonah ..the son of man ... three days / nights in the earth (Matthew 12:40)*
- 34 *The Arameans – blinded (2 Kings 6:18)*

d) Bible story

See Study 1.

LEARN

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

- 31 *He took them aside from the road to Jerusalem.
He took them aside as He wanted to speak privately to them.
He said 'go up' as Jerusalem was on a mountain.
It was written that He would be killed but rise again.
'Son of man' stressed His humanity / mortality.*
- 32 *The gentiles were the non-Jews i.e. Romans and Edomites (Herod).
It infers – mock, insult, spit, flog, kill in Isaiah 53.
It says it so graphically to show them that it is part of Gods plan.
It says He will rise on the third day in Jonah 2.*
- 34 *They were blinded by the Holy Spirit.*

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

- 31 *The message was specifically for the inner sanctum of the disciples – the*
12 *Apostles.*

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

As they were going up to Jerusalem, Jesus privately warned the disciples again that He was going to be killed by the Gentiles but rise again on the 3rd day. The disciples were blinded by God from understanding it.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

God planned that Jesus would be killed by men but raised again by Him.

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 32, 33**

Everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be turned over to the gentiles. They will mock Him, insult Him, spit on Him, flog Him and kill him. On the third day He will rise again.

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

31 God may confide in His people regarding the future.

God is in complete control – He knows the beginning from the end.

God acts consistently with His Word.

b) His grace?

34 God acts for our good when we have no appreciation of it.

c) Jesus and His salvation?

32 Jesus submitted Himself willingly to His Father's will.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

31 Listen, when Jesus 'takes you aside'!

32 Marvel at the sacrifice of God for us.

Look carefully at what God has predicted will happen with an open mind.

34 Don't give up believing if you don't understand.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

A blind beggar receives his sight

Background

Crowds were following Jesus as He journeyed towards Jerusalem. Rabbis often taught their followers by talking as they walked along together.

As He approached Jericho before heading west to Jerusalem, a blind man heard the commotion and asked who was coming. Given his reaction, he must have already heard something about Jesus and his ministry.

Word List

- 35 *Jericho* City near the river Jordan, c 800ft below sea level
A curse had been placed on any who would rebuild it after its destruction by Joshua. (Joshua 6:26)
(Jerusalem was 2600ft above sea level – a hard journey of 8/9 hours.)
- 37 *Nazareth* Jesus lived in Nazareth, a small town in Galilee, until he started his ministry. (*c.f.* 4:16)
- 38 *called out* The word describes a normal, loud shout.
Son of David Title the Jews used to refer to the long-awaited Messiah. Luke, writing with Gentiles in mind, uses it only once more; Matthew, writing mainly for a Jewish audience, uses it more often.
- 39 *rebuked* Harsh censorship *c.f.* Jesus and demons (4:41; 9:42)
shouted all the more Different verb from v38, indicating a shout of utter desperation – *c.f.* ‘bellowed’
- 42 *heal* Greek *Sozo* – heal or save (*e.g.* 19:10)

Bible Connections

See also Mark 10:46-52 Mark names the blind man as Bartimaeus, who was healed as Jesus *left* Jericho.

Matthew 20:29-34 *Two* blind men

38 *Son of David* *see* Ezekiel 34:23; Psalm 89:28-37; 132:11,12; David was from Bethlehem 1 Samuel 17:12 - Micah 5:2.
Matthew 1:1,6; 12:23; 21:9; 22:41-45; // Luke 20:41

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 35 *Why Jericho?*
 - Where was He approaching Jericho from?*
 - Why was he sitting by the roadside begging?*
- 36 *Why did he ask what was happening?*
- 37 *Why did they say, 'Jesus of Nazareth'?*
- 38 *Why did he call Jesus, son of David?*
 - Why did he call for 'mercy'?*
- 39 *Why was he rebuked?*
 - Why did he persist?*
- 40 *Why did He order the man to be brought to Him?*
- 41 *Why did He ask what he wanted – Bartimaeus was blind?!*
- 41 *What did he mean by calling him Lord?*
- 42 *What did He mean 'receive your sight'?*
 - What was his faith in?*
- 43 *Why 'immediately'?*
 - What does 'followed Jesus' mean?*
 - Why did he praise God (not Jesus)?*
 - Why did they all join in praising God?*

What surprises or confuses you?

- 40 *What caused Jesus to stop?*

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 35 *As approached Jericho (on way to Jerusalem) (31)*
- 38 *Mercy (18:13)*

b) individual book,

- 37 *Jesus of Nazareth - Demons (4:34) Disciples (24:19)*
- 39 *Son of David and Messiah (20:41)*
 - Are you the Christ ('son of David')? (22:67)*
- 40 *Jesus stopped. c.f. Jesus asking who touched me (8:45)*
- 41 *Jesus is Lord. (1 Corinthians 12:3)*
- 42 *Your faith has healed you (Luke 8:48)*
 - Your sins are forgiven (5:20)*
- 43 *Praising God - birth (1:64; 2:13,20) healing (5:25; 11:25)*

c) whole Bible,

- 35 Jericho – Abraham prophecies against (Genesis 15:16); cursed by Joshua (Joshua 6:26)
- 38 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Joel 2:32)
- 40 He hears us. (1 John 5:14,15)
- 42 We are saved by grace through faith. (Ephesians 2:8,9)

d) Bible story?

See Study 1.

LEARN

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

- 35 Jericho was a symbol of a curse by God on the inhabitants of Canaan - the city of 'destruction' – (not to be rebuilt)
He approached Jericho from North at beginning of the ascent to Jerusalem.
He was begging from the passing pilgrims.
- 36 He must have heard the commotion.
- 37 They said, 'Jesus of Nazareth' as he had a reputation.
- 38 He called Jesus, son of David, as he believed he was the Messiah
He called for 'mercy' acknowledging - a) He was a sinner b) Jesus had power to forgive sins c) Jesus was divine.
- 39 He was rebuked as they thought he didn't matter / was a distraction.
He persisted because he believed in Jesus.
- 40 He order that the man be brought as he must have been separated by a large crowd.
- 41 Jesus asked as He wanted the request articulated.(Was it money, healing, etc.?)
He meant by calling Him Lord that Jesus was Messiah. (God?)
- 42 He meant that a gift was offered.
His faith was that Jesus was Messiah.
- 43 'Immediately' as the transaction had been done.

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

- 40 The 'bellow'/the Holy Spirit caused Jesus to stop?

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

As Jesus approached the cursed city, a blind man cried out to Jesus as the Messiah.(35-39)

Jesus stopped, called on him and asked him what he wanted from Him. He replied that he wanted to see. (40,41)

He saw, and Jesus acknowledge that this was through his faith. As a result, ALL praised God. (42, 43)

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

Faith in Jesus, the Messiah, saves/heals us.

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 42b**

Your faith has healed you.

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

43 *God is worthy of our praise.*

b) His grace?

42 *God gives sight (spiritual) through His grace, received by faith.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

40 *Jesus responds to a cry of faith.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

35 *Don't give up, though you can't see/ don't understand!*

36 *Note - honest questions are to be encouraged!*

38 *Call on Jesus.*

Appeal to Jesus on the basis of His mercy.

39 *Do not obstruct any who want to see Jesus.*

Do not allow any to put you off from seeing Jesus.

41 *Respond to Jesus' question – 'What do you want me to do?'*

42 *Receive Jesus' promise by faith.*

43 *Respond immediately by following Jesus and praising God.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 7

Luke 19: 1-10

God welcomes the repentant sinner

Background

Jericho was on an important trade-route from Jerusalem to the East and there was a good deal of local wealth *e.g.* from the famous balsam groves in the area.

The Romans operated a taxation system to pay for government, army and road-building. They took a census of the population, divided the needed income by that number, and held an auction. The highest bidder paid that year's taxes in advance, and then held the right to extract money from the population, backed by Roman soldiers to enforce payment.

He could then subcontract to several others who did the actual gathering of money (*e.g.* Matthew, before he became a disciple of Jesus: Luke 5:27; Matthew 9:9). Zacchaeus was a 'Chief' tax collector. The system lent itself to unscrupulous people who saw it as a chance to take more than the official rate. They wanted to recover their outlay, plus gain enough to live on and outbid next year's competitors.

Under Jewish law, robbery with violence needed a four-fold restitution: if you killed someone else's sheep you had to pay back four sheep (Exodus 22:1; 2 Samuel 12:6). But for voluntary confession and restitution after fraud (as here) you had to pay back the original amount plus only one fifth (Leviticus 6:5; Numbers 5:7).

Word List

2	<i>Zacchaeus</i>	Hebrew name meaning 'pure' or 'righteous'
	<i>chief tax collector</i>	Probably head of the local taxation department
4	<i>running (and climbing)</i>	Very undignified for Jewish man
	<i>sycamore-fig tree</i>	Very closely related to the mulberry tree, with spreading branches easy to climb
5	<i>I must stay</i>	A strong expression
9	<i>son of Abraham</i>	A true Jew who follows the faith of Abraham
10	<i>lost</i>	In the wrong place (Luke 15:4,8,32)

Bible Connections

7	<i>guest of a 'sinner'</i>	<i>see also</i> Matthew 9:11
8	<i>Law required – for violent theft - four times</i>	<i>see</i> Ex 22:1
	<i>- for voluntary restitution original - one fifth</i>	Lev 6:5; Numbers 5:7
10	<i>seek and save the lost</i>	<i>see</i> Isaiah 53:11; John 1:29; 3:17

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 1 Why was he 'passing through' (before a 15 mile hike)?
What does Zacchaeus mean?
- 3 What does the emphasis 'chief' and 'wealthy' mean?
Why did he not employ the force of the Roman Legions?
- 4 Why did he want to see Jesus so desperately?
- 5 How did Jesus notice him?
How did he know his name?
Why did He say 'immediately'?
Why 'must' He stay with Zacchaeus?
- 6 Why did he welcome him 'gladly'?
- 7 Who were 'all the people'?
What was the problem with a sinner's house?
- 8 Why did he stand up?
Why did he address the Lord not the 'mutterers'?
Why give a half of his possessions to the poor.
Why pay back four times those he had cheated
- 9 What did he /they all understand by 'salvation'
Why his house and not just him?
- 10 Why does He refer to himself as the 'son of man'

What surprises or confuses you?

How does this very rich, cheat enter the Kingdom? (c.f. 18:25)

2) The Context

a) surrounding passage,

- 5 Immediately (18:42)
- 7 All the people (18:43)
Sinner c.f. tax collector (18:13)
The poor (18:22)
- 9 Who then can be saved? (18:26)
The humble are exalted. (18:14)

b) individual book,

- 2 Zacchaeus is a derivative of 'Zechariah' (1:5)
Tax collector c.f. Levi (3:13; 5:27)
- 5 The prompting of the Spirit (8:45,46)
- 7 Murmur / mutter (RSV) Pharisees and Scribes (5:30; 15:2)
- 8 the Lord c.f. referring to God (4:8,12; 5:17; 10:2; 13:55)

- The Lord said to my Lord (20:42; Ps 110:1)
 9 salvation (1:69,71,77; 2:30; 3:6)
 10 Son of man title used here in connection with 2nd coming (17:24, 26, 30; 18:8)
 The lost – sheep, coin, son (15:3-32)

c) whole Bible,

- 1 Jericho – the cursed city (Josh 6:26)
 4 Everyone who is thirsty come to the waters and drink. (John 7:37)
 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. (Matthew 5:6)
 5 Today, if you hear his voice... (Hebrews 3:7)
 You were chosen before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:4)
 6 You are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8,9)
 9 Son of Abraham – those with faith in Jesus (Rom 4:16)
 ‘House’ salvation (Acts 16:15,31)

d) Bible story

See Study 1

LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?
- 1 He was not going to stay in this cursed city (c.f. ‘by pass meadow’ in Pilgrims progress)
 “Zacchaeus’ means pure / righteousness.
 3 The emphasis means he was ‘the low of the low’
 Why did he not employ them was that he was not thinking of himself(?)
 4 He want to see Jesus because like the blind man he was believing
 5 Jesus noticed him by hearing or by the Holy Spirit.
 He seems to have known his name.
 ‘Immediately’ emphasises that salvation comes NOW.
 He must stay means that it was a command!
 6 ‘Gladness’ is the faithful response to grace.
 7 ‘All the people’ were those who were praising God.
 Entering a sinner’s house made you unclean.
 8 He stood up as a sign of respect(?)
 He addressed the Lord as he only had eyes for Him.
 It was a sign of his commitment
 Four times was the maximum repayment to another(?)
 9 Salvation’ meant entering God’s Kingdom.

His house because they too were included in salvation.

10 *The 'Son of Man' underlines He would return for His people*

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

This very rich cheat enters the Kingdom as all do by becoming the 'lowest' (c.f. 18:14, 25)

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

Jesus was passing through Jericho. There, a wealthy chief tax collector called Zacchaeus was desperate to see Jesus, so he ran on ahead, climbed a tree and waited for him. (1-4)

Jesus, when he saw him, commanded him to come down saying that he had to stay at his house today. So, Z. came down and welcomed him. The people muttered that Jesus had gone to be the guest of a sinner (5-7)

Z. promised Jesus that he would give half of his possessions to the poor and he would repay those he had cheated, four times. (8)

Jesus responded that he was saved and a child of Abraham for the son of man came to seek and save that which was lost. (9, 10)

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

Jesus came to save those who are strangers from God but who repent, like Zaccheus

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

The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

9 *God wills to retrieve his family; the sons of Abraham..*

b) His grace?

10 *God seeks and saves the lost.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

- 1 *Jesus is passing through so if today if you hear his voice, call out.*
- 5 *Jesus notices those who seek Him.*
- 6 *When Jesus calls, people respond.*
- 9 *Jesus acknowledges His people, immediately.*

2) What should I do?

- 2 *Note - however bad you are / have been, Jesus may welcome you.*
- 4 *Do not let any obstacle stop you from seeing Jesus.*
- 6 *Obey Jesus, immediately and gladly.*
- 7 *Do not judge those who Jesus accepts.*
- 8 *Respond to Jesus - ignore all others.*
- 10 *Note - If you are 'lost', Jesus is seeking you.*

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'**

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