

HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

Luke 4³¹ – 6¹¹
Leader's Guide

Hearing the Word Luke 4:31-6:11 Leader's Guide

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Nigel Barge, December 2011

Scripture Quotations taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION
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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
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. Exodus is mainly narrative (story), the most common type. To approach narrative correctly we need to keep in mind the following principles.

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 he wrote 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)

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 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: 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) the prophecy about Jesus by Simeon (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). This promise was 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
1:32 called Son of the Most High
1:43 Mary mother of 'my Lord'
2:11 Saviour who is Christ the Lord
2:49 in 'His Father's house'
3:22 God says 'you are my Son';
4:34 The Holy one of God

4:41 the Son of God
5:8 the Holy presence
5:13 able to cleanse an individual
5:20 a forgiver of sin
5:32 (righteous one) calling sinners to repentance
5:34 the bridegroom

Jesus drives out an evil spirit

Background information

From 4:14 to 9:50, Luke gives us an account of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Much of this information is also given in Matthew and Mark. Luke begins his account of Jesus' mission with some miracles of healing and a preaching tour.

The expression "a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon" is nowhere explained. The Bible says little about demon possession before or after the incarnation, but much during Jesus' ministry. In Scripture then this phenomenon is part of the conflict between Jesus, who came to destroy the works of the devil (I John 3:8), and evil.

Word List

31 <i>Galilee</i>	North Palestine; bordered on East by River Jordan and the Sea of Galilee
31 <i>Capernaum</i>	20 miles from Nazareth, down on NW shore of Sea of Galilee, near where river Jordan runs into it
<i>Sabbath</i>	Seventh day, Jewish day of rest, running from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday
<i>Synagogue</i>	Jewish place of meeting for worship in a locality- from a Greek verb meaning <i>to gather together</i>
33 <i>demon/evil spirit</i>	<i>evil</i> means <i>unclean</i> in the Greek
34 <i>Holy One of God</i>	Unusual title, stresses thought of consecration to God's service
35 <i>be quiet</i>	Literally "be muzzled"

Bible connections

<i>see also</i>	Mark 1:21-28
32,36 <i>amazed at Jesus' teaching</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 7:28-29
33-34 <i>demon shouting 'I know who you are'</i>	<i>see</i> James 2:19
34,37 <i>Holy One of God</i>	<i>see</i> Mark 1:24; John 6:69
35 <i>Jesus' work is to destroy the works of the devil.</i>	<i>see</i> 1 John 3:8

LOOK

1) The Text

- What questions does it raise?

31 Why did he go back 20 miles downhill to Capernaum?
 Why did he begin on the Sabbath?

32 What does 'have authority' mean?
 Why was it his message and not him personally?

33 What was the man doing in the synagogue?

34 Why did he ask if Jesus had come to destroy them?
 What did he mean 'Holy One of God'?
 How did he know who Jesus was?

35 Why did Jesus tell him to be quiet?
 Why did the demon not injure the man?

36 Why did it amaze them?
 What was the news that spread about Jesus?

b) What surprises you or catches your eye?
Jesus told the man to be quiet. Did he not want people to know?

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passages

34 The Father had said to Jesus 'you are my Son' 3:22
 Jesus had just said that he was the anointed one 4:18

b) The Individual book

31 Is this Jesus wiping dust of Nazareth from his feet 10:11
 34 Mary was told Jesus was the 'Son of the Most High' 1:32

c) The Whole Bible

34 The demons believe - and shudder! James 2:19
 35 cf Jesus tells Satan to get behind him Matthew 16:23

The reason the son of God appeared was to destroy
 the works of the Devil 1 John 3:8
 man not hurt cf A bruised reed not broken Isaiah 42:3

36 All authority is given to Jesus Matthew 28:13
 Jesus' words & deeds happen together & match James 2:18

d) The 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) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?

31 *He went back because of the previous good response there* v23
It was his custom to go to synagogue on the Sabbath v16

32 'Have authority' means hearers knew he had the power to back up his words.
His 'Word' ('logos' cf John 1:1) was where the authority lay

33 *The demon had not shown itself before but did so in Jesus' presence.*

34 *He asked if Jesus had come to destroy them because he knew that was the case.*
'Holy One of God' meant Messiah, Son of God
The devil recognises Jesus – God the Son

35 *Jesus was not yet ready to publicly acknowledge his identity*
Jesus was in control and did not permit it.

36 *They were amazed by the authority of his Words and the power of his actions*
He spoke with authority and evil spirits obeyed Him.

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

He silenced the evil spirits. They were trying to expose him and hurry him into his work. It was not his time to be revealed. He needed first to preach the context of the Kingdom; the King had yet to be crowned

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

Jesus teaches with authority and power, setting prisoners to Satan free. The demons recognised him as the Son of God but he forbade them to force his hand by telling this to others.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *The authority of Jesus' words of teaching matched His actions as He expelled demons.*

2) Which verse best sums up the passage's message?

KV *What is this teaching? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits and they come out (36b)*

3) How do you think it does this?

The incident begins and ends with the amazement of the crowd at His authority in word and deed

LIVE

1) What does the passage show about God?

a) His nature and character

36 *God/Jesus holds all authority.
God's Word is irresistible.*

b) His grace

33 *He delivered the man without request or payment.*

35 *He did not harm the 'bruised reed'.*

d) Jesus / his salvation

33 *Jesus teaching has authority*

34 *Jesus is 'the Holy One of God'.*

35 *Jesus' intention was to destroy the works of the devil.*

36 *Jesus has authority and power over evil*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

31 Note - *Jesus goes where he is received and welcomed.*

Note The Sabbath was a special time for teaching.

33 Note - *The Devil can be active among the church.*

34 Note - *Evil spirits have collective identity – 'us'.*

Be assured - Evil spirits respond to the presence of Jesus.

Be confident - Evil spirits acknowledge Jesus' authority.

Be aware - Evil spirits understand their fate – destruction.

35 Note - *There is no 'love lost' between Jesus and evil spirits! .*

Note - Evil spirits obey Jesus' Word without question.

36 *Be amazed at / recognise Jesus' authority over evil.*

Note - People discern God's authority.

37 Note - *When the power of Jesus is present there is little need to advertise!*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Jesus heals many

Background and

Jesus continues with miracles of healing and teaching the people. This is Luke's first mention of 'the kingdom of God', which was to become the favourite theme in Jesus' teaching. Preaching this good news is Jesus' priority.

Word List

38	<i>Simon</i>	one of the 12 disciples <i>see</i> 5:1-11; 6:13
	<i>high fever</i>	a medical term
41	<i>Son of God</i>	expression of Jesus' unique relationship to Yahweh
	<i>Christ</i>	means Messiah - literally 'Anointed One'
43	<i>Kingdom of God</i>	same as the kingdom of heaven <i>c.f.</i> Matthew 5:3; Luke 6:20
44	<i>Judea</i>	or 'the land of the Jews'

Bible Connections

	<i>see also</i>	Matthew 8:14-17; Mark 1:29-38
42	<i>daybreak...solitary place</i>	<i>see also</i> Mark 1:35; 6:46; Matthew 14:13,23; Luke 6:12; 9:28

LOOK

1) The Text

a) What questions does it raise?

38 *What had he been doing in the synagogue?*
Why did he go to Simon's house?
Why was his mother in law in his house?
Why did they ask him to help her?

39 *Why did he bend over her?*
Why did he rebuke the fever?
Why did she begin to wait on them?

40 *Why did they bring the sick when the sun was setting?*

41 *Why did he not let the demons speak?*

42 *Why did he go to a solitary place?*
Why did they want him to stay?
What was the good news of the kingdom?

b) What surprises you or catches your eye?

43 *Jesus said he was sent 'to preach', not give his life for the sin of the world.*

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passages

41 *Jesus would be called the Son of the Most High.* 1:32
Demons shouted 'you are the holy one of God' and He sternly told them to be quiet. 4:35

43 *Jesus said He had been anointed to preach.* 4:35

b) The Individual book

42 *He went up a hillside to pray.* 6:12

c) The Whole Bible

40 *Jesus healed the sick* Matthew 8:17
It is all by God's grace, we don't deserve it Ephesians 2:8

41 *Peter acknowledges Jesus is the Christ* Matthew 16:16

42 *No-one keeps Him from doing the Father's work* Matthew 16:22

d) The Bible story

See study 1

LEARN

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

38 He had been teaching on the Sabbath.

He went in response to an invitation (?)

A mother in law would be one of the least significant people in a Jewish man's life!

They asked him to help because they believed he was able to heal /he had 'authority and power'. (v36)

39 He bent over her to demonstrate/reassure her of his attention.

He rebuked the fever as it was caused by a person / a demon(?)

She did it because she was completely well / it was her job

40 They weren't allowed to carry burdens on the Sabbath, but the Sabbath had ended at sunset so they could come.

41 He did not let the demon speak because he did not want everyone to know that he was the Christ.

42 He went to a solitary place to pray

They wanted him to stay for the blessings, not because of belief that he was the Christ. (They had not been allowed to know!)

Good news of the kingdom is that God will save from death those who repent of their sin, and be their King.

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

Preaching was the foundation for his Death; the three years' ministry prepared for His death; it made known the heart of the one whom we would come to know through the sacrifice of Jesus.

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

Jesus had been teaching and delivering from evil spirits on a Sabbath. He was invited to Simon's house where he found his mother-in-law fevered, and at their request, he healed her. News spread and many brought their sick to him after sundown. Demons tried to expose Jesus' identity as Messiah, but he wouldn't have it. Though the people tried to keep him for more ministry, He knew, through prayer, that he had to continue for now to preach and teach, elsewhere.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP The benefit of God's presence must not distract from proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom of God.

2) Which verse best sums up the passage's message? **v 43**

KV *I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well, for I was sent for this purpose.*

LIVE

1) What does the passage show about God?

a) His nature and character

41 *God is Lord of all the earth – demons included!*

43 *God's Word of the Kingdom of God must be shared*

b) His grace

40 *He responded to all in need, irrespective of who they were and what they had wrong, and treated them all in the same way.*

c) Jesus / his salvation

42 *Jesus, God the Son, needed to be alone and quiet with the Father.*

43 *Jesus performed the miracles but His focus was on proclaiming the Kingdom.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

38 *Appeal to Jesus - he responds to calls for help.*

40 *Be confident of Jesus's compassion for your need. c*

41 *Note Demons acknowledge and submit Jesus' authority.*

Note - God's timing is crucial. (Jesus wasn't revealed as Messiah yet).

42 *Note - Day break is a good time to meet with the Father.*

43 *Note - Compassion and miracles without preaching miss the point of Jesus mission.*

Do not be distracted from presenting the Gospel of the Kingdom of God

44 *Note – Jesus' priority of preaching to the Jews*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Calling of the first disciples

Background

The crowds are still following Jesus and he continues to teach them. Fishing on the Sea of Galilee was usually done at night in small boats using large drag-nets. During the day the fishermen would clean and repair their nets.

Word List

1 *Lake of Gennesaret* also known as Sea of Galilee or Sea of Tiberias. 13 miles long by 7 miles wide and 680 feet below sea level. Gennesaret is also the name for a fertile plain on the west side of the lake.

Gennesaret word derived from 'harp' (because the lake is roughly harp-shaped) or 'garden of riches'.

3 *sat down* the customary position for teaching

5 *Master* term denoting anyone in authority

8 *Lord* 'kurios' was a term Luke used of God (4:18)

10 *don't be afraid* 'stop being fearful' rather than 'don't get scared'

catch men The greek verb *zogreō* means 'take alive'; it is usually used of taking a person prisoner in war so sparing their life. It can also mean 'to restore to life and strength, revive'

The tense shows a habitual practice is in mind.

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:40-42

1 *Word of God* *see* Mark 4:14; Hebrews 4:12

5 *fishing all night and catching nothing- see also John 21:3*

8 *'Go away...I am a sinful man.'* *c.f.* Abraham, Job, Isaiah, Israel. Genesis 18:27; Job 42:6; Isaiah 6:5; Exodus 20:19

LOOK

1) The Text

a) What questions does it raise?

1 *Why 'Gennesaret' and not Galilee?*
What was the word of God?

2 *Why two boats?*

3 *Why Simon's boat?*
Why did Jesus sit down?

4 *Why after he had finished speaking?*
Why into the deep water?

5 *Why did Simon question Jesus?*
Why did he lower his nets at Jesus' say so?

6 *Who were 'they'?*

7 *Why 'partners' not James and John (see v10)?*

8 *Why did he fall at Jesus' knees? Why did he feel sinful?*

9 *Why were they astonished?*

10 *Why are James and John mentioned?*
How would he 'catch men'?
Why might they have been afraid?
Who is 'you'?
Why did he not speak about sin?

11 *Why did they follow Jesus?*

b) What surprises you or catches your eye?
What was the point of this miracle?

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passages

3 *He already knew Simon and had healed his mother in law.* 4:38

b) The Individual book

4 *Simon (4:38) whom Jesus named Peter* 6:14

8 *kurios is the word translated 'Lord'.* 3:4; 4:8,18

Recognising our sinful nature and unworthiness 18:9-14

9 *Do not be afraid - good news!* 2:10;12:7,32

11 *Their call was a precursor to mission.* 9:1ff

Cost of discipleship 14:25ff; 18:28-29

c) The Whole Bible

1 *Word of God* Deuteronomy 8:3; Jeremiah 1:4,5; John 1:1

6	<i>The Word is effective</i>	<i>Isaiah 55:11</i>
8	<i>Fell at Jesus' feet</i>	<i>Revelation 1:17</i>
	<i>Awareness of sinfulness</i>	<i>Genesis 18:27; Job 42:16; Isaiah 6:5</i>

d) The Bible story

See study 1

LEARN

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

- 1 *Using 'Gennesaret', Luke underlines the 'fruitfulness' of this story / the Word of God.*
The Word of God is that which proceeds from His mouth.
- 2 *The two boats belonging to Peter & Andrew, and James and John.*
- 3 *He knew Simon and had been to his house.*
He sat down as a sign that he was about to teach.
- 4 *When He had finished speaking, it was time for application*
It was not normal fishing, because fish are usually caught in shallow water.
- 5 *He questioned because the command made no sense.*
He lowered his nets because of Jesus' authority.
- 6 *'They' were Simon and Andrew.*
'Partners' because the focus, here, is all on Peter and his reaction.
- 7 *He was awestruck and Jesus was sitting in the boat(?)*
He felt sinful as he was in the presence of God.
- 9 *There should have been no fish in the net; it was a creative act.*
- 10 *James and John are mentioned as they also became disciples.*
He would 'catch men' by preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God. (4:43)
They might have feared the unknown.
'You' is Peter, James and John.
He did not speak about sin as that was another lesson.
- 11 *They followed because they saw that God was with Him and in Him.*

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

The point of this miracle was to demonstrate the power of the Word of God to Peter within his work place, and then to enlist him to proclaim it.

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

Within the context of proclaiming the Kingdom, Jesus enters Peter's work place and enables him supernaturally to catch an abundance of fish. He then calls

Peter to join him in His mission with the promise that he will have a harvest of the souls of men.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP The power of God will enable His followers to share their faith in Jesus.

2) Which verse best sums up the passage's message? **v 8**

KV Don't be afraid. From now on you will catch men

LIVE

1) What does the passage show about God?

a) His nature and character

4 God's Word is creative.

8 God's holy presence, makes humanity aware of their sin.

10 God calls his followers to catch men / share their faith in Jesus..

b) His grace

6 The catch was not a function of human skill; it was a divine gift.

6 The catch was abundant – much more than they might expect.

c) Jesus / his salvation

2 Jesus' words were the Word of God.

4 The Word is the means of 'catching' (i.e. saving men)

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

4 'Crowd around' Jesus and listen to His Word.

4,5 Believe in Jesus' Word even if it makes you look silly.

8 Be aware of your sin and bow before the Lord Jesus Christ.

10 Do not let fear hinder you in sharing the Good News of Jesus.

11 Be assured - God's Word / call is 'effectual' – it always works.

Note - Jesus is worth all we have.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Healing a leper

Background

In Biblical times 'leprosy' was the name given to a number of skin diseases, some curable and some not. In its worst form it was disfiguring and fatal. The only defence against it was quarantine. Sufferers were forbidden to approach other people and had to call out 'Unclean' to prevent accidental contact. *see* Leviticus 13:45-46 The psychological effects were as serious as the physical.

Word List

12	<i>leprosy</i>	skin disease
	<i>covered with</i>	an advance state of the disease
	<i>make me clean</i>	heal me (Leprosy was a 'dirty' disease. It defiled.)
14	<i>go...priest</i>	The priest acted as a kind of health inspector.
	<i>sacrifices</i>	offered after priest was satisfied. <i>see</i> Leviticus 14:2-32
	<i>Moses commanded</i>	a way of referring to the Law
	<i>testimony to them</i>	proof that he had been healed

Bible Connections

	<i>see also</i>	Matthew 8:2-4 and Mark 1:40-44
13	<i>Jesus' compassion</i>	Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; James 5:11
14	<i>'Don't tell anyone.'</i>	also said to demoniacs in 4:35,41
	<i>leprosy in Old Testament</i>	<i>see</i> Leviticus 14:2-32
16	<i>Jesus praying</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 3:21; Mark 1:35; Mark 6:46; Luke 4:42; 6:12; 9:18,28; 11:1

LOOK

1) The Text

a) What questions does it raise?

12 *Why 'one of the towns'?*

Why face to the ground?

What did he mean by 'Lord'?

13 *What did Jesus mean – 'I am willing'?*

Why did Jesus touch him?

Why was he willing?

Why did he command 'be clean'?

14 *What did he order him not to tell?*

What was the testimony?

16 *Why the 'but'?*

Why did Jesus often withdraw to pray?

b) What surprises you or catches your eye?

The man asked not to be healed but to be clean

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passages

12 *unspecific about which town*
'Lord'

*cf 4:14,31
3:4; 4:8,18; 5:8*

15 *sick brought to Jesus*

4:40

16 *withdraw to pray*

6:12

b) The Individual book

12 *Healing of leprosy is a sign of the Kingdom.* 7:22
minimal faith 17:6

13 *God is willing to embrace us in our sin.* 15:20
Ask and it shall be given. 11:9

14 *c.f. Another patient was told to tell what God had done.* 8:39

c) The Whole Bible

12 *God is not willing to see any perish.* 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:3,4
At the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Philippians 2:9,10

13 *Jesus became 'unclean'.* 2 Corinthians 5:21
If the Lord is willing. C.f. Daniel 3:17,18

Gethsemane prayer: 'Not my will be done.' Luke 22:42
Cleanse from all sin. 1 John 1:9

14 He is not ashamed to be called our God.
16 He only did what he saw the Father doing.

Hebrews 11:16

John 5:19

d) The Bible story

See study 1

LEARN

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

12 ‘One of the towns’ means the lesson has general application (?)

‘Face to the ground’ is an attitude of complete surrender.

‘Lord’ was a divine name.

13 Jesus meant He accepted him just as he was.

Jesus touched him to demonstrate his acceptance.

He was addressing the disease, the virus that caused leprosy.

14 He ordered him not to tell that a) he was ‘Lord’ – c.f. 3:35; 4:41

and b) he had healed him – crowd control!

The testimony was to the world at large – the man is acceptable.

16 The ‘but’ shows that the healing was not the main thing; Jesus needed

to keep close to the Father.

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

The primary effect of the disease was total social exclusion.

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

A leper happened on Jesus. Having said he was willing to ‘clean’ him, Jesus heals him. Forbidding publicity about who he was or what he had done, he tells the man to go through the proper channels for re-entry into society. Despite this, news spread about what he had done. Though the crowds pressed him, he often completely withdrew to pray

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP Jesus is willing to become unclean in order to cleanse those who came to him in faith.

2) Which verse best sums up the passage’s message?

KV And he stretched out his hand and touched him saying “I am willing. Be clean” (13)

3) How does it do this?

It shows the attitude and the power of Jesus

LIVE

1) What does the passage show about God?

a) His nature and character

13 God is willing to embrace us in our sin.

God is willing and able to cleanse and forgive our sin.

b) His grace

13 There is no requirement or payment needed for the gift of cleansing.

c) Jesus / his salvation

13 Jesus cleanses us from all our sins.

14 Jesus fulfils the Law.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

12 Submit yourself totally to Jesus.

Note - Even requests from the 'weak' will be granted.

13 Expect that miracles may happen 'immediately'.

Rejoice in the gift of God's cleansing.

14 Obey Jesus' instruction to you, however 'inconvenient'.

15 Note – real news about Jesus spreads!

16 Make time for prayer, however busy you are.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Jesus heals a paralytic

Background and

This healing miracle is recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus had quite a reputation by now; the Pharisees were coming from a distance, (Judea and Jerusalem) not just locally, to hear him. Jesus works the miracle and shows that he has authority on earth to forgive sins.

Word List

17 <i>Pharisees</i>	unofficial religious leaders of the day with great emphasis on keeping the law and their many human additions to it, allegedly to explain it.
<i>Teachers of Law (scribes)</i>	those who studied, taught, interpreted the Law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible
<i>Judea</i>	south of the country
<i>Jerusalem</i>	capital city, with the Temple
18 <i>some men</i>	Mark tells us there were four.
19 <i>roof</i>	Palestinian houses then had flat roofs, often with external staircases.
20 <i>sins</i>	wrongdoing, violating God's law
21 <i>blasphemy</i>	disrespect for God, insulting his honour
24 <i>Son of Man</i>	a term Jesus often used of himself (c.f. Dan 7:13f)

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 9:2-8 and Mark 2:3-12

20 <i>faith of friends</i>	<i>see</i> Luke 7:9f; 1 Cor 7:14
21 <i>Who is this...?</i>	<i>see also</i> 7:49; 8:25; 9:9,18,20; 19:3
21 <i>Who forgives sins?</i>	<i>see</i> Isaiah 43:25
24 <i>Son of man</i>	<i>see</i> Daniel 7:13ff

LOOK

1) The Text

a) What questions does it raise?

17 *Why had the teachers come from all around?*

Why does he mention that the power of the Lord was present?

What happened when power was not present to heal the sick?

18 *What were the men trying to do?*

20 *Whose faith did he see? Why did he call him 'friend'?*

What had that to do with forgiveness?

21 *What was the blasphemy?*

Why did they ask the question 'who can forgive sins but God?'

22 *How did Jesus know what they were thinking?*

23 *Why did he compare these two things – saying and doing?*

24 *Why does he call himself 'Son of Man' here?*

Why did he send him home?

25 *What did he praise God for?*

26 *Why were they amazed?*

Why were they awe-ful?

What remarkable things had they seen?

b) What surprises you or catches your eye?

He saw 'their' faith and forgave the sins of the man.

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passages

20 *acknowledged as God* 4:34,41; 5:8,12

b) The Individual book

19 *persistence in bringing requests to Jesus* 18:1ff)

20 *friend* 7:34; 11:5; 14:10

forgiveness of sins 7:47-49; 11:)

c) The Whole Bible

17 *He could not heal many.* Mark 6:5

20 *I call you 'friends'.* John 15:15

saved by faith Ephesians 2:8,9

sickness not caused by sin John 9:3

22 *Jesus knew what they were thinking.* Mark 2:8

24 *hearing and obeying the Word* Hebrews 3:7

Pick up your mat. John 5:8

sickness thought to be due to sin John 9:2

e) The Bible Story

See study 1.

LEARN

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

17 *The teachers came because they had heard of Jesus.*
When the power was not present he could not heal the sick.
Luke says power was present to show a general attitude of faith.

18 *The men were trying to present their friend to Jesus.*

20 *He saw all of their collective faith including the lame man's.*
Jesus called him 'friend' to acknowledge his acceptance of him.
God's acceptance of us by faith means we are forgiven.

21 *Blasphemy was the insulting of the name of God.*
They asked because what he said implied a claim to be God.

22 *He knew by their faces and actions.*

23 *He compared them because saying is much easier than doing.*

24 *He called himself 'Son of Man' as an oblique claim to be Messiah.*
He sent him home to spread the news.

25 *He praised God for his forgiveness and healing.*

26 *They were amazed at the authority of Jesus over sin and sickness.*
They were awe-ful because they'd seen power over sin and sickness.

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

If power was present to heal, the general response to Jesus was faith. The mission was an expression of corporate faith of all concerned. Jesus addressed the paralysed man as 'friend' acknowledging his faith – to be saved physically and spiritually. Jesus' reply makes it explicit as a public demonstration. The Son of Man saves.

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

Jesus, within an atmosphere of faith, is presented with a faithful man who is lame. He does not heal him straight away but announces the forgiveness of his sin, thus making a claim to be divine. When challenged he heals the man as well, as proof of his claim. The response is awe and praise.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP Jesus, as God the Son, can address man's spiritual needs of God's forgiveness of sin, as well as physical needs.

2) Which verse best sums up the passage's message?

KV "But that you might know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the man who was paralysed, "I say to you rise, pick up your bed and go home." (24)

LIVE

1) What does the passage show about God?

- a) His nature and character
- 20 God responds to faith
God is forgiving
- 26 God's acts of mercy are worthy of praise
- b) His grace

20 God responded without being paid or even asked!

- c) Jesus / his salvation
- 24 Jesus' death commands healing of body and soul; the greater healing is that of the soul.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

- 19 Be persistent in bringing requests to Jesus
Note - Prayer / requests do not require 'talking'!
Present friends / situations to Jesus
- 20 Note - Faith in Jesus provides the context for God to forgive sin
- 22 God sees the thoughts of our hearts
- 24 Obey the Word of God, if you hear Him
- 24 Believe in Jesus - the forgiver of sins
- 26 Worship Jesus – the forgiver of sins
Praise God for his amazing deeds .

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

The calling of Levi

Background

The Romans taxed people by farming out the taxing rights to the highest bidder. Many charged more tax than was strictly necessary and pocketed the extra, so they were often rich men. Everyone heartily disliked tax collectors as collaborators with the Romans and as extortioners. Levi probably collected toll or customs duties rather than poll tax or the like.

Word List

27 <i>Levi</i>	also known as Matthew see Matthew 9:9 (<i>Matthew</i> means: 'Gift of God /Yahweh')
tax collector	not allowed in local synagogue or Temple; classed with robbers and murderers.
Levites	Tribe set apart to serve in the Temple (Numbers 18:21ff; Deuteronomy 18:1-4)
30 'sinners'	In the Pharisee's eyes, anyone who was ceremonially unclean was a sinner.
32 <i>repentance</i>	The Greek verb <i>metanoeo</i> used to mean: to perceive afterwards; to change one's purpose or conviction; to regret; to repent. But NT usage is heavily influenced by the OT: not just feeling sorry, but a total change of the motivation and direction of one's life; to turn round, to convert. The related noun <i>metanoia</i> is not just a change of mind on reflection, repentance, but conversion.

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 9:9-13 and Mark 2:14-17

27 <i>Follow me'</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 4:19
29 <i>banquet</i>	for Luke's dinner scenes, <i>see also</i> 7:36; 9:12ff; 10:38ff; 11:37; 14:1; 24:30,41ff
32 <i>repentance</i>	Luke develops this theme more fully than Matthew or Mark. <i>see</i> Luke 3:3,8; 10:13; 11:32; 13:3,5; 15:7,10; 16:30; 17:3,4; 24:47 <i>see also</i> John 3:17

LOOK

1) The Text

a) What questions does it raise?

27 *What was this after?*
Where did he go out from?
What was the significance of the name ‘Levi’?
What was his ‘tax booth’?
Where was Jesus going? What did he mean by ‘follow me’?

28 *What was ‘everything’? (He still had his house and the means to put on a banquet)*

29 *Who were ‘the others’?*

30 *Why did they complain to his disciples?*
What was wrong with eating and drinking with ‘sinners’ (30)?

31 *How was Levi ‘sick’?*

32 *Who was righteous and did not need to repent?*

b) What surprises you or catches your eye?

He could still throw a banquet after ‘he had left everything’.

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passages

28 *The fishermen ‘left everything and followed him’.* 5:11

30 *Jesus made himself unclean by touching the leper.* 5:13

32 *Sinners are aware, cleansed, forgiven.* 5:8, 13, 20

b) The Individual book

27 *the tax collector - right with God cf the Pharisee 18:9-14*
Zacchaeus, described as son of Abraham 19:1ff
‘Follow me’ 9:23, 57-62; 14:27; 18:22
The Lord takes precedence over all things 9:57ff

29 *banquets* 7:36; 9:12ff; 10:38ff; 11:3; 14:1;
19:7; 22:14; 24:30, 41ff

30 *confident of their own righteousness* 18:9

32 *repentance* 3:3, 8; 10:13; 11:32; 13:3, 5; 15:7, 10;
16:30; 17:3, 4; 24:47

c) The Whole Bible

27 *Today, if you hear his voice* Hebrews 3:7; Psalm 95:7-11

	<i>the call of God</i>	<i>Romans 8:30</i>
	<i>dead in trespasses and sin</i>	<i>Ephesians 2:1f</i>
30	<i>Jesus sharing with sinners</i>	<i>Philippians 2:6-8</i>
31	<i>eating/ drinking = acceptance</i>	<i>'foreigner' Exodus 12:4</i>
	<i>not eating with those who do not live or act according to their profession of faith</i>	<i>1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 John 10</i>
32	<i>No one is without sin.</i>	<i>John 8:7; Romans 3:23</i>
	<i>Sinners can be 'born again'.</i>	<i>John 3:1ff</i>

d) The Bible Story

See study 1.

LEARN

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

27 *It was after showing that he had authority to forgive sins.*

He went out from the house where he had been teaching; It seems to have happened on the same day – related incidents. 5:17-39

'Levi' was the tribe of the priests. His new name, Matthew, Means 'gift of God'.

His 'tax booth' was the place of doing business.

'Follow me' meant come with me / put me first.

28 *'Everything' meant all his means of income /tax collection*

29 *'the others' were the entourage.*

30 *They spoke to the disciples for they were in 'awe' of Jesus.*

26 *Eating with 'sinners' was a sign of accepting them.*

31 *Levi 'sick' in that he knew his need of Jesus and his forgiveness*

32 *Jesus alone was without sin/righteous and did not need to repent?*

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

'Left everything' meant leaving his occupation: tax collecting)

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

Having forgiven the sins of the paralytic, Jesus calls the ostracized tax collector. To the self-righteous, trusting in their own righteousness, Jesus points out that he only calls 'sinners'.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP Jesus instantly forgives the sins of any who admit their need and follow him

2) Which verse best sums up the passage's message?

KV I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance (32).

LIVE

1) What does the passage show about God?

a) His nature and character

27 God's call comes to us where we are – in our trespasses and sin.

b) His grace

28 God receives us and the only thing we 'give' is obedience to His call.

c) Jesus / his salvation

28 Jesus call (His Word) is always obeyed - by everyone/thing!

29 Jesus is found amongst the 'roughest' of company.

32 Jesus welcomes the repentant sinners.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

27 Heed the call of Jesus – 'Follow me'

28 Note - The Lord takes precedence over 'everything'

Note - The call of God does not require explanation / qualification

29 Note - A convert to Jesus desires to share Him with others

Take the Gospel out of synagogues/church, to where people are

Be proud of Jesus and share Him with others.

30 Don't look at 'righteousness' in yourself or others; look at God's r.

Welcome those who Jesus welcomes.

31 Note - Jesus enlists the 'sick'; those who know they need Him.

32 Repent of your sin, before Jesus.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Jesus questioned about fasting

Background

The Law prescribed only one fast - on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29-34) but fasting was practised by John the Baptist's followers and by the followers of the Pharisees. Jesus' disciples were too cheerful for the Pharisees!

Word List

33 <i>pray</i>	It probably refers to set prayers at fixed hours
34 <i>taken from them</i>	(Greek = <i>aparthe</i>) suggests violent separation. It refers to Jesus' death on the cross?
36 <i>parable</i>	story or short, pithy saying, making a point in a round-about way
37 <i>wineskins</i>	usually goatskin, flesh and bones removed and skin left intact. When new, the supple, elastic skin could expand as the new wine fermented, but as it aged it became dry, hard and rigid; everyone knew it could still be reused to hold water, but new wine would burst it.
39 <i>old is better</i>	or 'the old is good' i.e. unwilling to consider the new

Bible Connections

see also Matthew 9:14-17 and Mark 2:18-22

35 *taken from them*

see Luke 9:22

LOOK

1) The Text

- a) What questions does it raise?
 - 33 Who are 'they' who said...?
 - Why did John's disciples fast and pray?
 - Why did the Pharisees fast and pray?
 - Why do they mention John first?
 - What is the criticism with 'eating and drinking'?
 - 34 Who are the bridegroom and guests?
 - When will the bridegroom be removed?
 - Why will they fast after he has gone?
 - 36 What do old and new represent in the parable?
 - What is the point of the parable?
 - 39 What is the old wine?
 - Why do 'they say' it is better?
- b) What surprises you or catches your eye?
Old wine is better.

2) The Context

- a) Surrounding passages
 - 34 Jesus had applied Messianic prophecy to himself in Nazareth 4:18
 - Demons had stated He was 'Holy one of God', 'Son of God' 4:34,41
 - Jesus was confronted by the Pharisees and teachers of the law on:
 - i) his ability to forgive sins v21
 - ii) his 'cleanliness' eating with sinners v30
 - iii) fasting v33
 - iv) the Sabbath 6:7
- b) The Individual book
 - 33 'John's disciples' - Pharisees knew of
 - i) His association with Jesus – cousin 1:36, 39-44
 - ii) His anticipation of the Messiah 3:15-17.
 - 34 Jesus' death c.f. 9:22,43-45; 12:50; 13:32; 17:25; 18:31
- c) The Whole Bible
 - 33 Pharisees focused on Moses' Covenant. Ex 20:4-6, 8-12; 31:16
 - John's disciples were focused on David's covenant, (the last part of the Old Covenant) 2 Chronicles 13:5; 21:7
 - n.b. Successive covenants before Jesus – Adam, Noah, Moses, David were all 'developments', and included in the one 'Old Covenant' Jesus cut a New Covenant Matthew 22:28

	<i>This was a greater covenant, which developed and fulfilled the Old</i>	<i>Jeremiah 31:33; Matthew 5:17</i>
33	<i>They prayed constantly waiting for the Holy Spirit</i>	<i>Acts 1:14</i>
34	<i>Bridegroom is Messiah</i>	<i>John 3:39; Matthew 25:1-11; Isaiah 62:5</i>
35	<i>Jesus was taken away at the ascension></i> <i>(The Spirit of Jesus returned</i>	<i>Acts 1:10</i> <i>John 14:18)</i>
36	<i>new creation</i> <i>the new way – faith expressing itself as love</i> <i>Lord, Lord ...</i> <i>a righteousness that is by faith</i>	<i>2 Corinthians 5:17</i> <i>Galatians 6:5</i> <i>Matthew 7:22</i> <i>Romans 1:17</i>

d) The Bible Story

See study 1.

LEARN

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

33 ‘They’ were the Pharisees and teachers of the Law.

John’s disciples sought to bring in the day of the Messiah.

Pharisees sought to obey the Law completely’.

They mention John first because they knew of his link with Jesus.

The criticism with ‘eating and drinking’ is ritual uncleanness.

34 Jesus is the bridegroom. The guests are Israel.

The bridegroom will be removed at the crucifixion/ resurrection.

They will fast awaiting ‘his return’.

36 ‘Old’ is the Old Covenant, and ‘new’ is the New Covenant.

The point is that the New Covenant will not fit into the Old.

39 Old wine is the practice of the Old Covenant.

They say’ it is better as they prefer the security, certainty and personal activity of the Old, in contrast to the personal impotence in the New, trusting in the work of Jesus alone.

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

‘Old wine’ tastes / feels better; to feel that you are contributing and doing something (c.f. fundraising vs direct giving).

3) Give an overall ‘picture’ of the passage in a few sentences. The Pharisees infer that Jesus’ disciples are inferior to those of their own and John’s. Jesus replies shows that they are fasting to an end (the coming of the Messiah, the fulfilment of the Law). He himself is that end so there is no need for his disciples to strive toward it.

His Parable illustrates that his New Covenant will not fit into the old. They must stop ritual and taste ‘the new wine’- the Kingdom of God’.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP Though people bound to the Law of the Old Covenant prefer it, the New Covenant of Jesus produces and requires new people.

2) Which verse best sums up the passage's message? **v 39**

KV '... no one after drinking old wine desire new, for he says, the old is good'

LIVE

1) What does the passage show about God?

a) His nature and character

34 *God appeared amongst men – the bridegroom.*

b) His grace

34 *People who attend his wedding are guests not customers!*

c) Jesus / his salvation

38 Jesus 'new wine' cannot be confined to the old wine skins of religious ritual

The New Covenant brings no legal religious ritual, just faith in and obedience to 'the Bridegroom'.

2) What should I do?

33 *Beware of trying to form 'coalitions' against Jesus.*

Do not view spiritual discipline as 'work' for God

34 *Note – fasting is not meritorious nor prescribed; neither is it dismissed.*

Note – Ritual has no merit in itself.

36 *Beware – The disciplines of keeping the Old Testament Law must not be applied to the New Covenant*

38 Turn from Old Covenant ways and receive the fulfilment in Jesus.

Enjoy the new wine. Have faith in Jesus and His fulfilment for all things.

39 *Note – Having 'tasted' the Law-keeping and ritual of the Old Covenant, it is very difficult to ignore it and embrace the New Covenant.*

Jesus and the Sabbath

Background information

Opposition to Jesus was mounting up and the Pharisees and the scribes were coming out into the open with their objections. The Pharisees listed thousands of acts prohibited on the Sabbath, in thirty nine categories, of which four were reaping, winnowing, threshing and preparing a meal. Jesus confronted them head on and showed that he is 'Lord of the Sabbath'.

Word List 1

	<i>Sabbath</i>	seventh day of Jewish week; a holy day, day of rest Hebrew root word 'sabat' means 'to cease'. After 6 'days' of creation, God 'rested' on the 7th 'day'.
2	<i>Pharisees</i>	unofficial religious leaders of the day who put great emphasis on keeping the law, plus their thousands of petty additions to it, allegedly to explain it
3	<i>David</i>	the second King of Israel
4	<i>consecrated bread</i>	also known as <i>the shewbread</i> , or the ' <i>bread of the Presence</i> '; made in a special way; on display for one week in the Temple, then eaten, but only by priests.
5	<i>Son of Man</i>	a title Jesus used of himself (c.f. Daniel 7:13f)
6	<i>synagogue</i>	Jewish place of worship
7	<i>shrivelled</i>	Some form of muscular atrophy

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 12:1-14; Mark 2:23-3:6

1 *Sabbath*

Fourth commandment tells us to keep it holy and a day of rest Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15

picking corn

Wayfarers allowed to do this to satisfy their hunger, but only by hand: no sickle. Deuteronomy 23:25

2 *unlawful*

Pharisees defined reaping, threshing, winnowing and preparing food as work, so forbidden.

4 *consecrated*

only to be eaten by priests (Leviticus 24:5-9) but given to David and his men when they were on the run from King Saul 1 Samuel 21:3-6.

7 *healing on Sabbath*:

Pharisees only allowed it if there was danger to life.

LOOK

1) The Text

a) What questions does it raise?

1,6 *Why does Luke mention both incidents?*
1 *Why was Jesus going through the fields?*
Why were the disciples eating the grain?
2 *How did the Pharisees see them?*
What were they doing that was ‘unlawful’?
Does unlawful mean against the Torah or the Talmud (Moses, or the traditions built around the Law that God gave him)?
4 *What was Jesus point about David eating the bread? Was David right or wrong?*
Why mention that David gave it to his companions as well?
5 *Why does he use the term ‘Son of Man’?*
What does ‘Lord of the Sabbath’ imply?
6 *Why was the man with the shrivelled arm there?*
7 *Why are they ‘looking for a reason to accuse him’?*
Why did Jesus walk into their trap?
8 *Why did he ask the man to stand up in front of everyone?*
9 *What was the challenge of the question?*
11 *Why were they furious? What was in their minds?*

b) What surprises you?

Jesus says what David did was unlawful – did he mean that David was right to break the Law. If so, does the comparison with David suggest that his disciples were breaking the Law yet were right to do so?
Is this just about the Sabbath or is it referring to whole Law

2) Is there any help elsewhere in the Bible?

a) The surrounding passages

2 *Pharisees growing discontent* 5:17,21,30
Pharisees confront Jesus re the Sabbath 13:10ff; 14:1ff
8 *Jesus knew what they were thinking* 5:22

b) The book

5 *Divinity implied* 1:17, 32, 43; 2:11,49; 3:22, 49; 4:18,33,41;
5:8,13,20,32,34

c) The Whole Bible

1 *Permission to gather grain by hand* Ex 23:25; Deut 23:25

2	<i>Sabbath as sign of the covenant</i>	<i>Exodus 31:12</i>
3	<i>David ate the bread of the presence</i>	<i>1 Samuel 21:3-6</i>
4	<i>Bread of presence is for priest to eat</i>	<i>Leviticus 24:1-9</i>
6	<i>Sickness and sin</i>	<i>John 9:2</i>

d) The Bible Story

See study 1.

LEARN

a) How would you answer the questions?

1,6 *Luke mentions both to show that Jesus was confronting the Pharisees on the issue of the Sabbath.*
Picking and rubbing the grain was unlawful 'work' as they saw it.

2 *He was out walking; but walking was 'work' if more than 1000 paces!*
Trampling on corn could be regarded as threshing which was also 'work', so unlawful on Sabbath. They were eating the grain because of hunger.
They saw them because Jesus and disciples were the only people out there / doing it.
It was 'unlawful' in that it was against the traditions of men.

4 *Jesus implied that David was right to eat in the circumstances of hunger.*
David was not a 'special case'

5 *Son of man' has divine connotations. (Daniel 7:13)*
'Lord of Sabbath' implies he is above the commandments.

6 *His shrivelled arm should have excluded him.*

7 *They are trying to condemn him because he is inferring he is God.*
Jesus walked into their trap because he wanted to confront them.

8 *He asked the man to stand in front of them to show it was public.*

9 *The opposite of doing good is not doing nothing, it is doing evil.*

11 *They were furious because he had broken their rules with power.*
They discussed how to negate (kill) him.

b) What surprises you?

David was right to break a ritual law elaborating on the 4th commandment (not the other 9). It was given for man's need.

Can you summarise the passage

Jesus was challenged when He and His disciples were openly breaking the human rules about keeping the Sabbath. Having pointed out that David and his companions did so 'in extremis' he pronounced that He was above the Law (i.e. He was God).

On another Sabbath he deliberately and confrontationally healed a man with a withered arm. Healing was doing good, keeping rules was doing evil. The Pharisees and teachers of the Law were outraged and sought to silence Him.

LISTEN

What is the main point of the passage?

MP Jesus, the human, is in fact God the Son who instituted the Commandments.

Which verse best expresses this?

KV 'The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.' (5)

LIVE

1) What does the passage show you about God

- a) His nature and character
- 2 God knows what we are thinking.
- 9 God cares more about what we are (people who trust in Him) rather than what we do (keeping religious/sabbath laws).
- 10 God address His question to all'.
 - b) His grace
 - 1 The disciples did nothing to earn the corn!
 - 10 The man did nothing to deserve/receive his healing but obey Jesus.
 - c) Jesus / His salvation
- 5 Jesus is greater than the Law.

2) What should I do?

- 1 Don't be constrained by man's religious rules.
- 3 Note - Human need takes precedence over religious rules.
- 5 Fix your eyes on Jesus Himself, rather than on religious rules.
- 7 Don't be restricted by the thoughts and rules of religious leaders!
- 9 Note - The choice is always between good and evil, not good & nothing.
- 10 'Stretch out your hand' and receive the blessing of God.
- 11 Note - The good of Jesus is met by the irrational hate of the devil.

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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