

HEARING THE WORD



NIGEL BARGE

Luke 6¹² – 6⁴⁹
Leader's Guide

Hearing the Word Luke 6:12 – 6:49 Leader’s Guide

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Email: info@hearingtheword.org.uk

Website: <https://hearingtheword.org.uk>

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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

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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's Gospel is known as the non-Jewish (Gentile) Gospel. 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) 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 during his time on earth). 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

Part of the ‘motley crew’?!

Background information and Word List

In the preceding chapter Luke has shown how the Jewish religious leaders and many ordinary people rejected Jesus and his claim to be the Messiah (literally, the promised one ‘anointed’ by God as King). After a night spent alone in prayer, Jesus chose twelve particular followers.

13	<i>disciples</i>	learners, followers
	<i>apostles</i>	people with a special charge and authority from Jesus Greek <i>apostolos</i> = one who is sent out
14	<i>Peter</i>	Greek <i>Petros</i> , the extra name Jesus gave to Simon, <i>Petra</i> means <i>rock</i> , so <i>petros</i> is a <i>piece</i> of rock, i.e. a <i>stone</i>
15	<i>Bartholomew</i>	literally, <i>son of Tholomai</i> cf our surnames <i>MacDonald</i> , <i>Donaldson</i> . This friend of Philip (Matt 10:3; Mk 3:13; Acts 1:13) is called <i>Nathanael</i> , a given name, in John 1:45; 21:2. <i>Matthew</i> sometimes called Levi (see 5:27; Matthew 10:9)
16	<i>Zealot</i>	Zealots were a radical group violently opposed to Rome. This description, however, may mean only that he was characterised by fiery zeal.
	<i>Judas, son of James</i>	also known as Thaddaeus (see Mark 3:18)
	<i>Iscariot</i>	possibly ‘man of Kerioth’ (a town in Judea) (see John 6:71; 13:26). He was the only disciple not from Galilee - (Jesus, from Nazareth, was of the tribe of Judah (2:4; Mt.1:3,6).

Bible Connections

12	<i>prayer</i>	Luke often draws attention to importance of prayer for Jesus e.g. 5:16; 9:18,28; 11:1. see also Mark 1:35; 6:46 Matthew 14:23
13	<i>choosing the Twelve</i>	see also Matthew 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19
14	<i>Simon Peter</i>	When Jesus first met him (John 1:42), he named him <i>Kepha</i> , Aramaic for ‘rock, stone’. That appears in Greek letters as <i>Cephas</i> , used in 1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5 and Gal 2:9. Translated into Greek, <i>Cephas</i> is <i>Petros</i> , not previously used as a man’s name. It is written in English as <i>Peter</i> .

LOOK

1) The Text What questions does the passage raise?

12 *Which days?*
 Why a mountainside?
 Why did he need to spend a night praying?

13 *Who were 'his disciples'?*
 How did he 'choose' them and why twelve?
 Why did he 'also' name them apostles?

14 *Is the order of names significant? E.g. why is Simon's name first? Why did Jesus call him, 'Peter'?*
 Why is James mentioned as 'son of Alphaeus'?
 Why is the second Simon described as 'the Zealot'?
 Why is one Judas called 'son of James'?

16 *Why is the other Judas called 'Iscariot'?*
 What was the latter before he became a traitor?

What surprises or confuses you?

Why did He need to spend a night in prayer before choosing apostles?

2) The Context

a) The surrounding passage

12 *One of those days (this phrase begins new sections at 5:1, 17; 6:1)*

13 *Disciples (17)*

15 *Levi (Matthew) is one of the 'sick' (5:27-32).*

b) The individual book

16 *'became a traitor' see 9:1ff and yet 22:3,47,48 betrayed Jesus*

c) The whole Bible

12 *the whole night praying (Philippians 2:7,8)*

13 *'He chose' - the standing/attributes of the Apostles? (1 Cor 1:26)*
twelve apostles /New Israel (Joshua 4:4; Revelation 21:12,14)
Apostles: Be with him...preach...have authority (Mark 3:14; Mt 26:40)
witnesses to resurrection (Acts 1:8,22; 2:32; 3:15; 13:31)
'sent ones' to the nations (Psalm 67; Isaiah 42:6; 49:6)
to ends of the earth (Matthew 28:19; Luke 24:47)
writers of Scripture (Jn 14:26; 15:26,27; Acts 2:42; 2 Pet 3:16)

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) What type of literature is this?

Gospel, narrative

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

12 'One day' marks the start of a new section (5:1, 17; 6:1, 12)

A mountainside was private.

He needed the time with his Father because he was fully a man.

13 'his disciples' were a large, amorphous group of followers (cf 17).

He 'chose' some for no 'good' reason – none were priestly, some were wealthy by ill-gotten gains, some were political opposites.

Twelve to match the twelve sons of Jacob / tribes of Israel ?

*'Also' apostles, as their **prime** purpose was to be with Him (Mk 3:14)*

14 There is no answer here about why Jesus called Simon, 'Peter'. In lists of disciples, all the Gospel writers put Peter's name first (the order of the rest varies).

To distinguish this James from the brother of John son of Zebedee

To distinguish him from Peter, and to show his political allegiance?

One Judas is called 'son of James' to distinguish him from 'Iscariot.

i.e. Luke is making a big effort to identify all twelve precisely.

16 'Iscariot' shows he is the only disciple from Judah, ie non-Galilean?
Before he became a traitor he was an active disciple.

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

He needed to spend a night in prayer to his Father.

a) because he was a man (cf Phil 2 :7,8);

b) because it was vitally important; and perhaps because it was hard;

c) to accept that these were the Father's choice!

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

Jesus, having sought the Father's will, chose 12 unlikely men to accompany Him in His mission to establish the New Covenant.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP Jesus prepares for God's New Covenant to be spoken (written) for mankind, by choosing an unlikely team.

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

KV He chose twelve of [His disciples], whom he also named 'apostles'.

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

I3 Authority is God-given and for all to see.

God chooses leaders to 'send out' on his behalf.

b) His grace?

I4 God chooses leaders who, by human standards, are not necessarily the most 'suitable'!

God chooses all kinds to lead

c) Jesus and His salvation?

I2 Jesus was fully a man – He needed to pray.

I3 Jesus chooses 'apostles' to send out with the message of His New Covenant.

Jesus needed company?

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

I2 Recognise the importance of prayer.

Pray before big decisions.

I3 Submit to the Apostles / the Scriptures that God commissioned.

Expect that answers to prayer may be very specific: 12 from the large crowd (v17)

I4 Acknowledge - God can use **ANY** of us for **ANY** task!

I6 Note - Active service in church now does not necessarily mean we are genuine disciples of Jesus.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 2

Luke 6:17-26

Enjoy God's 'upside down' Kingdom

Background information

6:20-49 is sometimes known as the 'Sermon on the Plain' (or level place) as distinct from 'the Sermon on the Mount' in Matthew 5 - 7. Some think one sermon lies behind both accounts, but there are many differences between them: Luke's is just 29 verses long, where Matthew takes three chapters. Or maybe Jesus said similar things more than once.

The 'blessings and woes' make a mockery of the world's values. They praise what the world despises and reject what the world admires.

Word List

17	<i>level place</i>	perhaps somewhere on the mountain side
	<i>Judea</i>	area about 80 miles S of Galilee, around Jerusalem
	<i>Jerusalem</i>	capital of Judea, site of the Temple
	<i>Tyre and Sidon</i>	coastal area 40 - 60 miles N.W of Galilee. Historic sea ports founded c 2,500 yrs before this event.
18	<i>evil</i>	Greek word is 'unclean'. <i>see</i> 4:33
20-22	<i>blessed</i>	happy /fulfilled
22	<i>Son of Man</i>	A title Jesus uses of himself - stresses his humanity yet hints at his being divine. (cf Daniel 7:13,14)
23-26	<i>woe</i>	'alas' or 'how terrible'; expression of regret and compassion, not a threat.
23	<i>prophets</i>	people called by God to speak on his behalf, here referring to the Old Testament prophets

Bible Connections

18	<i>curing those with evil spirits</i>	<i>see also</i> 4:33
19	<i>power coming from Him</i>	<i>see</i> 5:17; Matthew 9:20; (c.f. Mark 6:5)
20-22	<i>beatitudes</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 5:3-12
21	<i>hunger</i>	<i>see</i> Isaiah 55:1-2
	<i>weep...laugh</i>	<i>see</i> Isaiah 61:2-3
22	<i>exclude/insult</i>	<i>see</i> John 9:22; 15:18-21; 16:2; Isaiah 51:7
24	<i>rich/comfort</i>	<i>see</i> James 5:1-6; Luke 16:25
25	<i>well fed/hungry</i>	<i>see</i> Isaiah 65:13
	<i>laugh/weep</i>	<i>see</i> Proverbs 14:13
26	<i>false prophets</i>	<i>see</i> Matthew 7:15

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

17 Who is 'them'?

Why Tyre and Sidon not Damascus?

Why hear and be healed?

19 Why did they feel they had to touch him?

20 Which disciples was he looking at?

Why did he only address his disciples?

What does he mean by blessed?

What does it mean to 'have the Kingdom of God'?

22 What is it about 'the Son of man' that they would be hated for?

23 What is 'the great reward'?

How did they treat the prophets?

Why did they treat them in that way?

Why 'their' fathers' not 'our' fathers?

What surprises or confuses you?

This is the first thing Jesus says as He begins to teach his disciples.

Why is the kingdom (20) and reward (23) in the present tense but satisfied and laugh (21) in the future?

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passages

17 Having drawn together a wider group of disciples (5:11, 28; 6:1,) Jesus has just chosen twelve as His companions / ambassadors. (6:13)

b) The Individual book

17 Tyre and Sidon, better on Judgment day than Capernaum (10:13-15)

18 preaching – why I was sent (4:43)

19 touching him (8:45)

touching not essential (7:1-9)

20 the poor (4:18)

The Apostles left everything. (5:11,28)

c) The Whole Bible

19 In the OT, the poor meant the pious. (Psalm 40:17; 72:2,4).
not turn anyone away (John 6:37).

20 Kingdom of God (*Philippians 2:10,11; Revelation 20:11-15*)

23 The reward is the same as the things given up. (*Luke 18:30*).
 result of work done (*1 Corinthians 3:14*)
 commendation of Lord and 'many cities' (*19:17*)
 treasure in Heaven (*Matthew 6:20*)
 rejoicing in suffering (*Acts 5:41; Philippians 4:6*)
 momentary affliction — eternal glory (*2 Corinthians 4:17*)

d) The Bible Story

See study 1

LEARN

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

17 'Them' were the Apostles.

Tyre and Sidon were seaports – a gateway to the world.

His message is the primary purpose of His mission

19 to access his power, though it wasn't necessary

20 He was looking at the twelve(?)

He was speaking about their calling as 'sent out' ones.

'Blessed' means that you are receiving good things?

To 'have the Kingdom of God' means to be under the reign of Jesus.

22 *Challenge of King/Kingdom brings hate and resentment from some.*

23 *The commendation of the Lord(?)*

They rejected the word of the prophets and killed them.

They rejected them as they rejected God.

Those who rejected Jesus, and those who rejected the prophets were the same.

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

Jesus wanted His disciples to know from the start both the rough and the smooth.

*Those currently facing adversity for His name's sake **are** part of Kingdom of God and are storing up treasures in Heaven, which **will be** realised in future.*

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

While His disciples are aware of the excitement of the crowds and the privilege of being chosen as ambassadors, Jesus begins to instruct them by preparing

them for the reality of the hardship and blessing that was to come in His service. He does this by comparing their imminent treatment as spokesmen of God's Word with the fate of the prophets of old.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *Faithful discipleship of Jesus will lead to adversity in this world but eternal blessing.*

2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 20**

KV *He lifted up His eyes on His disciples and said: "Blessed are you poor for yours is the Kingdom of God".*

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

20-26 *God's perspective of mankind is 'black and white'.*

He rewards and judges (punishes) mankind.

b) His grace?

19 *ALL who touched Him were healed.*

20 *God gives His Kingdom to the poor (those who cannot pay for it).*

20-22 *Those who are poor, hungry and weeping are blessed when they come to Him.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

18 *Jesus is to be heard and 'felt'.*

22 *Jesus, the Son of Man, is an offence to some of His creatures.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

17 *Note - The message is for all (c.f. 'the ends of the earth').*

20-21 *Spell out the cost of discipleship of Jesus to all at the start.*

Be aware that 'poverty and weakness' before God leads to the blessing of His Kingdom

22 *Be prepared - People will hate you just because you believe in and follow Jesus.*

Note - It is the Kingdom / King that is an offence to some.

23 *Note - Suffering for the name of Jesus is a joy / blessing.*

Recognise that, like the Prophets of old, those who speak God's Word today will be maltreated - for the same reason.

Be realistic - Many reject God's authority.

Note - To bear/suffer for Jesus will mean great reward.

24 Note - Spiritual ease leads to cursing.

26 Beware the popularity of men.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Be gracious like God

Background information

The heart of this sermon is the need for love. In New Testament Greek there are four nouns translated in English as 'love'. Jesus is speaking of *agape** love, not *eros* (romantic love), *storge** (natural affection) or *philia* (friendship). He means love for even the unlovely i.e. love that arises because the 'lover' is loving, and chooses to love.

v31 is often referred to as the 'Golden Rule'. It appears in some earlier cultures, but only in the negative form (*Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you*). Jesus seems to be the first to have given it in the positive form. *See also* Matthew 7:12.

Word List

29	<i>Cloak / tunic</i>	outer / inner garment
30	<i>give</i>	continuous tense i.e. habitual attitude
32	' <i>sinners</i> '	The unreligious (like tax collectors) were not allowed into the Temple; so could not offer sacrifices.
35	<i>without expecting to get anything back</i>	A better translation of the Greek is 'never despairing'.
	<i>sons</i>	our relationship with God the Father <i>see</i> Rom 8:14-16
	<i>Most High</i>	a title for God <i>see</i> e.g. Daniel 7:18. It stresses the <u>absolute</u> nature of His authority c.f. Genesis 14:18-22.
	<i>Ungrateful</i>	lit, <i>acharistous</i> means 'without grace' (<i>charis</i> meaning grace).

Bible Connections

27	<i>love</i>	Examples of <i>agape</i> love: Jesus praying for those who nailed Him to the cross: Luke 23:34 <i>c.f.</i> The first Christian martyr, Stephen: Acts 7:60. God's love for sinners: Romans 5:6,8,10 1 Corinthians 13; 1 John 4:19
	<i>do good</i>	Jesus 'went about doing good' himself <i>see</i> Acts 10:38
27-35		<i>see also</i> Matthew 5:38-48 and Romans 12:9-21
30	<i>give . . .</i>	<i>see also</i> Luke 6:38; 21:1-4; Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10-11;
32	<i>credit</i>	Charis (greek) - grace (lit. means 'what to you grace is there')

*pronounced a-ga-pay, stor-gay

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

27 *Why ‘but’?*
Who were those who ‘heard’ him?
Who were their enemies?

31 *How do you want them ‘to do to you’?*
How does this sum up the preceding four verses?

32 ‘Credit’ with whom?
What does he mean ‘sinners’?

35 Why does he repeat ‘Love your enemies’? (27,35)
What kind of reward?
What does ‘sons of the Most High’ mean?
Who are the ungrateful and wicked?

What surprises or confuses you?

29/30 *The impossible / undesirable (?) nature of the command*

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passage

35 *Reward (23)*

b) Individual book

27 *hear (7:22) listen (8:8)*
Love your enemies. (23:34)

32 ‘Sinners’ mean unreligious (5:31,32; 15:1,2) religious (Luke 24:7) i.e. everyone!

35 ‘Reward’ means well done. (Luke 19:17), treasure in Heaven (Matthew 6:20)

c) Whole bible

27 *Do not ‘pay back that man for what he did’. (Proverbs 24:29)*
Love your enemy. (Matthew 5:43)

27,35 *Enemies (Romans 5:10)*

29 *Jesus was struck on the cheek. (John 18:22)*

35 ‘Sons of’ means ‘like Him’. (1 John 3:2)
Most High - All authority is His. (Matthew 28:18)
Ungrateful – those dead in trespasses (?) (Ephesians 2:1)
The unforgiving servant (Matthew 18:23-34)
Love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:9)

d) The Bible Story

See study 1

LEARN

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

27 ‘But’ follows on from v 22, 23 – ‘blessed are you when men hate you...’
Those who heard were those who really listened to Him.
Enemies were those who ‘excluded, insulted, rejected’ them (22).

31 We want people to be gracious and forgiving.

*Those whom I have cursed, ill-treated, struck, taken a coat off,
asked of, taken from, would, I hope, treat me graciously.*

32 ‘Credit’ (grace) – ‘sinners’ repay each other for favours. Grace is
different: it gives without demanding something in return.
‘Sinners’ are the non-religious.

35 ‘Love your enemies’ is the ‘acid test’ of following Jesus.

Reward is the commendation of the Father.

It means that they will share in the privileges of being the sons of God.
The ungrateful and wicked are the ‘sinners’.

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

It is because we appreciate that God is like that with us, that we, having received His mercy, can be like that to others.

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

Listen – Do good to those who do you ill. Don’t be like the world - be gracious – just like your Heavenly Father is gracious to you.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *Imitate your Father being kind to the ungrateful and wicked and you will enjoy the reward to being sons of the most High.*

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

v 35b

KV *Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.*

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

35 *God is kind to the ungrateful and wicked*

God rewards us for our behaviour.

He is willing to call us 'sons'.

He is 'most high' – above all power and authority.

b) His grace?

35 *The Most High loves his enemies.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

34 *Jesus forgave sinners (23:34).*

Jesus died for the wicked /ungrateful / the sinners (Ephesians 2:1)

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

27 *Note - some folk do not 'hear' Jesus!*

27-30 *Note -The Christian life is 'absurd' by the world's standards.*

35 *Be like your Heavenly Father - kind to the ungrateful and wicked.*

Do good to others.

Lend and don't expect to get a return.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Do unto others as God has done to you!

Background information

In this section Jesus applies some of what he has said already.

It is possible to group v 36 with the preceding verses, as the New International Version does; but if seen as an introduction to vv 37-42, it sets the tone of leadership under God, as disciples express to others the mercy they themselves receive from God.

Our approach to judging our fellows is a consequence of the way God has treated us – ungrateful and wicked as we are (35).

A forgiving spirit is a sign of being forgiven!

Word List

38 <i>lap</i>	Greek <i>kolpon</i> refers to the fold in outer garment made as it hung over the girdle; it was used as a kind of pocket.
40 <i>above his teacher</i>	At this period, a learner's only source of information was his teacher.

Bible Connections

36 <i>mercy</i>	<i>see</i> Romans 12:1; 2 Corinthians 1:3
37 <i>do not judge</i>	<i>see also</i> Matthew 7:1-5; 18:21 -35, James 2:13; but compare Galatians 2:11-14, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 9-13; 1 John 4:1-3
38 <i>give</i>	Elijah and the widow 1 Kings 17:1-16

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

- 36 *How has God shown his mercy?*
- 37 *Why two negatives followed by two positives?*
- 39 *Parable (singular) only refers to blind man and pit?*
- 40 *Who is the student / the teacher?*
- 41 *Why 'your brother'?*
Why a 'speck' and a 'plank'?
- 42 *Why 'hypocrite'?*

What surprises or confuses you?

Why the interjection of the parable at this point?

2) The Context

- a) Surrounding passage
- 38 *Give to everyone who asks ((6:30)*
A payment/reward? (23,35)
- b) Individual book
- 38 *Forgive. (Luke 11:4)*
- 40 *Teacher (3:12; 7:40)*
- c) Whole Bible
- 36 *Does not count our sins as we deserve. (2 Corinthians 5:19)*
- 37 *Don't judge. (Romans 14:10-13; Galatians 6:1-5)*
God judges. (Rev 20:11ff)
No condemnation (Romans 8:1)
- 39 *Spiritual blindness (John 9:39)*
- 40 *"We shall be like Him (Jesus)". (1 John 1:3)*
Jesus 'did not come to judge the world, but to save it.' (John 12:47)

d) The Bible Story

See study 1

LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?
- 36 *He does not count our sins against us as we deserve.*
- 37 *The Christian life is not only negative, it is positive too.*
- 39 *The sentence following (the student...) must be an explanation.*
- 40 *The student represents all people. The teacher is Jesus.*
- 41 *'Your brother' implies relationship and obligation.*
The contrast shows the sin of judging others is far 'greater' than most sins.
- 42 *'Hypocrite' implies acting as though you didn't have a problem in your own eye.*

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

The parable follows the command not to judge, so someone who judges is like a blind man – he doesn't see the plank in His own eye.

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

Jesus teaches: Instead of judging and condemning, give and forgive, like me, your teacher. Human beings are in no place to judge.

LISTEN

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

MP *Treat others as your heavenly Father treats you – with mercy.*

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

KV *Be merciful, even as your Father in Heaven is merciful. (36)*

LIVE

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

- a) His nature and character?

36 *God has mercy on us.*

38b *God will treat us the way we treat others (especially our enemies v27)*

- b) His grace?

37 *God is willing not to judge or condemn us for our sins.*

38 *God is willing to forgive us and to give to us.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

37 *It is possible for us to avoid being judged by God, because Jesus was judged in our place.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

36 *Imitate God and be merciful to others*

37 *Do not judge others.*

Take stock of the judgment of others in our own lives.

40 *Note - Those who submit to God, learn from God and will be like Him.*

42 *If we judge others it suggests there is a problem of un-forgiven sin (a 'log') in our own lives.*

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 5

Luke 6:43-45

Watch your mouth!

Background information

Jesus uses another metaphor, one from the countryside, familiar to all his listeners. A man's deeds show what is in his heart.

Word List

45 *the heart*

Jews reckoned the *heart* as the place of thinking and the *gut* as the place of emotions. Modern English would say we *think* with our *minds* and *feel* with our *heart*.

evil

A strong word associated with the devil, to include evil spirits (Luke 7:21) and the evil one (Matt.5:37)

Bible Connections

See also Matthew 7:16,18,20

43 *good and bad fruit*

see Matthew 12:33-37; Mark 7:20-23

fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:19-24

45 *the reason for what we say*

see Proverbs 4:23-24; James 1:14-15,26

the tongue

James 3:3-12

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

43 *What is 'good' fruit?*

What is 'bad' fruit?

44 *What is the difference between 'recognising' good fruit from bad, and 'judging', which is forbidden in vv 37-42?*

45 *What is a 'good' man?*

What is an 'evil' man?

Why the 'overflow' of the heart?

What surprises or confuses you

In Matthew's version (7:21), Jesus goes on, 'Not everyone who calls me "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven but only he who does the will of my Father. Many will say... then I will say, "Away from me, you evildoers..." . Why does Luke omit these words?

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passage

45 *mouth speaks (cf 42,46)*

evil spirits (7:21)

b) Individual book

45 *good heart / soil (8:15)*

No one is good but God. (18:19)

Nothing is concealed that won't be disclosed. (12:2)

Treasure is where heart is. (12:34)

c) Whole Bible

45 *'good man' (John 7:12; Acts 11:24)*

His mouth speaks - 'Jesus is Lord'. (1 Corinthians 12:3)

believers one in heart (Acts 4:32)

The many made righteous (good). (Romans 5:19)

A fool is thought wise if he keeps silent! (Proverbs 17:28)

good by the grace of God (Ephesians 2:8,9)

d) The Bible Story

See study 1

LEARN

- 1) How do you answer the questions that the passage raises?
- 43 ‘Good’ fruit is that for which the owner / harvester planted it.
‘Bad’ fruit is that for which the owner / harvester has no use.
- 44 Recognising good from bad is one thing but to judge others involves condemning them and assuming we are better than them.
- 45 A ‘good’ man is one who has been made good/righteous’ by God.
A ‘bad’ man is one who is not righteous before God.
Most of ‘the heart’ is concealed i.e. our thoughts are generally secret. The mouth ‘leaks out’ what is in the heart.

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

In Matthew 7:15, He is speaking specifically about being on guard against the false prophets. In Luke it is a general comment to all disciples to look at themselves.

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

By his words and actions, one can deduce if someone is right before God.

LISTEN

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

MP One can tell a person’s standing before God from what they say and how they speak

- 2) Which verse best sums up the message of the passage? **v 45b**

KV For of the overflow of the heart his mouth speaks.

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

b) His grace

45a God bears good fruit in the heart of His people

Someone/anyone can only be ‘good’ by an act of grace by God.

c) Jesus and His salvation

45 *Someone can be 'good' through the work of Jesus **on the cross**.*
Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

43 *Examine your heart.*

45 *Note - There are 'good' people.*

Note - The state of a heart cannot be hidden for long.

'Watch your mouth' - it must bear only good fruit

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Study 6

Luke 6:46-49

Put your mouth where your money is!

Background information

Jesus tells the disciples a story to illustrate the importance of acting on the teaching they have received.

In the Middle East, rain is sporadic. For much of the time, the intense sun leaves the ground baked hard. So when rain does come, much of it quickly runs off, combining into streams that can suddenly turn into torrents powerful enough to wash away everything before them.

(The route such water carves out for itself is called a *wadi*, which looks like a river bed, but is dried up most of the time since it does not come from a spring. E.g. look up images of 'Wadi Qelt' on-line, to see a steep gorge made by a wadi's erosive power. The road going East from Jerusalem to Jericho (Luke 10:30) runs beside it.)

Word List

46 *Lord* To call someone 'Lord' is to admit we owe allegiance to that person.

Bible Connections

46-49 Parallel in Matthew 7:24-27

46 *honouring God* *see also* Malachi 1:6

47 *hearing and doing* *see also* James 1:22-25; Luke 11:28

48 *founded on rock* *see* 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; Ephesians 2:19-22; Isaiah 28:16; 1 Peter 2:4-8

LOOK

1) The Text

What questions does the passage raise?

46 *Why does he use the name 'Lord' twice?*
Who is calling Lord?
How does he know they are calling? His ministry is only starting?

47 *What does 'comes...hears my words, puts into practice,' involve?*

48 *What does the time lag mean?*
What does 'the flood' refer to?

49 *Why is the destruction 'complete'?*
Why did Jesus omit 'come' to me (compare 47 with 49)

What surprises or confuses you

46 *It does not say 'Lord, Lord,' come from the 'overflow of the heart' (45)?*

2) The Context

a) Surrounding passages

46 *'For of the overflow of his heart, the mouth speaks' (45)*

b) Individual book

47 *little ones ... come to me (18:16)*

48 *Stand on the last day (17:24; 21:27, 34,35)*

c) Whole Bible

46 *Lord, Lord (Matthew 7:22; 25:11)*

47 *Hearing His words / the Word (Luke 24:45; John 1:1; 5:39)*

Faith comes by hearing the message and the message is heard through the Word of Christ. (Romans 10:17)

Come to me all you who are heavy laden. (Matthew 11:28)

Obey the Word. (Matthew 21:28ff)

48 *Build of God in the face of the world e.g. Noah (Genesis 6:22)*

Foundations – the Apostles and Prophets (Revelation 21:14)

After all things, to stand (Ephesians 6:13-18)

49 *Complete means eternally (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:14)*

Disobedience in the time of Noah (1 Peter 3:20)

Where/when is this 'flood' coming? (2 Peter 3:4)

Love lasts eternally. (1 Corinthians 13:8,13)

Love God and your neighbour..... (Luke 10:27)

d) The Bible Story

See study 1

LEARN

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

46 ‘Lord, Lord’ emphasises insincerity (?)

An insincere disciple is capable of calling Jesus, ‘Lord’.

Jesus is aware that the crowds are ‘fickle’ – though they revere Him know, they will not last.

47 *It involves believing in Jesus.*

48 *the time lag means there will be times of ‘ease’*

‘the flood’ is when we see we are not in control of life events

49 *The destruction will be ‘complete’ because it is eternal*

Comparing v 47 with 49, Jesus omits ‘comes to me’ in the second instance as ‘coming’ involves faith, which is missing in v49

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

46 *Overflow of heart suggests words and action. Words without actions are empty.*

Luke is writing for Gentiles; Matthew to Jews; hence the warning to the Jews in Matthew. (Cf the healing of the Jew (Matthew 8:1) before the Roman Centurion (Matthew 8:5ff; Luke 8:1ff)

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

Empty words will be tested. Only true faith in Jesus will persevere.

LISTEN

1) What is the lesson or the main point?

MP *Only hearing and obeying Jesus gives life that cannot be destroyed.*

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

KV *Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like. (47)*

LIVE

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

a) His nature and character?

b) His grace?

48 *God / The rock is strong enough for any storm.*

c) Jesus and His salvation?

46 Salvation is demonstrated by obedience to Jesus.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

2) What should I do?

46 *It is possible to say, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not be a Christian.*

(By believing, the Gentiles opt in to Jesus. By not believing, the Jews opt out).

Be real – obey in Word and deed.

48 *Commitment to Jesus involves ‘digging down’ – time and effort.*

48/49 *‘Dig down while the weather is good’.*

The flood /torrent is inevitable for all.

Beware the lie of the eternal bubble – “it will always be thus”.

Now underline the application of the Main Point.

Sharing the Word

Use

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

Preparing for a group

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

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

Write down your own questions and answers. *

Format

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

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

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

Remember!

As we gather round God's Word -

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

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

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