

A Walk Through Luke

Introduction

The Gospel of Luke gives a careful, compassionate look at Jesus as the Savior for all kinds of people. Luke is a Gentile doctor and a coworker of Paul, and he writes an orderly account for a man named Theophilus so that he can be sure about what he has heard of Jesus. Luke gathers eyewitness reports and shapes them into a clear story of Jesus' birth, ministry, death, and resurrection, then continues that story in Acts. He wants his readers to see that the good news that began in the towns of Galilee and the streets of Jerusalem is meant for every nation, every class, every person.

Luke comes in the early decades of the church, when the gospel is spreading into the wider Roman world and many Gentiles are coming to faith. The book is very concrete and down-to-earth. It shows Jesus eating at tables, touching the sick, welcoming children, and telling stories that stick in our minds. Luke stresses that salvation in Jesus is for the lost and the least: tax collectors, sinners, Samaritans, women, the poor, and the broken. He highlights prayer, joy, and the work of the Holy Spirit from the opening chapters onward. Again and again Luke shows heaven breaking into ordinary places—a manger, a fishing boat, a dusty road, a simple meal.

Luke also works like a spiritual checkup for disciples and churches. It asks whether we share God's heart for the outsider, whether our money and hospitality reflect His mercy, and whether our prayers and praise rise up in all seasons, not just in comfort. It confronts pride, hardness toward the poor, and religious coldness that grumbles when grace goes to the "wrong" people. At the same time, Luke does not fight against grace; it shows what grace looks like when the Son of Man "comes to seek and to save the lost." Sinners are forgiven and restored, and then sent out in the power of the Spirit as witnesses. Luke helps the church move from hearing the story to living it—following Jesus into the margins, opening our tables, and joining God's joy as His salvation reaches "all people."

So read on! Ask the Lord to move your heart toward Him as you do.

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Chapter 1

Dr. Luke has researched and dug through all the events, so that we may have certainty in the things of Jesus. This is his factual account, vetted!

'Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. ' Luke 1:1-4

The Lord loves to bring His works through extremely difficult or impossible situations! He prefers the impossible. And all this to return Israel to Himself. What an accomplishment! Read on:
'In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old. Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside. Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." ' Luke 1:5-17

The old guys always seem to wonder - because of the age factor... But the lesson is that God does what He says, and we can trust in His plans and actions.
So how will Z know what to make of these words from Gabriel? Well Gabriel shares who he is, his rank and position, and also on whose authority G came to speak.
Then as an added validation or proof, G shuts Z's voice ... with a promise...
'Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."
The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.

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And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.” ’

Luke 1:18-20

They were watching and waiting for him. When he came out, they discovered something had happened. But he couldn't tell them.

Isn't this how the Lord works - we know something is up. He is alive and doing things - but we don't know exactly what, or how it will complete?

We can count on the Lord, and we will walk the path as He unfolds it...

'Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak. '

Luke 1:21-22

At the right time, seemingly after a long time, the Lord vindicates. He removes shame, and brings blessing. He can be trusted for the long haul! Every time.

'When his time of service was completed, he returned home. After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. “The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.” ’

Luke 1:23-25

When the angel shows up, to you, a woman in a man's society, a virgin, someone of very low community esteem... Then declares you are highly favored by God - yeah I'd be troubled too! God has His plans, amazing plans - expect them!

'In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. '

Luke 1:26-29

The angel came to her with a message, and she was troubled, concerned, not sure what it meant... And then she heard the message. God assured her. He is at work. He knows what He is doing, and His work will continue, reigning forever! Everything will be right on time, and the results amazing. Rest assured. We should rest assured as well, for all the same reasons.

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"The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." '

Luke 1:28-33

The plan to re-inject humanity with God's perfect DNA. How can man return to the Garden, pure, perfect, no sin? The DNA from fallen Adam must be halted, and a fresh remake, from the original, must be inserted into the stream for Mankind... THIS is how He does it...

From this comes a perfect savior, one whose DNA becomes mine - And I will live forever, pure, clean, in Him!

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.'

Luke 1:34-38

Mary went to Elizabeth's and received a blessing. Baby John in the womb was the first to recognize Jesus!

Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and blessed Jesus and also testified that Mary believed the word of the angel.

Let us also believe what God has promised!

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb.

And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

Luke 1:39-45 ESV

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Does my soul offer glory to God, does my spirit rejoice? Do I consider all He has and is doing in my life?

'And Mary said:

“My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.

His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful to Abraham
and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors.”

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home. ' Luke 1:46-56

Zech and Liz were diligent to obey the Lord, and they named their son John. The results were awe inspiring. Be like Zech and Liz!

'When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy. On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, but his mother spoke up and said, “No! He is to be called John.” They said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who has that name.”

Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone’s astonishment he wrote, “His name is John.”

Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God. All the neighbors were filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things. Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, “What then is this child going to be?” For the Lord’s hand was with him. '

Luke 1:57-66

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Nine months tongue tied, then the Lord released Zechariah. Zech sang a new song, what he had learned in silence! What an amazing work the Lord has done!

'His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come to his people and redeemed them.
He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David
(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),
salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—
to show mercy to our ancestors
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
and to enable us to serve him without fear
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
And you, my child, will be called
a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord
to prepare the way for him,
to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace.” '

Luke 1:67-79

The next passage was 29 years in the making. 29 quiet years... Did Zechariah wonder what had become of God's Promise? Did Elizabeth struggle, wondering if she had been a good mom? Had he continued in God's plan and vision? It's a long road. Same with us...

'And the child grew and became strong in spirit ; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.' Luke 1:80

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Chapter 2

Caesar Augustus is not a friendly guy. Decided that everyone must be registered, setting up for more taxes. This is Government over-reach. Oppression. Control.

Could God really be in this? Is He in the midst of our struggles? Does He get the inflation, the failed production, the cultural obstruction?

Yes. He does.

'In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register. '

Luke 2:1-3

Mary had her little lamb in Bethlehem. The Romans forced it. There was no room. Inconvenient. And who likes long travel? Especially inconvenient. And then there was no Maternity ward, no family, they were in an inn, strangers.

Imagine the animals looking into the face of their creator, laying in the feeding trough...

So much goes into this complex situation, and yet, the Lord was orchestrating the whole time! We get a savior. The world rejoices! Inconvenience turns out to not be the story. This is God's plan, wisdom, care and provision – and that's the story!

'So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. '

Luke 2:4-7

The shepherds were shepherding, hanging out, protecting. And suddenly they were interrupted - a sky full of angels, and an announcement. Frightened, terrified - is this the end?

Peace! It's good news. They were the first to hear! There's a savior born tonight. You'll recognize him wrapped in cloths on the animal buffet table!

If they need a savior - then I need a savior. It's for all of us.

'And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy

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for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ' Luke 2:8-12

The Lord works in funny ways. He goes far outside the bounds of what I think is normal, and compels us forward. He knows the path. He knows what it takes.

These shepherd know the sky. They stay awake to protect their sheep. When the sky comes alive, something is up. In this case, angels, announcing, worshiping. They simply had to go see for themselves!

'Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." '

Luke 2:13-15

Amazing that God chose shepherds rather than rabbis or teachers, and yet such a powerful proof that God did this. Shepherds had little standing in society, and yet their announcement to everyone was powerful. Everyone was astonished. And Mary kept this announcement in her heart - a long-term encouragement.

'So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. ' Luke 2:16-20

Mary and Joseph could have made this about them, their family. This was about living in humility and faith and following. But for them this wasn't a show, or simply acting the part.

They heard the angel. They recognized the God of the Universe was directly at work, here. He created the baby. He brought forth the life that would save all lives. He was at work, and His plans must succeed.

They heard the angel declare what the baby shall be named. In respect, love, faith, they obeyed, and named him Jesus.

'On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived. ' Luke 2:21

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Taking time to follow the Lord, diligent to obey ... I love their heart!

'When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord") and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons." ' Luke 2:22-24

How long? How many years, decades, had Simeon been waiting? Yet God's promise to him, the promise was secure. He knew God, personally. He walked with God, trusting, longing, depending. His hope would one day appear.

Are you waiting? Keep trusting, listening. Messiah has come and our redemption is secure. Life's challenges are still ahead, and the nations still need to follow Messiah. They have not yet heard. Our hopes and dreams, still ahead.

Lay it all out before Jesus.

Celebrate Him.

Trust in Him, and bank on Him.

'Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.

When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel." '

Luke 2:25-32

God was at work in Jesus, everybody expected that. Yet He was also at work in Mary. He was at work in Joseph. His specific plans for them were playing out. He was showing them the wonder of His work, how He interleaves lives, and how the culmination of humanity is in Jesus - a blessing for all... And they pondered these things, wondering, worshipping. What amazement as they beheld God at work... Who knew what would be ahead?

'The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.

Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." '

Luke 2:33-35

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Testimony! Don't simply believe because of what one man said or did, look at all the affirmation, confirmation, and third party observation!

'There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. '

Luke 2:36-38

Having seen amazing things from God, Mary and Joseph did all they could to follow Him, best they knew how.

'When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. '

Luke 2:39

Children aren't usually wise. Strong, yes. Adventurous. Inquisitive. Maybe shy. Busy. But wise, that's something that arrives sometime after 25... The son of God is different. But then, he's God. Yet again, fully man, having left the God-thing behind. (Philippians 2:6-8). But look at Jesus:

'And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him. '

Luke 2:40

Imagine how well Jesus knew the temple, the rabbis, the priests, the people. Every year. Every year he went there. Faithful parents, Mary and Joseph, took him there.

We are parents - be faithful. Keep bringing your kids up to know the Lord...

'Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. ' Luke 2:41

Twelve year olds. Boys. They get an idea - and everything else goes out the window! Having raised seven sons, this event doesn't surprise me in the least.

A family outing for Passover in Jerusalem - they did it every year. This year too. And at the end, they journeyed home. Well, at east mom and dad thought they did.

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Boys hang out with boys. Not seeing Jesus in their midst was not a surprise - he has friends and hanging out apart from mom and dad is normal... But after a day, it isn't normal. It's another day to go back and find Jesus.

Sorry dad. The carpentry customers are going to be delayed. Sorry mom, your plans are shelved for a bit. Boys. Yup.

Here's two days of worry and concern. What would happen? Today, ponder missing your 12 year old kid. Tomorrow we'll begin looking for him.

Parenting isn't easy. Not even for Mary and Joseph.

'When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.

Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. '

Luke 2:42-45

Anna knew. In the temple, a widow, devoted to God, she knew. One look at Jesus, she got it. He was Messiah.

Our Savior has come.

Just consider that.

Live accordingly.

'There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. '

Luke 2:36-38

Parenting - just be faithful

Grace - God pours it out in His time

'When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.

And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him. '

Luke 2:39-40

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He was a sharp one. He'd been processing thinking, and walking with the Father, even as a young boy. So this time, they found him - he was in the temple with the priests. Talking and asking questions. Crazy to be the kid, who actually created everything and everyone, including these guys. But He is gentle, and kind too... Amazing...

'After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. '
Luke 2:46-47

The Divine and the human collide in Christ. Yes, He was about His Father's Business... And yet His mom and dad were panicked, and worried. Our lives find this too - The Father's plans are sometimes obscure and seem out of place - yet they are always right. And sometimes such plans drive us to choices that are hard on others... Hang in there. Jesus wins.

'When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."
"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"
But they did not understand what he was saying to them. '
Luke 2:48-50

Jesus was also cognizant of his mom and dad, and obeyed them as well. Mary kept pondering the things she was continually seeing. And Jesus was growing in stature and in wisdom, in favor with God and with man.

'Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' Luke 2:51-52

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Chapter 3

Fifteen years of Tiberius Caesar.
The Word of God came to John - and he went out preaching!
God knows the timing! For us too.

'In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene— during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. '

Luke 3:1-3

John's ministry was foretold - preparing people to meet their savior who is coming. They shall see salvation! Make ready!!!

'As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.
Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill made low.
The crooked roads shall become straight,
the rough ways smooth.
And all people will see God's salvation.' ” '

Luke 3:4-6

John did not believe in attractional models for reaching people. Tailoring the message to encourage attendance - no he wasn't into that stuff.

Confronting sin and hypocrisy - yes John went there.
Repent! Stop cheating God.

'John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.
And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.” '

Luke 3:7-9

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Don't come for the show.
Turn your life around and live your faith.
-John

"What should we do then?" the crowd asked.
John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." '
Luke 3:10-11

Even tax collectors have a place at the table. John was breaking all the religious rules, preparing the way! So - yes - there's even room for you!

'Even tax collectors came to be baptized.
'Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"
Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. '
Luke 3:12-13

Even soldiers. There are ways to follow Jesus, for anyone! Be content. Don't be bossy.

'Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"
He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay." '
Luke 3:14

They had been watching. They had been waiting a very long time. Expectations - will they now be fulfilled?

Am I waiting? Am I working, but with expectation? Jesus is coming back. And He is changing lives right here, right now!

'The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. '
Luke 3:15

The plant must produce good grain!

The one coming is far more powerful and pure! He has a winnowing fork in his hand, and will separate the good harvest from the chaff.

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John has already told us to put on good works to demonstrate our changed hearts - so we get to work, expectantly!

'John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." '

Luke 3:16-17

John both challenged and invited. There was exhortation "Get it together!" as well as proclamation "You can't get anything better than this!" - both were in the message. Let's tell the whole truth - Jesus offers the best ever - and - you will have to change ...

'And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them. ' Luke 3:18

Sometimes proclaiming the truth brings a price. Pay the price.

'But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of his marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done, Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison. ' Luke 3:19-20

And Jesus was baptized too - but with testimony of the Father, and with visible affirmation by the Spirit! Jesus - the Son of the Father, well pleasing to Him! I am secure because the Father, Son and Spirit have secured me!

'When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." '

Luke 3:21-22

Jesus was the son of promise. In His lineage were amazing people - beginning of course with God Himself. But also the promise through Noah. The promise through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and redemption seen even through Boaz. God has a plan! And He has a plan for me, and one for you too!

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'Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melki, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josek, the son of Joda, the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, the son of Melki, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Kenan, the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.'

Luke 3:23-38

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 4

At baptism, Jesus was declared the well pleasing son of God, by the Father, and with the Spirit coming upon Him. Thus his ministry began.

But it's the next step that sets the stage for a truly powerful ministry. The Holy Spirit led Jesus to the wilderness, for a 40 day confrontation with Satan. THIS is where eternity was guaranteed, a ferocious battle with The Enemy himself. Jesus relying on the Spirit, buffeted all around, fasting and fighting.

In the balance: would Jesus win against Satan, and guarantee the Son had what it takes to propitiate for us? He sinless with power, we weak in sin and need.

'Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.'

Luke 4:1-2

At the end, but not after, Satan attempts to derail Jesus' battle in the desert. Satan wanted to undermine the thorough preparation and fight - but Jesus was in it to complete.

Same for me. Same for you. Don't throw in the towel and cave when it gets really hard. Stay the course and see God deliver you. THIS is how Satan is defeated. Same for you and me.

'The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.' "

Luke 4:3-4

The devil tempted Jesus to seek his own glory. Another trap - "Just give up, and I can give you glory" was the offer. Jesus stayed the course. Worship God alone!

'The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.' "

Luke 4:5-8

Satan was declaring that God didn't really protect you. He was challenging the true trust in God. Here's the secret: God who protects you is already at work, and already protecting. There's no need to attempt

A Walk Through Luke

to "prove it" but instead a humble prayer, and then, this: The biggest proof is to humbly move forward and lay our trust in Him.

Satan was just hoping to break that trust by issuing the challenge. Jesus chose instead to complete the course. The Spirit had driven Jesus to the wilderness, and the Spirit will bring him through. The Spirit has enough for you too. Keep trusting and moving forward.

"The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. For it is written: " 'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.' "

Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

Luke 4:9-12

Satan loses. The enemy of our souls is defeated, and will experience that in the end. So take heart. When we resist the devil, when we use scripture, when we continue in faith, he gives up. Yes he'll be back. Keep fighting in faith!

'When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time. '

Luke 4:13

At the end of the Battle in the Desert, the devil was defeated. Jesus was filled with the Spirit, and now begins the re-taking of the heart of Israel and the world. Jesus is coming back. But it began just after Jesus faithfully battled satan, stayed the course, leveraged scripture and waited in trust on God alone. Filled with the Spirit, a man has power! Do the same!

'Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. '

Luke 4:14-15

Following the Battle in the Desert, Jesus went out in the power of the Spirit. But do we know what you get when the Spirit is your power?

Five things:

1. Good news for the poor
2. Freedom for prisoners
3. Sight for the blind
4. Freedom for the oppressed
5. Favor of the Lord for everyone

What are you asking Jesus for?

He brought a revolution that changes everything.

A Walk Through Luke

Want to pray in God's will?
Pray to see these five in your neighborhood!
The Kingdom is here!

'He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” '
Luke 4:16-19

Not only was the time come for the Kingdom, Jesus declared that He is the King, the one to bring this restoration!

Still true today - He is the King, powerful and mighty.

'Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” '
Luke 4:20-21

Conflict.

I hear what you are saying, and it's good. But I am not sure - don't I know things about you that argue differently? You say great things about God, but you are just the local boy...

They were inspired and yet a little troubled. And Jesus knew it.
Satan was sowing seeds of doubt.

Are you in this place? Tell Satan "No" and adamantly embrace the Son instead. He will prove who He is - but you start with faith!

'All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked. '
Luke 4:22

A Walk Through Luke

His friends and neighbors didn't believe him. They already dismissed the thought. So he goes after them. He challenges their unbelief and points out their litmus-test approach - it was all based on dismissal. Then he explains it, using the times of Elijah and the Syrian Naaman to show God is at work, and their deceit and lack of faith kept them out of the blessing.

What's keeping you out of the blessing? Can you set aside your premise, and look straight into Jesus - let him work in you as He promises?

'Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself!' And you will tell me, 'Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'"

"Truly I tell you," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian." '

Luke 4:23-27

Jesus' assessment of the people in his home town was spot on. They were not going to believe. But his comparison of them to the unbelievers in Naaman's time, that really offended them. and they took action.

Let's not presume regarding our stature in faith. Instead, let's come humbly, quietly to God, ask Him to expose our unbelief, and to pour His Spirit in to redeem those parts. Don't be angry when God shows our gaping holes and severe need. Instead, beg of Him for His forgiveness, renewal, and infusion of His Spirit. Jesus had that infusion.

'All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff.

But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. '

Luke 4:28-30

A different response than in Nazareth. They were amazed because of his authority - he taught as the author. We will see lots of powerful spirit-working here. For us, look at Jesus, recognize his authority. Take it in, put it on, live it out. Apply and go forward!

'Then he went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the Sabbath he taught the people. They were amazed at his teaching, because his words had authority. '

Luke 4:31-32

A Walk Through Luke

Demonic spirits recognize Jesus from far off. He walks into the synagogue, and they know their territory is invaded. They know the author, and his authority.

Notice how they try to hold on to the domain which they have grabbed. They are tenacious. And so in our lives too - are there strongholds, walls that seemingly cannot be overcome? Speak to those in the name of Jesus. Speak to those with His authority: "demon come out and depart!" Jesus breaks through.

'In the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon, an impure spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, "Go away! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" "Be quiet!" Jesus said sternly. "Come out of him!" Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him. '

Luke 4:33-35

How to respond... listen to Jesus's words, His authority, and look at His results. Be amazed, and then be following. Go where He goes. Do what He does. Capernaum folks get it.

'All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What words these are! With authority and power he gives orders to impure spirits and they come out!" And the news about him spread throughout the surrounding area. '

Luke 4:36-37

Some are healed. Others not. And I cannot see from the outside what the Spirit will do.

Still, one of the results of messiah coming was taking stripes so we can be healed. Physically took the stripes, physically healed. So look at what Jesus did. Filled with God's Spirit, he looked at a woman with a fever, and rebuked the fever. The fever left her, and she was well, got up, and made dinner! I bet it was a good dinner.

This is the same way I prayed for my friend K, and her back was healed then and there. It's not me, it's the Spirit, in an obedient follower. Do the same!

'Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. So he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them. '

Luke 4:38-39

Bring every one to Jesus. He heals every one.

My experience is not "every" one, but "many." I will keep bringing every one to Jesus.

A Walk Through Luke

'At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them. '

Luke 4:40

Jesus showed up in power, but he protected the people's right to discover him themselves. He healed and drove out demons, but he would not let the demons declare him. Instead, he worked so each person could discover him himself. He cares for you too much to steal your opportunity. Go introduce people to Jesus, and let them discover all that he is!

'Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah. '

Luke 4:41

I want more of Jesus, more and more and more... They loved his teaching and wanted him to stay longer. But they were being taught another lesson: It's not enough to learn and learn and learn. One must listen and learn, and then put that into practice. You'll learn more later. But by faith take what you learn and move forward. Meanwhile Jesus is going to other towns - that's why he was sent... You can't always get what you want - but you get what you need...

'At daybreak, Jesus went out to a solitary place. The people were looking for him and when they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them.

But he said, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent." And he kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.'

Luke 4:42-44

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 5

Standing by the shore, the people were crowding him, listening to the word of God. Jesus speaking, GOD was teaching. These were the very truths GOD wanted them to know. And the people couldn't get enough of it.

When Jesus speaks, what do you hear?

Are you so hungry to hear GOD's word that you crowd Jesus.

Pursue Him.

Hunger for Him.

'One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. '

Luke 5:1

Crowded, Jesus took action, with what he had and what was around him. He got into a boat and asked Simon to push away from the shore, a little, and then he could teach more effectively. Simon did so - he was also willing.

Look around you, what can you do to be more effective, particularly as you share the kingdom? Who do you need to tap to help you? Pray the Lord will show you what's right in front of you!

'He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. '

Luke 5:2-3

Peter obligingly kept his boat in place while Jesus taught the crowds. Sometimes you work so others can receive what God has for them.

But you are not forgotten. His plan includes you - even when you're hard working in thankless stuff. You have not been overlooked, and you have not been wasted for somebody else. He has something for you too.

'When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. '

Luke 5:4-7

A Walk Through Luke

Ripped nets.
Sinking boat.
Jesus knows how to fish too!
He knows me!!!

Jesus taught from the boat. He then took the boys fishing, and they took a haul!

Simon had been listening as Jesus taught. Simon had been processing on it, and then Jesus filled their boat full.

This was too much for Simon. He realized who Jesus was - God right here with him, in the boat. Suddenly he was ashamed. He doubted the instruction for fishing, but went reluctantly. And then Jesus delivered. Simon was ashamed. His doubt, his past, his heart - all of it was far from God. And now God was pouring out blessing for him.
God does the same for you.

'When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" '

Luke 5:8

The day began as a fisherman with no fish. He was cleaning nets. Then Jesus showed up, and he became a floating podium manager. Even more of a waste of his time - he still had no fish. But he did his job. And then it happened, Jesus filled his nets and his boat, and he realized he was far from God. And now this - a call. Would he? Or would he not?
Will you?

'When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.
Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people."
So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. '

Luke 5:8-11

Outcast. Separated. Shunned.
The disease was horrid.
The banishment was worse.
Then Jesus shows up.
What are you fighting?
What are you carrying?
He is willing.

A Walk Through Luke

'While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him. '

Luke 5:12-13

Jesus worked a longer process. He didn't want acclamation in the public square. Instead, he worked individually changed lives, healed sicknesses, a kingdom spread by individuals. This was for the leper, and for the priests. They needed to discover something happening.

They had known of "one day" for hundreds of years. The Woman's seed would crush the serpents head. They had read of a son of David who would heal. Moses had told them what to offer when they saw it, but they had never seen it...

So go show the priests... When your life is changed, go show the leaders. tell your family and friends. Percolate this kingdom in your neighborhood.

'Then Jesus ordered him, "Don't tell anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. '

Luke 5:14-15

Where is your power from? Do you go quietly and wait? Listen? Rest?
Holy Spirit will meet you. Take the time.

'But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. '

Luke 5:16

Jesus was not building a church. He was not establishing a sect. He was pouring God's real Kingdom into the lives of broken people. The sick were being made well... So what's troubling you? Are you waiting for a doctor or a therapist? Perhaps it's time to cry out to Jesus!

'One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. '

Luke 5:17

A Walk Through Luke

Do you want the Power of God in your life?
How hard will you work to pursue Him?

He's not an ATM where you just walk up and get yours, But He is in the neighborhood.
What will you go through to meet Jesus?

'Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. '
Luke 5:18-19

We attempt great things for God. Maybe they are for ourselves. Doesn't matter. It's HIS response that matters. And wow, is His response good? It's way over the top good. Wow do I need it. We need it.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."
Luke 5:20

When Jesus ruins your theology... The Pharisees listened to Jesus' words, but all they could hear was blasphemy. It was their doctrine and theology that actually had no room for messiah. God's promise was lost on them because they refused to hear what God had sent.

Warning - hold your theology carefully, and always bring it back to the Lord -His Spirit leads into all truth. Be willing to be changed by Him!

'The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" '
Luke 5:21

Jesus went further. He knew his words brought consternation, as he wrecked their broken theology. The man needed help, and the religious leaders needed to be shattered.

This was not malice on Jesus' part, but intent to bring the leaders back to a real faith in God. You also need real faith. Not fake, but actual trust and dependence, especially when it seems hopeless.

'Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."

A Walk Through Luke

Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today." '

Luke 5:22-26

First invitation in a long time. Levi had wealth but few friends. A perceived traitor to Israel, everyone assumed even God hated him... And then Jesus shows up.

No matter who you are or what you have done, Jesus has something for you. The relationship door is open, and the power of God is right behind the welcome.

Levi wasted no time!

'After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him. '

Luke 5:27-28

When Jesus brings you into his family, you want more! You want others to meet him too. You want to dig into what he teaches. You want to go with him as he welcomes others. You want to help him minister, work with him as he heals, join him when he prays.

Levi found the invitation and now friendship was all new and so life-changing... One day he would learn of Jesus' amazing sacrifice for all of us, removing our sin and making us actual children of the living God! But for today, he used what he had and threw a great dinner, inviting many just like himself - rich but lost!

'Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. '

Luke 5:29

Further destroying tradition, Jesus shows the real results of repentance and forgiveness. These people suddenly were welcome by the Lord, and they celebrated, free! And yet the religious leaders hated it - their oppressive system was being overturned - and they knew it.

There's life for you, for anyone who wants to turn and come to the Master!

'But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." '

Luke 5:30-32

A Walk Through Luke

The leaders had a complaint: Jesus and his disciples weren't religioning correctly. They weren't doing it right.

Jesus' answer was perfect - the religion was to get people ready - the REALITY was now here: messiah! How could they NOT celebrate right now?

'They said to him, "John's disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking."

Jesus answered, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast." '

Luke 5:33-35

So confusing to those who are not looking for God's Messiah. Yet so clear for those who see all things being made new, because of messiah. Jesus simply shows how everything is made new, restored, refreshed, on time, with purpose!

'He told them this parable: "No one tears a piece out of a new garment to patch an old one. Otherwise, they will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for they say, 'The old is better.' "

Luke 5:36-39

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 6

Let's be clear - the Sabbath isn't what teachers declare it to be. Sabbath is what the Lord of the Sabbath designed it to be. Rest. Refreshment. Pause. Reflection. Sustenance. Interruption. Reunion. These all come from stopping work and enjoying time with the Lord of the Sabbath.

Are you pausing? Resting? Refreshing with the Lord? Is your sustenance from walking with Him? Come to the reunion. Jesus, and you. Come reflect. Interrupt life and find sustenance in Him. He's ready.

'One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." Then Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." '

Luke 6:1-5

Which camp are you in?
Are you a leader who seeks to entrap the new teacher?
Or, are you a follower, willing to go the distance with the one who heals and has God's power?
There are only two camps...
One of them is deadly.

'On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Get up and stand in front of everyone." So he got up and stood there. Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?" He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was completely restored. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus. '

Luke 6:6-11

Decisions. Do I get them right? What if I get it wrong? Where do I start? I need someone much smarter than I... Jesus began at the mountain. He spent all night, praying. We can learn here - what's first?

'One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. '

Luke 6:12

A Walk Through Luke

Big decisions - so Jesus prayed all night. And then he chose his apostles. These pillars were the foundation for his family of followers - we call it the church today.

Pray first, pray long, seek the Lord. Then do as He guides!

'When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. '

Luke 6:13-16

Having been on the mountain, prayed all night, and then choosing his apostles, they went down to a level place.

Crowds were there, waiting.

He cured those with illnesses and diseases, and cured those with impure spirits.

Power was emanating from him.

Friends, expect no less when you walk with the holy spirit indwelling you.

Go to the mountain.

Then get ready, He is at work!

'He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all. '

Luke 6:17-19

The upside down kingdom. Not made of rich and wealthy, but made of people who walk with the King, friends, cared for, flourishing! Jesus spoke to the poor, and told them they have the kingdom.

This is now. The King, his assets, power, protection - it's now. It's theirs. It can be yours too - join the king!

'Jesus raised his eyes to his disciples and said:

“Happy are you who are poor, because God’s kingdom is yours. '

Luke 6:20

You will be full!

Jesus brings hope to the hungry.

A Walk Through Luke

Satisfaction.
You will laugh.
Hope for those weeping.
I miss my son.
But, one day!
The Kingdom isn't a crutch - it's an entire hospital with proven success!

'Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.
Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh. '
Luke 6:21

When you are hated, reviled and dismissed - rejoice!
Jesus has your back.
God knows you, just like He had the backs of the prophets.
He is at work.
Press on!

' Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.
"Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. '
Luke 6:22-23

Jesus warned the comfortable, the rich, those who were cruising and not caring... Jesus warns America - this could easily be us! Oh Jesus, show me where I am cruising, and open my eyes to where I can help, care, step in, and make a difference.

' "But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.
Woe to you who are well fed now,
for you will go hungry.
Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.
Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. '
Luke 6:24-26

Love my enemy.

A Walk Through Luke

Do good for him, to him.
When he curses, bless him. Pray for a flood of Jesus over him.
Even in mistreatment.
Love him.

' "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. '
Luke 6:27-28

There's nobody beating me, or striking me - we live in peace. There's nobody taking my coat, but if there were - I'm supposed to give my shirt also. We don't live in oppression here...

And now the next part, Give Generously. If they ask, give, and don't demand back. Unspoken, God is the one who gives so generously to me - I can certainly give to others.

'If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. '
Luke 6:29-30

Jesus followers give. They give and don't keep accounts. They provide for those who need, and those who ask. Why is this? God supplies for us. We have learned this. God gives bountifully. We won't run out. So we give!

'Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. '
Luke 6:30

I want to be kind, like Joash was kind. Gracious toward others, not judging. Helping, serving. Stepping in, two hands, open to help...

'Treat people in the same way that you want them to treat you. '
Luke 6:31

Love isn't supposed to be a balance sheet. Keeping accounts, making it even, caring only when being cared for - these are wrong. Living in our own strength and working it all out - NO - Don't do it. Pour out what you will never see come back. Give without reserve. Care even for those who hate you... This new Kingdom is really different. Because the King is even more generous to us, and we won't run out!

A Walk Through Luke

' "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full.

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. '

Luke 6:32-35

Be mercy filled. Pour mercy on others. Don't count their wrongs. Don't keep record. Pour out love and care. Go the distance. Our Father has done so with us. He never condemns, but pours grace. And grace after grace. He gave His own son to carry my wrong, my broken-ness, my sin. He knew I couldn't accomplish it, and so He stepped in.

'Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. '

Luke 6:36

Don't judge.

Don't condemn.

Forgive.

I have no idea what is going on inside him. I don't know what he's facing. What giants and ghouls lay ahead of him. Don't judge. I don't know the score. Don't condemn. But it became personal when he came after me. Forgive.

My God knows. He understands. He is the care taker, the justice giver. He is the salve to heal. He is the restorer. He is protector. And all this for me too.

' "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; '

Luke 6:37

Abundantly. Generously. As any have need. Give!

'Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.' '

Luke 6:38

A Walk Through Luke

If I am not healed, how can I heal someone else? If I cannot see, how can I guide? Jesus challenges me to really know where I am at, first! Have a true assessment. Then have Him heal, correct, restore. I must get right with God. This is first. Then, we'll see what He will do with me...

'He also told them this parable: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into a pit? ' Luke 6:39

Let's take a good look at our teacher.
Was he self-sufficient, or was he less sufficient and dependent on God and others?
Let's do the same...

Was he well received or did he have his critics and pests?
We shall get the same.

Did he hide from hard challenges, or did he step forward?
We should do the same.

Was he powered by self-talk, or was he powered by prayer?
We should do the same...

We are in his class - he's the teacher!

'The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher. ' Luke 6:40

With my obstruction, I am probably not seeing his problem correctly at all. Nor is it my problem... It's my log, and I've been ignoring it... But I can't do a thing until I can see clearly.
Jesus, show me that log, and let's get it taken care of. Go ahead, I am willing...
Once healed, you can show me what to be working on...

' "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?

How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye?

You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. '
Luke 6:41-42

A Walk Through Luke

Want a reality check? Look at your fruit. What do you produce? What happens to others when you are there? What flows into people's lives from you?

Also - Jesus heals. Do you want to produce good fruit? You can. Turn to Him, give your heart and life to His hands, and say "Yes" to whatever He asks. You can bring good fruit!

' "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars.

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. '

Luke 6:43-45

When I hear a sad situation or something atrocious, sometimes an observer says, "Oh Lord!" And when we go to public events with an invocation, we hear "Dear Lord..."

But Jesus calls us to rethink this, and then live accordingly... I have to do what he says!

' "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? '

Luke 6:46

House on Rock:

That's who HEARS Jesus' words and OBEYS them.

House on Sand:

Hears. Doesn't obey.

Stand on the rock - OBEY!

'As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.'

Luke 6:47-49

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 7

After.

After he finished.

Jesus completes, then moved on.

After.

So. Stick it out until He's done... You can make it.

When Jesus had finished saying all this to the people, he returned to Capernaum.

Luke 7:1

The centurion got it... He valued his servant. And now his servant was sick. This isn't an asset issue, it's a friendship issue. He could've always hired another - but this one was important to him.

The centurion HAD to get him well. This was too important...

What would you do? Where would you go?

He went to Jesus...

'There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. '

Luke 7:2-3

Did Jesus go because they pleaded with him? Was it the argument?

No, Jesus went because the man loved God and showed what loving God looks like... He loved God's people. He loved God's plan. He sought God's messiah.

The rest of the story was merely faith playing out...

'When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." So Jesus went with them... '

Luke 7:4-6

His trust in Jesus was enough. Jesus didn't need to come, but merely to say the word.

Is Jesus' word enough for you to rest and trust?

'So Jesus went with them. He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to say to him: "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you.

But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

A Walk Through Luke

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." Then the men who had been sent returned to the house and found the servant well. '

Luke 7:6-10

Jesus sees the widow, forlorn and lost, and is filled with compassion. By the power of the Spirit of God, he commands the dead son, arise!

This is not deity in power, this is a man of faith calling on the power of God.

We can call on the same - and see even more.

'Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her.

When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry." Then he went up and touched the bier they were carrying him on, and the bearers stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!"

The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. '

Luke 7:11-15

God's Kingdom shows up in power. Not what they were seeking, but everything they needed - and the same is true for us today! God has come to help his people. Everywhere you go, it's more than a future promise. It's a declaration for changing today. Involving you. Involving me. Are we up for it?

Here, a woman, widow, soon to be scorned by her community, just lost her son. That was the end of her provision. We might say "My life is over - I am done for."

But not today. Today, Jesus shows us how faith and God's power change everything. And we have access to the same well - we tap in the same way... Let's do this!

'Then he went up and touched the bier they were carrying him on, and the bearers stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said.

"God has come to help his people."

This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country. '

Luke 7:14-17

John wasn't sure. This "King" and "Kingdom" wasn't arriving the way anyone expected. There was no freedom from Rome. Israel wasn't being pushed to the top of the list of nations.

John was confused, his followers too. So he sent inquiry...

'John's disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, he sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"

A Walk Through Luke

When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'"

Luke 7:18-20

Jesus shattered their theology and instead asked them to look at the works of God around and among them. They wanted to know the MESSIAH signs, they wanted the OVERTHROW of ROME. They wanted ELEVATION in their STATUE as their nation would be RESTORED.

They didn't get those things... Instead they got broken people's lives restored... Jesus was DOING Isaiah 53. He was doing Isaiah 61. It's probably time to go back and see what the rabbis missed, what the theologians in their day failed to grasp. (Please go read those now! Then continue this note...) Then go look around at Jesus and all the people. Now, what do you see?

'When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'" At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind.

So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me."

Luke 7:20-23

What were you looking for? Did you wonder what the hullabaloo was about by the river? Did you wonder because a half-crazed guy was preaching? Was it the crowds? What did you think you were seeing?

So here's the thing:

GOD of the UNIVERSE

was making HIS KINGDOM pierce into

this wretched corrupt society,

AND an invitation is here for you

to join in the KINGDOM...

But you had no idea...

Still it's true!

So - what did you come for?

What will you do now?

'After John's messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John:

A Walk Through Luke

“What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces. But what did you go out to see? A prophet?

Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: “ ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” ’

Luke 7:24-28

Sanity check: which side were you on?

Regarding "Behavior", the tax collectors were wrong and the religious leaders were right. But - Jesus is not interested in people behaving.

Regarding allegiance, following and obeying, the Pharisees had no interest in learning and following God's Messiah.

So which side are you? Me? I am broken, but invited. I fail, yet God welcomes me. I trust Him to make me who He desires me to be.

I am redeemed. And you are welcomed too!

COME TO JESUS, as you are!

'(All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John. But the Pharisees and the experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.) '

Luke 7:29-30

Are you watching and offering opinions?

Or, are you doing?

Watching means you don't actually do anything. You merely observe and make judgements. Nobody gains a thing from you.

Doing means hearing, thinking, and putting into action. Wisdom is proven by the people who implement the wise guidance. Let's DO!

'Jesus went on to say, “To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other: “

‘We played the pipe for you,

and you did not dance;

we sang a dirge,

and you did not cry.’

A Walk Through Luke

For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.'

But wisdom is proved right by all her children.”

Luke 7:31-35

Jesus hears our invitation, comes in, and puts his feet up. He's ready for us. He's ready for me. He's ready for you. Invite him in!

'When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. '

Luke 7:36

A woman at the meal began her own process of repentance, remorse, turning to Messiah. She began weeping, tears falling on Jesus' feet, and she wiped them with her hair. She poured out expensive perfume on his feet as well. Oh her heart was turning to God.

Has your heart turned to God. Have you looked at the past and renounced it, wept over the hurt and pain, and chosen instead to anoint Jesus as your savior?

A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

Luke 7:37-38

Jesus is not like the others. He knew what Simon was thinking. Fully God, Simon was soon to learn that his guest is amazing, sharp, and knowing. His guest knew what Simon was saying to himself. And Jesus will bring the message home with power! Jesus is the one we want in our life!

'When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."

Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you." "Tell me, teacher," he said. '

Luke 7:39-40

A Walk Through Luke

Today's lesson is rich! Simon wondered if Jesus even knew the background of that woman dotting on him... And then Jesus turns to Simon... And notice the benediction -Go in peace and be sure to note why!

'Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

"Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Luke 7:40-50

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 8

Jesus travelled from one town to another, proclaiming the Kingdom of God. He had an entourage, a group of women with him. And the women shared one trait - they had been cured of evil spirits and diseases. Such a constant in Jesus' life, the curing of evil spirits and diseases. We should expect to see the same when Jesus is in our lives. Today I lift up my friend Scott and my friend Bill - Heal them Jesus!

'After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.'

Luke 8:1-3

What happens when Jesus is travelling around the region, teaching to the public? He tells us. The farmer spreads his seed everywhere, but the results vary.

The seed is given to all, but only some grow to maturity. When we spread seed, we share with everyone, but there's a lot of life's circumstances, and a lot of life choices that affect whether the fruit will come.

Keep spreading. Pray for fruit. Encourage people on their life choices too!

'While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable:

“A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.”

When he said this, he called out, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.” His disciples asked him what this parable meant.

A Walk Through Luke

He said, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, “ ‘though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.’

“This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop. ’

Luke 8:4-15

Now you're a follower. Me too.

Now there's a need to invest.

Now I add some action toward others.

Now I join in Jesus' work, by His Spirit!

No longer an audience, I am His worker, as He keeps working through me!

' “No one lights a lamp and hides it in a clay jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, they put it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light. For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open. Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they think they have will be taken from them.” ’

Luke 8:16-18

Family Intervention.

Oh no, here it comes!

What now?

So Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him. They wanted to talk with him... My take is they wanted to stop the nonsense and have Jesus get a job be more like the family... Have you been there? Well, Jesus was about His Father's business, and set his hand to the plow to complete it.

A Walk Through Luke

And He embraced and engaged anyone who was with Him! What's the test? His family are only those people who hear Him, and put into practice what He says.

'Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you."

He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice." '

Luke 8:19-21

The more we are with Jesus, the more we discover His character, His nature, His love, His power. They were learning. Who is this that even the wind and the waves obey Him? He can calm the storm in my life. But get this- He rebuked them. Where was their faith? He expected them to stand and command in the power of the Spirit, just as He did. Where do I need to stand and rebuke in my life?

'One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger.

The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!" He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm.

"Where is your faith?" he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him." '

Luke 8:22-25

The poor guy just wanted relief. He had no idea how good the restoration would be!

I don't realize how good God's work will be in me either! Eagerly pursue it!

'They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs.

When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!"

For Jesus had commanded the impure spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places. '

A Walk Through Luke

Luke 8:26-29

The man didn't want torture. He was already getting tortured, tossed into the fire, harming himself. Nobody could help. Until Jesus.

Jesus commanded the demons come out of this man, and they were powerful. He asked their name, and heard "Legion." That's a big number, 3,000-6,000 in Roman military. These had all made a place in the man's life.

What has made a place in your life? Have you found yourself unable to remove it, remove those? Sometimes it's more than you can handle.

Jesus can handle them. Jesus can send them all to the Abyss, to the final lake of fire made for them. With a word He can free you, release you and set you healed on solid ground. Oh we need Jesus... Next we learn what Jesus did!

'When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!"

For Jesus had commanded the impure spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. And they begged Jesus repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. '

Luke 8:28-31

Speaking in the authority of Jesus Christ. The demon was forced to reply. This holds true today. Not because of me. It's the authority of Jesus. They told of their name. They also knew that being sent to the Abyss was final. So they begged to go into the pigs. And off they were sent.

Not so good for the pigs. They rushed over the cliff into the sea, and drowned. And not so good for the pig farmers either - there goes their herd. But the demons were freed again. These may still be out there. Unless someone in Jesus' authority commands them to the Abyss.

What are you facing? Could a demon be involved? Speak and command in Jesus' name and authority. Send it to the Abyss.

'Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. And they begged Jesus repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and he gave them permission.

When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. '

Luke 8:30-33

A Walk Through Luke

He's free, he's free! The demons are gone, and our friend is restored - he's finally free! The pig-tenders were proclaiming in the town about the demons, the pigs, and their restored friend!

So the town people came out - and got mad. They made Jesus leave.

Restoration had cost the town people some income. And they were not pleased. Are you willing for restoration? Is freedom worth it? What if it costs you income to see salvation land in your town? Being spent for the gospel is hard - and these people were not willing. Am I willing?

'When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened.

When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured.

Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left. '

Luke 8:34-37

A living testimony. You have to stay in your hard situation, even though you'd rather get out of town. Nobody likes Jesus around here.

Turns out the people were mad at Jesus. So He did something amazing. He restored a guy filled with a legion of demons. And Jesus sent him back to the town.

Irrefutable testimony ... this man is going to change the whole region to Jesus followers. But it starts hard...

'The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return home and tell how much God has done for you."

So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him. '

Luke 8:38-39

We pray in the name of Jesus. We declare His Kingdom and healing. We listen to His Spirit. We hand the power, control and credit to Him. His Spirit has power, and we walk after Him in it.

And then things happen. Suddenly, people are waiting. But not for us. They too need to meet the Holy Spirit... "Greater things"

'Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. '

Luke 8:40

A Walk Through Luke

Your only daughter is dying. Not sick, worse, life slipping away. And you've been faithful, at the synagogue week after week, year after year. And you're a leader - why is this happening to you? You've been doing your part, but still, she's dying. Does God not hear? What does this mean? And you have a reputation to keep. But she's dying... Gotta do something.

So you decide to cross that line, walk against your colleagues, to seek out Jesus. He's controversial. Just got kicked out of the Gerasene region. But your daughter is dying. So you go to him.

Imploring him, begging him, come on, my daughter is dying. And Jesus decides to come. But the crowds are crushing in, and you're not making progress. This raises the final question...

How do you do with road rage when traffic is against you? This trip is far worse - your daughter is dying. And ALL. THESE. PEOPLE. How do you cope with the biggest life obstacles? Guess what, it's going to get even worse.

'Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him.'
Luke 8:41-42

Jairus wants Jesus to come to his daughter - she's dying. The crowds are crushing in. And then someone cuts in line.
How do you feel in a situation like that?

Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" He felt power go out. Probably felt hot to the touch - ask my wife. But who was it?

Finally, a woman stepped forward. All she wanted was to be hidden. Touching Jesus healed her, and finally she could disappear.

For 12 years she had been unclean. Think of a Hindu Outcaste, where everyone shamed her, pushed her away in derision. She was forever unclean - 12 years.

But Jesus forces her to go public. He wants to publicly set the record straight - for her. Salvation changes everything. She was just about to learn this too!

And there's Jairus, dealing with more interruption...

But can you imagine the peace the woman finally received? She can go in peace. Are you in turmoil? There's hope, healing, and an inheritance. Go in peace!

'And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.'

A Walk Through Luke

“Who touched me?” Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, “Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you.” But Jesus said, “Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.”

Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.

Then he said to her, “Daughter, your faith
Luke 8:43-48

Jairus is waiting and wondering. Jesus just got done with the woman, Interrupter #2. Was Jairus upset? Was he patient? Was it fear? Was it faith? Well, it's going to get tested even more.

How are you with the insurmountable? Upset? Patient? Afraid? Trusting? And what happens when it gets even worse?

Jesus has an answer!

'While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” he said. “Don’t bother the teacher anymore.” Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.” ' Luke 8:49-50

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 9

'When Jesus had called the Twelve together, He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

He told them: "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.'

Luke 9:1-6

You've been called, so have I. Power and Authority are given, along with a charge. Drive out sickness and spirits, heal people and declare the Kingdom. And when you go to a new town, stay with the people who welcome you. Don't take your own supplies, but depend on them. Let them be a part of this kingdom by having skin in the game!

They did it. So should we.

'Now Herod the Tetrarch heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life.

But Herod said, "I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?" And he tried to see him.'

Luke 9:7-9

God's work, done God's way, it's going to get everyone's attention. This is good.

We are expendable. But the Good News of the Kingdom must go out!

'When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done. Then he took them with him and they withdrew by themselves to a town called Bethsaida, '

Luke 9:10

The apostles were excited. They got back and told of all that had happened. And then Jesus showed them one more principle: you have to get away. He took them to Bethsaida.

We can't run 24×7, we need some rest, with Jesus.

A Walk Through Luke

I need some rest, with Jesus. You do as well.

'but the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.'

Luke 9:11

Jesus took them away for some rest. But the crowds! They followed anyway. Jesus did what he should have done, he met the crowds, healed sicknesses and illnesses, and taught about his kingdom.

That's the magic. That's the method. Seems so very simple. Because it is so very simple.

Last night we heard a worker who shared the same. Caring for people. Praying healing. Praying provision. Praying direction. Then following.

We too can do this.

'Late in the afternoon the Twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so they can go to the surrounding villages and countryside and find food and lodging, because we are in a remote place here."

He replied, "You give them something to eat." They answered, "We have only five loaves of bread and two fish—unless we go and buy food for all this crowd." (About five thousand men were there.)

But he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." The disciples did so, and everyone sat down. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. '

Luke 9:12-17

So, that "Jesus Retreat" turned into a great crowd of people needing healing, wanting to learn, and experiencing the Kingdom. At least the disciples are pragmatic. They encourage Jesus to send the crowds away. Everyone is tired, everyone is getting hungry. And there are no plans.

At the end of your retreat that turns into a carnival, do you just want it to finally finish, and have some normalcy arrive? I do. We all do. Except Jesus. He has something better in mind. He throws a higher obstacle in front of the disciples.

When you've had enough, and want to head home, how do you feel about one more giant thing? Jesus is not much of a planner. That's why the disciples are striving to organize. Jesus just tells them, "Don't send the crowds away, you feed them." And the guys have nothing.

A Walk Through Luke

These guys are frustrated. They are out of ideas and out of resources. Have you ever been there?

And then Jesus does the thing...

'Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "God's Messiah." '

Luke 9:18-20

Imagine praying with Jesus, just the few in a private room. And then he asks, who do people think he is...

And then he looks at me, and he asks, "Who do you think I am?"

The question of a lifetime. I've walked with him. I've learned life lessons. I've grown in trust. I've seen great things. Miracles. Provision. Life restored.

But this question changes everything. If I believe it, then there's a responsibility on me. To follow. To join in. To give my all while in God's work, just as He does.

Am I in? Are you in?

'Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone <that Jesus is Messiah>.

And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. '

Luke 9:21-23

So we figured out Jesus is God's sent one, Messiah. We are not to run out and tell people. Jesus wants the softer approach, going and serving. Heal sicknesses and afflictions, cast out demons, show the Kingdom in action. People will discover their King, just as we have!

It's hard work, and won't be self-fulfilling. There's a cost. A huge cost. Check it out, then join in!

A Walk Through Luke

'Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? '

Luke 9:23-25

Learning more of Messiah, learning more of the cost of following.

The Disciples just agreed that Jesus is the sent one from God, he is God incarnate. Suddenly the obligation on them comes into view. If Jesus is Messiah, then no personal pursuit comes equal to the life spent following Jesus. Following Jesus will cost everything. Every day the disciple must choose again, Jesus comes first.

And it's a costly discipleship, there's a cross involved. I'm going to die to self.

There's an upside too. Following Jesus saves my life. Following Jesus means finding the real life God has for me. Gaining the whole world does not compare to the life I find in Christ.

Have you grabbed that cross today, and set yourself again to follow Jesus?

'Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

"Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:26-27

What will you stand for?

Will you stand for Jesus, proud, enthralled?

Will you be ashamed and not stand?

I exult, knowing we shall be with Him!

'About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning.

Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.

A Walk Through Luke

As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, “Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (He did not know what he was saying.) While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. A voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.”

When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves and did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen. '

Luke 9:28-36

Did you catch that glimpse?

It's a Kingdom.

There's God's people-leader, and the Challenger-to-faith, and Jesus.

What did you see?

"My teacher is no ordinary guy."

So who is He?

This is every man's decision.

'The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him. A man in the crowd called out, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. A spirit seizes him and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him.

I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they could not.”

“You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you and put up with you? Bring your son here.”

Even while the boy was coming, the demon threw him to the ground in a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the impure spirit, healed the boy and gave him back to his father. And they were all amazed at the greatness of God... '

Luke 9:37-43

Jesus expects us to step up and work our faith using His authority. Everything he does, he expects us to do. Everything he can do, is done in the power of the Holy Spirit. If you are a Jesus-follower, you also have the Holy Spirit. Jesus expects us to step up in faith.

Faith is required of the worker and of the recipient. In this case, neither the disciples nor the father believed they could see release from the demon. But they could have. This made Jesus upset.

A Walk Through Luke

Step out in faith, The Lord will place you in situations and places in which you can walk in faith.

'And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. While everyone was marveling at all that Jesus did, he said to his disciples, "Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men."

But they did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them, so that they did not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask him about it. '

Luke 9:43-45

The glory and the flame.... Everyone was amazed and thrilled to see all that Jesus would do, the lives changed. But they didn't know the cost behind it. There is a Calvary ahead, and he tried to tell them. Think on this, remember the cost. Remember we might face trials, Jesus faced it all and paid it!

'An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him.

Then he said to them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest." '

Luke 9:46-48

Get out of the GREATNESS business.
Get into the WELCOME business.
The Kingdom is for everyone.
Hold the door open.

"Master," said John, "we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us."

"Do not stop him," Jesus said, "for whoever is not against you is for you." '

Luke 9:49-50

He's on our side!

In fact, he wasn't driving out spirits, our Holy Spirit was driving out spirits, and the man was faithfully following God's lead. He did it because it was God in him.

And the Holy Spirit in you brings the very same authority, power, and results. It's time to get in ministry!

A Walk Through Luke

'As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem.

When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?"

But Jesus turned and rebuked them. Then he and his disciples went to another village. '

Luke 9:51-56

What a foreboding time. Still Jesus set his path toward Jerusalem. He also taught his disciples: just because the people don't get it yet, we don't condemn them.

For us, go easy on people. Remember, we took years to get here.
Give them time...

'As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."

Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Luke 9:57-58

Following Jesus may not get you that pristine home and brand new car.

These don't matter, it's following Him that matters. Will he provide?

'He said to another man, "Follow me."

But he replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." '

Luke 9:59-60

If you are putting Jesus off until later in life, you're simply putting him off. Don't.

The King of the Universe, over all others, wants you. Talk. Listen. Walk. Learn. Explore.

This is your opportunity - DO IT!

A Walk Through Luke

'Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family."

Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:61-62

And just as quickly, Jesus reminds me that I must plow effectively, for Him. So today will be about diligence, hand still on the plow, going forward!

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 10

'After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.'

Luke 10:1-3

Jesus puts the work in OUR HANDS! He sends US to the places He is going to go.

He still does. We go with His command. We carry His authority. We bear His power. We are led by His Holy Spirit.

We can't lose. So Look! Pray. Send us!

Oh, hey! www.lookpraysend.us

'Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. "When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. "When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

Luke 10:4-9

Jesus gives us the instructions - here's how to bring Him into a new community!

1. 'Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and
2. Do not greet anyone on the road.
3. When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you.
4. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages.
5. Do not move around from house to house.
6. When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you.
7. Heal the sick who are there and
8. Tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

That's an 8 Step Method. And it's easy!

So... What part do you need to add or change in your approach?

'But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God

A Walk Through Luke

has come near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town. '
Luke 10:10-12

When you arrive in a hard town, ask Jesus to show you a welcoming person, a person of peace. If you don't find one, it's time to move on. Jesus is the one who sends, who leads, who directs, and who closes doors too. Listen and follow. Be in the right place! If you are not, then move on.

' "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades.

"Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me." '

Luke 10:13-16

It's so awesome to see the love of God - and we enjoy telling others!

But there is another side. Rejection of Jesus means rejecting all of what God is and does. It's devastating, and the results are eternal. We don't enjoy telling others about this. But we must.

Jesus takes the time to tell people about Hell as well...

'The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." '

Luke 10:17-20

They returned home excited. They had power, the Holy Spirit in them! But now they believed it and acted on it.

Will we?

'At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. '

Luke 10:21

A Walk Through Luke

What were "these things" for which Jesus offered praise?

- That followers of Jesus have power...
- That the Holy Spirit could cast out sicknesses and diseases...
- That demons are subject to Jesus' authority...
- That we will do greater things...

When we step out, it's not because of who we are. It's not because of how much better we behave. We don't earn it.

It's all about who Jesus is. He's the Lord, who reigns in power. So for us, simply trust, obedience, and standing in faith in Jesus!

“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

Luke 10:22

Do you know who gets all things? It's Jesus. His Father committed all things to Jesus. It's Jesus.

Nobody knows Jesus except the Father. All of us are kind of discovering, whether you're a newborn follower, or whether you are a learned professor in a seminary. We are but learning. The Father knows Jesus.

Nobody knows the Father, except for Jesus. With one exception. Jesus makes the Father known, even makes Him known to us! So we are learning of the Father, as Jesus is making Him known.

How lost were we? Completely!

How did we get back to God? Only by Jesus making the Father known.

Spend some time in this verse.

"Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.” "

Luke 10:23-24

Jesus showed the disciples that they were standing between anticipation and fulfillment. What the faithful had been waiting for was now unveiling before their eyes. They were seeing it, they were

A Walk Through Luke

experiencing it. Remember their astonishment - the Holy Spirit in them meant power, healing, restoration? This is the experience, God with Man, Emanuel!

'On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered, " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' ; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' "

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." '

Luke 10:25-28

So - did you catch the problem? The theologian wasn't doing it. Isn't that my problem too? The Theologian knew the answer already. Jesus knew that he knew it too. Jesus gave him the opportunity to tell it, but that leads to a problem... Do you know the answer too? If you do, what is the problem?

'But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." '

Luke 10:29-37

The leader was trapped. He wanted to get Jesus cornered and instead found himself facing the truth - Loving God wholly, and loving my neighbor completely. Then the thought occurred- how have I done?

We are all here. We get the metric, we see the measure - but how do we do? I mean, aren't we there? So Jesus helps us really measure.

A Walk Through Luke

How have you done? How am I doing? Which person would I be - the protected leader? The rule-following ascetic? Or the careless foreigner who gave up what he had to help?

Which are you?

Which do you want to be?

DO it!

'As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.

But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Luke 10:38-42

Come sit and learn at the feet of Jesus. Skip the formal, skip the ritual, skip the preparations... All those will get taken care of - come meet Jesus. Mary and Martha are both welcome there - and so are we!

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 11

'One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

He said to them, "When you pray, say: "

'Father,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.

And lead us not into temptation. ' " ' "

Luke 11:1-4

Jesus made it very simple... How To Pray 101

'Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.'

I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. ' "

Luke 11:5-10

In prayer, be audacious! ASK over-the-top requests, ask the big asks, expect results! If the neighbor responds because of the impertinence, won't our Father answer even more because of His love for us? GO for it - ask as much as you need!

' "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" ' "

Luke 11:11-13

A Walk Through Luke

Jesus taught about asking, seeking and knocking - our Father will give as we do so. But they weren't really sure he meant it. So he reinforced again.

THIS IS IMPORTANT - learn it, and act on it! The Holy Spirit is given to you, to me!

'Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. '

Luke 11:14

This ONE SNIPPET - it's the BIG DEAL.

Jesus does it by the Holy Spirit.
You and I can as well, by the Holy Spirit.

Such results!
The MUTE spoke!

When Holy Spirit infests your life, he brings power, insight, wisdom and direction. Listen to him, and follow!

'But some of them said, "By Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons." Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven. '

Luke 11:15-16

So how do you do when Jesus heals, or frees? Where's your heart when he is teaching? Here a young man was mute, and Jesus drove the demon from him - and he began speaking! What's your response?

- Demons aren't for today?
- Some sort of trick?
- Jesus could do things because he is god?
- Another time, without modern medicine?
- Come Holy Spirit, show me and I will obey like Jesus?

Every one of us has to decide when to finally trust what Jesus says, and expect greater things than even He did...

Jesus wants to know where we are in following him - and the rest will take care of itself.

'Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: "Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebul.

A Walk Through Luke

-Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges.

But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. '

Luke 11:17-20

They questioned where Jesus' power came from. And he was relentless, he didn't concede. Instead he pointed out that Satan cannot drive out Satan.

And then, if this is true, then THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN is HERE, NOW.

What will they do about it?

What about you?

I am IN!

' "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up his plunder. '

Luke 11:21-22

The strong man wins. Jesus is the strong man. Get Him in your life, like now!

Simply go to Him, ask Him in, tell Him you are His.

That's it! Strong Man Wins!

' "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. '

Luke 11:23

When we are talking about the strong man, and the power of God, we are talking about choosing sides: darkness or light.

And we MUST choose sides. There's no "OBSERVATION GROUP" - it's a battle and you're in it. Choose Jesus' side!

' "When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first." '

Luke 11:24-26

A Walk Through Luke

There's a two part responsibility to healing.

Jesus' authority removes demons and drives out afflictions. Solid, complete, people are free!

Once freed, people must pour their hearts into Jesus, follow Him, obey Him, walk in His power. This shuts the door to the Spirits.

But if that door is not closed, then the healing is temporary, and the end result is far worse.

Lessons:

1. Be healed - Jesus already does this!
2. Be his disciple - follow and obey him!

'As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you."

He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

Luke 11:27-28

She wanted to say it was a family thing, a lineage thing. You had to be from that one line... And Jesus says "no, it's an obedience thing. Everyone is welcome!"

You want the blessing?

'As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.'

Luke 11:29

Jesus calls us a WICKED GENERATION. We ask for a sign but we have no intent whatsoever of following the sign. We make off-the-cuff demands, and offer no allegiance whatsoever.

To us, to the Wicked, Jesus tells us, there won't be any show. There won't be a dance, no attractional performance, no guest speakers, or artists, no celebrities. We won't get that. All we will see is a half-dead guy telling us the end is near and we must repent.

Skip the attractional model. It fails and doesn't cause people to turn back to God!

'As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.

For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation. The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn

A Walk Through Luke

them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom; and now something greater than Solomon is here.

The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and now something greater than Jonah is here. '
Luke 11:29-32

This one's actually very straightforward. Jonah was sent to Nineveh as a sign. The sign said "TURN BACK TO GOD"

Likewise, Jesus was sent to our generation, as a sign: "TURN BACK TO GOD."

Even the Queen of Sheba gets it - she came from afar to learn of God.

Are you ready? "TURN BACK TO GOD."

' "No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light.

Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness.

See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness.

Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you." '

Luke 11:33-36

Jesus lived in demonstration of how the light works. It hits everybody! The light fills the whole body, and results in radiant joy to everyone around as well. There is grace, forgiveness, healing, release, and power. And it's for you and me too. Not just to warm up my own dark places, but to flood every place we go!

Jesus showed us, and we can and should show others as well. Let your light shine today!

'When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. '

Luke 11:37

Anyone can invite Jesus to the table. Guess what? He will come!
You can too, NO QUESTIONS ASKED!

A Walk Through Luke

The Pharisee was astonished to see that Jesus did not first wash before dinner. And the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.

You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also? But give as alms those things that are within, and behold, everything is clean for you.

Luke 11:38-41 ESV

Don't bank on your religion to cleanse you. No matter your ritual or practice, there's a life hidden inside, and THAT needs salvation. Cleanse that, and everything else will be clean also.

' “Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. “Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the marketplaces. “Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which people walk over without knowing it.” ’

Luke 11:42-44

Turn on the inside stuff: justice, love, compassion generosity... Get beyond the outside stuff.

'One of the experts in the law answered him, “Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also.”

Jesus replied, “And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them. “Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your ancestors who killed them.

So you testify that you approve of what your ancestors did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs. Because of this, God in his wisdom said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.’

Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary.

Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it all.

“Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering.” ’

Luke 11:45-52

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The religious leader felt insulted.

Jesus, "It's not an insult when it's truth! Shape up now!"

' "Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering."

When Jesus went outside, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, waiting to catch him in something he might say.'

Luke 11:52-53

Satan loves destruction and hates people. He will use anyone, especially publicly recognized leaders. Check everything against what Jesus says in His Word, and listen only to Him!

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 12

'Meanwhile, when a crowd of many thousands had gathered, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying:

“Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs. “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more.

But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell.

Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. '

Luke 12:1-7

What should I really be worried about? It's not what others think.

I need to be far more concerned of not being in a right relationship with my Father in heaven. He is real, His love is constant, His judgment is right, and He wants to remake me. So count me in.

' “I tell you, whoever publicly acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man will also acknowledge before the angels of God. But whoever disowns me before others will be disowned before the angels of God. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. '

Luke 12:8-10

The issue of Jesus is settled. He is God, came for us, taught about the Kingdom, died for all sins, rose from the grave, and ascended to his Father's side. He's there making intercession, even now.

The issue of you and me is still up in the air. What will we do about Jesus. Are we interested? Are we joined in? Are we carrying our cross and following? The issue is us!

' “When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.” '

Luke 12:11-12

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The follow-up to standing for Jesus publicly, it's when they arrest you and bring you into the community square, before the judges. Don't back down, don't soft-sell it. God who made you and me, He calls us to stand for Him in the square! Don't worry about what you'll say. Instead go, stand in confidence, and God will give you the words. We are declaring a Kingdom, and the invitation goes out to everyone who hears!

'Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?"

Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." '

Luke 12:13-15

Everybody wants "Equality" but few want "Piety." Oh for growth in devotion, to listening to God, to obeying His words, to pouring into others.

Yet a few simply want "their fair share." There is no fair share. I don't deserve anything... Jesus help me follow you!

'And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'" "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." '

"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God." '

Luke 12:16-21

Change your thinking.
Be rich toward God.
Pour into His work.
Give to the poor around you.
Send the Gospel to peoples who have never heard.
Look out for the widow and the orphan.
Give generously.
Give it all!
You don't need a bigger barn.
You need a bigger heart.

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'Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.

Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life ? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? '

Luke 12:22-26

Don't worry about your life, your health, your clothes. Trust God, follow hard after Him, and you will be taken care of.

' "Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!

And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. '

Luke 12:27-31

God loves you incredibly! More than those beautiful flowers... So get it right and keep it right - seek His Kingdom. Bring that Kingdom everywhere you go. Pray for healing and restoration, and proclaim it. The King is here.

' "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. '

Luke 12:32-34

Set yourself up to care for the poor. Bias toward giving, and you will not run out!

' "Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him.

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It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them.

It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into.

You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” ’

Luke 12:35-40

The Son of Man is coming. Are you dressed, ready, watching? Are you making the most of your time, ready to work, or working as able, until He comes?

’Peter asked, “Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?” The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

But suppose the servant says to himself, ‘My master is taking a long time in coming,’ and he then begins to beat the other servants, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers. “The servant who knows the master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be beaten with many blows.

But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. ’

Luke 12:41-48

Peter thought there were chosen people - the ones who get in specially! And Jesus decimates the thought.

God is at work in us - but the proof is that we are working daily, waiting for our king, and building the kingdom in between.

’ “I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and what constraint I am under until it is completed!

A Walk Through Luke

Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.” ’

Luke 12:49-53

There is a scary part.

Jesus came as PEACE to the outcast, the neglected, the forgotten. He came as hope to the lost. But Jesus comes as judgment to the persecutors, the unjust, the vile. Jesus comes as a plumb line for truth and righteousness. And our world needs the standard.

Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He fights against the Prince of Darkness who rules the world. And the battle is ON.

Take time to figure out who you are with - then be all in for Him. I hope you choose Jesus.

'He said to the crowd: "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is. Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this present time? '

Luke 12:54-56

You know the weather, you know exactly what is coming... How did you miss all the signs of God's incoming Messiah?

' "Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?

As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be reconciled on the way, or your adversary may drag you off to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.”'

Luke 12:57-59

As followers of Jesus, we can make decisions, judgments, with the Spirit inside us to rule or over-rule. We don't need wicked judges to decide. So here's the question - will I allow Jesus to rule by His Spirit, and will I obey Him? Am I a believer and desiring to live His way?

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 13

'Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. '

Luke 13:1-3

What you heard, it's heinous. It truly is. Killed and blood mixed into rituals. Ick. I am sorry at what they did.

Sin is sickening. And it's fatal. sin kills. Don't miss this: what we have in sin is far more deadly than the evil which others perpetuate.

We need redemption, given from God, repentance of our sin, turning away to then receive Jesus, to follow Him.

'Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.' '

Luke 13:4-5

The way I think, how I evaluate, THIS is what leads to my actions. My view is off. My measure is wrong, and the scales are bent. I need to get the measure right, and then I can begin evaluation.

I look at others, and they are so wrong. It's obvious, and so I am not like them. But then Jesus speaks. He shows me that I am the one who is off. I am misunderstanding.

The others, I am just like them, and in great need. I am corrupt, filled with sin, and cannot see the Lord unless He brings salvation. Wash me Jesus. Wash my friends too!

'Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

" 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.' "

Luke 13:6-9

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The Owner has a right to the tree. He's invested for three years, but with no fruit. He can do whatever He wants, but He is tired of waiting, and ready to move on. His caretaker says to give it a year. He will feed it better and see if we can't get something out of the tree. The Owner appears to agree.

God has a right to the fruit from my life. He's been investing for years. But the fruit isn't what it could be. Is He tired of waiting, and ready to move on? Then the caretaker tells Him, give it one more year, and the caretaker will invest more.

Where are we with the Lord? As far as our responsibility, are we bearing fruit? What could we do to bear more fruit? Certainly Holy Spirit feeds us and empowers. But we also have choices. What is our choice at this point?

Get after it. Start producing fruit!

'On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity." Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God. '

Luke 13:10-13

Jesus meets us in our infirmity. Crippled by a spirit, Jesus declares freedom and release. He healed her then and there. Notice she couldn't straighten up; and now, with a word, with Holy Spirit's power, she's free!

'Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue leader said to the people, "There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath."

The Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?"

When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing. '

Luke 13:14-17

Being set free, 24×7
The leaders disapproved
The people were thrilled
Jesus is King, 24×7

A Walk Through Luke

"Then Jesus asked, "What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches." Again he asked, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough." ' Luke 13:18-21

So what's this Kingdom like?

It's like a tiny seed that grows into a huge tree - this is going to be huge!!! And we're invited, and we are inviting others...

What's it like? It's like yeast, almost invisible and unseen, and it permeates everything. It reaches everyone and changes everybody,.

This is what the Kingdom is like!

And it all started with a messiah, promised of old, born of Mary, Emmanuel, God with us!
Merry Christmas!

"Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?"

He said to them, "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' "But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.'

"Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' "But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!'

"There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last." '

Luke 13:22-30

Jesus isn't in the numbers game, He's in the authenticity game. Be authentic. He wants you!

'At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you." He replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will keep on driving out demons and healing people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.'

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In any case, I must press on today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem! “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

Luke 13:31-35

Jesus is not running for his life. He's not afraid of Herod.

Jesus is healing and bringing the Kingdom. For Jerusalem. For the win!

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 14

'One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. There in front of him was a man suffering from abnormal swelling of his body. Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" But they remained silent.

So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him on his way. Then he asked them, "If one of you has a child or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull it out?" And they had nothing to say. '

Luke 14:1-6

Love.
Every Day.

Jesus did.
They hated him for it.

'When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: "When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this person your seat.' Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests.

For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." '

Luke 14:7-11

Humility matters!
Don't self-promote, instead serve.

The Lord knows and loves me, I don't have to go do the battle.
He elevates.

'Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." '

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Luke 14:12-14

Invite, feed, love and care for those who could not possibly pay you back... Jesus goes there, and calls us to service and charity. Give beyond your circle! Here's why you have what you have - so the Lord can work in you for others.

'When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

"But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' "Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'

Luke 14:15-20

So we all understand there's a King, there's a Kingdom, and there's a huge celebration! And we understand what joy there is to be at the celebration.

But nobody wants to come. Not really.

Do you want to come? Will you put your stuff aside, and come?

' "The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.'

" 'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.'

"Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.' "

Luke 14:21-24

The King wishes His banquet table be full.

Be there.

Get your friends there.

Spread the word to anyone missed: Be There.

Go to the whole world, bring them.

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So we set our sights on every people group, every family, every language, every tribal village: Come. It's easy - we have planes, boats, cars, phones, media, internet.

It's hard - very few want to love and follow Jesus.

We go anyway!!!

Please go anyway.

Jesus is worth it.

You are welcome.

'Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.'

Luke 14:25-27

Coming to Jesus means placing him first. He becomes number one in our life. Family, obligations, commitments, they all submit to him first. Following Jesus is costly, yet well worth it. The crowds begin to thin when the cost comes forward. What about you?

' "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.' "

Luke 14:28-30

Why is Jesus being so harsh? He's brought the Kingdom with amazing power, healing and restoration. He's put the leaders on notice that their false piety is not acceptable, and that God is here for everyone. But now he is telling his followers how hard and harsh the life is for the follower. It's a tough row to hoe.

Everyone is welcome. But the truth is, the road is costly. Jesus wants followers, but he wants them to last and go the full course. So he explains the need to take a real assessment - and only after that, please, follow him!

' "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. '

Luke 14:31-33

Jesus is really something. He's found a topic he won't give up - you and me following him. He wants us as disciples. And so he goes for another round, showing us we must look at this and truly decide

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whether we are willing to do what it takes to follow him. He wants us following him. So he tells the account of the king going to war. The king must know ahead of time whether he has what it takes. Otherwise the king won't do it.

Take some time and figure out. Will you do what it takes to follow Jesus. Will I?

Yes, I will. At any cost.

' "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

Luke 14:34-35

We've been asked to consider. We've been asked to plan. We've been asked to measure the cost. Discipleship is hard. But diligence, sticking to it, these are what actually keeps and gets people to be part of the King's Kingdom.

Jesus wants us. He wants us effective. So count that cost. Then go make and be the difference!

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Chapter 15

'Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."'
Luke 15:1-2

Who are your friends? Who is it that hangs out, that comes around? Who do you welcome?

What about reputation? "I don't smoke and I don't chew, and I won't go with girls who do." is an old line about choosing, discretion, the right people.

Jesus would have none of this. People didn't know he is a King and the opener of the Kingdom for everyone. All they knew was they heard of healings, of release from demons, of bread multiplied, and of a new teaching where God invites people to join him. So they came.

We came too. But are we OK with everyone who is coming? The leaders were not. And we have to decide - who is OK in God's Kingdom? Once we get that settled, then we know who to start hanging out with and begin talking to.

'Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.'

Luke 15:3-7

Those people that Jesus hangs with? They already belong to the King.

They are like a lost sheep. But they are the Shepherd's sheep. Jesus says they are lost, compared with all the well behaved sheep who are present and submissive.

The lost sheep is valuable, precious, and the Shepherd has not given up. He goes after them!

Is there anyone you know who just seem lost? Talk to the Shepherd - he is at work. And when the odd start to show up, welcome them. The Shepherd is at work!

' "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."'
Luke 15:8-10

A Walk Through Luke

He's really against us looking down our noses at others. Condescension has no place in Jesus' Kingdom. Nobody is rejected. Nobody is unworthy. Every man, woman, boy and girl is designed and created in God's image, and He wants them in his Kingdom.

Imagine the celebration if your wealth is suddenly drastically cut, and you had no idea. You scramble, trying to figure out what happened. Then after a day, it's restored. Relief. Assurance. Comfort. You call your friends, and tell them the good news. You put it on Instagram with a picture, or Facebook with a story. Twitter gets 280 letters as you describe the restoration.

Heaven celebrates even more, when one lost sinner turns back to God. Angels sing, the Father smiles, the Son nods, he's done it again. There's a party.

Everyone is designed for the Kingdom, and we must celebrate when someone turns. This is bigger than national championship, this is greater than the SuperBowl.

We celebrate salvation!

'Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. '

Luke 15:11-12

This is angst and agony for a father. You've been pouring into your two sons for years. You know each one well. His strengths, his abilities, his foibles and quirks - all these you've watch develop for years. And you want to see them grow up, move into adulthood, find their place and shine. Build a family, and live as productive contributors in the community.

So you make a place for each of them, you provide, you invest, you help along the way. Being a dad is being a caretaker in others' lives. These are your own sons. One day you'll be in heaven, and your estate will go to the kids. A bonus to help them, a stewardship for them.

But there are crushing moments too. Your son comes to you, and wants his portion now. He is done with you. He cares nothing for you as the dad, or his place in the family, or the things you have been working for him. He wants his portion. You dad may as well be done. Dead. Buried. Gone. I'm taking my piece and leaving.

This simply hurts, it's crushing... Just imagine!

' "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. '

Luke 15:13

A Walk Through Luke

Oh foolish son. Enticed, tricked, dragged by passions and desires, thinking this is your great future, you've wasted it. It's gone.

Oh the sorrowful father. Watching, silently from afar. Maybe he said something. Maybe he didn't. The ache and yearning - what will become of my son?

And the story is not over. Though the cost was huge, did you catch it? No matter the lifestyle, no matter the actions, no matter the sin and revelry, he was... He was always the son.

Maybe he comes home. Maybe he doesn't. But he is always the son. And the Father NEVER forgets. (Romans 8:38-39). Never.

'After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. '

Luke 15:14-16

There are good times and there are hard times. When you squander, there are harder times. But the lesson isn't about thrift, or managing money. The lesson is about how living in sin will bring consequences.

This is the loving hand of God, moving mountains to bring a confrontation. He places dire circumstances, with a plan to restore. God knows exactly how this ends.

But the young man does not yet know. He's in the process of experiencing difficult times. He thinks he's in control. The father misses him, wants him home. The Father is working to bring this about. And no, they don't always come home. I know this all too well.

Are you far from home? Is life brutally hard? Have you stopped to ask the question, why am I in this place? How did I get here? Should I stay here? ... When you find yourself in a hole, stop digging. And perhaps, start praying. ... And, the Party is over.

' "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!

I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.'

Luke 15:17-19

A Walk Through Luke

Sometimes they come to their senses. Sometimes the ache and struggle bring about a realization, a turning, a stop and redirect. This is the beginning of great things. And hard things too, there's a lot ahead.

Sometimes they don't see a solution and a turning. Sometimes they are so broken, so hurt, the Father brings them home to himself. He knows them, they are his lost sheep. And sometimes we remain the parents, longing. Father is good, and welcomes them, washed, clean, pure restored, with him. We will have that celebration, it's just not here.

This man had an awakening. God had more to do with him. And his brother, but that's another story. Brothers can be hard too. This man came to his senses, and then realized the depth of his fall. He saw where he had landed, and embarrassed, frustrated, out of solutions, he decided, "I'm going home."

So he set his mind to it, and now, what do I tell dad? mom? my family? my friends? Oh what a mess I have made. They can't possibly take me back. I'll go work my father's work, as a servant.

This young man had not yet learned. He was still the father's son.

So are you. Turn back today!

'So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. '

Luke 15:20

The Great Embarrassment.

The son who went out in pride, all his treasures in hand, and contempt for his family, is now trudging home. He knows the bridge is burnt. He knows the great offense toward his dad. He literally declared his father worthless and dead. The whole inheritance squandered, his father's wealth cut in half, this son had no right to anything. And he knew it.

What bridge have you burnt? Are you back in great fellowship with your family? Are you right with the Living God? What offense did you inject to create the mess? Are you willing to discover who God made you to be? Are you able to look at God and bless Him, recognizing He made you? He crafted you just so, and He put you into that family? He chose your mom and dad, and you came by His hands to where you are?. It's time to get back home.

So the son is walking, and found a most amazing result. All the way home, he practiced his lines, hoping to become a servant, and get some food. He had no idea the love of his father for him. Perhaps you don't either...

A Walk Through Luke

'So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it.

Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. '

Luke 15:20-24

While saying the well rehearsed lines to himself, his father had been running to him. A friend pointed out, in this culture, men don't run, it costs their dignity. But to this man, dignity mattered not, God was answering his prayers, long prayers, groping, grasping for a response, and here God's answer was playing out in right front of him, his son was coming home!

The son was astonished, but had to go through the lines. He had no expectation for joy. The father allayed all of it. He embraced his son, and treated him as a prince, a returning royal family member. Get the robes, adorn him. Kill the fatted calf, let's have a feast. My son is home! And they did, they began to celebrate and feast!

Such joy for the Father. Such joy when a lost son comes home. Celebration. Oh turn from sin, and come back to your Father. He has the robe ready, and a fatted calf. He wipes away sin, and you'll find yourself home, a washed, cleaned and loved son! The celebration begins!

Jesus is calling. Stop delaying, it's time to come home.

' "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' '

Luke 15:25-27

How do you feel when you do the work and the other guy gets the credit? You've been out doing the job, making everything work, covering for others, because its the right thing to do.

Here you are coming in from another long day on the job, and you hear music, dancing, a celebration, and you weren't even told about it. What is this? So you quietly ask another worker, and he says it's a family celebration, because your brother has come home.

A Walk Through Luke

But this isn't any brother, this is the guy who decimated your family, destroyed your parents and took half the family goods to squander. He treated you as dead. And now he's back, and there's a party? This reeks. And you are justifiably angry.

' "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'"

Luke 15:28-30

Resentment kills. Passivity destroys. This young man had been harboring resentment for a long time. He never told his father how he felt. But his younger brother was squandering the family fortune to go party, without a thought for anyone.

Meanwhile this older brother had been diligently working. He was the good son, doing everything he should. But he never talked to his father. He never shared his anger and frustration. He just stuffed it, and lived out the passive life of obeying his dad's directives.

Oh how the father wants relationship! Oh how much he could have offloaded this burden. But the older son never came around either. He was simply trying hard to be the good son. And he couldn't get his heart right.

We cannot either. Whether you are running from God, or whether you are simply trying to be good, you aren't drawing near to your Father. Come to Him. Pour out your hurt and frustration. And then learn from Him. It's such a better road! And you'll find release for the anger, and a new love and perspective too!

" 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' "

Luke 15:31-32

The elder son had been working so hard, and never had a party thrown. He was definitely insulted, and angry. But there was truth he needed to learn too.

He had always been with the father, and had fellowship available. But he was never ready to join in. He had chosen the path of dutiful service, and believed his job was to stay the course. He likely would have done this until his father had died and the estate became his.

He missed that his father wanted relationship with him. His father wanted to share life, to join in with all the ups, down, joys and hardships. This son had missed it.

A Walk Through Luke

Are you walking a path of tireless devotion, but no relationship with the Father? Come on over, join in with Him. Pour out your heart, and learn. He loves you!

But no longer. Learn what you're missing, and get back into fellowship. Yes, you too can celebrate. Yes, you too can experience joy, and be blessed with your friends. There's a family relationship that needs to be experienced, it's yours!

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 16

'Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.'"

Luke 16:1-2

Someone else tells your boss that you haven't been doing your job well. Yeah, that happens.

Then the boss calls you in, announcing that you can't work for him any longer. But you haven't even told your side yet. The job is gone and nobody is listening.

But he will hear your side. As he hands you a box. Does this sound familiar? Unfair firing happens.

Maybe there was something you did wrong, but no help, no guidance, no coaching.

It's a setup. What should you do? We'll get into that tomorrow. Jesus tells us today that it happens, and it happened in his time too. Jesus gets me, and knows my situation!

' "The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg— I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.' "

Luke 16:3-4

When it's going south, your life won't be what it was, and you can't stop it, it's time to pause. Take an assessment. What can you do? Who can you trust? How can you reshape the future - to the best of your ability. Be shrewd!

Jesus is telling us how to react. Tomorrow, we'll discover he means to be shrewd about all life, particularly our walk with God. But here - you're in a mess. Stop and figure it out, best you can. Make a plan!

God will use people who can handle managing things, even when it's not going your way! He looks for us to manage well!

' "So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' " "Nine hundred gallons of olive oil," he replied. "The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.' "

"Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' " "A thousand bushels of wheat," he replied. "He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.' "

A Walk Through Luke

“The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. ’

Luke 16:5-8

So the manager got fired because of poor management - at least this was the accusation. But the manager finished his tenure by turning the tables. He understood cause and effect, he understood discernment, and he knew people. He had to make a new path, and he knew just what to do.

He called in each of the master's debtors, and he worked with each one to adjust the accounts. The debtors now were indebted to the manager, and had a friend and advocate in him. He ended up with people who would welcome him, and give him a place to stay and food to eat.

The crazy part is this: even the master commended the manager. The manager had acted very shrewdly, and created something from nothing. Doesn't seem quite legal or appropriate, but it was shrewd, it met the goal, and even the master commended him. Now how is THAT for a letter of recommendation?

“The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

Luke 16:8-9

The master appreciated the manager for acting shrewdly. We don't know if he got his job back. We do know that Jesus has a lesson for us.

Use our treasures to build relationships. It's those relationships that offer a future home, care and supply when we need it. Caring for others and building a network of friends, this is wise.

It's also how the church works. We pour into others. But we have a greater motivation, as Messiah has redeemed us. Yes we should pour into others. So they can know him. So they too can be cared for. And so the world will watch and find themselves drawn to Jesus also.

' “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? ’

Luke 16:10-12

So we've been considering the manager whom the master dismissed. He acted very shrewdly to manage the bit he had left, to create a way forward. And the master commended him for it.

A Walk Through Luke

So Jesus goes on to say if you can be trusted with something small, you can be trusted with big things too. So what has he entrusted you with? Work? Family? Wealth? Relationships? How are you doing with your work? DO you complete what's given you? Are you diligent for it? How about your family? How are you with your parents? Wife, husband and kids? How about your neighbors? What about the things you own?

So what about the good news of Jesus, of new relationship with God, of forgiveness, of restoration, of walking with the Holy Spirit? Are you living in this? Furthermore, are you investing in others? Are you telling the good news and helping people follow?

Are we the "faithful with little... who are now entrusted with much?"

' "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." '

Luke 16:13

If your goal is wealth, you're going to be disappointed. Jesus declared that God is first. Period. He must be my master. What he says, I hear. What he commands, I do. where he takes me, I willingly go.

Do I trust him for the rest? Do you trust him for the rest?

'The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight. '

Luke 16:14-15

The religious leaders had the best of both worlds. They were influential in the synagogue, and their bank accounts were full. Very literally, they could do anything they wished. But Jesus drills past all the resources and goes for the heart. Outside signs of wealth and achievement were nothing to Jesus. The heart which cares for others, and is humble toward God, that's what God seeks. And He will supply and care for the one who is leaning on Him!

' "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing their way into it. '

Luke 16:16

You've heard of rules and acts, must-do's and thou-shalt's. They've been told for millenia...

But let me tell you about a kingdom, where kindness, care, love, service, healing and restoration happens. many are coming in, and finding life, joy, fulfillment, and more.

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And it's all about the king. This king wants you, a friend, someone to walk with, to help you, to lead and guide, heal, restore. He takes away sin, and establishes adoption - and everyone is running to it!

Won't you? There's a place for you!

'It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law.'

Luke 16:17

The door to Heaven's Kingdom is flung wide open for all are welcome. And yet, do know, the truth of God's Word has not diminished. His law, teaching, character, admonition and demands for justice endure.

This crazy balance means we come, but we must learn and obey too!

'Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.'

Luke 16:18

Jesus goes there! Marriage and Divorce.

Marriage of a man and a woman is the foundational picture to understand the forever love of God in Christ for His bride, the church. A man will leave his father and mother, and will cleave - hang-on - adhere - become one with his wife. And she to him. This design establishes a forever commitment, a joint "I do" that underscores God's "I Do" commitment to every believer.

So hard for our society where people can marry just about anything, and we all either say "Yes" or we stuff any thought. The longing for understanding - everyone gets that. The deep hurt and violence that adorns some marriages, we all hate that and understand why we see break-ups.

Jesus calls out the selfish who simply want everything their way and would simply put their spouse away. Divorce is wrapped in sin. And Jesus calls out the hypocrites here. (God hates other things too. And He loves to build good marriages also.)

' "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on

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me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

“But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

“He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

“Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

“ ‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’
“He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’ ”

Luke 16:19-31

Jesus tells the story of Hades, of a rich man, of a beggar Lazarus, of dying and finding torment, of finding comfort, and of the hopelessness and pain in hell.

Some observations:

- Jesus knows what happens after this life,
- In the story, confirms there is a hell with torment.
- Nobody ends up there by accident.
- Our life on earth leads to where we end up.
- Choices are ours in this life
- The results are eternal.

So what are we living to do? Me, I want to love and know Jesus, and help others know him too. My hope is you too will live for Jesus, know him, and make him known as you care for others too.

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 17

'Jesus said to his disciples: "Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come. It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. So watch yourselves'

Luke 17:1-3

Don't create problems. Don't trip people up. Don't create scenarios that pull people into sin. Consider the other side - build people up. Come alongside. Pray, encourage. Teach. Mentor.

'So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them." '

Luke 17:3-4

Is Jesus serious? Doesn't he know how insolent my people are? They don't care, and I have had it!!!

'The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you. '

Luke 17:5-6

Having faith is a choice. Looking at hard circumstance, and then counting on your Father in Heaven to overcome it, that's faith.

But also, forgiving your brother over and over, Jesus had just talked about that. Having faith means turning to God, bringing the whole mess to Him and depending on Him to resolve it. Then turn to the circumstance and tell it about your Father!

"Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'?"

Won't he rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do?

So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.' "

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Luke 17:7-10

Getting back to what's real.

We have jobs, and people don't celebrate when we are doing our jobs. At the end of the day, doing our job gets appropriate pay, but it doesn't set us apart to our bosses. We are not somehow fantastic for doing what we are paid to do.

Jesus wants us to know that we don't somehow get elevated in stature by doing our jobs. He wants us to know who we are, where we live, where we fit. Having a true understanding is crucial.

Don't worry - He invites us into a relationship where we are incredibly valued. But we don't earn it, it's a gift from God above. But to Him we are precious, He made us!

'Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. '

Luke 17:11-14

So Jesus got his gumption up and headed to Jerusalem! (He knew the leaders were out to kill him - so this is a big decision!) And being Jewish he traveled so as not to go into Samaria. This would have set off announcements and alarms regarding him in Jerusalem. He gets the cultural stuff, and follows it. Sometimes. At least this time.

On the way a group of lepers, people with a visible skin affliction, they see him. And they know their place - they stand a ways off. They were not allowed to mingle with others - part of what lepers had to do. These ten saw Jesus, and they recognized him. Not just his name, but his true identity. And they knew the authority and power which he carried.

So they called out to him, "Master!" "Heal us."

Jesus didn't say yes. and he didn't say no. Instead he gave them a task - "go show yourselves to the priest." This is weird. They could see they still had the disease. And in fact, Jesus did nothing.

But they knew his authority, and power, so they headed for the priest. Here's faith. Enough to do what he says. Will you do what he says? What's in your hand, a mustard seed?

Go. Do. And guess what? Along the way they were healed.

What has he told you? Are you going yet? What will he do? Life is amazing. Let's find out...

'One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

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Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?” Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.” ’

Luke 17:15-19

One came back. He was among the ten, going to show himself to the priest. A Samaritan, headed to show himself to a priest. Guaranteed awkward. A willing humiliation, because he wanted God's relief from this detestable skin disease.

Healed, on the way, he raced back to Jesus. The others didn't come back to Jesus. How about you? When God provides and answers prayers, do you come and fall at Jesus' feet? How do you respond?

'Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.” ’

Luke 17:20-21

These religious leaders had not considered the forever power and rule of the Creator. They thought a new king with armies would come. They thought this neglected planet would one day experience a ruler to set things right.

But He is forever, and He rules in the lives of men. He never forgets the widow and the orphan, and his invitation is open for any who will come. He's already here. But he's not about their religious games or traditions. He wants real trust, real repentance, real relationship. He wants you. He wants me...

'Then he said to his disciples, “The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. People will tell you, ‘There he is!’ or ‘Here he is!’ Do not go running off after them. For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. ’

Luke 17:22-25

Longing for rescue with none coming...

Jesus has been working to reveal the light of Messiah among his people, and they've been having none of it. The best they came up with was that he, the carpenter, was doing magic tricks. They couldn't see beyond that.

And Jesus begins to show a long hopeless future for them, long with unbelief. They will want Messiah to come, and none will rescue. There is no other lifeboat, no other way of escape. And they will not know whom they have missed.

A Walk Through Luke

In fact, they are already gone in their unbelief. They just don't know it. And upcoming events will just underscore their failure to embrace Messiah.

'Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. '

It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. '

Luke 17:26-30

Jesus in the temple is asking the people whether they want to walk with the Lord. DO God's commands matter to them? WILL they turn their hearts to follow HIM first, above all else?

Noah in his day obeyed God. He was upright and all his neighbors knew it. For 60 years he was building a boat, a rescue vehicle. And he was compelling his friends to renounce evil and turn to God. They refused. The outreach continued 60 years, to no avail. Finally Noah went into the vessel, God closed the door, and soon the world was under a deluge to destroy evil.

Lot in his day lived in an evil society. The city was given to lascivious living, evil acts, done for self satisfaction and at the expense of everyone else. God's call has always been to reject sin, turn to God and seek forgiveness. The call was long term, and nobody was interested. And then one day an angel came took Lot and his family away, and the city was destroyed. Even Lot's wife was on the fence, and looking back longingly, she was destroyed too.

Jesus is telling these people in the temple that destruction is certain. And an invitation is extended from God the Father to each one. Will they take it and repent? Will they live for Him?

The same invitation is for you too. Will you take it, renounce evil, and turn to God?

And one day, just as certain as the global flood, just as certain as the fire bombing of Sodom, there will be immediate judgment on earth. Don't be left behind. Turn to God today!

'On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back. Remember Lot's wife.

Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it. I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left. There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left."

A Walk Through Luke

And they said to him, “Where, Lord?” He said to them, “Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.” so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. '

Luke 17:30-35,37

Two kinds of people. Some are foundational residents, implanted in the community - and they aren't going anywhere. Others are transients, citizens of another Kingdom.

When the Son of Man comes, some will race toward Him, with full abandon. There is no consideration of what is left behind, their allegiance and citizenship is in another land!

Others will watch from afar, reluctant that they are tied to their things, their stuff, their role, their community. They won't join Messiah, and they will miss Him.

Where will this be? He's not saying. But when you see the decimation of those left behind, you'll know. It's right where you are standing...

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 18

'Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'

"For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'"

And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?"

I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"'

Luke 18:1-8

We just learned that many will not be ready for the coming kingdom. They aren't looking for the return of the King. And when they see him coming, they don't drop everything and race to meet him.

Now Jesus gives an entirely different scenario. What do you do with ongoing trouble and no apparent response from the Father? So he tells a story to illustrate what ongoing persistent prayer may look like.

Note that he gives us the conclusion first - ALWAYS PRAY and DON'T STOP PRAYING. What you are facing might take a while.

'To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."'

Luke 18:9-14

We are all broken. Me. You. The neighbors. And we can't fix it by being religious or working hard. We have an internal problem, and it plays out in our whole life...

A Walk Through Luke

So stop it. Come to Jesus. Give him your brokenness, and ask for his grace. He's the one who pulls us together. There is no other cleanse or restoration, except that God does it. So let him...

'People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." '

Luke 18:15-17

The Kingdom is here for the kids. They get it. They get in. Climbing all over Jesus, they laugh and relish the affection, the time, the play, the relationship.

My son Joash got it. He embraced Jesus. As a little one, he was all over Jesus. And Jesus loved it.

Later on, three years ago today, Jesus embraced him. Not forgotten. Never out of reach. Time to come home. He's safe in his savior's arms.

Heaven's gates are open wide!

'A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.' "

"All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said. When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. '

Luke 18:18-23

What does it take to follow the King?

Everything.

But it's worth it.

Are you "In"?

'When he (the rich young ruler) heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed,

A Walk Through Luke

it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

Peter said to him, “We have left all we had to follow you!” “Truly I tell you,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.” ’

Luke 18:23-30

Oh, counting the cost is hard. The cost may be high, very steep. And it's a choice, a call, and it demands an answer. In this case, the rich ruler wanted it all. Maybe he's American deep down inside. But he wants every part, and the Kingdom.

Jesus challenged him to leave his stuff, give to the poor, and become Jesus' disciple... Later Jesus' disciples began looking at their stuff, wondering about the choice they made... And then it comes to you - and me. Where are we on leaving it all to follow Jesus?

'Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.” The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about. '

Luke 18:31-34

Again, Jesus tries to tell them. What the prophets told ages ago, it's coming true in front of you. Earlier, after feeding the crowd, he told the disciples what was coming. (Luke 9:21-22). Again, after an amazing meeting with Moses and Elijah, he told them again. (Luke 9:44-45)

Jesus was declaring God's open door, an invitation to His Kingdom. And Jesus was showing what the power of the Holy Spirit brings through healings, through feedings, through wisdom, through teaching. And here we are today, Jesus telling them again what must happen. And - the GENTILES - that's us! The Gentiles crucified him. This is about all men, all mankind, complicit in rejecting the savior. Worse, in killing him through tortuous crucifixion.

Jesus is revealing God's plan, His path to bring all men and women back to himself. Jesus was sent from God. Jesus taught us all about who God is. Jesus welcomed the outcast, the foreigner, the cripple, the hurting, even the hungry. And he changed everything for each one, right there. The Kingdom matters right now, today.

A Walk Through Luke

Better, the Kingdom works because of the King. And He holds you and me. He paid for our sin. He invites us to walk with him, and trust only in him. And He will change everything in us, in our life. But first, he's headed to Jerusalem, and they are going to kill him. This is required, to pour out his pure blood for my sin. And for yours. And to wash us pure and clean. And then to send us out to tell others. That's the plan. And He's all about fulfilling it, even today. So come! Give yourself to Him.

'As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by."

He called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

"Lord, I want to see," he replied. Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you."

Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.'

Luke 18:35-43

When you know you have need, abject suffering and no end in sight (pardon me), you pursue Jesus. This blind man needed restoration, and the crowd just wanted him to be quiet.

Don't make people be quiet. Instead, reach out with the power of God, and heal them. Bring the Holy Spirit. Bring them to Jesus. Let's see lives change!

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 19

'Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. '

Luke 19:1-4

How much do you want to see Jesus? He's coming to your town, he's appearing nearby, so all you need is access. A TICKET. Will you change your schedule? Will you go in person to make sure you get in? How valuable to you is seeing him in person?

Here's a wealthy guy, but he can't see Jesus because of the crowd. He's too short, and there's no other way to get there. But this doesn't stop him. He simply works harder, and thinks of a solution.

Will we work this hard to see Jesus? Start by taking that book off your shelf, and open it up. Start reading. Then talk to him, in private. Yes, he hears you. Let's work as hard as an unbelieving short-statured tax collector.

'When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. '

Luke 19:5-6

Jesus went straight to Zacchaeus in the tree. Jesus knows when we are seeking him, and he responds! Zack! Come on down from that tree. I must stay at your house today!

Jesus will come straight to the one seeking him. He must make himself at home, it's his nature. So tell everyone, come down from that tree, Jesus is coming to your house!

Zack did just that, came down, and welcomed him gladly! Such joy. Such relief!

'When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

A Walk Through Luke

Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” ’

Luke 19:5-10

What do people say? Accusing bad for your good. When people walk in the light, they affect others. Some run and embrace it, like Zack here. And others look judgmentally, and denigrate some as sinners, and others as enablers...

They did this for Jesus, and Zacchaeus too. Jesus hangs out with sinners. Zack is one of them... Do you get misunderstood, or worse, do you get judged?

Come to Jesus - you won't believe the difference it makes. Check out Zack. And then find the encouragement that Jesus offers too!

'While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.

He said: “A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’

“But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king.’ ’

Luke 19:11-14

Do you ever watch a situation go bad, in slow motion? Everything is working, and then it isn't. And you can't stop it... So Jesus continues teaching in Zack's house. He has a lesson for them. But first you must watch the situation unfold...

His servants no longer wanted to serve. They liked all the good things they got. But they did not want to work. And so once they were given something to do, they started trying to wiggle out of it.

Are you this way? Am I just looking for free candy? Jesus talks about a kingdom, and then talks about workers working... Are you ready to work for His kingdom?

' “He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

“The first one came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned ten more.’ “ ‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’

A Walk Through Luke

“The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’ “His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’

“Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’

“His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’

“Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’

“ ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’

“He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’ ”

Luke 19:15-27

Are you celebrating King Jesus today? Many of these weren't all too excited about him being crowned king. But they were split!

Some took their work seriously - he had asked them to care for his stuff. And some did.

Others did not take their work seriously - and simply gave him his stuff back later.

Jesus was talking about the goods God has given us. He was talking about the responsibility to care for others. He was talking about being a representative for his kingdom.

And now the question is - how are we doing? This side of his return, we can get busy with what he's given us. we can bring good news. we can declare freedom. We can bring Holy Spirit's power and change lives. We can tell his forgiveness for us and for others. We can grow his kingdom by doing our part.

What will he say when he calls us to account?

'After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’ ”

A Walk Through Luke

Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They replied, “The Lord needs it.”

Luke 19:28-34

Jesus went on ahead. He knew where he was going and what he was doing. He knew what the scriptures had said and he was obeying. His disciples followed - they were with him. Committed, all-in.

Jesus knows the details, the challenges, the conversations. He sent the disciples to fetch a colt. He told them where it was, and what the owner would say. He gave them the reply, and everything went just as he said.

In my life, he knows all the details. He knows where he is going, and what I will face. He knows the details, and what people will say. And he knows just what I should do as well. I can lean on him. You can too.

...

“Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They replied, “The Lord needs it.”

They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

Luke 19:32-38

They faithfully did what he asked - they went to steal a donkey, and they used the cover story he gave them.

IT WORKED! They got the donkey! And the owners let them. So back they went to Jesus - they had seen something cool - Jesus knew what was ahead, and all the details. They couldn't wait to tell him! But that wasn't the lesson. It was just a part of it. They brought the donkey to Jesus. Coats were placed on it, and he began riding down into Jerusalem. And then it happened.

The crowd began singing and praising God. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. What an amazing thing was happening. What did it all mean? Something big is going on. And all the disciples knew was that they would do what he says. Perhaps we'll figure out what it all means.

A Walk Through Luke

Jesus knows me. He knows the days, the events. He knows the needs. He knows the results. I am oblivious, and He has it handled. He has me handled. I can rest, and work, and trust. He has this.

'Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." '

Luke 19:39-40

The Pharisees wanted the old. They lived for control, for contrived religion. Oh they didn't have a savior. In fact, they ignored God's Messiah. They weren't looking for him any longer. Jesus simply points out that God is at work, and nothing stops Him!

NOTHING STOPS HIM!

Hold that thought today.
He is changing your life!

'As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.

The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you." '

Luke 19:41-44

Looking over Jerusalem, Jesus wept. He continually faced the leaders who were not looking for peace from God. They were seeking their own agendas, and not caring for their people. They were busy, distracted, and self-serving, without any care for people or God.

Warning to me - am I willing to receive what makes for peace? Am I willing to stop my agenda, sit at the feet of God, immerse in his Word, and allow Him to build the relationship with me that he wants?

These wouldn't. And Jesus wept. Oh my, they missed it big!

'When Jesus entered the temple courts, he began to drive out those who were selling. "It is written," he said to them, " 'My house will be a house of prayer' ; but you have made it 'a den of robbers.' " '

Luke 19:45-46

A Walk Through Luke

If we are going to draw near to our Father to pray, we better get rid of the wicked theft and deceit. He came in and immediately began cleaning house. This is his work, what he does.

Are you ready to pray? Jesus just might come in and clean your house first too!

Here's the key, Jesus - come in and clean away! I need you..

'Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.'

Luke 19:47-48

God himself, teaching in his own temple!

People hung on his words. Do I hang on his words? Oh, they are life. They tell me about me. They tell me more, about him, and how he made me. They tell me about us. They tell me about the power of God. Oh help me hang on those words!

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 20

'One day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and proclaiming the good news, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him.

“Tell us by what authority you are doing these things,” they said. “Who gave you this authority?” He replied,

“I will also ask you a question. Tell me: John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin?”

They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Why didn’t you believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet.”

So they answered, “We don’t know where it was from.”

Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.” '

Luke 20:1-8

Oh the leaders hated Jesus. They wanted to trick him, to trap him. Jesus used their words to trap them. They were men of prestige, leaders and well renowned, and they asserted authority to keep control. But they had no use and no time for this preacher, this talk of salvation, for a savior. They wanted to be rid of him.

Here's the secret: they didn't love God, and are threatened by anyone standing for God. Jesus was right in their crosshairs.

Are you willing to stand there too?

Learn your scriptures and then go engage! Win people to Jesus.

'He went on to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time.

At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out.

“Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.’

A Walk Through Luke

“But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. ‘This is the heir,’ they said. ‘Let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

“What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.” When the people heard this, they said, “God forbid!” ’

Luke 20:9-16

What will the owner do? He's created a vineyard, and rented it out. The renters had a part in it, but they were partnering with the owner. In the end they despised the owner, and killed the owner's son.

What about you and me? Do I work my part and welcome the owner and his son?

What about the people who were given Genesis 12:1-3? They were given a part, becoming a blessing to others. And through them all the nations would be blessed.

But they beat the servants and killed the son... What about us? What will we do with Jesus?

'...So they threw him<the son> out of the vineyard and killed him.

“What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.”

When the people heard this, they said, “God forbid!”

Jesus looked directly at them and asked, “Then what is the meaning of that which is written: “ ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’ ? Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”

The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people. '

Luke 20:15-19

Imminent.

It's coming.

Just around the corner.

Jesus is promising - the owner is coming back. And the tenants have not been faithful.

This is the cornerstone.

It's the most important part of the whole kingdom.

What will you do on this rock?

Whoever comes to Jesus, embraces him - they are welcomed.

Whoever fights against the son - loses everything.

Friends, come to Jesus. Lay everything before him. And then trust him. Worship him. Follow him. embrace him.

A Walk Through Luke

'Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said, so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. So the spies questioned him: "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

He saw through their duplicity and said to them, "Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?"

"Caesar's," they replied.

He said to them, "Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent. '

Luke 20:20-26

Deceitful leaders, only wanting their own power. They looked for any avenue to trap Jesus, to get rid of him. And they sent spies....

Does this make you wonder, "At what point should they have reflected and realized that they, themselves, are the problem?" The Lord works circumstances to separate his people from the forever-lost. He condemns nobody to hell, they go there by choice. And He sets up scenarios to give them opportunity to repent.

Whose image is this on the coin....?

Reflect - consider - maybe even repent!

Don't go after Jesus until you're ready to have him scrutinize you. And if he does, then stop what you are doing, and consider. Turn to him, and follow...

'They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent. '

Luke 20:26

When you are going up against Jesus, there's a chance you are going to lose. Just Saying!

So - don't do it. Stop, and rethink it. Consider what you are really doing... Maybe it's time to embrace the savior.

Or at least to shut up, to be silent. They did.

A Walk Through Luke

'Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question.

“Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.

Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. The second and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children.

Finally, the woman died too. Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?” '

Luke 20:27-33

Wow. The Sadducees are just like us. Seeing Jesus, listening to his words, shocked at miracles, and amazed at his following. And then the Pharisees work and work to trick him. Everyone sees he is sharp, knows what they are doing, and offers very gracious, amazing answers.

But what is it that makes the next group think, "We can do better. They couldn't trap him. But we can do this." And then they jump in. They do the STUPID attempt themselves.

Lost in sin, we continue pursuing more sin. And here they come to try. At some point shouldn't we stop, reflect, and maybe repent?

'Jesus replied, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection.

But in the account of the burning bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”

Some of the teachers of the law responded, “Well said, teacher!” And no one dared to ask him any more questions. '

Luke 20:34-40

Jesus answered the Sadducees with details of heaven. They were snickering about the resurrection, and Jesus brought truth - he has been there. He is headed back there. And he exposes their misunderstanding.

It's more than a misunderstanding. They created a fake problem, and used it to lead people astray from Heaven. Jesus simply uses their scriptures to show they are way off. You'll like heaven. I can't wait to see my son Joash again, there!

A Walk Through Luke

'Then Jesus said to them, "Why is it said that the Messiah is the son of David? David himself declares in the Book of Psalms: " "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." '

David calls him 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?" '

Luke 20:41-44

A parting shot. The leaders gave up on trying to trap Jesus. But Jesus was not yet done with them. He wanted to place a seed in them, an idea, and stir up real spiritual hunger.

They needed a real relationship with God, and Jesus decided to inject a reminder that their theology was messed up, and keeping them from knowing what God had always planned. They had no relationship with God, and they had long since dropped any interest in God's Son, the Messiah.

So Jesus asks a question which will stay with them, and haunt them. The Holy Spirit loves to work from places like this! And the question will haunt them, until they bow their knee to God's Son!

'While all the people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, "Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely."

Luke 20:45-47

Jesus has been arguing back and forth with the Scribes and Pharisees, the teachers of the Law. He has been gracious, as well as very pointed in his remarks. These teachers have failed to trap him continually, and the disciples have been learning a ton as students of these exchanges.

Jesus wraps up this time with a solid condemnation of these teachers who have been leading the nation away from God. Let's be careful to bring people to God, instead...

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 21

'As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins.

“Truly I tell you,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.” '

Luke 21:1-4

Pharisaic Laws and Rules were destroying lives. Here's a woman wholly devoted to God, doing all she can, placing all her trust only in Him... She's the only one in the room doing so.

For everyone else, this is public show and recognition among peers. Jesus lifts up the one who gave her all... She's the most like him - he gives his all, for you and me...

In the meantime, I hope my guidance, principles and laws don't hamstring people into poverty. I want people to know God's love and provision, to walk with him. I hope my words get them to this place!

'Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, “As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down.”

“Teacher,” they asked, “when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?”

He replied: “Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and, ‘The time is near.’ Do not follow them. When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away.” '

Luke 21:5-9

Beautiful building! But it's not going to last. Trouble is coming.

We are in a war, and the deciding issue is People and their Relationship with God. It's crucial.

Tomorrow we will see that it's almost here! Tell your friends. The door to meet and know Jesus is wide open. Tell your friends. We have time. But the issue of life is before us.

Tell your friends.

“Teacher,” they asked, “when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?”

A Walk Through Luke

He replied: “Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and, ‘The time is near.’ Do not follow them.

When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away.”

Then he said to them: “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

“But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. And so you will bear testimony to me. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.

You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. Everyone will hate you because of me. But not a hair of your head will perish. Stand firm, and you will win life. ’

Luke 21:7-19

When will Jesus return?

Wars. Earthquakes. Famines. Turmoil.
It's not yet.

Persecution. They will haul his followers before tribunals, and demand answers. But don't go worrying what to say. The Holy Spirit will give you the right words.
Oh. It's still not yet!

Families will turn on you.
Stand firm, and win LIFE!

' “When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people.

They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ’

Luke 21:20-24

A Walk Through Luke

The Temple went in 70 AD - Jesus spoke of it. But this was not the end, this began the "Times of the Gentiles" - a season when God would work for Jews and Gentiles alike, pursuing them for the Kingdom.

I am grateful that God's plan kept the door open for the rest of us. All peoples. All ethne. He wants all of us. And he wants you too!

“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Luke 21:25-28

It's not the environment.

It's not the cosmos.

It's not the planetary science.

It's not the catastrophe in the skies.

When you see the Son of Man coming in the clouds, THAT's IT!

Redemption is here.

I'm looking for clouds, looking for Jesus!

'He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. “Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. '

Luke 21:29-32

When you see the events happen, you'll know it's time. Jesus is coming back.

At this point there is little left until Jesus returns. Get ready.

'Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

“Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth.

Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.” '

Luke 21:33-36

A Walk Through Luke

Jesus' words will -never- pass away.
All of our life concerns will pass away.
So be very careful what you cultivate.

For me, every day, I start in God's word. I ask the Lord to teach me, show me, stir in me, cause me to reflect, and help me put into practice the very things Jesus teaches.
I recommend you do the same. And - tell a friend today too!

'Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives, and all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the temple.'

Luke 21:37-38

The most important priority is not doing what God says. Obeying is important. But it's second. It comes after.

Look at Jesus. Amazing teaching. Incredible insight. Power of God flowing through him. Where does he get it?

Will you go to the same place? Will I? The first priority, far beyond the others, is time alone with God. Spend the time with him first. After a hard day, go back to God, and spend time.

Listen. Quietly listen. Read his word. Ponder, consider, meditate on his word. Hear him.
Then obey.

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 22

'Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. '

Luke 22:1-3

The leaders were looking for a way to dispose of Jesus - because they were afraid of the people. Adversaries. Manipulators. Afraid.

We live in a battleground. There is one side, people who walk with Jesus, listen to God, obey what he says. These people repent from sin, strive to love and care, and share the same message. They tear down false idols, and fight hypocrisy. They seek the downcast, and bring good news.

There is the other side, power, control and manipulation. This side has desire for wealth, for respect, for control. This side fights against the living God and thinks they will win. When a prophet arrives, calls people to repent, to throw out sin, to care for the poor, to remove barriers, then those in control panic.

There is a power behind each of these. The power of God to redeem, and the power of Satan to control. 1 John 5:19 describes this well. This power is led by Satan, an angel of God who rebelled. He is always looking for an opportunity to overturn the work of God. When he finds an "IN" he takes it. Don't let the "in" be you!

'Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. They were delighted and agreed to give him money.

He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present. '

Luke 22:3-6

You have to serve somebody. Who is it going to be? Will it be money? Will it be prestige and honor? Will it be God? Will it be the public leaders? Will it be the Government?

Behind it all, will you serve God and care as he cares? Or will you go away from God - and who would you be serving then?

'Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."

A Walk Through Luke

“Where do you want us to prepare for it?” they asked. He replied, “As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, and say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there.” ’

Luke 22:7-12

Jesus knew, had a plan, and took charge. Passover was here, and they had to celebrate.

Why did Jesus revile the teachers while embracing the celebrations? Especially this one?

The teachers were not teaching the truth! (US School Boards take a listen!) They were missing the point, and letting others miss the point too.

Jesus had a plan. He sent two to go get the Passover ready - they had to celebrate! It begins with "here's a guy carrying a jar with water..." He already knows every detail. And he knows every detail in my life too!

But catch this - the True Passover Lamb was sending two of his followers to make ready the Passover Celebration. They didn't get it, but he did!

'They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” ’

Luke 22:13-16

Peter and John were astounded. They found everything exactly as Jesus said. So they cooked the Passover meal. This is a big deal, a time when the spiritual leader of the house carefully observes what God told Moses, and prepares accordingly. Look how serious Peter and John have become. No longer crusty fishermen, these guys were diligent to follow...

What was next has been described by others... "Passover was much more than a meal consumed by a family during a festival. It was an opportunity to remember the story of God's redemption. Each prepared item played a significant role in helping God's people to remember what He had done for them. For instance, the Passover lamb reminded them of the faith of their ancestors, who painted their doorposts with the blood of sacrificial lambs, thus sparing them the visit of the death angel. The bitter herbs helped them to remember the bitterness of their slavery in Egypt, and the unleavened bread brought to mind their hasty departure from Egypt. The nut-and-fruit paste helped them to recollect the clay their ancestors used to make bricks for Pharaoh in Egypt, and the cups of wine reminded them of God's promises in exodus 6:6.8."

A Walk Through Luke

After all this preparation, Jesus comes with the others, and shares a long-felt desire. He's wanted to meet with them at this meal for so long!

'After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!" '

Luke 22:17-22

Take and eat, drink. This is the last time until he is in the Kingdom, with his followers. And it's not ordinary, this isn't just a remembrance of God passing over. This is a new covenant. GOD's provision of the sacrifice, and a forever agreement that this satisfies all the demands for ransom and repayment. Forever we are with the Lord because of this body and blood.

And there's a betrayal, one who is not of us, who has determined to oppose Jesus' work and kingdom. Woe to the betrayer.

'They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors.

But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.

For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. '

Luke 22:23-30

A Walk Through Luke

A panic sets in. "Is it me? Am I the one? I don't think I am the one to undermine Jesus." But this tugs at my insecurities, my fears.

"I think I am better than Thomas. He is always uncertain. And James fights with John, so I think I am not the one. Maybe it's one of them. For sure, someone at the table is the betrayer. And I hope it's not me."

They were fearful, insecure. They've been walking with Jesus, learning, joining in, helping. And many others are also. But then there's the authorities who have it out for Jesus. Things are getting dicey.

And now someone is going to betray him? Someone in this room? It can't be... I sure hope it's not me. In fact I think I am pretty much up there among the great ones.

Jesus settles all the scores. He reminds me that it's about serving. And then in the end, he tells of the future - we have a place for leadership. Wow. We all do. Except maybe the one who will betray.

This future is amazing. The present is confounding. (Isn't that how it is with us too?) Press on, serve, help, trust. Keep walking with Jesus!

' "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." '

Luke 22:31-32

Then, just after speaking of ruling the nations, being established in roles of great authority, Jesus turns to Simon and tips him off. Something terrible is coming and Simon doesn't even see it. Still, these words are not for now, they are for later, to help Simon come back...

Jesus knows what you and I face. He knows where we will fall. And He is already working to bring us back. Trust him. Listen to him. Return to him!

' "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." '

Luke 22:31-32

Satan wants to crush and sift you, like crushing wheat. He asked permission - and did not get a "NO". Instead, Jesus prays we can get through it.

Jesus is working a more powerful long plan - and you and I are part of it. SO resist the devil, draw near to God, and walk in faith.

Jesus has us. But we will go through it...

A Walk Through Luke

'But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death."

Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me." '

Luke 22:33-34

Simon gets beyond his abilities. He's eager, wants to be the leader, wants to be the reliable one. But he has a heart problem. He's been relying on his own abilities, and it's going to crash down. He still doesn't see it.

Me? Am I relying on my own abilities? I DO want to lead, to be a solid follower, a mentor, encourager, even pastor. But am I relying on ME as well?

What's ahead?

Oh, Jesus, calm my heart. Teach me to listen, to become humble, to depend and wait on you...

'Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?"

"Nothing," they answered.

He said to them, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one. It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."

The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are two swords."

"That's enough!" he replied. '

Luke 22:35-38

When the time comes, Jesus will help you prepare. For the disciples, the time is now. It's tonight. And he warns them it's going to be some hard days. He wants them to know. But he wants them to also be assured. Warning to stay alert, take a sword, they immediately take inventory. Jesus slows them - it's enough.

There's a balance here. Be prepared, hard times ahead. But also, you are prepared and aware, now trust as you go through it. Old promises of God's Word are in process all around them. All around us as well. Prepare, work, trust, expect His results!

'Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him.

A Walk Through Luke

On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." '

Luke 22:39-40

It's a very tense night. What a supper. What fellowship. What deceit. What predictions. What focus. This night was not like any other, you can feel it in the air. So what does Jesus do?

He did what he usually did. He went out to the Mount of Olives. The disciples knew it well. They seemed to go there regularly.

Tonight they paused, and Jesus gave them a directive - pray. Pray you won't fall into temptation.

There's a betrayer out there. Satan has wanted to sift Peter's soul. Disciples making promises they can't keep.

Pray you won't enter into temptation... Jesus is going further, to pray alone. It's a very tense night.

'He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." '

Luke 22:41-42

Jesus went the distance.

Jesus endured the torture on the cross.

Worse still, Jesus carried my sin, and all its punishment himself.

He carried yours.

He bore the penalty for every sin of every man woman boy and girl.

He satisfied the righteous demands of our unrighteousness.

He carried it all.

Before he did, he asked God the Father - is there any other way?

Is there another solution?

Can any other means pay the penalty of my sin?

NO.

There is no other way.

Without Jesus, I have no savior.

The world is lost - gone.

Except for Jesus.

'An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. '

Luke 22:43-44

A Walk Through Luke

Enduring is brutal.
Jesus enduring for us, the most brutal punishment ever seen on earth.
Torture, endured.

During his prayer time, he was fighting, struggling.
God the Father sent an angel to fortify Jesus' strength.

Even then the anguish was horrible,
God's grace and power, these got Jesus through.
These will get you through too.

'When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." '

Luke 22:45-46

God's angel was with Jesus to strengthen him. Drops of blood weeped as he prayed, and he came to the end of his time praying...

Jesus arose, went back to his disciples and found them asleep. He warned them to pray so they wouldn't fall into temptation.

How about us. Am I swept up by the drama, the angst, the foreboding challenges? Am I willing to invest in the prayer time?

These disciples don't know what's ahead - but we do. We've read it many times, and they are facing challenges they have never imagined.

You and me too. Take the time to go alone and pray. Invest. You need it. I do too.

'While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" '

Luke 22:47-48

Eleven disciples were sleepy.

The twelfth disciple was awake but treacherous.

God's plan was in full motion, an impending lamb to be sacrificed, for all of our sin. But that's not here, that's a day off.

A Walk Through Luke

Here we have Judas, leading a crowd, and coming to kiss Jesus. THIS is insurrection.

Jesus' heart must have been breaking. Soon his heart would be shattered and his blood poured out for us. But what a sad moment.

'When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.

But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him. '

Luke 22:49-51

These disciples were "All in" but they didn't yet understand what was happening. Judas just came up and Jesus announced him the betrayer. Then a kiss, a group to arrest, and the disciples panic.

So you and I are in the midst of it. We don't really get it yet either - but there's a confrontation, anger, confusion, and we do what they do. We go to FIGHT mode.

Oh we have much to learn. Sorry about the ear. MAN - another miracle! I accuse Peter, in the Garden, with a sword.

Jesus is in control, headed as the Lamb to Sacrifice, but we didn't know it. Still his compassion slows down the disciples, heals the ear, and answers the charge.

Father is still in control - and this will mean our salvation!

'Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour—when darkness reigns." '

Luke 22:52-53

Yes they had come to arrest him, like an armed horde. Yet Jesus had always been available to them, meeting and teaching in the temple. So why the garrison? Why the armor? Why in the middle of the night?

It's the darkness. Fewer people around. Hidden from the public view. Easier to pull this off. Satan chooses darkness. Evil hates the light.

Jesus calls them out on their evil, their deceit. They know the public loves Jesus, yet they are driven to get him. This is the only way they can win.

A Walk Through Luke

And it's going to be temporary. They will shriek in victory, but their work will end in our salvation, in Jesus' reign forever, and the gathering of believers from every tribe, tongue, nation and kindred. Every family will find salvation in Jesus. This is what "kindred" means.

Don't fret the darkness. But choose to love and care in the light. That's what Jesus does!

"Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. And when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him." But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said.

A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied.

About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean." Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!"

Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. '

Luke 22:54-62

When everything goes wrong - what then? When plans collapse, the Lord is gone, and I am scrambling, doubts race in. Fears take over, and I lose it. All trust is gone, the ideas and plans are over, and I am empty. Was it all for nothing?

The test is a pass-fail test. Peter failed. I am sure he was certain there was nothing left. What is faith if it doesn't pan out? All Peter had left was to try and understand why the last three years were spent, were wasted. It's all over and it's terrible.

Circumstances continue, I am in a mess, and then something happens. A glimpse. Jesus said it would happen. It's all over, and I failed. And Jesus looks at me. Is it over? Or is Jesus right on time, on track? Could these horrible circumstances also be normal for walking with Jesus? What a mess. What embarrassment. Shame. But Jesus said it would go this way, and he said that he must go through this.

Could it all still be on track? Could my faith be legit, and following be the way forward?

"The men who were guarding Jesus began mocking and beating him. They blindfolded him and demanded, "Prophecy! Who hit you?" And they said many other insulting things to him. '

Luke 22:63-65

A Walk Through Luke

Shameless. The guards joined in the revelry. They taunted, cajoled, and began poking. Then slaps, slugs, beating. This was almost a game.

They didn't need to do it. This was a Jewish problem. Jesus never attacked the Romans. He never criticized or revolted. His work was among human hearts, working repentance and redemption among lost souls.

But the guards joined in anyway. The religious leaders were having their way, and these Romans jumped right in.

Sometimes we do that too. Oh our wicked hearts.

'When day came, the Council of the elders of the people (Sanhedrin, Jewish High Court) assembled, both chief priests and scribes; and they led Jesus away to the council chamber, saying, "If You are the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed), tell us."

But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe [what I say], and if I ask a question, you will not answer.

But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

And they all said, "Are You the Son of God, then?"

He replied, " It is just as you say."

Then they asked, "What further need of testimony do we have? For we ourselves have heard it from His own mouth."

Luke 22:66-71

Oh these leaders, what a devious lot. They have paid for Jesus to be arrested and brought to them. They have chosen to stop his ministry among people, and to work the lies until they can kill him.

Their plan is simple. They will get enough snippets of his teaching to show his claims of being God's sent one, and then kill him for blasphemy. And their problem is further that as they describe him, speak of him, and quote him, the words they use are actual testimony to his divine origin and purpose. They actually end up saying that Jesus is God's "Sent One" as foretold in the scriptures. "You say that I am." as Jesus puts it.

Are we already settled on Jesus, and false claims? Have we listened, or have we cordoned him off to a category where we then stop listening to him?

All the Sanhedrin's claims were true, and proven by the voice of God, by the works of the spirit, by circumstances, by foretold events like donkeys or 30 pieces of silver.

A Walk Through Luke

Jesus is God's sent one. Let's not turn on him, rather let's listen, follow and obey. Along the way we'll fall in love with God and be amazed at his care and companionship for us!

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 23

'Then the whole assembly got up and brought Him before Pilate. They began to accuse Jesus, asserting, "We found this Man misleading and perverting our nation and forbidding us to pay taxes to Caesar, and claiming that He Himself is Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed), a King."

So Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him, "It is just as you say."

Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this Man." '

Luke 23:1-4

Pilate knew. These were contrived charges. The manipulation was obvious. Furthermore, everyone was aware of the good that Jesus had been bringing. They saw miracles, healings, even the dead raised back to life.

Pilate heard about the claim regarding taxes, and yet declared that he found nothing wrong in Jesus. Pilate got it. But he was getting pressure.

How do you handle criticisms of Jesus? Can you stand up adamantly in support, or do you soften and just hope to get through the conversation? Pilate takes a strong stance - but as you'll see tomorrow, he takes the easy way out by going soft and passing the problem to someone else.

'But they insisted, "He stirs up the people all over Judea by his teaching. He started in Galilee and has come all the way here."

On hearing this, Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean.

When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. '

Luke 23:5-7

Pilate bails. He had stood strong, knew Jesus was innocent, and announced such.

But the mob wouldn't hear it. They were intent on getting Jesus and destroying him. So they pushed Pilate harder, and Pilate succumbed.

Pilate then decided he could get out of his responsibility if he could push it to someone else. And he knew Herod's jurisdiction would prevail, so he dumped the problem to Herod.

Pilate was still responsible. He wasn't willing to stand for Jesus. What about me, will I? What about you?

A Walk Through Luke

' When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some miraculous sign. So Herod questioned him at considerable length; Jesus gave him no answer.

The chief priests and the experts in the law were there, vehemently accusing him. Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, dressing him in elegant clothes, Herod sent him back to Pilate. That very day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other, for prior to this they had been enemies.

Then Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. When I examined him before you, I did not find this man guilty of anything you accused him of doing. Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us.

Look, he has done nothing deserving death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him." But they all shouted out together, "Take this man away! Release Barabbas for us!" (This was a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city, and for murder.)

Pilate addressed them once again because he wanted to release Jesus. But they kept on shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" A third time he said to them, "Why? What wrong has he done? I have found him guilty of no crime deserving death. I will therefore flog him and release him." But they were insistent, demanding with loud shouts that he be crucified.

And their shouts prevailed. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, who had been thrown in prison for insurrection and murder. But he handed Jesus over to their will.'

Luke 23:8-16,18-25

Where are you with this Galilean? Are you looking to be entertained? Or are you afraid of being associated with him? Perhaps you want to just protect your liability, and want some distance. That's Herod, Peter and Pilate.

Herod wanted the personal show, the entertainment - and Jesus said nothing. Boy was Herod mad. Peter was all in, yet around the fire, was accused and denied Jesus - three times. How are we when pressure is on?

Pilate hoped that by reason he could convince the public to just release Jesus - but they demanded blood. Pilate tried to pawn the problem to Herod and it came back.

This thing was sticky, and Pilate finally bowed to the pressure and Jesus was convicted. Of something. But Pilate sentenced him - all the while thinking he was doing what someone else demanded.

We cannot escape our guilt and shame - we caused this.

A Walk Through Luke

'As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him.

Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then " 'they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!" ' For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One." The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself."

There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the Jews .

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong."

Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. " Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, "Surely this was a righteous man."

When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. '

Luke 23:26-49

They led him away, and crucified him. We deserved it, he died unjustly. And it was heinous, crucified.

A Walk Through Luke

Satan thinks he's won. The disciples are decimated. What does this mean?

'Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body.

Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.'

Luke 23:50-56

What a quiet Saturday. All of Friday's workings have all gone silent. The crowds, the angst, the tension. The screaming religious leaders, the angry Scribes, the confused followers, the heinous guards, now done. The body of Jesus gets taken down, by a man named Joe. He takes the body, and places it in his own family tomb. It's what respectful people do.

It's so quiet. And it's over. Our hopes, died. Our leader, tortured and killed. The Pharisees and Sadducees victorious. What's next? Will Peter get his boat going again? Is Matthew headed to the tax office? Does Nathaniel still have a heart for God? Thomas is just angry, muttering unbelief everywhere. And the ladies, they are distraught. But they still have work to do - it must wait until tomorrow. Poor Mary is simply decimated.

How about you? How are you when all the pursuit, hopes and dreams are dashed upon the rocks? Everything is shattered, and there's nothing left. How are you?

A Walk Through Luke

Chapter 24

'On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' " Then they remembered his words. When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened. '

Luke 24:1-12

What could be worse than losing their leader?

Losing his body.

The women went to the grave in the morning, with spices, to finish the preparation and embalming. Their last act of affection, done amidst sorrow.

But he wasn't there. The grave was empty. Then two dazzling men appeared and asked, "why are you looking for the living among the dead?" Jesus was raised just as he had told them.

And then they remembered what he had said. They went and told the others. Peter came and saw for himself - he was perplexed.

Nobody knew what it means. But over time, Jesus would meet them, and they would learn. For you and me, our savior Jesus died for our sins on that cross. His blood washed our sins away, his body broken in our place. And then God raised him alive, proving he had overcome our sin, my sin. And then he sought me, and lives in my life.

He seeks you too, ready to live in your life. Ask him in! If this seems weird, reach out to me, let's discover this together!

The Lord is Risen!

'Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened.

A Walk Through Luke

As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

“What things?” he asked.

“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. '

Luke 24:13-27

Oh they were a mess. Everything was over, done, crushed, wiped out. They had done what, three years? To what end? It was over. And not the way they had hoped. So they set out, toward Emmaus.

With so much pent up frustration, and eviscerated hope, they were simply empty. And they talked about it.

Are you there? Has everything finished, crushed and destroyed? What was that all about? With Jesus, everything was amazing, exciting! Jesus died, and we are so alone. and now what?

This is where Jesus shows up. Jesus knows where he is in the story, and he knows what is next. We can't see Jesus in the midst - but what if he really is there. What if he is alive and this is still his work? Do you long to know where Jesus is in your story?

This changes everything...

'As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them.

A Walk Through Luke

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” ’

Luke 24:28-32

These followers were beginning to get it. They were starting to understand Messiah, who he is and what he came to do. And they are beginning to recognize that Jesus was that man. (Read Isaiah 53, and 61 for more).

At evening, they wanted to hear more, so they beckoned the man in. Supper was good, and then he took the bread and the cup - and WOW. It's Jesus!

He wakes us up the same way. Are you wondering where he is in your journey? Truth is, your journey had to be this way, and he is there with you!

He vanishes and they were stunned! I'd be stunned too. This is exactly who Jesus is!

'They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, “It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.” Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread. '

Luke 24:33-35

Cleopas and friend walked seven miles, discussing this Jesus and all that went awry. The stranger then walked them back through God's handiwork and promises, and showed a messiah who had to experience all those things.

After dinner, he broke bread - and they realized it was Jesus. Alive. This is stunning! And He disappeared.

They ran all the way back to Jerusalem, and met the others. Peter had met Jesus as well. Plus the stone rolled away and the angels. This is BIG NEWS! Jesus is alive.

Nobody knew what it meant, but Jesus is back, death is dead, life is abounding. Oh so much ahead! And what hope! Death is dead. Life has come.

'While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself!

A Walk Through Luke

Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.

And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” You are witnesses of these things. '

Luke 24:36-42,44-49

Oh what a day. THIS IS STILL RESURRECTION DAY!

On the very same day He rose, he appeared to Peter, then Mary, then Cleopas and companion, and now to the disciples. And he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures.

THIS is what he wants for you - today, the very same day. To meet with you, to show himself, to open our minds and understand his scriptures. Everything is new, and the future is hugely bright! Guaranteed! No matter what, Jesus wins, He is in it until our end with Him!

'He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

You are witnesses of these things.

I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” '

Luke 24:46-49

In summary, we touched on this above. But take a closer look at the closing... At the end of three years ministry, Jesus takes them into a review. It had to be this way. The result is repentance and following Jesus.

The second point? You are my witnesses. These followers are the verification, and the conduit to the nations. And the group includes you and me.

A Walk Through Luke

Third Point? We need help. Jesus sends what the Father Promised - the Holy Spirit to be with us every day and night forever. Holy Spirit now lives in the believer, with power, wisdom, fellowship, encouragement, words and wisdom!

Let's do this! People will see us. They will hear of Jesus, forgiveness, repentance and discipleship. They will learn He is going to all the nations. And they will receive and live in the power of Holy Spirit too.

Yes, let's do this!

'When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.'

Luke 24:50-53

The promise of the Holy Spirit, the assurance of the plan has been given. Salvation is to be brought to the nations. Jesus has given confirmation that everything is right on schedule...

He blessed them and ascended into heaven. They praised and worshiped Him, and they rejoiced! His promise and assurance mean we are free to worship and praise Him too!