



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

LUKE

Week 1

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Before You Begin Your Journey...

Why are there four separate Gospels? By the third century, many such texts were circulating through the Roman Empire—the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Thomas, Peter and others—all purporting to be accurate accounts of the life of Jesus.

What if you had been on a fourth century council committed to preserving the true gospel of Jesus Christ? What criteria would you have used to evaluate the written accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ? One criterion used by the early church was the authority derived by the authors from either being eye-witnesses themselves or having direct access to eye-witnesses. Another criterion was support from citations of these texts by early church fathers. Universal, wide-spread appeal of these texts also seemed to be important. Of course, above all, each book had to uphold the truth of the gospel. So the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were eventually approved. Gnostic Gospels, such as Thomas, were not accepted.

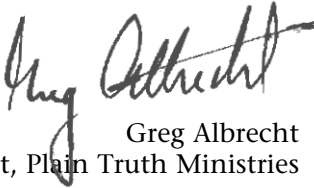
But why retain four Gospel accounts? A major reason was the breadth created by four views. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels because they view Jesus' ministry from a similar perspective, as though through "one eye." All these accounts were inspired by the Holy Spirit; each account relating the unique perspective of its author to his audience.

Matthew wrote to a predominantly Jewish audience to lead them to understand that Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures and was the Messiah. Mark wrote to a predominantly gentile audience to show the miracles and authority of his ministry for gentiles as well as Jews. Luke gives a universal audience historical affirmation of the validity of the life and ministry

of Jesus. And John's Gospel, probably written late in the first century after the fall of Jerusalem, provides a great deal of material that none of the Synoptic Gospels address, duplicating less than ten percent of the material in the Synoptic Gospels.

In this volume we explore the Gospel of Luke. Our emphasis is to appreciate Luke's careful research and his additional insight into the life and ministry of our Savior. Luke talked with some of the apostles to learn first hand about the life of Jesus. He starts his Gospel with the miraculous birth of John the Baptist to the elderly couple, Zechariah and Elizabeth. This unique story sets the stage for the miraculous birth of Jesus to the youthful virgin Mary—the human birth of a divine being. Luke emphasizes that Jesus was both God and man from his conception. Luke affirms that reality through his account of Christ's ministry, his crucifixion and his resurrection. Luke's Gospel is a powerful record of what Christ did to save us all.

It's an exciting story. Read on...

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Greg Albrecht". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Greg Albrecht
President, Plain Truth Ministries

How to Use the CWR Bible Survey...

1—Read and study at your own pace. This is a devotional. It is designed to help you consider and ponder the great truths of God's written revelation. It is designed to help you worship and come to know God. We plan to cover the entire Bible in 43 volumes, and while that sounds like a long time, don't be in a hurry. Take your time! Even though each volume is divided into bite-size daily lessons, you may want to take two days on each "daily" lesson.

2—We suggest you set aside a special time for the *CWR Bible Survey* every day. We recommend allowing 30-45 minutes, but even if you can only spare 15 minutes, try to make it part of your regular schedule. You will find that the *CWR Bible Survey* will be an invaluable resource for facing your daily challenges.

3—You will need a good Bible. This might be an excellent time for you to consider purchasing a study Bible. Plain Truth Ministries has reviewed many of the study Bibles that are available, and in cooperation with Thomas Nelson and Zondervan, we are pleased to be able to offer two superb study Bibles that will be an excellent resource and help to you. Please see the back pages of this book for more details.

4—Always read the assigned passage of the daily lesson in your Bible first. Each daily lesson builds upon the portion of the Bible being covered that day. You may want to begin by praying about what God has in store for you as you read, and then look at the questions and background information.

5—Consider the format of each daily lesson. Almost every daily lesson will include:

- **Opening Up to the Word** —a section designed to help you open your mind to the teaching God has inspired.
- **Digging Into the Word**—this section will encourage you to get your nose into the Bible and think deeply about what it says.
- **Living Out the Word**—here you will be challenged to consider the practical implications for your life. How does this passage help you live?

• **Window On the Word**—will offer key insights to help you more clearly understand the daily Bible passage.

6—After you finish the daily lesson, take some quiet time. You may simply think, look out the window, take a walk, or even get down on your knees. But use this time to let this daily lesson sink in. Ask God to show you what he wants you to understand from your reading and study.

7—Consider the *CWR Bible Survey* for small groups in which you may be involved. Tell your friends about it. If you are involved in a small group that meets for prayer and Bible study, introduce your group to it. Many are seeking an easy-to-read guide to help them understand the Bible and to help them know God. The *CWR Bible Survey* can do that!

• **Abbreviations Used in the *CWR Bible Survey***—

Genesis	Ge	Nahum	Na
Exodus	Ex	Habakkuk	Hab
Leviticus	Lev	Zephaniah	Zep
Numbers	Nu	Haggai	Hag
Deuteronomy	Dt	Zechariah	Zec
Joshua	Jos	Malachi	Mal
Judges	Jdg	Matthew	Mt
Ruth	Ru	Mark	Mk
1 Samuel	1Sa	Luke	Lk
2 Samuel	2Sa	John	Jn
1 Kings	1Ki	Acts	Ac
2 Kings	2Ki	Romans	Ro
1 Chronicles	1Ch	1 Corinthians	1Co
2 Chronicles	2Ch	2 Corinthians	2Co
Ezra	Ezr	Galatians	Gal
Nehemiah	Ne	Ephesians	Eph
Esther	Est	Philippians	Php
Job	Job	Colossians	Col
Psalms	Ps	1 Thessalonians	1Th
Proverbs	Pr	2 Thessalonians	2Th
Ecclesiastes	Ecc	1 Timothy	1Ti
Song of Songs	SS	2 Timothy	2Ti
Isaiah	Isa	Titus	Tit
Jeremiah	Jer	Philemon	Phm
Lamentations	La	Hebrews	Heb
Ezekiel	Eze	James	Jas
Daniel	Da	1 Peter	1Pe
Hosea	Hos	2 Peter	2Pe
Joel	Joel	1 John	1Jn
Amos	Am	2 John	2Jn
Obadiah	Ob	3 John	3Jn
Jonah	Jnh	Jude	Jude
Micah	Mic	Revelation	Rev

LUKE

A Universal
Gospel

Introduction to Luke

Authorship: Early Christian writers, including Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen and Eusebius, state that Luke, the evangelist and companion of Paul, wrote the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. Luke was a gentile, and well educated, as evidenced in his literary style. Most scholars agree that the man who wrote Acts also wrote the Gospel of Luke. Both books are dedicated to Theophilus, probably a Christian who contributed financial support to Luke while he was writing. Both books show an understandable interest in medical details, as Luke was a physician (Col 4:14).

Date: Scholars debate whether this gospel account was written early, before the destruction of Jerusalem, or later. The book of Acts ends in the early 60s with Paul imprisoned in Rome. Since the Gospel of Luke was the first of the two volumes, it appears that it was written early—about A.D. 55-62. It may have been revised by Luke at a later date.

Setting and purpose: Luke writes primarily to a non-Jewish readership. For example, rather than using the Jewish term *rabbi*, Luke uses the Greek term meaning master (5:5; 8:24, 45; 9:33, 49; 17:13). He also finds it important to explain Jewish law and tradition for his audience (1:9; 2:23, 24).

Luke's purpose is to show that the work of Jesus rests firmly on historical evidence. Jesus is the Savior of the world (2:11; 4:16-19). Jesus is the divine light to the gentiles (2:32).

Distinctive features: Luke's Gospel is the most comprehensive Gospel. He includes accounts that do not appear in the other Gospels. However, Luke appears to have used Mark's account as the basis for his book. Matthew's and Luke's accounts correspond with parallel wording in 350 of the 661 verses in Mark; Luke further uniquely parallels Mark in another 24 verses. Luke's account parallels another 200 verses in Matthew, perhaps from a common source. This leaves about 575 verses that are unique to Luke.

More parables are given in Luke than in any other Gospel, with unique accounts of the Good Samaritan, Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, Lost Son, Unjust Judge and the Pharisee and the Tax Collector .

Luke records the role of women in Jesus' ministry, more so than is mentioned in Matthew or Mark. Luke reflects on the work of the Holy Spirit and how He prepared the way for Jesus and his ministry. Luke emphasizes that the kingdom has come to earth in the life of Jesus and will be fully established with the return of Jesus (19:11-12).

Outline: This outline shows the structure and content of the book of Luke. Capital letters do not necessarily correspond to daily readings in this volume.

I. BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE OF THE SAVIOR, 1-2

- A. Introduction, 1:1-4
- B. Announcements of Births of John the Baptist and Jesus, 1:5-56
- C. Birth and Early Life of John the Baptist, 1:57-80
- D. Birth and Early Life of Jesus, 2

II. PREPARATION FOR JESUS' MINISTRY, 3-4:30

- A. John the Baptist Prepares the Way for Jesus, 3
- B. Preparation by Jesus, 4:1-13
- C. Inaugural Sermon in Nazareth by Jesus, 4:14-30

III. THE GALILEAN MINISTRY, 4:31-9:50

- A. Authority of the Messiah Demonstrated, 4:31-6:19
- B. Sermon on the Plain: New Laws of the Kingdom, 6:20-49
- C. New Citizens of the Kingdom, 7:1-8:56
- D. New Leadership, 9:1-50

IV. LATER JUDEAN, PEREAN MINISTRIES, 9:51-18:30

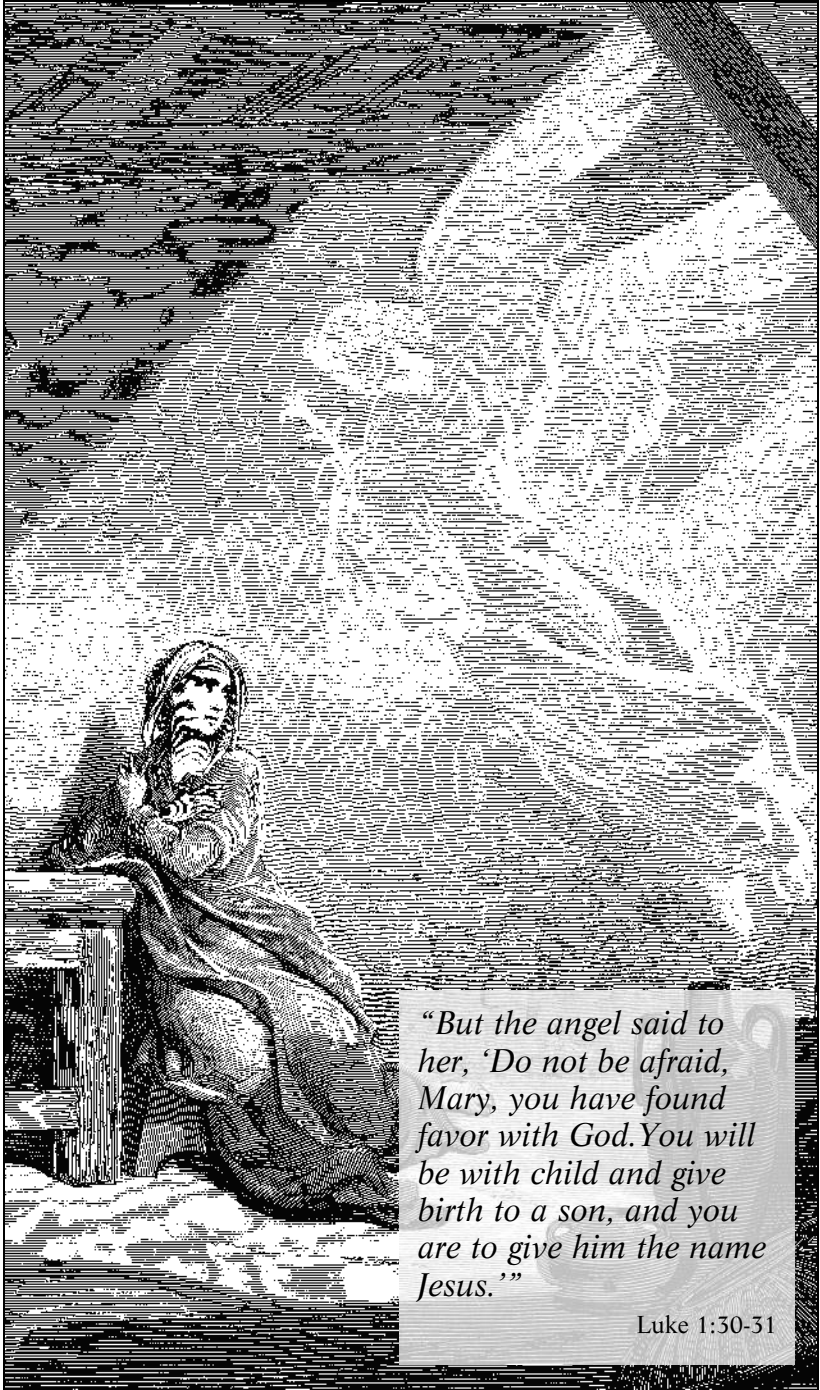
- A. Failure of the Faithless, Commission of the Faithful, 9:51-10:42
- B. How the New Covenant Critiques the Old, 11:1-13:9
- C. Teachings on New Discipleship, 13:10-18:30

V. PASSION WEEK: NEW COVENANT ESTABLISHED, 18:31-23:56

- A. Final Approach to Jerusalem, 18:31-19:27
- B. Jesus Teaches in Jerusalem, 19:28-21:38
- C. Jesus Administers the Last Supper, 22:1-53
- D. Jesus Arrested, Tried and Falsely Convicted, 22:54-23:25
- E. Jesus Crucified and Buried, 23:26-56

VI. RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION, 24

- A. Resurrection and Appearances to Disciples, 24:1-49
- B. Ascension to Heaven, 24:50-53



“But the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.’”

Luke 1:30-31

John and Jesus Are on Their Way!

DAY 1

Luke 1:1-38

Have your parents ever told you how they felt when they first knew you were coming into the world? Was there great joy? Were angels singing? Trumpets blasting?

1. How do God's actions toward Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth demonstrate the grace that spans both testaments? Hint: in those days, childlessness was a public embarrassment and emotional pain. See Genesis 16:1; 25:21 and 1 Samuel 1:2?

2. The angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah in the Temple. How was God's joy reflected in his answer to Zechariah (vs. 12-20)?

3. Was Zechariah's loss of speech because of his unbelief (v. 18-20) or a lesson of God's power and grace—or both?

4. How was the grace of God demonstrated in the conception of Jesus (vs. 26-38)? Twice, Luke emphasizes that Mary was a virgin (v. 27). How was her faithfulness demonstrated (v. 38)?

5. How did Gabriel describe Jesus (vs. 28, 31-33)? How was Jesus' nature unique?

1. Would you be willing to lose your ability to speak for nine months if you knew God was going to give you great joy at the end of that trial?

2. Are you a parent? Do you want to be a parent? Do you feel you would be a better parent if you knew your child's life was due to God's miracle?

Luke writes, not as an original disciple of Jesus, but as a historian recording the eyewitness accounts of those who traveled with Jesus. He begins with the birth of Jesus, which means "Savior" (v. 31), the Son of the Highest (v. 32), a ruler (vs. 32-33), the Holy One (v. 35), the Son of God (v. 35). Note the **trine nature of God**: The Holy Spirit, the Holy One (the Son) and God (the Highest, the Lord God, vs. 32, 35).

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

DAY 2

Songs of Joy!

Luke 1:39-80

OPENING
up to the Word

Mothers are society's unsung heroes. How do you honor *your* mother?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. By whom was Mary, the mother of Jesus, honored (vs. 28, 29-45)? How blessed was she (vs. 42-45)?
2. Mary's prayer of praise is known as the *Magnificat* (vs. 46-55). How did she magnify the greatness of God the Savior? How did her praise focus on God, rather than herself? Compare this to Hannah's prayer (1Sa 2:1-10).
3. Why do you think Luke included so much detail about the naming of John the Baptist (vs. 57-66)? Why did Zechariah wait until John was eight days old to name him?
4. The song of Zechariah (vs. 68-79) is known as the *Benedictus*, from the Latin word for "praise." In this song, what references can you find to Old Testament promises fulfilled by God? How many verses focus on God? How many on his son's future ministry?
5. How is Jesus like the sunrise? Compare Luke 1:78-79 with John 1:4-5, 9.

LIVING
out the Word

1. Consider how Mary's being chosen as the mother of Jesus also carried a great sense of responsibility. If you are a woman, consider how you would have felt if an angel had appeared to you, giving you the same message he gave to Mary.
2. Has God ever intervened in your life, as he did in the life of Zechariah (v. 64)? How did you react?
3. Consider writing a simple prayer that magnifies God—a prayer of benediction, blessing the Lord God of Israel (v. 68).

WINDOW
on the Word

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was blessed by a tremendous miracle: God chose her to be the mother of his son. God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, chose Mary to carry Jesus in her womb, to give birth to him and to raise him as her son.

“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 room for them in the inn.”

Luke 2:6-7



Artwork by Ken Tunell—PTM

DAY 3

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!

Luke 2:1-52

OPENING
up to the Word

How would you react if a hotel in your town had denied a room to a woman in her ninth month of pregnancy?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Why was Jesus placed in a manger (v. 7)? Was Jesus, God incarnate, presented as rejected from the very beginning by a world that did not understand him (see Jn 1:10-11)?
2. Why do you feel Luke did not include the story of Joseph being upset at hearing of the pregnancy of Mary, in contrast to Matthew's account (Mt 1:19)?
3. Why did Luke, a gentile writer, tell the story of Jewish shepherds who worshiped Jesus? Compare this with Matthew's story of the gentile Magi.
4. How did the law of Moses apply to Joseph, Mary and Jesus (vs. 21-24; see Lev 12:2-4)? Does their sacrifice indicate that they were a rich or poor family?
5. How did Luke explain the nature and purpose of Jesus through the narrative in this chapter (vs. 10-11, 14, 25-26, 29-32, 34-35, 49)?

LIVING
out the Word

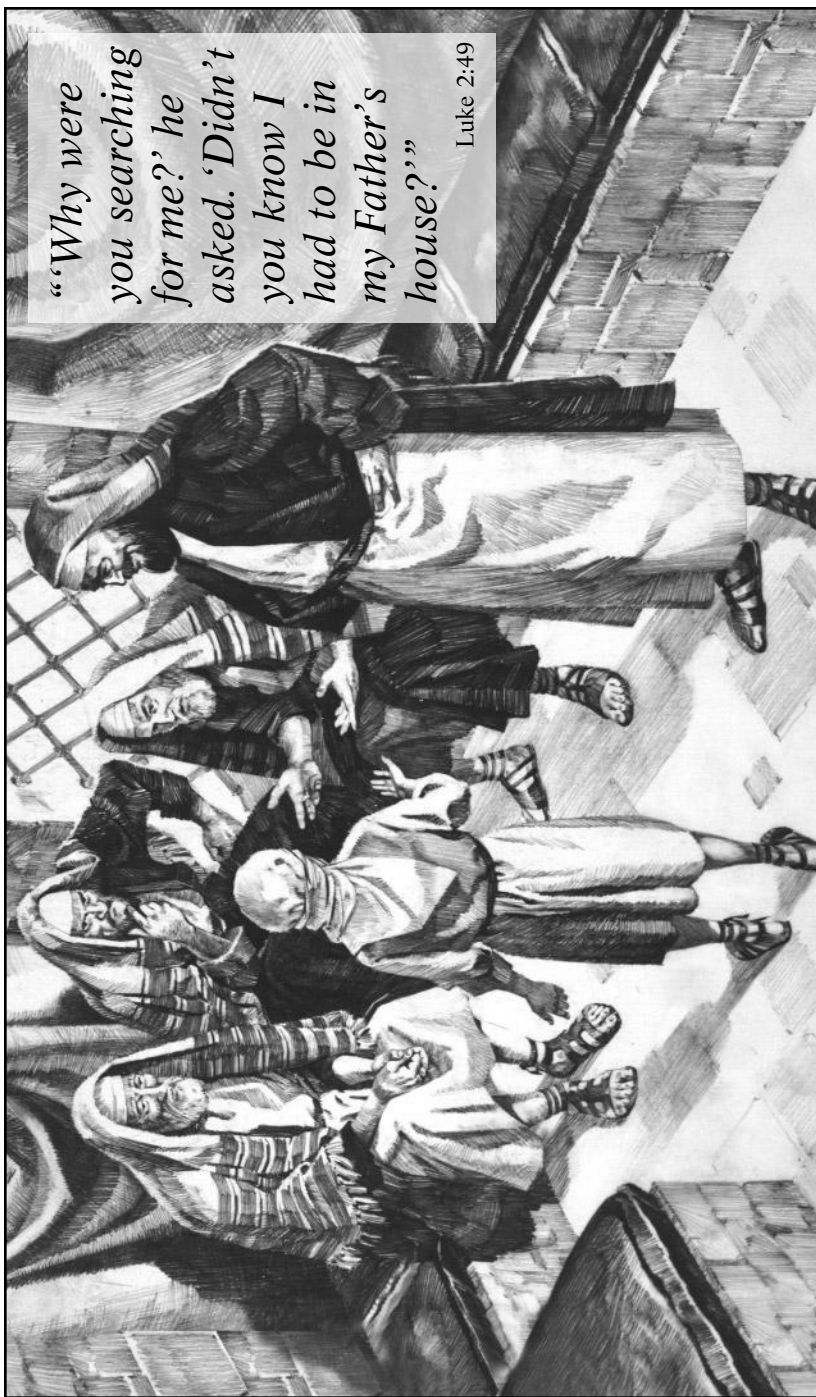
1. Consider the great joy of the angels (vs. 10, 14) and the shepherds (v. 20). How do you express your joy for Jesus?
2. Simeon knew he would not die before seeing the Lord's Anointed (v. 26). Do you find your deepest significance and identity with Jesus as did Simeon (vs. 29-32)?
3. If your son reacted to you as Jesus did to his parents in verses 48-50, how would you react?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Jesus was unique. He was **fully human**, with blood flowing through his veins and with the physical needs to eat, drink, exercise and sleep. He was also **fully divine**, with powers far beyond human comprehension. Luke seeks to explain this paradox in his account. Jesus grew in his human existence as do other humans. His personality and character grew through education and nurturing. He had a dual responsibility as the Son of God and the son of Joseph and Mary.*

“Why were you searching for me?’ he asked. ‘Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?’”

Luke 2:49



DAY 4

“Prepare the Way!”

Luke 3:1-38

OPENING
up to the Word

Did you ever have an important person ask for your help? How did you feel? (a) upset— “why can’t you get someone else?” (b) humble— “how can I help?” (c) flattered— “who am I to help someone important?”

DIGGING
into the Word

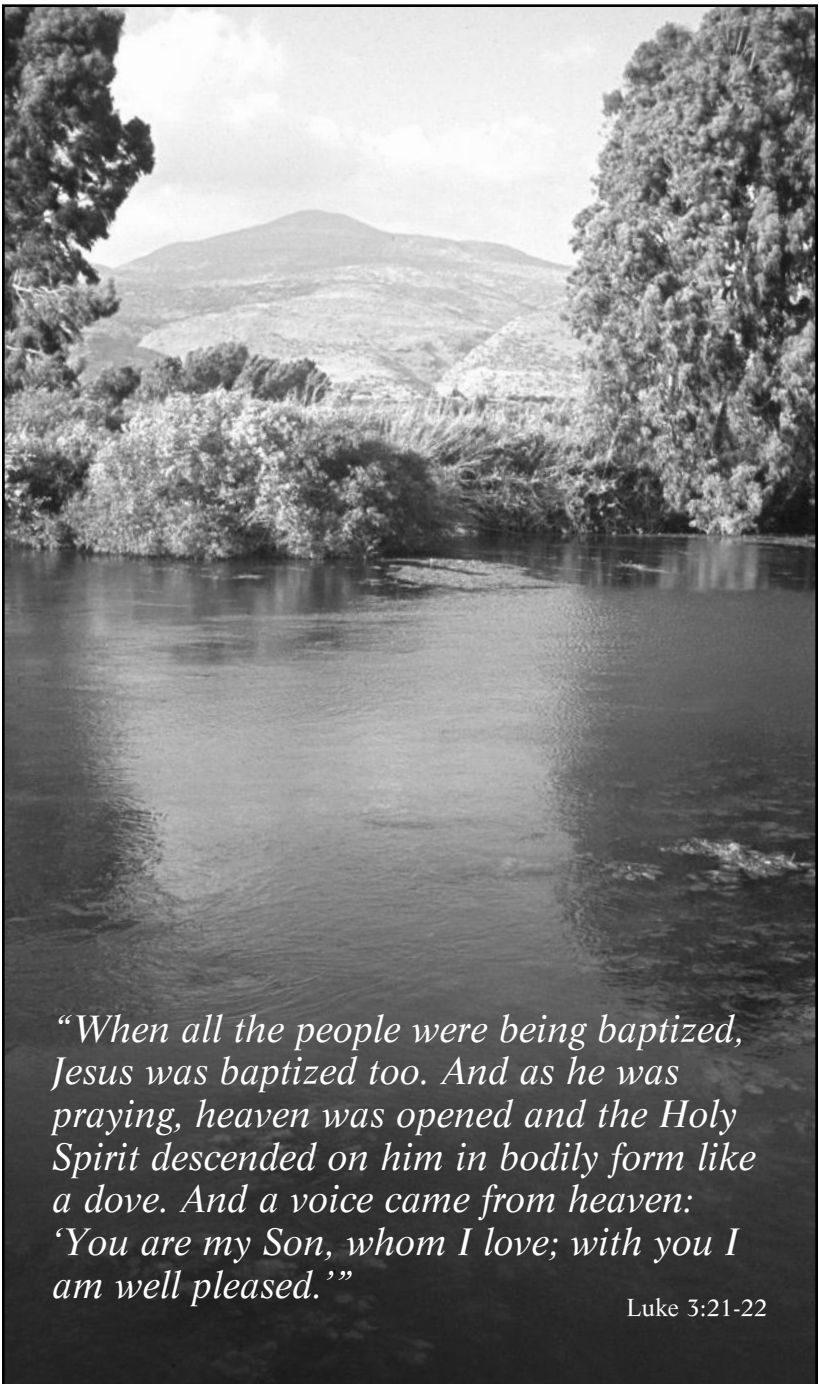
1. How did Isaiah see the preparatory mission for the Messiah (vs. 4-6)? What was to become straight? Smooth? For what purpose?
2. How does the baptism of Jesus contrast with the water baptism of John (vs. 3, 16; Ac 2:1-4; 19:1-7)?
3. Herod Antipas had divorced his wife and married his brother Philip’s wife, Herodias. This violated the Mosaic law in Leviticus 18:16. Was John the Baptist preaching or meddling (Lk 3:19-20)?
4. Why was Jesus, the Son of God, baptized (vs. 21-22)? Was this primarily an example for Christians—or a transition to mark the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus Christ? Consider Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; John 1:29-34.

LIVING
out the Word

1. What reaction would you get if you called today’s religious leaders a “brood of vipers” or criticized the morality of political leaders?
2. Consider John’s commands in Luke 3:11-14. What would you give today to help someone in need?

WINDOW
on the Word

*The Jewish religion called for **purification rituals through washing** (Ex 30:17-21; Lev 13–15). Dishes used in Temple rituals had to be cleansed by water to clean them. In this way God taught Israel how great his holiness was (Lev 22:31-33). John the Baptist came from the Judean wilderness preaching repentance from sins. His baptism in water symbolized spiritual cleansing for God’s use (v. 16).*



“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

The Devil, You Say!

Luke 4:1-44

OPENING
up to the Word

When you yield to temptation, do you: (a) blame Satan—"The devil made me do it!" (b) blame God—"Well, he created me with these urges," (c) blame society—"It's an evil world," (d) take personal responsibility for weaknesses—"I have sinned, please forgive me"?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Why did Jesus go into the wilderness (vs. 1-2)? How does his baptism and this episode parallel Israel's deliverance from Egypt (see Ex 12:37-14)?
2. How did Satan attempt to exploit the weaknesses he perceived in Jesus (vs. 3-13)? How did Jesus counter Satan's offers?
3. How did Christ's message in the synagogue in Nazareth set the stage for his ministry (vs. 18-21)?
4. Who understood the nature of Jesus more—the people in the synagogue or the demons (vs. 34, 41)? Why did he order the demons to be quiet (v. 41)?

LIVING
out the Word

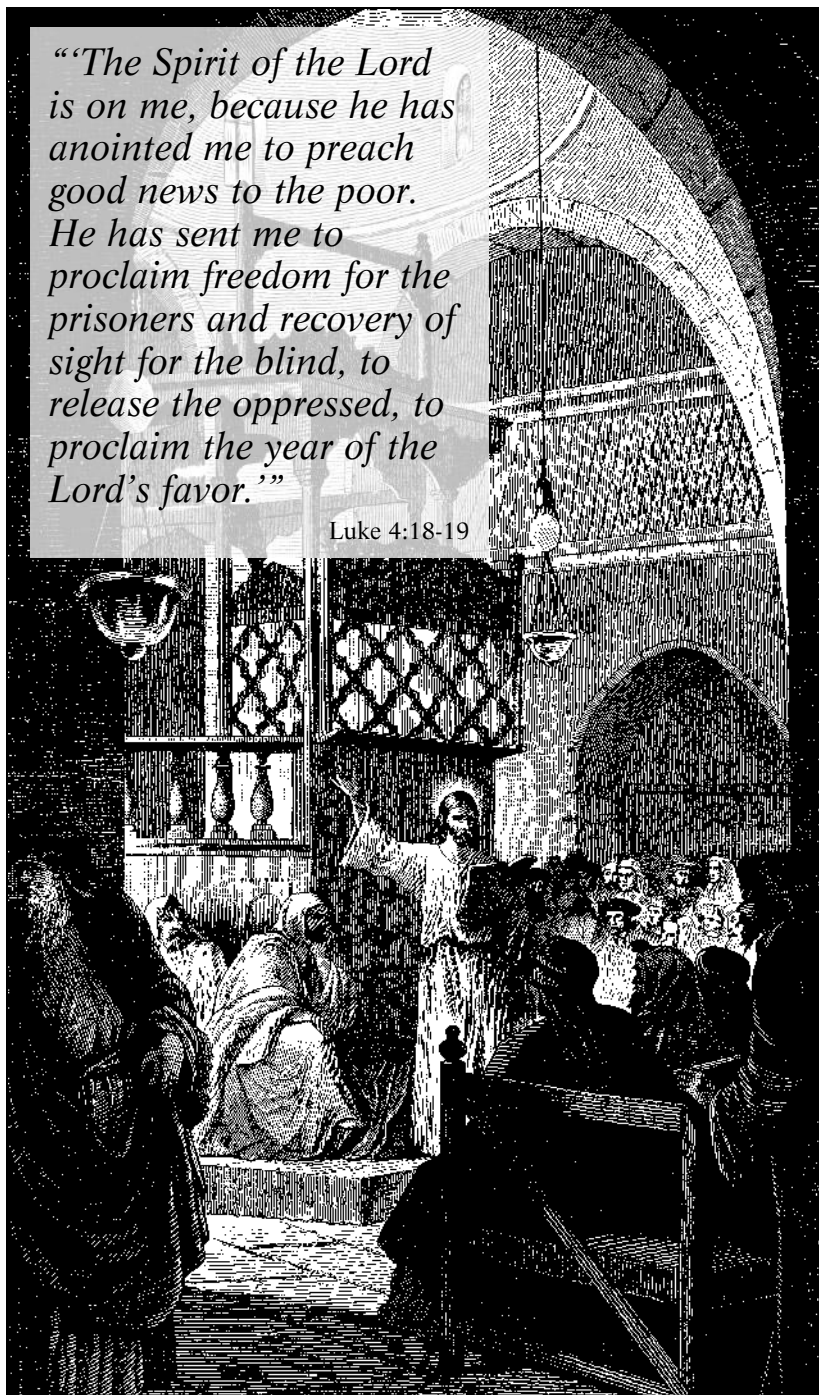
1. Consider the three areas of temptation as self-indulgence, self-rule and self-aggrandizement. Which of these tempts you the most?
2. Is the Spirit of the Lord on you? Are you helping to carry forward the work of Jesus? Is the kingdom real to you (v. 43)?

WINDOW
on the Word

*On the Sabbath, many Jewish people gathered in **synagogues** to worship God. Passages from the Old Testament were usually read aloud from scrolls stored in the synagogue. The synagogue leader would call on someone to give the sermon, the topic usually based on the passages read that day.*

*“The Spirit of the Lord
is on me, because he has
anointed me to preach
good news to the poor.
He has sent me to
proclaim freedom for the
prisoners and recovery of
sight for the blind, to
release the oppressed, to
proclaim the year of the
Lord’s favor.”*

Luke 4:18-19



DAY 6

Fishing Lessons

Luke 5:1-39

OPENING
up to the Word

What qualities make for a good fisherman? (a) eternal optimism, (b) eternal patience, (c) love for silence and tranquility, (d) willingness to get wet.

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Why do you feel Jesus called fishermen to be his disciples (vs. 1-11)?

2. What do you see in the personality of Simon Peter (vs. 3-9)? (a) up front, (b) secretive, (c) quick to respond, slow to think, (d) pessimistic.

3. When Jesus met the paralytic, which problems did he address first—the spiritual or physical (vs. 17-26)? Why were the Pharisees angry with Jesus?

4. Now we meet Matthew Levi, tax collector, who would eventually write one of the Gospels (v. 28). Why did Matthew throw a big feast at his home? Why did Jesus attend?

5. Why didn't the disciples fast (vs. 33-35)? When would Jesus' disciples fast?

6. What does the story of old wineskins, which have lost their elasticity, have to do with a doctor (v. 31) and a bridegroom (v. 34)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Do you have the stamina of a fisherman—and the optimism?

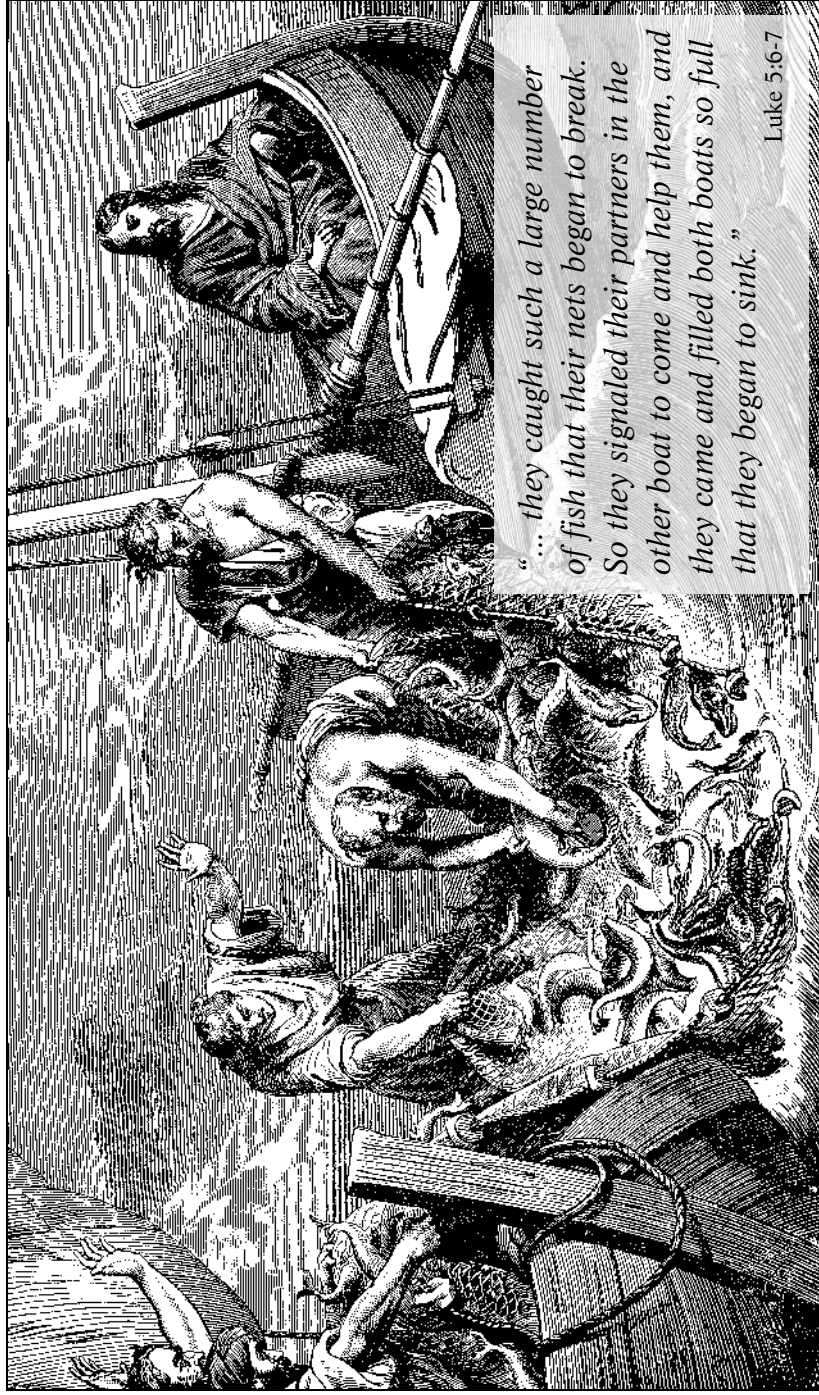
2. If you were leprosy or paralyzed, which would mean more to you—spiritual or physical healing?

3. How do you feel about tax collectors? Are you like the Pharisee or Jesus?

4. How much fun is it to go the doctor? When you start feeling better, are you glad you went? How do you feel about taking your sin to visit your spiritual doctor—Jesus?

WINDOW
on the Word

*The term **leprosy** was used for various skin diseases (Lev 13) and it resulted in banishment from the community until healed. Leprosy represented sin because sin corrupts one's image of God. Like sinners, leprosy persons had to offer sacrifices (Lev 14:2-32).*



“... 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 5:6-7

Lord of the Sabbath

Luke 6:1-19

OPENING
up to the Word

How do you view laws? (a) made to be broken, (b) challenges to be circumvented, (c) good for everyone but you, (d) important to maintain a civilized society, (e) good unless they lead to violation of greater principles.

DIGGING
into the Word

1. In the view of the Pharisees, what was unlawful about picking grain and eating it on the Sabbath (vs. 1-5)? Or with healing someone on the Sabbath (vs. 6-11)?

2. As Lord of the Sabbath, as both God and man, did Jesus need the Pharisees to interpret the law for him? What about vice versa? Consider Colossians 2:16-17.

3. This list marks the call of the disciples. Compare this list (Lk 6:13-16) with the ones in Matthew 10:2-4 and Acts 1:13. Which three disciples are listed in the same place each time? Why?

LIVING
out the Word

What was the purpose of the Sabbath? Is the Lord of the Sabbath your Lord?

WINDOW
on the Word

***The Sabbath** was given by God to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament to identify them as uniquely his people. It was to remind Israel that God was Creator (Ex 20:11) and Redeemer (Dt 5:15). The Sabbath was holy time from sunset Friday night to sunset Saturday night. No work was to be done during that 24-hour period.*