



## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

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### LESSON 13 – STUDY QUESTIONS LUKE 14:25-35, 15:1-32, 16:1-10

#### DAY ONE

1. What idea from last week's lesson (Lesson 12, Chapter 13 through 14:24) helped you in your prayer life?

#### Read Luke 14:25-35

2a. In this week's lesson Jesus was still headed toward Jerusalem, where He would give up His life. By now, large crowds were following Him. He turned to the crowd and said some shocking things about the cost of discipleship. What must those who come to Him do to be His disciple (verses 26 and 27)?

b. What is Jesus saying to His listeners about earthly attachments?

3a. In verses 28-32 Jesus explained that before making a serious commitment one must carefully calculate the cost. What question did He ask to illustrate His point in verse 28?

b. What will happen if he does not sufficiently plan ahead (verses 29-30)?

4a. In verse 31 Jesus drew an analogy between a disciple and a king waging war. What question did He ask?

b. What would a wise king do if he does not have the resources to achieve his goal (verse 32)?

5a. In verse 33 Jesus expanded on His exhortation from verses 26-27 to love God above all and to take up one's cross and to follow Him. What was Jesus' conclusion?

b. In explanation, what analogy did Jesus make between salt and discipleship (verses 34-35)?

6. CONNECTION: A king's first responsibility is loyalty to his people and his land. They must be first in his heart, just as the king must be first in his people's heart. ("For king and country" was a familiar war cry, indicating the soldier was loyal to the point of giving his life). Jesus taught that the loyalty of discipleship also requires complete devotion. To follow the cross, to follow in Jesus' steps requires single-minded faith. Love of God takes priority over everything. This can be frightening when we think of putting God first above family, but He is really telling us that our whole-hearted faith allows us to love others as we should. Can you think of an example of a person or persons (past or present) who provide a role model for loving God above all else? Share your thoughts with your small group.

Read "The Greatest Commandment" in Deuteronomy 10:12 and write a prayer today asking God to help you serve Him with your whole heart.

**DAY TWO**  
**Read Luke 15:1-10**

7. As today's lesson begins, "all the tax collectors and sinners" were coming near to listen to Jesus (verse 1). According to verse 2, what were the Pharisees and the scribes doing and saying?

8a. To explain to the Pharisees and scribes a glimpse of His feelings toward lost souls, Jesus told them the parable of the lost sheep. According to verse 4, what question did He ask them?

b. Summarize from verses 5-6 what happened when the shepherd found the lost sheep, and what he said to his friends and neighbors.

9. In verse 7 what did Jesus tell His listeners will happen in heaven when one sinner repents?

10. Jesus continued to teach in parables. In verse 8 He began the parable of the lost coin. According to this verse, what would the woman who had ten coins and lost one coin do?

11. When the woman found the one lost coin, she called together her friends and neighbors telling them to rejoice with her. According to verse 11 with what wonderful statement does Jesus summarize the moral of this story? (Good memory verse)

12. CONNECTION: A silver coin was worth more than a day's wage. The coin could have been part of the woman's dowry or a wedding gift. In any event, it was so important that she would not even wait until morning to look for it; instead she spent valuable fuel to light a lamp and search for it. Jesus compared the woman's search for the silver coin to God's search for a lost sinner. By this analogy Jesus gave the Pharisees and scribes a glimpse of how much God values each of us. When we sin and turn away from God, He never gives up on us. He constantly calls us to be aware of His love. Think about a time when you or someone you know recognized that God was calling and decided to answer God's call and return to Him. Share some thoughts with your small group.

Read and record 1 Samuel 2:8 and let thoughts of how much God loves each of us lead you into prayer.

### DAY THREE

#### Read Luke 15:11-21

13a. The parable of "The Prodigal Son" is only found in the Gospel of Luke. Today's lesson begins with Jesus describing a man who had two sons (verse 11). What did the younger son say to his father (verse 12) and what did the father do?

**NOTE:** By asking for his inheritance, the son was "indirectly demanding the father's own death" (commentary page 105).

b. Giving his property in such a manner showed his incredible love for that child. Describe how the father must have felt at this request.

14a. A few days later, the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country. What did he do after he got there (verse 13)?

b. When the younger son had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country and he began to be in need. From verse 15, what kind of a job was he able to get?

15a. In verse 16, what tells you that he was starving?

b. Verse 17 tells us that "he came to himself." What did he say when he realized what he had done?

16a. According to verse 18 he decided to get up and go to his father, and say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you." Of what sins do you think the younger son was repenting?

b. The younger son set off for his father's home. Describe in your own words his father's reaction when he saw his younger son returning (verse 20).

17a. What did the returning son say to his father (verse 21)?

b. Some scholars consider this parable to be an analogy to Israel's disgrace and exile to other lands, where they worshipped idols and rejected their Father's commandments. Read and briefly note how Ezekiel 37:21-23 could relate to this parable.

18. CONNECTION: In today's parable, the younger son had to hit "rock bottom" before he recognized that he had thrown away those things which were most valuable in life - most importantly his relationship with his father. Perhaps the father recognized that his son would have to learn the hard lesson for himself. The brash young son would have to experience the loss of everything in order to change and grow. Have you or someone you know had a similar experience, when life taught you that you did not know everything or could not do everything on your own, and this ultimately brought you closer to your family or your faith? If you are comfortable in doing so, share a few points from this life lesson with your small group.

Read and record Proverbs 30:4 and begin your prayer today asking God for His guidance in all you do.

#### **DAY FOUR**

**Read Luke 15:22-32**

19. Today's lesson begins with the poignant words of the father of the prodigal son to his slaves. Record his words from verses 22-24.

**THINK:** How would you act as a parent in those circumstances? Consider that the son asked for forgiveness but the father was so overjoyed that he did not see the need to mention it.

20a. The elder son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house he heard music and dancing, so he called one of the slaves and asked what was going on (verses 25-26). Summarize what the slave told him (verse 27).

b. What was the reaction of the older son (verse 28)?

21a. His father came out and began to plead with him. Summarize the older son's complaint (verses 29-30).

b. How would you characterize his attitude and to whom do you think he could be compared in Jesus' world?

22. The father replied to the son with kindness and love, telling him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours" (verse 31). If this were your son in this day and time, how would you say this?

23. With what words did the father explain the infinite value to him of his lost child (verse 32)?

24. CONNECTION: The parables we have studied over the past three days (the Parable of the Lost Sheep, the Parable of the Lost Coin, and the Parable of the Prodigal Son and His Brother) build successively on the importance of what is lost: a sheep, a coin, a son; one of 99, one of 10, and 1 of 2. With each parable, that which is lost increases in value, showing more and more how God loves and wants those who are lost to return to him. Do we look at those who are lost as God's precious children? Or are we, like the elder brother, jealous of what we have and unwilling to share? Discuss ways in which we can open our hearts to welcome others into our community of faith.

Read and record Romans 15:7 and begin your prayer today thanking God for His abundant mercy.

## DAY FIVE

### Read Luke 16:1-9

25. Today's lesson begins with Chapter 16. Jesus was again teaching through parables. A rich man had a manager and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property (verse 1). Describe in your own words what you imagine "squandering his property" might have meant in those days.

26. For some reason the rich man was not happy with how his estate was being managed! What did the rich man say to the dishonest manager (verse 2)?

27a. The dishonest manager didn't know what he would do if he lost his position, because he wasn't strong enough to dig and he was ashamed to beg (verse 3). He decided on a course of action that would possibly make him some friends "so that he would still be welcomed into peoples' homes" (verse 4). What did he say to the first of his master's debtors (end of verse 5)?

b. What was the response of the first debtor (verse 6) and what did the dishonest manager then tell him to do?

28a. The shrewd manager goes on to ask another debtor how much he owed, and again he adjusted the amount downward from a hundred containers of wheat to eighty. Describe what you think the dishonest manager was trying to do.

**NOTE:** Stewards were estate managers who collected debts and rents for their masters. They often marked up the debt so they could keep a percentage as their payment.

29a. We read that the shrewd manager's master commended him (verse 8)! Record the rationale at the end of verse 8.

b. Jesus counseled His disciples (for it is they to whom He is speaking according to [Luke 16:1](#)) not to value (or trust) material things, but to use whatever wealth they have to help others. Record verse 9.

30. CONNECTION: While we may look askance at the actions of the dishonest (or shrewd) manager, we have to applaud his ingenuity and effort! He saw that he had two choices: to give up and lose everything, or work to make the best of the situation, or at the least, to help others and by so doing potentially help himself. St. Jose Escriva (from "The Way", quoted in The Navarre Bible, St. Luke, page 142) derived this challenge for us from the parable: "In saving our soul and spreading the Kingdom of God, our Lord wants us to apply at least the same ingenuity and effort as people put into their worldly affairs or their attempts to attain some human ideal." What a great question for us to consider: Do we put as much effort into our faith as we do into our businesses, our families, our interests? Share some ways in which we can become "shrewd managers" for the Lord in a positive way!

Read and record Colossians 3:23-24 and begin your prayer today asking the Lord to help you work for Him in all ways, every day.

#### **DAY SIX**

**Read Luke 16:10-18**

31. Jesus ended the parable of the dishonest manager with four teaching points listed below. Choose one of His conclusions and briefly explain it:

... "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much" (verse 10).

... "If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches" (verse 11)?

... "And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own" (verse 12)?



... "No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth" (verse 13).

32. The Pharisees, who were "lovers of money," heard all of this. How did they react (verse 14)?

33a. Jesus then declared the transition between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant that He was establishing by laying down His life for mankind. "The law and the prophets were in effect until John came; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is proclaimed" (verse 16). Briefly describe the "good news of the kingdom of God."

b. He finished with the rather mysterious statement, "everyone tries to enter it by force" (end of verse 16). This phrase has been interpreted in many ways. Look up 2 or 3 different translations of this phrase (including the New Living Translation, if possible) and comment on the meaning of this statement.

34a. In verse 17 Jesus went on to explain that even though the good news of the kingdom of God is coming, the "law" will not pass away. According to verse 17, what is easier than for "one stroke of a letter in the law to be dropped?"

**NOTE:** Parts of the "Law" from the Old Covenant, such as ritual sacrifices, were fulfilled in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, but the moral law, such as that contained in the Ten Commandments, remains. (Agape Catholic Bible Study, The Gospel of Luke, Lesson 11)

b. In verse 18 Jesus gave an example of the permanence of God's moral law, referring particularly to marriage. What does He say?

35. In Mark 10:2-9 Jesus explained the background of the statement contained in verse 18 regarding divorce, and expanded on this teaching and the permanence of God's moral laws. Read and summarize this passage.

36. CONNECTION: Today's lesson helps us to understand that by proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom, Jesus intended to radically change many of the cultural traditions of Jewish people. The Pharisees considered Jesus' preaching a radical departure from their cultural traditions and "laws" of the Old Testament. Jesus stated that He did not come to abolish the law (Matthew 5:17); rather, He came to put aside the practices such as divorce, which were added over the centuries and cloaked God's directives. Just as in Jesus' time, today there is constant pressure to concede to cultural mores that are unacceptable to God. To truly follow Jesus' teachings, we must stand firm FOR God's laws (without "dropping one stroke of a letter"). Two examples are the Catholic Church's (and other churches) stance against abortion and poverty. From a local news story or recent history, what are some other issues upon which the Church (and Catholics everywhere) has taken a stand to support Christian values?

Read and record Galatians 5:14 and write a prayer today asking God to give you the courage to stand up for Him in all that is worthy and true.

After completing this lesson, read pages 100-110 in the *The Gospel According to Luke* by Michael F. Patella, O.S.B. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible: Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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