



## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

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### LESSON 14 – STUDY QUESTIONS LUKE 16:19-17:37

#### DAY ONE

1. From the familiar parables you read last week in Lesson 13 (parts of Chapters 14, 15 and 16), was there one in particular from which you gained new insight into Jesus' teaching or was there something in the Commentary or Spiritual Reflection that gave you new understanding?

#### Read Luke 16:19–25

2. At the end of last week's lesson, Jesus emphasized the permanence of God's moral law. In today's lesson Jesus illustrated these principles in the story of a "rich man" who ignored his moral duty to his neighbor. How was the rich man dressed and how did he dine each day (verse 19)?

3a. Meanwhile, at the rich man's gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores (verse 20). What did he long for (verse 21)?

b. Dogs were considered unclean by the Jews of that time. What was happening that expressed the desperation of Lazarus' condition (end of verse 20)?

4a. Lazarus, the poor man, died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham, the hereditary father of the Jewish people and a symbol of the blessings and wisdom of the just. According to verse 22, who else died and what happened to him?

b. The rich man went to a place in Hades where he was tormented, but he looked up to another part of Hades where he saw Lazarus far away with Abraham by his side. According to verse 24, what did the rich man call out?

**NOTE:** God gave poor Lazarus justice in Hades (Sheol), the abode of the dead into which all men and women went (before the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross). In Hades there was a "good side and a bad side." (Agape Bible Study, *The Gospel of Luke*).

5a. Abraham reminded the rich man that during his lifetime he had received good things while Lazarus had received evil things, but in the afterlife, Lazarus was being comforted while the rich man was in agony (verse 25). Comment on why you think there was a "reversal of fortune" when these two men died.

b. Read and record one of the following verses from the Old and New Testaments which confirm God's moral law that we care for those in need.

Isaiah 58:7

Matthew 25:36

James 2:16

6. CONNECTION: In this parable we do not read that the rich man treated the poor man, Lazarus, badly. Actually, it appears that the rich man didn't notice him at all. This parable is a pointed example of how sin can occur from doing nothing (other than simply not loving) versus actually doing harm. Moses' law (Deuteronomy 15:11) specifically instructs the Jewish people to care for the poor, noting, as Jesus did, that the poor will always be with us. We, too, can become anesthetized to the need that exists around us. What are some ways that you and others you know not only notice need, but address it lovingly?

Read and record Deuteronomy 15:11 and write a prayer today asking God to make you ever more aware of the need that exists and ever more vigilant in helping others.

## DAY TWO

### Read Luke 16:26-31

7a. As today's lesson begins, "the rich man" was still suffering in the hellish part of Hades. He was addressed by Abraham who explained to him about the great chasm between him and Lazarus. What reason for the chasm did Abraham give the rich man in verse 26?

b. Refer back to yesterday's lesson (verse 24) which described what the environment in Hades was like for the rich man and then comment on a reason why people might want to cross this chasm.

8. In verses 27 and 28, the rich man begged Abraham to send him (in the NAB translation "him" is stated as Lazarus) to his father's house to warn his five brothers. For what reason did he want them to be warned?

9a. According to verse 29, what did Abraham reply to the rich man?

b. Rewrite verse 29 in your own words.

10. The rich man continued to beg Abraham to send someone to warn his brothers. What did he say would happen and what does this suggest to you about his brothers' way of living (verse 30)?

11. With what prophetic words regarding the unrepentant did Abraham end the discussion in verse 31?

12. CONNECTION: In this parable we are reminded not only that God's law commands us to care for the needy but that our repentance needs to happen now! Today is the day that we are given to live in the truth of God's love. We cannot wait till we are at Saint Peter's gates to show repentance. Yet it is easy to "put off until tomorrow things that could be done today," including confessing our sins and asking for God's mercy. What are some ways that you can remind yourself on a daily basis of how you SHOULD be living your life, including acknowledging your sins? Consider as well how you make sure that those things which are important to God are first on YOUR list.

Read and record Psalm 32:5 and begin your prayer today by asking God's mercy for the things you have done or have failed to do.

### **DAY THREE**

#### **Read Luke 17:1-10**

13a. Today's lesson begins Chapter 17 of Luke, which in some versions is entitled "Some Sayings of Jesus." Read and record Jesus' saying in verse 1, noting the emphasis on the word "by."

b. Jesus completed His warning with a dreadful image in verse 2. What would be better than to cause "one of these little ones" to stumble?

14a. In verses 3 and 4, Jesus taught His disciples how to deal with the sins of other disciples. How did He immediately grab their attention?

b. Verse 3 instructed them to rebuke another disciple if that person sins, but if he or she repents, they are to forgive the offender. According to verse 4, how often and how sincerely must His disciples forgive?

15. The apostles reacted to this teaching by saying to the Lord, "Increase our faith" (verse 5). Jesus used a mustard seed, one of the smallest seeds, to illustrate His answer. With just that tiny amount of faith what did Jesus say we could do (verse 6)?

**THINK:** The apostles were told to forgive "7 times a day." The number 7 indicates infinity, thus requiring limitless forgiveness, a task that is challenging for any of us! Could this be one of the reasons that the apostles (the twelve closest to Jesus) would say to Him, "Increase our faith?" Should we, too, ask Jesus to "Increase our faith" so that we can forgive as He commands?

16a. Jesus continued to teach through examples. In verse 7 He asked who among them would say to a slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field to "Come here at once and take your place at the table?" According to verse 8, what would the master more likely say to the slave?

b. In verse 9 what question did Jesus ask?

17a. Consider verses 7-10 as a metaphor with God as the Master and us as the slave (or servant). What should our attitude be toward God as we obey His commands?

b. Jesus ended His teaching by stressing that gifts from God are far greater than any service we can offer Him! Read and record what Jesus instructed them to say when they had done what they were ordered to do (verse 10).

18. CONNECTION: In this lesson Jesus seemed to be praising an arbitrary and difficult master; however, the focus of His teaching is not on the master's attitude; rather, on what the slave should be doing and feeling. The servant should perform the duties assigned to him, for which he is owed nothing but will be given food and drink in the master's good time. We also should tirelessly perform our service to God and fulfill His commandments without looking for approbation. As creatures we are not equal to the Creator. Our duty to Him can never repay Him for the grace we have received and continue to receive from Him each day! Share with your small group ways in which you serve and thank the Lord for His gifts.

Read and record Luke 1:38 and write a prayer today asking God that you lovingly accept your service to Him as Mary accepted God's will for her.

#### **DAY FOUR**

##### **Read Luke 17:11-19**

19. As today's lesson begins, we are reminded that Jesus was still on His way to Jerusalem. He is nearing the end of His journey. Review the map at the end of this lesson ([www.bible.ca](http://www.bible.ca)) to follow Jesus on His journey. What region did he go through according to verse 11?

20a. As Jesus entered a village, ten lepers approached Him, keeping their distance (verse 12). What did they call out to Him according to verse 13?

b. When He saw them, what did He say and what then happened (verse 14)?

21. For what reason do you think Jesus told them to show themselves to the priests? (See Leviticus 14:2).

22. One of the lepers, when he saw that he was healed, turned back and thanked God with a loud voice (verse 15). What did he do when he reached Jesus and how is he described (verse 16)?

23a. Jesus asked the Samaritan, “Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and gave praise to God except this foreigner?” (verses 17 and 18) What did Jesus then say to the Samaritan in verse 19?

b. What are some reasons that you think Jesus specifically noted that the person who returned and gave praise to God was a "Samaritan" and a "foreigner"?

**NOTE:** In this chapter Jesus healed a Samaritan leper who was a despised foreigner to the Jews. Scholars compare this healing with that recorded in 2 Kings 5:1-14 in which the prophet Elisha healed the commander of the Assyrian army, a much hated enemy of Israel.

24. CONNECTION: Today’s lesson continues the subject of gratitude. Jesus healed ten lepers, sending them to the priest for reentry into society. Only the Samaritan leper, and not the nine Jewish lepers, returned to thank Him for the great gift of healing. Consider the reasons the others did not return. Perhaps they took their good fortune for granted or they lost interest in Jesus after they got what they wanted. Perhaps they were too busy returning to their normal lives. In any case, Jesus clearly showed His disappointment that the majority did not return and praise God. What can this teach us about recognizing God's grace in our lives in spite of distractions? Share with your small group ways in which you thank God for His great gifts.

Read and record James 1:17 and begin your prayer today with a grateful heart, remembering the miracles in your life, great and small.

**DAY FIVE**

**Read Luke 17:20-31**

25. In today's lesson Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming. How did His answer describe the spiritual nature of God's kingdom (end of verse 20 and beginning of verse 21)?

b. In the last sentence of verse 21 Jesus told them that "the kingdom of God is among you." What does this phrase mean to you?

**NOTE:** The Greek word for "among" can also be translated as "within;" however, the USCCB states that the preferred translation in this passage is "among" because Jesus is speaking of the presence of the kingdom.

26a. Jesus prophesied somewhat mysteriously to His disciples that He would not always be present with them as He was at that time. Record His words from verse 22.

b. In verses 23 and 24 Jesus warned his listeners not to pay attention to false prophets because when the time comes for the day of the Son of Man, it will be obvious to all. Record verse 24, which describes this time.

27. What did Jesus say in verse 25 must happen first to the Son of Man before His second coming?

28a. Jesus compared God's judgments of His people in the Old Testament (verses 26-29) with what is to happen "on the day that the Son of Man is revealed" (verse 30). Describe what happened in the days of Noah from verse 27.

b. Briefly describe what happened in the days of Lot from verses 28 and 29.

29. Verse 31 warns that the day that the Son of Man will be revealed will come suddenly and unexpectedly and gives them instructions on what not to do. Record this verse.

**THINK:** On that “day” what belongings in your house would you be tempted to go back to?

30. CONNECTION: Today's lesson reminds us that our daily affairs will one day come to a screeching halt, whether at the Last Judgment or merely at the end of our lives. Jesus challenged His listeners to be prepared for the coming judgment of God. When Jesus described the great flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, He didn't dwell on the sinfulness of the people, but rather on how swiftly and unexpectedly punishment came. Perhaps they were too consumed with their daily activities to take time to repent and honor the living God. Look at your day-to-day activities and ask yourself if you are more day-centered or God-centered. What would you do differently today if you knew that tomorrow (or next week, or next month) was your “last day”? Share some comments with your small group.

Read and record Matthew 24:44 and remember to repent and worship God so that you are prepared when your time comes.

## **DAY SIX**

**Read Luke 17:32-37**

31a. As today's lesson begins, Jesus continued his teaching about the day that the Son of Man will be revealed. He returned to the Old Testament story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, counseling His listeners to remember what happened to Lot's wife (verse 32). Read Genesis 19:15-26 and summarize briefly why she was turned into a pillar of salt.

b. Comment on how the fate of Lot's wife relates to the message of this week's passage.

32. Jesus then gave His disciples more general advice about what their attitude should be toward daily life. Record verse 33.



33. Jesus warned them that on the day of the coming of the Son of Man God's judgment will be swift and irrevocable. How did Jesus describe this in verse 34?

34. What is the second example Jesus gave in verse 35?

**NOTE:** In the NRSV and many other translations, verse 36 is omitted. The King James translation has "Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

35. The disciples then asked Jesus, "Where, Lord?" Record His enigmatic answer (verse 37).

36. CONNECTION: In this lesson Jesus counseled His listeners to remember what happened to Lot's wife. Against God's command, she looked back toward her former home as she was escaping Sodom. For disobeying the angel of God, she was turned into a pillar of salt. Perhaps Lot's wife longed to return to the "security" of the life she had known. Most of us are too attached to our homes, our possessions, even our families and friends. It is difficult to turn away from the security of our mortal lives and keep our eyes heavenward. What are the things that you hold onto most tightly, and how does your faith help you to let go and trust in God? Share some thoughts with your small group.

Read and record Psalm 9:10, and write a prayer today asking God to help you change the things that keep you from loving and serving Him with your whole heart.

After completing this lesson, read pages 110-116 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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