

KNOW  
JESUS



# THE KINGDOM OF GOD

*Luke 14-18*

**BIBLE STUDIES**





This section of Luke continues with Jesus on his long journey toward Jerusalem, which first began in Luke 9:51. Along the way, he has been teaching people what it means to follow him as a daily practice of life. In this second half of the journey, Jesus increasingly speaks about the Kingdom of God—the kingdom which will come into full effect through his own death and resurrection.

The Kingdom of God describes what life looks like when a person lives with Jesus as their king. In these chapters, Jesus will describe who the kingdom is for, the benefit of being in this kingdom, and how we are to live in response to Jesus being God’s anointed king.

I hope and pray these studies continue to encourage you through the Gospel of Luke as we lift our eyes to all that God is and all that he has for us.

Luke Thomson  
*Senior Minister*

# LUKE OVERVIEW

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THE COMING LORD



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THE BIRTH OF THE LORD



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PREPARING FOR THE LORD

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THE LORD'S MISSION IN GALILEE

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THE LORD'S MISSION TOWARDS JERUSALEM

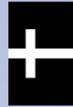
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THE LORD'S MISSION IN JERUSALEM



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THE ENTRY OF THE LORD



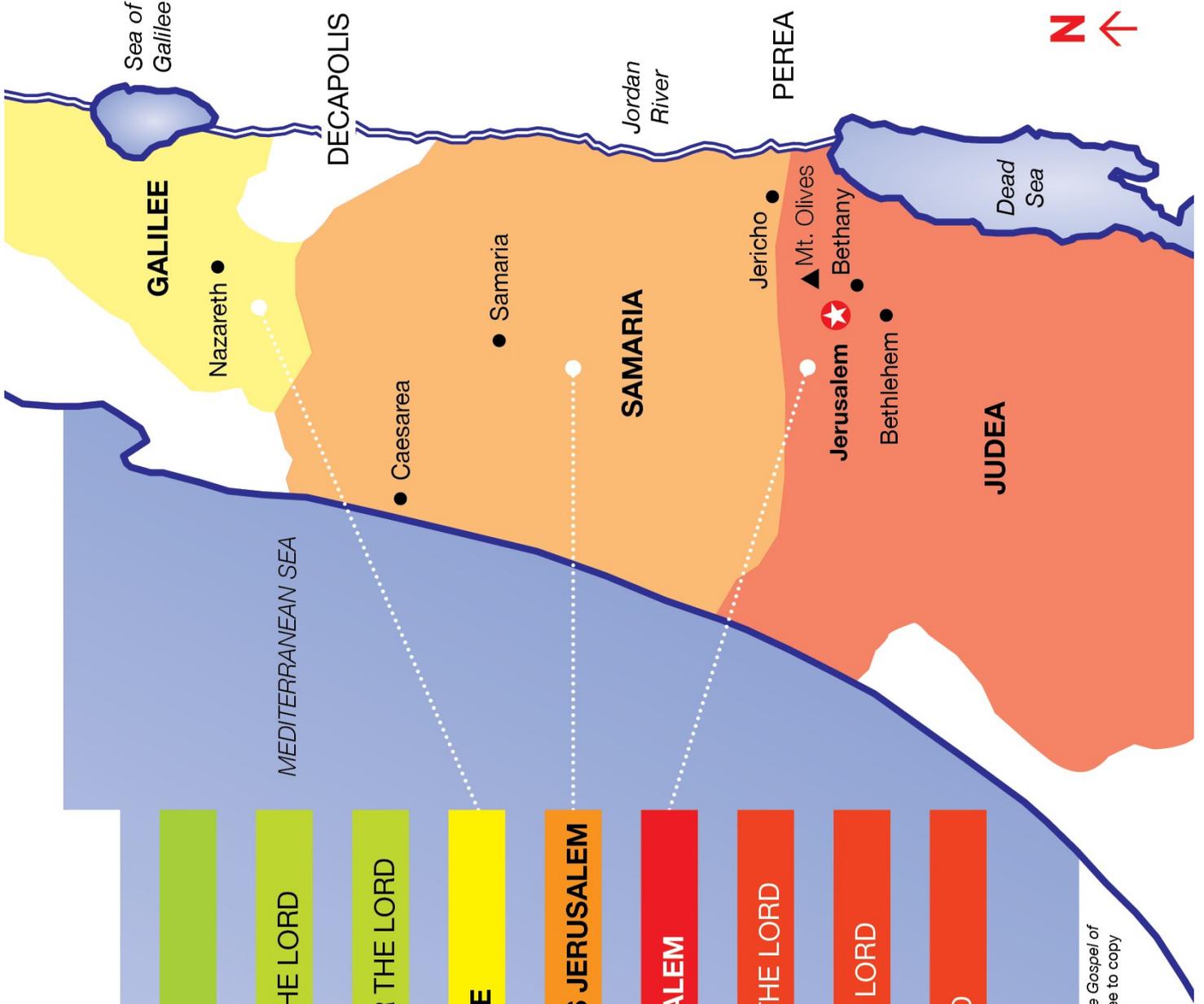
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THE SUFFERING LORD



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THE RISEN LORD



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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD

## LUKE 9-13

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# ENTERING THE KINGDOM

LUKE 13:18-35

## share

Have you ever waited to enter somewhere? Maybe a concert, a sale at a shop, or a new house. What was the feeling of anticipation like?

What makes a wait worthwhile?

## explore

**Read Luke 13:18-21**

How does the Kingdom of God look different now compared to how it will look at the end?

What do you think these illustrations were supposed to make people feel?

**Read Luke 13:22-30**

Why do you think the people didn't make it inside the owners house in time? (v. 25)

Why do you think the owner says that he doesn't know those who are knocking? (vv. 25, 27) What does this suggest about the connection between knowledge and action?

What do you think the person expected to hear as the answer to the original question? (v. 23) What does Jesus focus on in his answer? Why might he focus on this?

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### FUN FACT

"Weeping and gnashing of teeth" (v. 28) was a common expression to refer to eternal judgement.

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### TALKING POINT

“It is not fair that many will try to enter God’s Kingdom and not be able.”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely)

**1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10**

Why do you think it is fair or unfair?

How might God answer our concerns about this?

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### Read Luke 13:31-35

What does Jesus accuse Israel of doing? What should they have done?

## Live

The second and third stories highlight the importance of a right response to a knowledge of God. How do you ensure you are growing in your knowledge of God? What habits or practices do you find most helpful?

In what areas do you find your beliefs or knowledge of God most difficult to live out? What steps could you take to assist you in this?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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### FUN FACT

“No prophet can die outside Jerusalem” (v. 33). This seems to be based on previous experience, rather than any law or requirement. (For examples, see 2 Chron 24:21; Jer 26:20-23; 1 Kgs 19:10)

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# A KINGDOM OF BLESSING

LUKE 14:1-24

## share

How positive do you think the Christian life is viewed by society more broadly?

What are some positive, practical, everyday benefits to being a Christian?

How hard did you find it to answer this question?

## explore

**Read Luke 14:1-6**

Why do you think Jesus was being watched so closely? (v. 1)

What is the implied answer to Jesus' second question? (v. 5) What do you think this suggests about God's intention for his laws? (v. 5)

**Read Luke 14:7-14**

What attitude does Jesus promote people should have? (vv. 8-11)

What will happen to those who have this attitude?

Why do you think Jesus encourages us to serve these kinds of people? (v. 13)

What will happen to those who do? (v. 14)

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### FUN FACT

This is the third time Jesus has confronted Jewish leaders about the appropriateness to heal on the sabbath (cf. 6:9, 13:16)

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## TALKING POINT

“Christians have a duty to help others experience God’s Kingdom.”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

**1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10**

When is this hard to do?

Can it ever become a distraction? If so, when?

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### Read Luke 14:15-24

Jesus illustrates his previous comment (v. 13) and rebukes the guest (v. 15) by speaking of the Kingdom of God as a present reality, not just a future one. Why do you think he uses a banquet to illustrate this? Who does this suggest God’s Kingdom is for?

## Live

How well do you care for and honour those who ‘cannot repay you’? (v. 14)

What can make this difficult for you?

How could you display God’s love for the fringe of society in the week ahead?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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### FUN FACT

Luke doesn’t comment on how valid the three excuses are (vv. 18-20). Instead, he makes the point that following Jesus must be a first priority, regardless of other circumstances.

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# A KINGDOM OF THE CROSS

LUKE 14:25-35

## share

What is an item that you have saved for (other than a house or car)?

What non-financial costs are there to significant life decisions you have made?  
(eg. It may have cost you an opportunity or a relationship)

## explore

**Read Luke 14:25-35**

Jesus often uses strong contrasts to highlight two opposing views. How do his strong words make you feel? (vv. 26-27)

What point is Jesus trying to make?

Jesus uses two stories to illustrate the importance of 'counting the cost' (vv. 28-32). Why is it important to consider carefully what it means to follow Jesus? What might happen if you don't?

Why does being a disciple of Jesus require us to give up everything we have? (v. 33)

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### FUN FACT

The Bible often uses black and white contrast to emphasise a point, just as Jesus does here with 'hate' (v. 26). Compare it with Luke 16:13 or Matthew 10:37)

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### TALKING POINT

“Hate is not an emotion that Christians should feel.”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10

Are there things that it is godly to hate?

Are there godly ways to express hate?

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## Live

Are there ways in which following Jesus has ‘cost’ you?

When you count this cost, is it worth it? Why or why not?

How should we view our life, relationships and possessions if we follow Jesus?

How do we know if our priorities are in order? What can help us?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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#### FUN FACT

As with many of Jesus’ parables, the question of salt losing its saltiness (v. 35) is used to illustrate a point, even if it were not actually possible in real life.

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# A KINGDOM FOR THE LOST

LUKE 15:1-32

## share

What is the most precious thing you have lost? Did you find it again?

## explore

**Read Luke 15:1-10**

What prompts Jesus to tell these three stories? (vv. 1-2)

Who might be the modern equivalent of tax collectors and sinners? (v. 1)

What seems illogical about the shepherd's/woman's actions?

What does this tell us about how they value their sheep/coins?

**Read Luke 15:11-32**

What is surprising about the way the Father treats his younger son?

What is surprising about the way the Father treats his older son?

What do these stories tell us about God's care for the lost?

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### FUN FACT

The question of who would take care of the sheep (v. 4) is only relevant if this were a true story. Parables typically focus on one particular point, and leave out the unnecessary details.

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### TALKING POINT

“We are all the younger son in the story.”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

**1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10**

How does the reason for this story (cf. v1) help us consider who we should identify with?

Who does the older son represent in Jesus’ context?

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## Live

Do you consider yourself more like the younger or the older son? Why?

The shepherd, the woman, and the father all express great joy in finding something that was once lost. We are told this is an analogy for the rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents (vv. 7, 10). Do you ever feel a joy like this from others coming to follow Jesus?

What opportunities are there for you to see people begin to follow Jesus? What steps do you take to help others come to know Jesus as their king and saviour?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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#### FUN FACT

The younger son’s request for his inheritance is effectively expressing his wish for the death of his father.

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## A KINGDOM OF GREAT VALUE

LUKE 16:1-15

### share

When have you had to suddenly change your plans for the future?

Has there been a time when your future plans have been suddenly or radically changed by God?

### explore

**Read Luke 16:1-8**

How do you think the master would feel about the manager's actions? (vv. 5-7)

What does the master commend his manager for? (v. 8)

**Read Luke 16:9-15**

What does Jesus teach we should use wealth and possessions for? (v. 9a)

What do you think this means?

At the end of time, when worldly wealth no longer exists, what is the hope? (v. 9b)

Jesus teaching here is similar to a number of parables where he teaches about good stewardship (vv. 10-12). In what ways have you seen this idea experienced in worldly contexts?

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#### FUN FACT

"People of the light" (v. 8) was a way of describing God's people. They are often referred to as a community of light and truth.

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### TALKING POINT

“You should consider the money in your bank as if on loan from God.”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10

What are the dangers of wealth for a Christian? (v. 13)

How can we ensure we are not serving money before God?

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## Live

Why do you think we find it so hard to talk openly about our personal finances?

Jesus teaches we are to use our wealth and possessions in ways that honour God. What can make it hard for you to consider God when making decisions about your wealth or possessions?

How could our church become a place that encouraged people to be good stewards of their resources?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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### FUN FACT

Jesus is not teaching us to be dishonest. Rather, if even this dishonest manager can act shrewdly, how much more should we as followers of Jesus.

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# A KINGDOM FOR ETERNITY

LUKE 16:19-31

## share

Who have been important people in helping you understand the Bible?  
How did they help you?

## explore

**Read Luke 16:19-26**

What are the differences between the two men? (vv. 19-22)

What is the reason given for the great reversal of fortune here? (v. 25)  
How might this relate to Jesus' earlier teaching in this chapter? (vv. 9-12)

What can the rich man do about his situation? (v. 26)

**Read Luke 16:27-31**

What does the man want Abraham to do for his family? (vv. 27-28, 30)

What does Abraham say is enough for his family? (vv. 29, 31)

How does this whole parable relate to Jesus' teaching earlier in the chapter?

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### FUN FACT

This is the only parable of Jesus when a person is named. Lazarus was a common name at the time.

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### TALKING POINT

“Evangelism would be easier if there were more miracles.”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

**1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10**

Why do you think people often desire miraculous signs as proof for God?

In what ways is the Bible enough for evangelism? (see vv. 29, 31)

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## Live

Was there a moment in your past that convinced you of the truth of Jesus?

What is your experience of the Bible shaping or strengthening your faith?

How does this parable encourage us to use worldly wealth wisely?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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### FUN FACT

This parable is the most detailed description of hell in the Bible. However, because it is a parable, we should be cautious in making too many connections between this description and reality.

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# A KINGDOM FOR SERVING

LUKE 17:1-10

## share

What's a piece of wisdom that someone has shared that has always stuck with you?

## explore

### Read Luke 17:1-10

*This section contains a collection of four of Jesus' sayings, and are not necessarily connected together. You may like to consider each of these parts separately in discussion.*

Does anything stand out to you among these sayings?

What does Jesus say is the worse outcome? (v. 2)

What does this tell us about the severity of causing someone to stumble in their faith?

What is the goal of rebuking a brother or sister in Christ? (v. 3)

What does this indicate about the way rebuking should be done?

Why is Jesus unconcerned about the size of our faith? What matters more? (vv. 5-6)  
(See also Luke 7:9; 8:48; 18:42)

What is the role of a servant? (vv. 7-9)

How might this shape the way we view our service to God?

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### FUN FACT

"Seven times" (v. 4) is not an upper limit, but is symbolic for "always". (See also Matt 18:22)

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## TALKING POINT

“Genuine faith should see miraculous signs”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

**1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10**

Should faith give us the power to uproot trees? (cf. v. 6)

What is the goal of faith?

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## Live

How often do you explicitly seek forgiveness from others? Is this something you need to do?

What habits do you have that feed and grow your faith? What do you find difficult in growing your faith?

When can it be tempting to think you have gone ‘above and beyond’ the expectations of someone who follows Jesus? How does Jesus’ teaching emphasise our need for his grace?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?



## A KINGDOM FOR HEALING

LUKE 17:11-19

### share

How do you feel when someone neglects to thank you?

Do you ever find it hard to say thank you? When?

### explore

**Read Luke 17:11-19**

How do the lepers display their initial faith in Jesus? (v. 14)

Why do you think only one went back to Jesus? (v. 15)

Why do you think we are told this man was a Samaritan? (v. 16) What significance might this have on the overall story?

What response do you think Jesus was hoping to see in all 10 lepers? (v. 17)

Why do you think they may have neglected to return to Jesus?

What does this story teach us about God's compassion?

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#### FUN FACT

You would normally show yourself to the priest *after* you were healed. Jesus is inviting them to have faith in his power to heal them on the way to the priest.

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### TALKING POINT

“Thankfulness is a forgotten virtue”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10

When is thankfulness most valued in our society?

Why is thankfulness to God an important expression of our faith?

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## Live

Jesus’ final comment (v. 19) is about more than just physical healing. It is implied in these words that he has now also received a spiritual healing due to displaying a full and appropriate response to Jesus.

When you are most likely to forget to respond to God with thanks in your life?

What would it look like for us to respond to Jesus in the same way as this man?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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#### FUN FACT

Although not specifically mentioned, it is implied that the other nine lepers are all of Jewish descent (cf. vv. 16, 18).

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## A KINGDOM COMING

LUKE 17:20-37

### share

Have you ever had a bad experience being unprepared for something? What was it?

Why do you think some people are very good at being prepared?

### explore

**Read Luke 17:20-37**

Why can the Kingdom of God not be observed in the future? (vv. 20-21)

What do you think Jesus means by “the kingdom of God is in your midst”? (v. 21)

How has Jesus already brought God’s Kingdom into the world?  
What is yet to be completed?

Jesus tells his disciples that the coming of the Son of Man (ie. the return of Jesus) will be clearly visible to all (vv. 22-24). Why would this be comforting news?

How prepared for God’s judgement were the people in Noah and Lot’s days? (vv. 26-29)

How prepared does Jesus expect people will be for his return?

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#### FUN FACT

Son of Man is a title for God’s king who will bring about God’s kingdom. Jesus often uses the title to refer to himself.

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### TALKING POINT

“Live every day as if Jesus were returning tomorrow”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

**1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10**

How would your priorities change if you fully lived this out?

How would your priorities change if you knew Jesus was not returning in your lifetime?

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## Live

Why do those who try to keep their life lose it? (v. 33) What are we encouraged to do instead?

What does it mean to be prepared for Jesus' return?

How can we help one another to prepare?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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### FUN FACT

The proverb about vultures (v. 37) is likely a reference to the clearly visible and permanent nature of Jesus' return. As vultures are an obvious sign that death has arrived, so Jesus' return will signal the fulfillment of God's kingdom.

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## A KINGDOM FOR THE FAITHFUL

LUKE 18:1-8

### share

When do you find it easier to be patient? When do you find it more difficult?

Have you ever prayed for something consistently for a long period of time?

What gave you perseverance to keep praying?

### explore

**Read Luke 18:1-8**

How do you think the woman felt as she constantly pleaded for help? (vv. 2-3)

What is the reason for the judge responding to the widow's request? (vv. 4-5)

In what ways is God like the judge? In what ways is he different? (vv. 7-8)

What makes God trustworthy to bring our concerns to him?

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#### FUN FACT

This story involves what is called an *a fortiori* argument: "If even this..." (the unjust judge listening to the woman) "...how much more will..." (God listen to his people).

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### TALKING POINT

“God knows what we want, so there is no need to consistently ask him”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

**1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10**

How does asking God show our dependence on him?

How do we know when to accept that God’s answer to our prayer is ‘no’?

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## Live

What can make it difficult to persist in praying for the same things?

How does this parable provide us with encouragement to persist in prayer?

How can we encourage one another when God appears slow in answering our prayers?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?

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### FUN FACT

Luke relates this parable back to the previous passage (v. 8b) by raising questions of patience and faith while awaiting Jesus’ return.

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# A KINGDOM FOR THE HUMBLE

LUKE 18:9-30

## share

What is the best thing about being a child?

## explore

**Read Luke 18:9-14**

Why is it so tempting to act like the Pharisee in this story?

How does this parable show the Kingdom of God operating in complete reverse to earthly expectations?

**Read Luke 18:18-30**

What does the ruler trust for his worthiness? (vv. 18-21)

Which character in the first parable is the ruler most like?

Why is it hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God? (vv. 24-25)

**Read Luke 18:15-17**

What does it mean to “receive the kingdom of God like a little child”? What point is Luke emphasising by placing this story between the other two stories?

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### FUN FACT

Pharisees were strict religious followers whom Jesus often accused of meeting the letter of the law, but not the spirit of the law.

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### TALKING POINT

“We all tend towards living like a Pharisee”

To what extent do you agree with this statement? (1 = not at all; 10 = completely) Why?

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10

Why can it be so tempting to rely on our own action or merit?

Why is it so much better to rely on God’s grace?

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## Live

As you look back over chapters 14-18, what has particularly stood out to you through these studies?

What has challenged your attitude to following Jesus?

What has encouraged you to persist in following Jesus?

## pray

Reflecting on the passage:

- What does it lead us to praise God for?
- What can we thank God for?
- What should we ask God for?









