

DISCOVER

Journey to Jerusalem





LEADER GUIDE



Jesus' Journey Toward Jerusalem and His Death,

Resurrection, and Ascension





We thank Tamera Veenstra Schreur for writing the original lesson material for this study (1989, 1992), and we thank Carol Veldman Rudie for her contributions to an earlier revision (2001). This latest revised edition incorporates updates and suggestions by small group leaders and other participants.

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To the Leader

Prepare the Lesson

Coffee Break and Bible discovery leaders help people discover together what the Bible says and means. They are not teachers but guides, facilitators, and conversation leaders.

This leader guide is meant to assist you as a small group leader by coming alongside you in your own personal work. Always answer the study guide questions first, using the suggested basic steps of preparation. Then use the leader material to enrich your understanding of the passage.

We encourage you to study ahead of time so that you do not have to rely on the leader guide during your Bible study group meeting. You don't want to give the impression that the leader guide is an answer book. The answers are in the Bible; you are a guide to help your group find the answers in God's Word.

Get Ready to Lead

Learn to think in terms of questions. As you prepare to lead a lesson, ask yourself questions and try to discover the answers yourself. This will prepare you to anticipate group members' questions and thus help others discover truths from God's Word.

The new "Conversation" box in the study guide is for extra questions. The leader guide includes many extra questions that you may use to help build the group's conversation around the text. We also suggest that you write your own questions. You know the interests, personalities, and needs of your group members. You know what they will be curious about or when they will want to dig deeper into a Scripture passage. Put those extra conversation-building questions in the "Conversation" boxes and use them during your group time to help get dialogue started.

Also, encourage group members to put their own questions and discoveries in the "Conversation" boxes. By doing this, they will also be preparing for the group discussion. You might want to start a group discussion by saying, "What is in your 'Conversation' box? What would you like to talk about together?"

If you are able to prepare and pray thoroughly before each group session, you will be able to lead without frequent references to your notes.

This will free you to be more aware of the work of the Holy Spirit during your group discussion time and to focus more effectively on your facilitation and leadership responsibilities. You will also be able to keep better eye contact and listen more carefully.

Lead with Questions

Use questions to direct the group discussion. Draw out positive contributions by asking questions. Break down difficult or unclear questions with smaller, concise ones. Also use questions to respond to wrong or problematic answers. If you learn to lead others into truth by using questions, you will be a good Bible discovery leader. The questions in this study are designed to be used with the New International Version of the Bible, but other translations can also be used.

Help to Apply

Gently help group members discover the meaning of God's message for their own lives. Be careful not to be judgmental of persons who may not yet seem to be applying the truths you encounter together. It's the Holy Spirit's work to apply God's Word to people's hearts. Tactfully let the group know how the Spirit is applying the Word in your own heart and life. Pray faithfully for the Spirit's work in others.

While giving people the time and space to apply biblical truths as the Spirit leads them, simply try to help group members see that there is a relationship between the Bible and life. Questions for reflection at the end of each session invite everyone to take some time for personal reflection and optional sharing. Try to offer at least a few minutes for reflection time toward the end of each lesson, and encourage group members to do additional follow-up reflection at home.

Introduction

In this section of Luke's gospel we find Jesus on a journey. His destination—Jerusalem—becomes clearer throughout the study. He spends more time intensely teaching his followers, often hinting at the final purpose of his mission.

The first part of this study of Luke focused on Jesus' birth and his teaching and miracles, which demonstrated Jesus' divine power and authority. Jesus' disciples came to see him as the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God. In this part of the study, we observe how Jesus continues to teach his disciples about the coming kingdom of God. Through additional miracles and parables and other teachings he shows his followers what life will be like for them as kingdom citizens. The disciples are to imitate Jesus and exemplify his passion for people. The meaning of this discipleship is developed during Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem.

Then, as the study draws to a close, we walk with Jesus and his disciples through the final week of his life on earth. Though the events of this week include Jesus' death and burial, hope is not lost as Jesus' friends discover there is much more to come—more than they could imagine. The good news is that Jesus rose to life again for our sake, ascended to rule in heaven, and has sent the Holy Spirit to empower his followers—including us today!

Glossary of Terms

- **Abel**—the second son of Adam and Eve. His jealous brother, Cain, murdered him because Abel's sacrifice was acceptable to God.
- **Abraham**—the father of the Jewish nation. To him and his descendants God promised the land of Canaan and a special relationship of mutual faithfulness.
- **altar**—the place in the temple where people sacrificed their animals and burned their offerings to the Lord in worship.
- angels—messengers who carry out God's will in this world and serve those who belong to God.
- apostle—means "one sent out." It refers to a messenger who also represents the one who sent him. Luke gave the twelve leaders of the disciples this title to indicate their responsibilities after Jesus returned to heaven. They were to verify that the events and interpretation of Jesus' life were correctly communicated.
- ark—the boat that Noah built by which God saved Noah's family and representatives of all the animals from the flood.
- Beelzebub—the prince of demons, who was also called Satan.
- **Bethsaida**—a city on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum.
- **blaspheme**—to assume for oneself the characteristics of God or to scoff at or belittle God's name.
- blessed—receiving approval and favor from God.
- Caesar—the title of the emperor of the Roman empire.
- **Capernaum**—a large, cosmopolitan city on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. It was the most important city in Jesus' ministry in Galilee, with a large population of both Romans and Jews. It was also the home of the disciple Peter.
- **centurion**—one of six to ten commanders in a typical Roman regiment. These men commanded at least one hundred men who were carefully selected for their leadership qualities.
- chief priest—Priests were chosen to perform the rituals of the temple as prescribed in the Old Testament, such as working in the temple, overseeing sacrifices, and performing other religious duties. The chief priest was chosen as the head of this group. He wore special robes, had official authority, and performed rituals specific to his role.
- **Chosen One**—Old Testament title for the special servant sent by the Lord to lead the people in the ways of God.
- **Christ**—the Greek word for "Anointed One," and the equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messiah." Based on the Old Testament prophets,

2 Kingdom Citizens

Getting Started

We learned in lesson 1 that Jesus has begun his final journey to Jerusalem during which time he is revealing that he is the Messiah. He prepared the way by sending out a group of seventy-two ambassadors to preach the good news that the kingdom of God had come. But what is kingdom life really like? This lesson gives us two prime examples.

Optional Opening Share Question

In today's suspicious culture, how can we assist someone whom we do not know?

What Does It Say?

- 1. Luke 10:25-28
- a. What does the expert ask Jesus?
- b. What does the expert say is the summary of the law?
- c. How does Jesus evaluate his response?
- What do you think was the man's motive in asking the question?
- Why might this be a good question to "test" Jesus?

Experts in the law in Jesus' day would have memorized the first five books of the Old Testament, and they would have been intimately acquainted with its everyday application. This expert recognizes Jesus as a teacher and wants to know how Jesus interprets the law. The word *test* does not necessarily suggest a negative attitude on the man's part; either he was taking exception to Jesus' teaching or simply wanting to see what Jesus would say. The question is an important one: he asks about the kind of life that would result from obedience to God.

- How does Jesus reply to the man's question?
- Why might Jesus respond with a question?
- Why does he want to know how the man interprets the law?

By his response, Jesus shows that he too is well-versed in the law. Jesus is concerned about the principles by which the man is "reading" that law. These principles will tell Jesus much about the man's ability to understand the law.

- How does the expert summarize the law? What word seems to be the key to the summary?
- Who should be the primary object of one's love? How extensive should that love be?
- Who should be the second object of one's love? How extensive should that love be?

The man quotes the Old Testament law (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18) to demonstrate his accurate knowledge. The Old Testament teaches that keeping the law demonstrates the love a person has for the Lord first and for neighbors second. If someone truly loves God and neighbors, he must show this love by doing the acts required by the law and refraining from those forbidden by the law.

• What might heart, soul, strength, and mind refer to?

These terms are not a four-part description of the human personality. Rather, they indicate the totality of a person's being. When people give total allegiance to God, then they can truly love their neighbor.

- What is Jesus' evaluation of the expert's response?
- What does Jesus say will happen to a person who obeys the law?
- Why is obedience necessary?

When we studied Jesus' ministry in Galilee, we learned that knowing what God wants is not enough. God requires not just knowledge of the law, but a lifestyle shaped by the law. If the expert of the law does what he knows to be right, he will be practicing the kind of love required of kingdom citizens. Jesus here is simply emphasizing a truth that was known by all the religious leaders of his time.

2. Luke 10:29-37

- a. Why does the expert question Jesus further?
- b. In Jesus' story, what happens to the man who was going to Jericho?
- c. How do the three men who encounter the victim respond to his need?
- d. How does this story answer the expert's question?

Intrigued by Jesus' answer, the law expert seeks clarification with another question.

• What does the expert ask?

The expert now wants to know Jesus' definition of a neighbor.

 What is Jesus' reply? What might be Jesus' reasons for telling a story rather than giving a straightforward answer?

By telling this parable Jesus demonstrates real love in action, the kind of love required by the law.

- · How does the parable open?
- Where is the man going? What happens to him along the way?

The people in Jesus' audience would have been very well acquainted with the road from Jericho to Jerusalem. It was the most common route for any practicing Galilean Jew to take to the religious feasts in Jerusalem. However, this stretch of road was a lonely, rocky route, and it was notorious for the robbers that preyed on travelers. Because this man is travelling alone rather than as part of a caravan, he is all the more helpless once he falls into the robbers' hands.

- Who first encounters the beaten man? What is the man's condition?
- What does the priest do?

Ironically, the first person to come by, a priest, is in charge of temple rites. He knows exactly what the law requires of him (see Lev. 21:1-4). His behavior with respect to the beaten man is understandable, for he is not supposed to make himself ceremonially unclean for any person except the closest of relatives. However, in passing by on the other side, the

priest violated the law of love, a part of the Old Testament law that is just as important as the law about ceremonial uncleanness.

• Who is the second man to pass by the injured victim? What is his reaction?

This man is a Levite, a member of the Old Testament group entrusted with the orderly functions of the temple. All priests were Levites, although not all Levites were priests. However, because of their membership in the tribe, all Levites were set apart for service to the Lord. (See Num. 8:5-26.) No Levite would deliberately make himself unclean, according to Old Testament requirements.

- Who is the third person to come down the road? How is this person different from the first two? What does he do when he sees the injured man?
- How does his reaction differ from that of the other two? How does his behavior demonstrate the kind of love for neighbors that the law requires?

That the man who showed true love for his neighbor is a Samaritan would be especially galling to the Jewish expert. Recall your discussion about Samaritans in lesson 1. They were despised and hated by the Jews, who considered them to be religious and ethnic half-breeds. For a Samaritan to be singled out as keeping the law, over against the priest and the Levite, would have been a cruel blow to this law expert. Notice too that the Samaritan goes far beyond what is necessary to ensure that the man is cared for. Not only does he tend to the man's wounds on the road, but he also takes him to the next village and pays for the costs of his recovery. He freely uses oil and wine, his own donkey, and his own money. And to make certain that the innkeeper will take proper care of the victim, the Samaritan promises to reimburse any additional expenses.

 What do you think motivates the Samaritan? How is the Samaritan's motivation different from that of the priest and the Levite?

The Samaritan was more concerned about the welfare of the victim than slavish adherence to the fine details of the law. In this way, he is a prime example of one who keeps the law as summarized in verse 27.

 How does Jesus conclude the parable? How does the expert answer Jesus' final question?

Note that the law expert introduces the term *mercy*.

- What does *mercy* mean? In what ways had the Samaritan shown mercy?
- What does this say about how to fulfill the law?
- How does this parable answer both of the expert's questions?

Jesus asks the expert to judge the actions of the three men in the parable. The expert shows by his answer that he understands the quality of neighborliness that the law requires: mercy to people. The Samaritan showed unlimited care for a person to whom he had no obligation. This, Jesus says, is the essence of love and the fulfillment of the law's demands. Knowing this truth is not enough. It requires action. The law expert must go and do likewise.

3. Luke 10:38-42

- a. What words would you use to describe Martha? Mary?
- b. What "better" thing had Mary chosen (v. 42)?

Jesus moves on to the town of Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem.

- To what home is Jesus invited?
- What is Martha's attitude toward Jesus? How do we see this attitude expressed in her actions?

We know that there were people along Jesus' route who willingly opened their homes to him or his disciples as a mark of their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah (see Luke 9:4-5; 10:5-7). Martha's hospitality indicates that she is a follower of Jesus. However, she also is overwhelmed by her housework, and she asks Jesus to help get her sister to share the burden.

 What is Mary doing? How does her behavior differ from Martha's? How are her priorities different?

Unlike Martha, Mary has taken the time to listen to Jesus, assuming the role of a disciple. Take time to explain to your group that in Jesus' day

the religious leaders did not allow women to be instructed by teachers or rabbis. Jesus' support of a woman's commitment to learning as opposed to her traditional housekeeping role is revolutionary.

- How does Jesus reply to Martha? What is the "one thing" needed? What is Martha most concerned about?
- What reassurance does Jesus give Mary? Why is her choice better? How will her choice be rewarded?

Note that Jesus acknowledges Martha's work and worry. But he points out to both sisters that only one thing—being taught by Jesus and becoming his disciple—is the most important thing. Not only does Jesus reassure Mary, but he affirms the eternal consequences of her choice.

- How would you respond if Jesus were to visit in your home more like Mary or more like Martha? Why?
- What can we learn from this story about setting priorities?
 About busyness? About distractions that interfere with our relationship to Jesus?

Take time with these questions to help group members apply this very familiar story to their own lives.

4. Luke 11:1-4

- a. What do the disciples ask of Jesus?
- b. What picture of God does this prayer draw?
- c. For what things should we ask God?

On several occasions, Luke records that Jesus prayed (for example, 9:18). No specific occasion is mentioned here, but as a faithfully religious Jew, Jesus would have maintained the commonly observed times of prayer.

- What do Jesus' disciples ask him when he finishes praying?
- Why do they want to be taught to pray?
- Who is the model for their request?

Every Jewish teacher would have provided his disciples with a model prayer for their use. Nowhere in the gospels do we have an account of John the Baptist's prayers. However, Jesus' disciples want their teacher to teach them about prayer, even as he has been instructing them on all other matters of discipleship.

 How does Jesus "teach" them to pray? What elements of prayer are present in the model that he gives?

Verses 2-4 constitute the most popular prayer in the Bible. It is commonly called "The Lord's Prayer" and has been memorized and recited by Christians ever since Jesus' day. If you are leading a group that knows the Bible well, don't allow your members to assume they know the meaning of this prayer because of its familiarity. Be sure to explore it carefully so that all members will recognize its power and beauty.

- To whom is the prayer addressed?
- On what basis may the disciples approach God?
- Why should the disciples address God as "Father"? What does that title say about the relationship of Jesus' disciples to his "Father"?

Previously in this gospel Jesus has referred to God as "Father" (10:21-23). The link between knowing Jesus and knowing God is strengthened here by the fact that his disciples may address Jesus' Father as their own spiritual Father. Because of their link to their teacher, Jesus' disciples can claim this same relationship with God.

- What two concerns come first in this prayer? Why might these come first?
- What does "hallowed" mean? What does this prayer claim for the name of God? Why is God's name so important?

In Bible times, names were much more significant than they are today. We have already seen the significance attached to Jesus' name in Luke 1 and 2. People were identified by their names. To use a person's name was to invoke him or her directly; therefore, people used names with great care.

 To what kingdom does Jesus refer? Why would he be interested in its coming?

Where have we heard such language before?

You might wish to refer your group to Luke 3:3-17, where John points forward to the coming Christ, the King foretold by the prophet Isaiah. Here, Jesus' disciples are to acknowledge that the kingdom exists. By doing so they acknowledge that their faith in God is based on their confidence in the coming of God's kingdom.

- What requests are the disciples to make?
- How would you characterize these requests? What is important about each one?
- What does each request teach us about reliance on God? About discipleship? About communication with God?

Each day, Jesus' disciples are to ask God to provide sufficient food for that day. In doing so they demonstrate their ongoing trust in God's faithfulness to provide for their needs.

- For what must the disciples be forgiven? On what do they base this request?
- What does this request say about their relationship to others?
 How are prayer and forgiveness related? What must the disciple who prays this prayer do?

The request for forgiveness of sins is the request for daily forgiveness made by those who have already been redeemed. However, Jesus' disciples also live a life of personal forgiveness. They model in their lives and prayers the very forgiveness for others that they themselves request. In this way, they demonstrate both love for God—by imitating Jesus' actions—and love for their neighbors. With this kind of forgiveness—requested and granted daily—disciples maintain open communication with God and each other.

Your group may recognize that this prayer is not identical to the more common version in Matthew 6:9-13. Luke records only the essence of the prayer. Missing from both versions is the traditional "For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever." Scholars consider this conclusion to have been added by a copyist at a later date. Most translations do not include these words.

5. Luke 11:5-10

- a. What is the situation in this parable?
- b. What will motivate the friend to comply with the request?
- c. What is Jesus' point about prayer?

Again, Jesus uses a parable to teach his disciples.

- What is the situation Jesus asks his disciples to imagine?
- What is the man's dilemma? What does he do about it?

Given the high standards of hospitality in the ancient world, this situation is not improbable. The disciples would have been familiar with these unexpected demands. You might remind your group of the same demands that the disciples themselves made of people when they were sent out by Jesus (9:1-6).

- How does the friend respond to the man's request?
- What excuses does he give for not giving the man anything?
- Why does the friend decide to give in to the man's request?
- What is more important here, getting the need met, or responding from the heart?

Jesus is saying that even a friend will not necessarily respond to another friend in need, but he will respond to unceasing asking. Although the friend might have very good excuses for not supplying the need, he will do so simply to get rid of the nuisance at the door.

- What is Jesus' point?
- What does this story have to do with prayer? Why might Jesus tell this story after giving his disciples a model prayer?

Indirectly, Jesus is talking about the confidence with which we can approach God in prayer. If a friend will respond to bold requests, even those coming at an inconvenient time, how much more will God respond to persistent prayer?

The application of this parable to prayer comes in a familiar set of verses (vv. 9-10) that again urge persistence in asking and confidence in finding.

- Who are Jesus' disciples to ask?
- On what basis can Jesus' disciples be confident of their asking?
- How sure can the disciples be that their requests will be granted?

Jesus will reward persistence by his disciples, therefore they should continue to ask and the doors will open to them.

6. Luke 11:11-13

- a. What family relationship does Jesus describe?
- b. How does this analogy compare to God and the disciples?

God not only responds promptly to the prayers of Jesus' disciples but also gives them only the best gifts in response to their requests.

- What is the primary relationship that Jesus describes here? What kind of gifts are fathers capable of giving?
- What is the difference between human fathers and God?
- What is the point of this illustration? What does this story teach us about God? What kind of gift comes from God?
- What does this teaching tell us about the Holy Spirit?

Jesus turns to the father/son relationship to illustrate the kind of gifts that the Father gives his children. The analogy compares the human father to God the Father. God gives more trustworthy and enriching gifts than even the best human father is capable of bestowing. While human fathers give good gifts to their children, the Father in heaven does even better—God gives the Holy Spirit to his children. When God's people ask for the best thing of all, the Holy Spirit, God will certainly not give them something cheap or harmful.

Taking It Home

Luke 10:25-11:13

- a. According to these verses, how should people keep the law of God?
- b. What is the importance of prayer in the life of a follower of Jesus?

This lesson describes at least three ways in which Jesus' disciples are to act.

- What does discipleship mean in the story of the beaten man?
 How do the disciples of Jesus truly keep the law?
- How can one tell if one's actions are according to God's desires?
- What is the importance of doing God's will as opposed to simply knowing God's will?

The story of the good Samaritan points to the need for actions that embody love of God and neighbor. In the narrative of Mary and Martha, however, discipleship is illustrated with the opposite emphasis: the woman who listens is the true disciple, not the woman who is busy doing other things. Finally, Jesus' disciples want to learn what it means to communicate with God.

On what basis can the disciples approach God? What can they
anticipate when they make requests of God? What kind of gift
should they be asking for from God?

As you explore the essence of discipleship, be sure to discuss what we learn about God in this section. Some of your group members may not have enjoyed a good relationship with a father or an adult male in their childhood. As you discuss briefly the character of God, be alert to group members who are hurting.

An Invitation

Listen now to what God is saying to you.

You may be aware of things in your life that keep you from coming near to God. You may have thought of God as someone who is unsympathetic, angry, and punishing. You may feel as if you don't know how to pray to God or how to come near to God.

Listen to what God is saying to you through Jesus. God is an understanding, loving God. Jesus knows firsthand what it's like to live in a sinful, broken world. He knows how hard it is to overcome the temptation to sin. He has already taken the punishment for your sin, clearing the way for you to come near to God.

So now come near to God. It's as simple as A-B-C.

- Admit that you have sinned, and that you need God's forgiveness.
- Believe that God loves you and that Jesus already paid the price for your sins.
- Commit your life to God in prayer, asking God to forgive your sins, nurture you as his child, and fill you with the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of Commitment

Here's a prayer to help you draw near to God:

Dear God, I believe that you love me. Please forgive me for having done wrong things in my life, things that stand between you and me. Thank you for giving your only Son, Jesus, to die for my sins.

Now help me to believe in Jesus with all my heart. Help me to really accept that you came into the world to save me, not to condemn me.

I believe that my sins are completely forgiven because of what Jesus did for me. Help me to remember that what I did in the past no longer makes me guilty or unworthy of being your child.

Thank you that you are making me completely new, that you will teach me through the Bible how to be your child. Give me your Holy Spirit, to help me pray and to teach me from your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DISCOVER YOUR BLBLE SERIES

Bible Studies for Small Groups

LUKE 9-24

Luke's gospel tells the story of Jesus' life. It is sometimes called the most beautiful book ever written. As a physician, Luke wants to convince his readers that Jesus is the Savior and to explain the way of salvation. You will explore Jesus' ministry, death, resurrection and ascension while understanding his love for you in a whole new way. This is Part Two of the study on Luke covering chapters 9–24.

The Discover Your Bible series inspires readers to discover together what the Bible says and means. Participants dive into the text using questions that spark meaningful conversation and personalized application. Every lesson is designed to be a framework that guides groups on a unique and transformative journey. Discover more at DiscoverYourBible.org.

