THE WAY OF JESUS

Hope for Everyone

The Gospel of Luke:
Vol I



A Series Study Guide

February 2025

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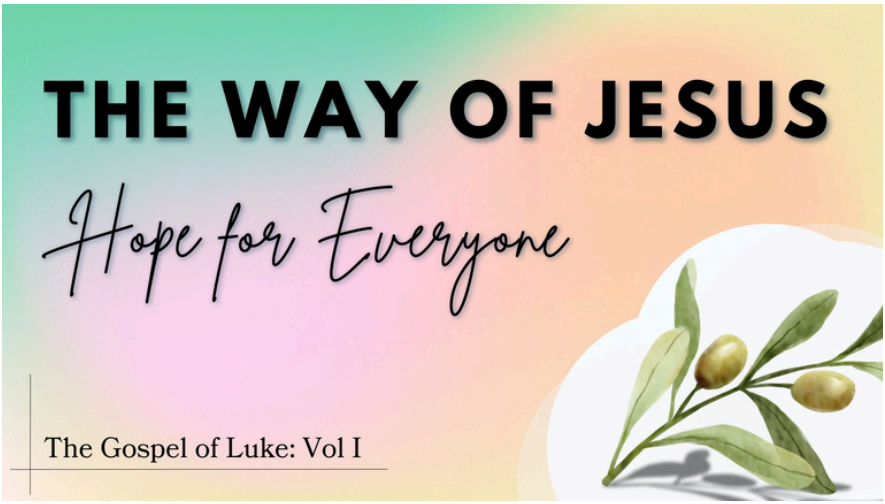


An introduction to Luke

Luke invites us, “Come, sit at the feet of Jesus. Know his heart. Encounter the one who changed my life forever.”

Luke, the author of the Gospel bearing his name, is widely recognized as a meticulous historian and a physician, traits that are evident in his detailed writing and focus on the humanity of Jesus. What often goes overlooked, however, is the profound personal impact Jesus had on Luke’s own life. Though he wasn’t one of the original twelve disciples and never directly encountered Jesus during His earthly ministry, Luke’s life was dramatically transformed by the message of Jesus, which fueled his mission to share this life-changing message of hope with others.

Luke was a Gentile, likely a native of Antioch, making him an outsider to the Jewish community of early believers. His inclusion in the Christian story highlights the radical, inclusive nature of the gospel message. Luke would have first encountered Christianity through his relationship with the Apostle Paul, whose missionary journeys he

accompanied. As Paul's traveling companion and fellow laborer for the gospel, Luke was immersed in the revolutionary teachings of Jesus and witnessed firsthand the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the early church.

What stands out about Luke is his deep desire to understand and communicate the truth about Jesus. His gospel is uniquely detailed, marked by historical precision, vivid accounts of Jesus' compassion, and an emphasis on prayer, the Holy Spirit, and the inclusion of the marginalized. This passion was likely born out of his own personal encounter with the grace of God. Luke's heart had been changed by the gospel, and he responded by carefully investigating and compiling a reliable account of Jesus' life, teachings, and works, not just for his contemporaries but for generations of believers and seekers to come.

Luke's transformative experience with Jesus fueled his commitment to ensuring that others, especially those like himself who were on the outside looking in, could see Jesus as clearly as he did: as the Savior of all people, offering new life to anyone who believes. This hope is for EVERYONE. Luke's gospel reflects a man who had been changed by the good news he so faithfully recorded.

The Way of Jesus

Luke invites us not merely into a history about Jesus or even a theology. Luke wants to introduce us to the way of Jesus; following Jesus is a way of life. His disciples re-orient their life around three Jesus-centered priorities:

Be with Jesus,
Be like Jesus,
Do what Jesus did.

Luke tells us the good news of Jesus in order to invite us to live in the way of Jesus. The way of Jesus, Luke contends,

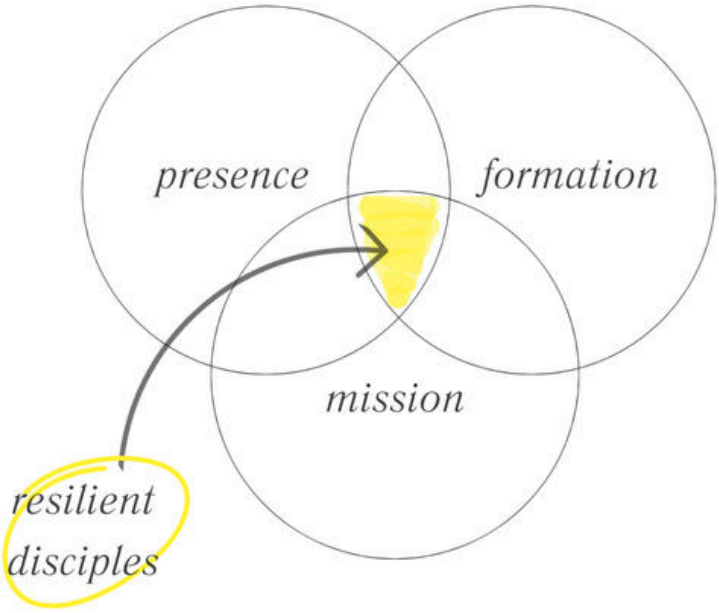
is the way of hope, new life, and compounding joy! This is good news.

Jesus' disciples - then and now - flourish at the convergence of PRESENCE, FORMATION, and MISSION.

PRESENCE // To be with Jesus
We seek the presence of God through a culture of prayer and worship; we hunger for God. *We want to be with Jesus*.

FORMATION // To be like Jesus
We practice intentional spiritual formation, learning how to walk in the way of Jesus and not the ways of the world. We are being formed into the likeness of Christ. *We want to be like Jesus*.

MISSION // To do what Jesus did
We joyfully join God's mission in our community and around the world. Our lives are marked by sacrificial serving, gospel generosity, intentional disciple-making, and surrendered living. *We want to do what Jesus did*.



Additional Resources

Practicing the Way, John Mark Comer (Embracing the rhythms of discipleship: to be with Jesus, to be like Jesus, to do what Jesus did.)

Luke: Historian and Theologian, I. Howard Marshall (A scholarly account of Luke's life and writings; heavy lifting, but very helpful.)

Luke: The Gospel of Amazement, Michael Card (Helpful and accessible commentary on Luke's gospel.)

The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry, John Mark Comer (Learning to slow down and embrace the unhurried presence of God - in a culture of busy. A great resource for slowing down to be "with Jesus.")

Renovation of the Heart, Dallas Willard (An invitation to embrace a deeper transformation, one that begins from the inside out. A great resource for becoming "like Jesus.")

Intentional, Brandon Guindon (Key everyday habits to make disciples the way Jesus did. A great resource to beginning to "do what Jesus did.")

The Familiar Stranger, Tyler Staton (A re-introduction to the Holy Spirit for those closing the gap between their experiences and what they read about in the Bible.)

Everything Sad is Untrue (A True Story), Daniel Nayeri (Recommending this one for those who want to engage with the themes of Luke, but don't love the usual non-fiction bibliography. Nayeri tells his own story of immigrating to America from Iran as a child, and his family's struggle, resilience, and journey of faith. Fun read, and a great conversation starter for students and others.)

The Way of Jesus
Week 1

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 3:1-38

SERMON TITLE

Heaven is open

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quotes:

“Looking at the wound of sin will never save anyone. What you must do is look at the remedy.”
- Dwight Moody

“Even angels long to look into these things.”
- Apostle Peter (1 Peter 1:12)

Week 1: Reflect and Discuss

1. What stands out to you about John’s ministry of preparing the way for Jesus? How does his message of repentance apply to us today?

2. Why do you think that it was important for Jesus, the sinless one, to be baptized? What does this reveal about His character?

3. We can’t open heaven on our own; God must move first. What does this teach us about God’s presence with us?

4. Reflecting on heaven’s glory being revealed/poured out, what are some ways you can cultivate a sense of awe and wonder in your spiritual life?

5. Have you been baptized? Why or why not? If no, are you ready? If yes, who might God be inviting you to share your story with?

6. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

7. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Baptism

A disciple of Jesus reorients their lives around three habits: to be with Him, to be like Him, and to do what Jesus does. Baptism is a great expression of that commitment.

Baptism is more than just getting wet. It says, “I’m with Jesus now. He has saved me from my sin and brokenness. I want more of His presence in my life; I want to be like Him; I’m joining what He’s doing in this world.” It’s a whole-body response to the truth and grace of Jesus!

Baptism is not about having everything figured out or being perfect -- it’s a response to what Jesus has done for you. Therefore, it’s not the finish line of our faith. It’s the beginning of our journey as a follower or disciple of Jesus.

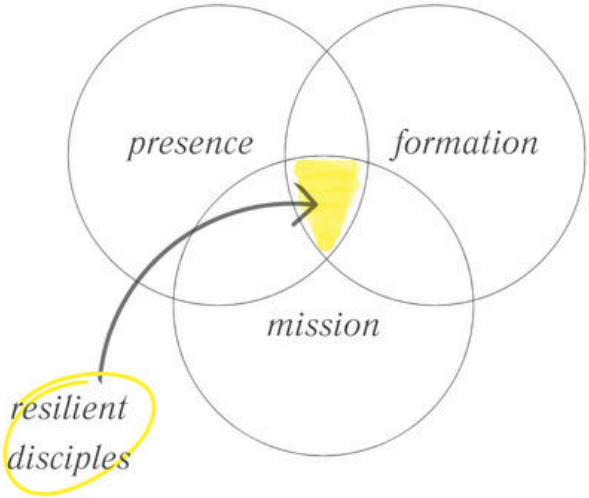
Baptism pictures that we are united with Jesus, scripture tells us. Paul uses this language when He reminds Christians in Rome about the importance of their baptism: “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been **united** with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be **united** with him in a resurrection like his” (Rom. 6:4-5).

Even the physical movements of baptism represent that we’re receiving Jesus’ death (we go down into the water), burial (we’re in the water), and resurrection (we’re raised up out of the water) as our own. Jesus did that for me. Sin has been put to death; I’ve been raised to walk in new life -- walking the way of Jesus.

Every baptized disciple is a commissioned baptizer - so if you have questions about baptism, ask someone you know who has been baptized and is following Jesus. Ask them why. Ask them their story. Maybe even ask them to baptize you! We love it here at Community when one disciple is baptizing another! That’s the way of Jesus.

Presence - Formation - Mission

Jesus' disciples - then and now - flourish at the convergence of PRESENCE, FORMATION, and MISSION.



PRESENCE // To be with Jesus
We seek the presence of God through a culture of prayer and worship; we hunger for God. We want to be with Jesus.

FORMATION // To be like Jesus
We practice intentional spiritual formation, learning how to walk in the way of Jesus and not the ways of the world. We are being formed into the likeness of Christ. We want to be like Jesus.

MISSION // To do what Jesus did
We joyfully join God's mission in our community and around the world. Our lives are marked by sacrificial serving, gospel generosity, and surrendered living. We want to do what Jesus did.

Take a moment of Spirit-led reflection: God, where are you calling me to take a next step in the direction of Jesus? Who can go with me, supporting one another in our commitments?

The Way of Jesus
Week 2

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 4:1-13

SERMON TITLE

Heaven's Hero

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quote:

“So in our temptation, we must flee to Christ! He conquered our adversary. The Son stands in our place to defeat the temptation that often defeats us... Our Lord didn’t endure this so we would have a model to follow. He did this so we would have mercy when falling. Christ delivers us. ”

- Thabiti Anyabwile

Week 2: Reflect and Discuss

1. Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus can sympathize with our weaknesses. How does knowing that Jesus understands your temptations and struggles change the way you relate to Him?

2. Reflect on the three areas where Satan tempted Jesus (provision, power, and protection). Which of these temptations do you relate to the most, and how can Jesus’ victory encourage you in that struggle?

3. In moments of temptation, how can we practically "flee to Christ" and rely on His victory rather than our own strength or willpower?

4. God cannot transform the person we’re pretending to be. What steps can you take to be more honest with God about your struggles and sins, trusting that He meets you with grace and gentleness?

5. How does the fact that Jesus offers mercy and grace when we fall encourage you to approach Him with boldness, as Hebrews 4:16 invites us to?

6. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

7. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Preach the Gospel to Yourself

Preaching the gospel to yourself is a powerful spiritual discipline rooted in the truth that we never outgrow our need for the good news. “Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God’s grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God’s grace” (Jerry Bridges, *Disciplines of Grace*).

Regardless of how long we’ve been following Jesus, we all need to be reminded that our identify in Christ and our acceptance by God is not a matter of our performance. Who we are is rooted in Jesus’ finished work on the cross. Centering ourselves of this truth, grounds us in God’s grace and strengthens us when we face failure.

To preach the gospel to yourself means regularly reminding yourself that, though you are a sinner, you are fully forgiven through Jesus’ sacrifice. You no longer need to carry the weight of guilt or condemnation because your sins have been paid for. It’s also an opportunity to rest in the assurance that God's love and acceptance are constant, not fluctuating based on your successes or failures.

Try it this week: Begin your day by reminding yourself of the core truths of the gospel: you are loved, forgiven, and secure in Christ. When temptation arises, remind yourself that Jesus has already won the victory over sin. When you fail, preach to your heart that His grace is sufficient, and you can come to Him boldly, knowing He offers mercy and help.

“I am a trophy of God’s grace. I am His beloved, His treasured possession. Not because of how I perform today, but because of His goodness and grace. Jesus’ death on the cross banished my sin and left me only with grace. Jesus resurrection invites me to walk in new, grace-saturated life. I receive His grace - and I am becoming His grace in a world obsessed with performance and success. Lord, may they see Your grace in me.”

Beloved

“Over the years I’ve come to realize that the greatest trap in our life is not success, popularity, or power, but self-rejection.

When we have come to believe in the voices that call us worthless and unlovable, then success, popularity and power are easily perceived as attractive solutions. The real trap, however, is self-rejection. As soon as someone accuses or criticizes me. As soon as I am rejected, left alone, or abandoned, I find myself thinking, ‘well that proves once again that I am a nobody.’ My dark side says, ‘I’m no good. I deserve to be pushed aside, forgotten, rejected and abandoned.’

Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the beloved. Being the beloved constitutes the truth of our existence.”

- Henri Nouwen, *You are the Beloved.*

The Way of Jesus
Week 3

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 4:14-44

SERMON TITLE

Prophet, Priest, and King

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quote:

“Jesus wears the crown, but He knows the weight of the cross. He sits in glory, but He knows the pains of earth. Therefore, He is the perfect Savior for those who are weak and weary.”
- Charles Spurgeon

Week 3: Reflect and Discuss

1. Jesus declared that He came to bring God’s Jubilee, a time of freedom, healing, and restoration. Where are you tired, broken, or overwhelmed in life? What would it look like to experience the freedom and rest that Jesus offers in those areas of life?

2.Luke 4:28-30 shows how the crowd rejected Jesus’ message when it didn’t align with their expectations. Are there areas in your life where you may be resisting Jesus’ call because it challenges your comfort or expectations?

3. Jesus came to bring the Kingdom of God, marked by freedom, healing, and restoration. What practical steps can you take to help bring this Kingdom reality to your community, family, or workplace?

4. If Jesus has revealed God’s heart and come near to us, what is holding you back from drawing closer to Him? How can you take a step of faith toward deeper intimacy with God this week?

5. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

6. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Compassion

C.S. Lewis rightly observes that love is dangerous:

To love at all is the be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give yourself to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable. (The Four Loves)

Love may be dangerous, but without love the human heart becomes something entirely more dangerous: hard and unfeeling. Jesus did not suffer from a hard heart. He felt deeply. He allowed Himself to feel emotion and even pain. It's a vulnerable place to be, but it's what love requires. Jesus wept with Mary and Martha over Lazarus' death. He felt the pain of other people deep in His core. He cared about the people whom He encountered. It was personal for Jesus. He was willing to have His heart broken. We call this compassion.

Jesus ministered from a heart of compassion—genuinely caring about the situations of others, feeling their pains and burdens—and that compassion led Him to action. It wasn't enough to feel from afar. Moved by compassion, Jesus healed, and gave, and served, and fed, and challenged. His actions flowed from His heart.

As those venturing to live and love like Jesus, one of the most life-changing prayers in our toolbox is to ask God to break our heart over what breaks His.

When our hearts break over what breaks the heart of God, we begin to care deeply for the lost; we have compassion on the hurting and overlooked; we care about the circumstances and stories of the people around us. Just like Jesus.

If you want to grow as a disciple, I challenge you, ask God to break your heart over what breaks His. Ask Him to help you see this world and its people through His eyes. Ask God to stir your heart to compassion.

Then, go through your day, keep an eye open to see how God may be answering your prayer. Suddenly, the sometimes unwelcome interaction with a neighbor (or co-worker, or spouse, or stranger) isn't a burden, but perhaps an answer to prayer!

The reward of our compassion isn't the smile on someone's face or the satisfaction that we've done the right thing. No, the reward is so much greater—the heart of God. To act in compassion is an expression of nearness and intimacy with the God who cares, with the God who invites us to "come" when we are burdened.

To experience the heart of God, "go and do likewise."

The Way of Jesus
Week 4

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 5:1-11

SERMON TITLE

Saturate

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quotes:

At Community, our purpose is “to make resilient disciples, seeking to saturate the inland valley with Good News.”

“It’s not so much the case that God has a mission for his church in the world, as that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission -- God’s mission.”

- Christopher J.H. Wright

Week 4: Reflect and Discuss

1. Jesus called His disciples to leave everything and follow Him. What might you need to leave behind in order to more fully follow Jesus and engage in His mission?

2. Where do you need to practice resilience as a follower of Jesus?

3. How can the church BE good news in our community? How can you BE good news in your neighborhood and workplace?

4. What would need to be true in order for God to use Community to reach even 1% of our valley (40k people)? What would need to be true in your life?

5. Before enlisting the disciples on His mission, Jesus said, “do not be afraid” (Luke 5:10). Why might this be so important to Jesus? Where does Jesus’ mission cause fear in you? What can you do about it?

6. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

7. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Disciple-Making

Following Jesus also means that we invite others to follow Him as well. How could I not? How could I not share that goodness with others? How could I not invite others to hear His words of life? How could I keep it to myself?

It can be as natural as Andrew telling his brother Peter, “You’ve got to meet this Jesus!” (John 1:41). Or Philip inviting Nathaniel, “Come and see” (John 1:46). Inviting others on the journey with Jesus does not mean forcing heaven down someone’s throat. We begin by acknowledging that God is already at work in their life. Our call, then, is to simply join in with what God is doing—at His lead, at His pace, and on His terms.

Calling disciples was Jesus’ method for turning His message and ministry into a movement. He didn’t form a political party. He didn’t start an institution, a company, or a school. In fact, Jesus called disciples before He ever gathered a church. Why? Because when followers of Jesus get discipleship right, a healthy church is a natural and beautiful outcome. As pastor Mike Breen notes, "effective discipleship builds the church, not the other way around.”

Jesus will build His church; our role is to grow as disciples by making disciples. If you’re hesitant, what’s holding you back? What’s preventing you from joyful obedience?

A great first step is to acknowledge our fear, doubts, and insecurities to God. Don’t pretend. Spend a few minutes praying today: “God, I hear Jesus’ call to follow, but sometimes I hold back. God, turn my fear into faith; my insecurities into confidence—confidence in you and your word. God, I want to be a part of your disciple-making mission. Give me the courage and wisdom to take one next step today! Amen.”

Don’t go alone.

“[The early disciples] devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:42-47

As we pursue to be with Jesus (presence), to be like Jesus (formation), to do what Jesus did (mission), we go together! Notice how the early church gathered for encouragement and equipping, and then spread throughout the city—meeting practical needs, demonstrating the kingdom of God, certainly connecting with new people in new places. They cared for those around them in such a way that they “enjoyed the favor of all the people”—that’s saying something in a world that was divided by class, ethnicity, and politics (much like our own).

We’re not called to do any of this alone! In fact, Jesus sent out his disciples two-by-two. We need one another to lean into the way of Jesus.

Who else shares your desire to grow as a disciple of Jesus? How could you encourage and support one another in this shared pursuit? Perhaps it’s time to join a House Church -- this is just a small gathering of the church seeking to close the gap between what we read in Acts 2 and our everyday lives. Let’s spur each other on!

Next Steps

While our study in Luke will continue, let's pause and look at some resources for what's next in our journey.

What's your next step:

Ready to get baptized?
Getting baptized (go public with your faith) - remember any baptized disciple can baptize you! Ask someone to tell you why they were baptized? Start a conversation! Still want to talk to a pastor? No problem. Find a pastor after one of our gatherings or call (909-945-5001) to set up an appointment.

Need to seek the presence of God?
Amazing! While the door is always open to connect with God, you may also appreciate the opportunity to seek Him with others. Join us for a night of worship and prayer on Friday, March 14th at 6pm (in partnership with Legacy Christian School). We're already praying that God will move in a powerful way.

Want more information about a House Church?
House Churches are small groups that meet in houses around our valley. The schedule and neighborhoods are always changing as we add new groups, but check out more info at findcommunity.com/housechurch

Here's our heart: hear from God and do what He says. See if you can't take one new step in the direction of Jesus this month. Do it in faith - and see if God doesn't show up with mercy upon mercy!

*Want to talk with a pastor or ministry leader about your next step? Email (info@findcommunity.com) or call (909-945-5001) to set up a conversation.

NOTES:

COMMUNITY
CHURCH RANCHO