THE WAY OF JESUS

Hope for Everyone

The Gospel of Luke:
Vol I



A Series Study Guide

March 2025

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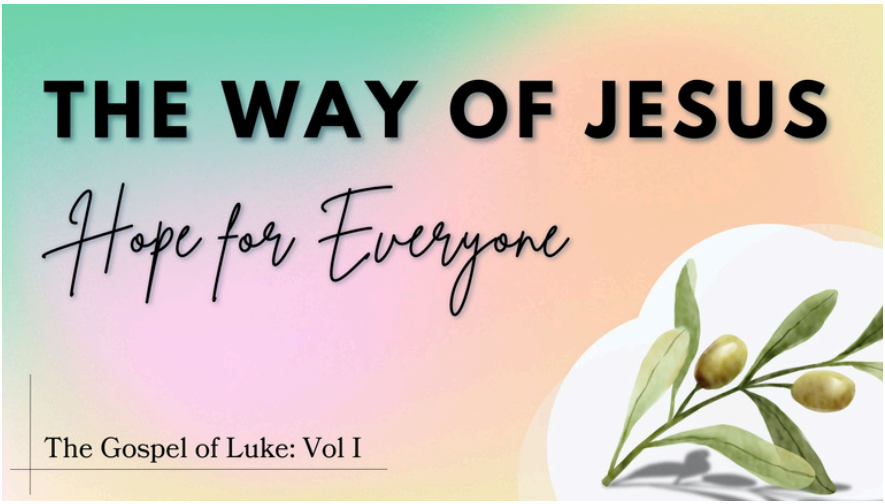


An introduction to Luke

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,

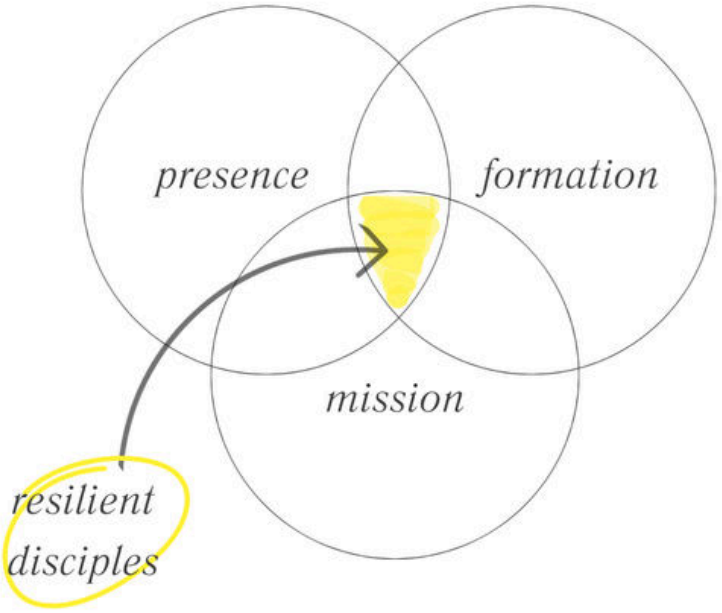
is the way of hope, new life, and compounding joy! This is good news.

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 become 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 become 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 begin 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 5

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 5:12-31

SERMON TITLE

Radical

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

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

Quotes:

"We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade, the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him."
- C.S. Lewis

"We have substituted theological ideas for an arresting encounter; we are full of religious notions, but our great weakness is that for our hearts there is no one there."
- A.W. Tozer

Week 5: Reflect and Discuss

1. Jesus could heal with a word – yet He reaches down in His mercy to touch. What is the significance of this touch?

2. In what ways do you think Jesus might be inviting you to feel His love and presence, not just intellectually but experientially?

3. Jesus often withdrew to pray. How can you make space in your life for more moments of intentional, focused connection with God?

4. The paralyzed man encountered Jesus, in part, because of the faith of his friends (5:20). Who is helping you move in the direction of Jesus?

5. Jesus invited Levi to follow Him. Who are the "unexpected" people in your life or community that Jesus might be calling you to reach out to or invite to pursue Jesus alongside you? List some real names - and pray over those names. Ask God to show you how He is already at work in their lives.

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: Attention

“Attention is the beginning of devotion.” - Mary Oliver

Jesus told us that “My Father is always working...” (John 5:17). This is a basic spiritual reality. God is always at work in and around your life. We, however, are lucky to be aware of even a fraction of it. Our eyes are busy and our hearts are distracted. In this noisy world, it can be hard to hear God’s whisper (read: 1 Kings 19:9-13). We have to lean in.

One way (among many) that the church has historically leaned in to give attention to the voice and work of God is through the “Examen” - a set of questions and prayer prompts to help us reflect on the presence of God around us. Praying the examen involves five steps:

1. **Gratitude**: Note ways that you have experienced God’s loving presence today - and thank God for that gift.
2. **Ask**: Invite the Spirit to provide insight beyond your own capacity to observe or notice.
3. **Review**: Review the day that you’ve just lived in partnership with the Spirit. Note experiences of God’s nearness. When might you have overhead His whisper? Also ask if there were moments when you may have missed the invitation of the Spirit.
4. **Repentance**: Ask forgiveness for any moments you rejected, ignored, or push back against God’s invitation to you.
5. **Renewal**: Looking ahead to the next day, resolve to live in partnership with God’s Spirit. Renew your desire to pay attention to God’s voice.

They say hindsight is 20/20. Praying the examine teaches us to recognize God in hindsight. Like the disciples on the way to Emmaus, who walked with Jesus but could only recognize Him in hindsight: “Weren’t our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:31). Slowly, looking back trains us to recognize God in the present. [The Prayer of Examen adapted here by Tyler Staton in *The Familiar Stranger*.]

The Secret Place

Jesus, we know, made a habit of walking away from the crowds in order to find a quiet and lonely place to pray (Luke 5:16).

Jesus taught us to do the same: “When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to the Father who is in the *secret place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly” (Mt. 6:6; NKJV).

We’re invited to find a place away from the distractions and diversions of the day to meet with God.

“Jesus’ life template was based on a rhythm of *retreat* and *return,* like breathing in and then out. Jesus would retreat: He would slip away from the noise and press of the crowd and find a place where he could pray, along or sometimes with a few very close friends. He would inhale. Then he would exhale, or return: He would come back to preach and teach and heal and deliver and offer love” (John Mark Comer, *Practicing the Way*).

The secret place wasn’t just a place or a time to Jesus - it’s a rhythm of life. A habit. A practice.

It doesn’t matter if your secret place is a literal closet, a patio chair in your backyard, or a tree at a local park. It doesn’t matter if you meet with God there at 5am or 5pm. It doesn’t matter if you’re there for an hour or a few minutes.

Make a habit of meeting with God. Make space for Him. Keep showing up. Overtime, your reward will be God Himself.

When and where will you meet with God?

The Way of Jesus
Week 6

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 5:33-6:11

SERMON TITLE

Don’t Miss Out On What God Wants To Do

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

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

Quote:

“Jesus’ resurrection is the beginning of God’s new project... to colonize earth with the life of heaven. That, after all, is what the Lord’s Prayer is all about.”

- N.T. Wright

Week 6: Reflect and Discuss

1. Jesus invites disciples to joyfully reorient their lives around Him. How can you cultivate a heart that is open to what Jesus wants to do in your life, rather than becoming cynical or resistant to change?

2. God’s vision for your life is greater than just getting a ticket to heaven. He is inviting us to flood earth with heaven here and now. How does this change the way you think about life on earth?

3. Jesus said His followers would do the works He did - and even greater things (John 14:12). What do you think Jesus means here? Are you leaning into His vision for your life related to this passage?

4. Are you willing to show 30 seconds of courage by asking “Can I pray for you right now?” What’s keeping you from stepping out like this? Would ask Jesus to help you?

5. Think of a time when someone prayed for you in a moment of need. How did that impact you? How can you use this experience to motivate you to offer prayer to others?

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: Pray for Others

Years ago, I sat next to a Mormon missionary on a plane ride to Chicago. After we exchanged pleasantries, it wasn't long before he set the bait: "Do you ever wonder why there are so many Christian denominations?" "No," I replied.

Unfazed by my lack of interest, the young man went into a 20 minute monologue about LDS being the one true church. He didn't ask any questions and wasn't interested in my thoughts. It was clear that he had a script - and he was sticking to it (whether or not I was in the least bit interested).

Sometimes we do the same thing. I believe that most Christians want others to experience the Good News of Jesus and His Kingdom. The heart is there - but we're either frozen with fear or in our zeal, we do more talking than listening, more script than Spirit.

There is a better way. Try this: "Can I pray for you right now?" Jesus, of course, regularly prayed for people throughout the towns and cities he visited. Praying for people in the moment is one way that we "do what Jesus did."

Offering to pray puts us in a position to listen with compassion, hear what's meaningful to someone, and actually invite God to work in the person's life! Prayer can open up deep spiritual conversations - but orients you to bless someone rather than putting you on the defensive about Jesus or your beliefs.

This kind of prayer is an opportunity to act on our faith in love, extending God's mercy, healing, and peace to those around us. If you're able, follow up with them afterward (even get their number). Ask how they're doing, check in on how God is moving in the situation.

This small act of care can make a big impact. God is sovereign - and one prayer could change someone's life forever.

The Mystery of Healing

“One of the fascinating things about studying healing ministry in scripture is the wonderfully diverse way the many stories of healing unfold. Peter’s mother-in-law was healed as soon as Jesus took her hand, but the ten lepers didn’t experience their healing until after Jesus had sent them away. Jesus healed a servant’s ear by touching it, but the hemorrhaging woman was healed when she sneaked up on Jesus and touched him. Jairus’ daughter was resurrected from death immediately when Jesus called her, but the blind man in Bethsaida needed Jesus to touch him twice before he saw clearly. Jesus ordered a man to stretch out his withered hand, and the man was healed as he tried the impossible, but the centurion’s servant was healed over a considerable distance just by Jesus’ word. The paralytic lowered down to Jesus through a roof was first forgiven of his sins and then healed, but when Jesus healed the man born blind, he assured his disciples that sin played no part in the affliction. Jesus first delivered the hunched-back woman from a demonic spirit of infirmity and then touched her spine to heal it, but the Canaanite girl wasn’t even present when Jesus delivered and healed her through a proclamation to her mother. Jesus distributed healings through touch, command, and declarations. Sometimes he applied saliva, sometimes mud. Sometimes just touching his cloak was enough.”

- Jordan Seng, *Miracle Worker*

The Bible isn’t a step-by-step guidebook to healing. Healing is not voodoo (say just this word, in just that way, and it will work). There is mystery in the revelation of God’s power. We are invited into the mystery. Remember, though, healing is not the Kingdom of God - it is a sign of the Kingdom. It is not end, but a sweet foretaste of what’s to come!

The Way of Jesus
Week 7

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 6:12-49

SERMON TITLE

The Way of Love

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

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

Quote:

“A disciple of Jesus is one who is with him learning to be like him and who intends to say and do what Jesus would say and do, in the manner in which He would say and do it.”
– Dallas Willard

Week 7: Reflect and Discuss

1. Jesus’ blessings and woes (Luke 6:20-26) turn the world upside down. In what ways might God be calling you to realign your life around the values of His kingdom rather than the world’s values?

2. Why do you think Jesus emphasizes love as an act of self-giving, even when repaid with hate? How does this reflect the gospel story?

3. Jesus teaches us to stay humble and avoid pushing ourselves to the front of the line. How can you practice humility this week in a way that reflects Jesus’ love and servant heart?

4. Love begins in the heart but must be expressed in action. What is one way you can put your love into action this week, especially for someone who may need to experience God’s love through you?

5. Jesus’ kingdom is like a small seed that has the potential to multiply and transform. What is one small action of love you can take this week that could plant a seed of God’s kingdom in someone’s life?

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: Uncommon Love

Remember the religious expert who asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” He wanted to set boundaries around what it meant to “love your neighbor” (Luke 10:25-28). He wasn’t interested in living out God’s heart of love; he was interested in the exceptions.

All too easily we can be the religious expert, seeking out exceptions and loopholes rather than whole-heartedly pursing God’s vision of loving others.

In response to the question, “who is my neighbor?”, Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan - and told the religious expect, “Go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37).

Jesus went around “doing good” (Acts 10:38). Paul encourages the church not to grow weary of “doing good” (Gal. 6:9). Can you imagine how much good could be done by a community of Jesus-followers sold out to living God’s heart of love every day, a church that made uncommon love a habit?

Try this: Start your day off with this simple prayer, “God, please give me one person to share your love with today. Amen.”

We pray “give me one,” and we go about our day with eyes wide open to the invitations to share God’s love (in word or deed) that He brings our way.

Use the space below to note where God may have been answering that prayer:

Start with the Dishes

Do you want a revolution? Start with the dishes.

"'Everyone wants a revolution. No one wants to do the dishes.' I was, and remain, a Christian who longs for revolution, for things to be made new and whole in beautiful and big ways. But what I am slowly seeing is that you can't get to revolution without learning to do the dishes. The kind of spiritual life and disciplines needed to sustain the Christian life are quiet, repetitive, and ordinary. I often want to skip the boring, daily stuff to get to the thrill of an edgy faith. But it's in the dailiness of the Christian faith… that God's transformation takes root and grows."

- Tish Harrison Warren, Liturgy of the Ordinary

Not every act of service, of course, needs a budget and a program manager. Often, small acts of love have the greatest impact. As Mother Teresa said, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can all do small things with great love."

Make a daily habit of showing love in small ways. Here are some ideas to consider: encourage one person every day; commit to being a great listener; pick up litter in your neighborhood; thank someone every day; offer to pray for someone; compliment others; smile. Pick one small but repeatable act of love and begin to put it into daily practice.

This habit will, over time, have a transformational impact on your life and open doors to engage and love others in unimaginable ways!

The Way of Jesus
Week 8

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 7:1-17

SERMON TITLE

E-V-E-R-Y-O-N-E

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

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

Quotes:

"The Church is the Church only when it exists for others... not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others."
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope."
- Tim Keller

Week 8: Reflect and Discuss

1. What do you notice about these two stories of healing? In what way are they similar? What are the differences?

2. In both cases, Jesus reaches out to people who might be overlooked in Jewish society (the centurion and the widow). How can our church be a place that reaches out to those who are overlooked or marginalized in our community? How can you help?

3. Watch Jesus closely - then go and do likewise. How can you live out the heart of God reflected in these encounters?

4. The widow did not express faith, yet Jesus raised her son. How can we show love and compassion to those who may not yet know Jesus or have no faith at all, without expecting anything in return?

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: Spirit-filled Witness

The hope of Jesus is for EVERYONE. Jesus expected His early disciples to be witnesses of this good news. In Acts 1:8, among many examples, we overhear Jesus telling His followers: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

You will be my witnesses - near and far. But notice: that witness only comes after being empowered by the Spirit. The Spirit is leading the witness of the disciples throughout the book of Acts.

“The Comforter comes not in order to allow [people] to be comfortable, but to make them missionaries... it is the Spirit who energizes the evangelism of the Church and drives its often unwilling members into the task for which God laid his hands on them: mission.” - Michael Green, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*

Biblically-speaking, the *Spirit-filled* church has nothing to do with worship style and everything to do with the church’s witness beyond the walls of their building.

If you’re nervous or hesitant to be a witness to Jesus’ story and life-changing grace, would you be open to the Spirit’s work in your life? If so, take a moment and tell that to God today: “Lord, I am open to your Holy Spirit. Come to me; dwell in me; speak to me so I may become more like Christ, and so I may join you and what you’re doing. Lord, give me the courage to hear and obey. Teach me how to open my life to your Spirit. Come, Holy Spirit. I am open. Amen.”

Perhaps use that last line of the prayer as a breath prayer that you return to throughout the week - especially as He presents you with opportunities to witness:

Inhale: “Come, Holy Spirit.”
Exhale: “I am open.”

You are not alone.

"The Spirit-filled life is not a special, deluxe edition of Christianity. It is part and parcel of the total plan of God for His people."

- A.W. Tozer

"Before Christ sent the church into the world, He sent the Spirit into the church. The same order must be observed today."

- John Stott

The Holy Spirit is not a luxury; He is a necessity. We cannot fulfill the mission of Jesus without the empowering presence of the Spirit."

- E. Stanley Jones

"The Holy Spirit does not work for us. He works in us and through us. We are His vessels, and it is through the Holy Spirit that we bring God's love to the world."

- Billy Graham

"The Holy Spirit was given to us to help us become like Jesus and to empower us to do the work He did. If we want to fulfill the Great Commission, we need the Holy Spirit to guide, empower, and direct us."

- Francis Chan

"The Holy Spirit doesn't need to equip you for what you're not going to do. But if you say, 'Yes, Lord, I'll do it,' He'll equip you fully."

- Henry Blackaby

The Way of Jesus
Week 9

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 7:18-35

SERMON TITLE

Look & Listen

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

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

Quotes:

Jesus does not deny His identity or His mission, but He invites John the Baptist to witness the evidence of the kingdom of God unfolding around Him. The works He does speak louder than words.

"The kingdom of God is not something you wait for. It's something you live in now, it's something you participate in now."

- Eugene Peterson

Week 9: Reflect and Discuss

1. Why do you think John the Baptist sent his disciples to question Jesus about His identity?

2. What does Jesus' response to John's disciples reveal about how the Kingdom of God is breaking into the world? How does this contrast with people's expectations of what the Kingdom should look like?

3. How does Jesus describe His generation? How do you think He might characterize our present generation? Why?

4. Jesus listens to the questions of John's disciples without rebuke, offering them a chance to see His Kingdom work firsthand. How can you better listen to the questions and struggles of others with compassion, allowing their curiosity or uncertainty to draw them closer to the truth of God's Kingdom?

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: Listening

James, an early church leader and the brother of Jesus, exhorts us, “take note of this: everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry” (James 1:19). In our world of polarization and hot takes, we often get it backwards: we would rather *speak our mind* than *mind our speech*. Listening is wisdom. Proverbs warns us, “Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish” (18:13).

Listening well is also a profound act of love: “Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable” (David Augsburger).

Take some time this week and ask a non-Christian or an inactive Christian to share their story. Here are some conversation prompts you could try (just pick one):

- Did you grow up going to church? What was that like for you?
- Was there a moment in your life when you started thinking differently about faith or spirituality?
- What were some of the key moments or people that shaped how you see the world and spirituality?

Rather than rushing in to share your own opinion, advice, or experience, listen with curiosity and compassion. Give them your undivided attention, and ask follow-up questions.

You may learn a lot -- about their background, their fears, their assumptions, their experiences, their hurt. That vulnerability is a big deal. Thank them for their honesty and openness.

See how the Spirit is leading in that conversation. Listening may be enough for the moment. Perhaps they will ask about *your* story. Maybe a need will come to the surface, and you can offer to pray for them. A wound may emerge, and you can show mercy. Ask God where He’s working, and follow His lead.

Five Obstacles to Listening

"A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion." Proverbs 18:2

1. Listening is Learned
Despite being one of the most essential skills, most of us were never taught how to listen well. We learned from what as modeled to us as kids - good or bad.

2. Pride Gets in the Way
Poor listening is often rooted in pride. We assume we know the speaker's thoughts or situation and often anticipate what they'll say, rehearsing our response instead of truly engaging.

3. It Take Work.
It's easier to nod along and say "yes" than to give someone our full attention. Real listening demands focus and concentration, and many of us struggle because we don't want to put in the work.

4. It's Noisy Out There
The rise of technology and social media makes it difficult to listen. We drown out quiet moments with distractions like headphones and social media, preferring quick soundbites over meaningful dialogue. It's very hard to pay attention to the quiet or the subtle in such a noisy world.

5. Brain Rot
Today even Netflix complains that it can't get our attention. With a phone in our hands, we mindlessly scroll and train our attention to be divided. We're having a harder and harder time having the patience and focus to listen well.

Push against these obstacles. Be intentional. Listen well.

The Way of Jesus
Week 10

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Luke 7:36-50

SERMON TITLE

Near the Lord

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

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

Quotes:

"God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him."
- John Piper

"Define yourself radically as one beloved by God. This is the true self. Every other identity is illusion."
- Brennan Manning

“Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.”
- David (Ps. 63:3)

Week 10: Reflect and Discuss

1. What stands out to you about the woman’s response to Jesus? How does her undignified worship challenge the way we think about approaching Jesus?

2. Compassion is messy - because it involves people. When have you experienced that? How did it make you feel?

3. How do I personally respond to Jesus' presence in my life? Do I approach Him like the Pharisee, focusing on maintaining appearances and boundaries, or like the woman, with a heart open to His mercy and grace?

4. How does this story shape my understanding of holiness and grace? Do I tend to define holiness by distance from sin, or by drawing near to Jesus and extending His grace to others?

5. How can I become someone who opens doors for people to encounter Jesus, rather than someone who puts up barriers?

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: Presence

God’s native language is a whisper.

If you’re anything like me, perhaps you tend to look for God in the wind, earthquake, and fire rather than the whisper (a la 1 Kings 19:11-13). Sometime I complain, “God, why don’t you make it obvious? Why a whisper? What not a yell or scream or something just a little bit more obvious?”

Sometimes He does. The truth is, though, it doesn’t seem like we respond much better when God speaks in louder, more obvious ways. In scripture, those louder moments prove relatively ineffective. Elijah’s fire spectacular was epic - but didn’t produce any clear fruit. Jesus’ own miracles were received with mix results. Even the empty tomb didn’t lead to revival among those who arrested Jesus. It led to accusations and persecution for the earliest Christians.

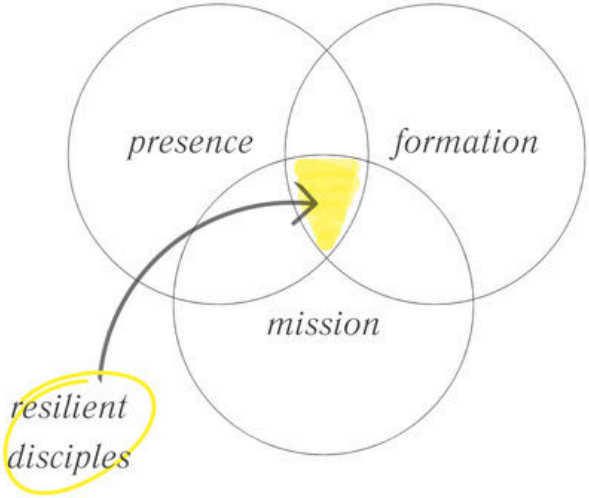
Maybe, as Tyler Staton writes, “God whispers not because he’s evasive but because he’s intimate... Maybe God whispers because it’s the only way he can get what he wants most, what he lost in Eden: to walk with you and me in familiar intimacy...”

God desires intimacy with you. His whisper invites you to lean in. His whisper requires your attention and your presence. God is about relationship -- not just a transaction or even transmission of instructions. God's whisper requires us to pause, to quiet the noise of our busy lives, and to lean in with expectant hearts. He speaks in the stillness, in the moments when we choose to turn our attention away from distractions and toward His presence.

We don’t just seek instructions or miracles; we seek Him—His heart, His nearness, His love. So today, take a moment to lean in. Quiet your soul and listen for His whisper. He is already near, ready to walk with you in familiar intimacy.

Examen: Presence | Formation | Mission

Jesus' disciples - then and now - flourish at the convergence of PRESENCE, FORMATION, and MISSION. Take a moment to check-in on these discipleship commitments:



PRESENCE // To be with Jesus
Lord, how have you I seen you draw me near? How can I move towards you each day? Where has my heart grown cold?

FORMATION // To become like Jesus
Lord, how have you been forming me into the image of Jesus? Where do I see the fruit of the Spirit? Where am I giving sin safe harbor in my heart?

MISSION // To do what Jesus did
Lord, how have I responded to your invitation to flood our valley with heaven? What is keep me from joining your Kingdom work?

Come, Holy Spirit. Make me more aware of your presence in every area of my life. Teach me to hear and follow. More of Jesus and His way in my life.

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?
LENT is a season marked by reflection, repentance, and renewal, as we prepare our hearts for Easter. LENT declares that God's story isn't finished. Even in our ashes, Jesus is making all things new.

Every Wednesday from March 5th- April 16th the Worship Center will be open from 6am-6pm for guided reflection and prayer. Come anytime on any Wednesday to either utilize the prayer station or simply pause, reflect, and respond to the God who wants to draw near.

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

Check the spring "Inside Community" magazine for more events and classes to help you grow into a resilient disciple, saturating this So. California with Good News!

*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