

Study 1. Good News for ALL!

READ: Luke 2: 21-35



KEY VERSE: Romans 1: 16

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”

Dr. Luke, the writer of the third Gospel, presents the Lord Jesus, who is the Son of God, as being truly human. You will remember, from previous Studies, that Matthew thinks mostly of Jesus as King, and Mark considers Him as God's Servant. Luke, however, sees Him as the ideal Man who has come for the blessing of all mankind and not just for the Jews.

Note the following points in Luke's Gospel which indicate that Jesus is the Saviour for ALL mankind:-

1. The genealogy (or family tree) in **chapter 3** goes right back to Adam, the first man, whereas Matthew's Gospel, which was written mainly for Jews, goes no further back than to Abraham, the 'father' or founder of the Jews.

2. It is Luke's Gospel which sets the birth of Jesus against the background of the Roman Emperor and his decree that **“ALL THE WORLD”** should be taxed (or enrolled). (**Luke 2: 1**)

3. It is only in this Gospel that the angel's message to the shepherds on the night of the Saviour's birth is recorded, **“Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be TO ALL PEOPLE”**. (**Luke 2: 10**)

4. When the Infant Jesus was taken to the Temple at Jerusalem for the performing of customary Jewish ceremonies, a godly man named Simeon took the Child up in his arms. In his prayer to God, he spoke of Him as God's salvation prepared for **“ALL PEOPLES”**, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel. (**See Luke 2: 30-32**) Note that Simeon mentioned the Gentiles before the Jews!

5. Luke gives a detailed account, in **chapter 4**, of our Lord's preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth, His home town. When the congregation refused to believe His claims to be their Messiah, He reminded them of what had happened in the days of two well known prophets of Old Testament times. The point our Lord made was that at that time, God had bestowed His favour on two non-Jews, or Gentiles. It was a warning to the unbelieving Jews of Nazareth that 'history would repeat itself'. If THEY would not accept Christ's good news, some GENTILES would!

6. One of the best known verses in Luke is found at the end of the story of Zacchaeus. (**ch. 19: 10**) You remember how he came down from the tree and warmly welcomed Jesus into his home. Our Lord spoke about 'the salvation that had come to his house', and then added, **“The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost”**. Here again, the Gospel of Luke is portraying a Saviour FOR ALL, for all are indeed lost and in need of salvation.

7. Luke finishes his Gospel by telling us that the risen Lord instructed His disciples to preach repentance and remission of sins in His name **“TO ALL NATIONS”**. (**Luke 24: 47**)

These points help us to see that Luke's Gospel takes a broad view of our Lord's purpose in coming to earth. Luke, who was probably a non-Jew (a Gentile) writes his Gospel in such a way that Gentile readers will see that here is a message of good news for them. The Gospel of Christ is for the whole world; it is indeed **“good will towards men,”** as the angels proclaimed at His birth. (**Luke 2: 14**) **Luke 3: 6** makes the same point - **“ALL FLESH shall see the salvation of God”**.

In the light of these facts, there are two important things for us all to consider:-

1. Each of us, at a personal level, needs to repent, believe and receive the forgiveness of our sins.

2. When we have taken this step, it is then our responsibility to pass on this world wide message. The Gospel is indeed **“the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes”**.

Study 1. Good News for ALL!

1 ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE TO THE FOLLOWING:-

- a) Luke makes no mention of the Roman Empire. _____
- b) In Luke's Gospel, the genealogy of Jesus goes back only as far as Abraham. _____
- c) Simeon took the infant Jesus into his arms. _____
- d) Jesus' home town was Jericho. _____
- e) Luke's Gospel stresses that the Saviour is for all. _____

5

2 FIND, IN LUKE 4: 16-29, THE STORY OF JESUS PREACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUE AT NAZARETH, AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:-

- a) What day of the week was it? _____
- b) From what Old Testament prophet did He read? _____
- c) What were the opening words of His preaching, after He had finished reading? _____
- d) Which TWO Old Testament prophets did He mention? _____
- e) How did the congregation react to what He said? (vs. 28 & 29) _____

6

3 a. IN WHAT SENSE ARE WE ALL "LOST"? _____

b. WRITE OUT LUKE 19: 10. _____

4

4 a. EXPLAIN IN DETAIL WHAT IS MEANT BY THE PHRASE - "THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD" (1 JOHN 4: 14 & 15 MAY HELP YOU) _____

b. DOES THE CONCEPT OF THE "SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD" MEAN THAT THE WHOLE WORLD WILL BE SAVED? GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR ANSWER. _____

6

5 WHEN OUR LORD ROSE FROM THE DEAD, TO WHOM DID HE SAY THE GOSPEL WAS TO BE PREACHED? _____

2

6 a. WHAT WAS LUKE'S OCCUPATION? (COLOSSIANS 4: 14) _____

b. TO WHOM WAS HIS GOSPEL FIRST WRITTEN? (LUKE 1: 3 & 4) _____

2

25

Study 2. Lost and Found

READ: Luke 15: 1-24



KEY VERSE: Luke 15: 2
"This Man receives sinners and eats with them."

In the time of Jesus, tax collectors (or publicans) were looked upon as traitors because they worked for the Romans. All true Jews hated them! Other people, who lived wicked lives, were equally despised. 'Tax collectors' and 'sinners' were social rejects! Our Lord Jesus, however, always had time for those people whom everyone else rejected! He was **"a Friend of tax collectors and sinners"**. (Luke 7: 34)

He was, of course, often criticized for showing compassion and friendliness towards such. Pharisees and scribes sneered at Him, as the **Key Verse** indicates. They were implying that it was altogether wrong of Him to do so. THEY would never be found in such bad company!

The Lord answered their criticisms by telling three stories or parables. The 'heavenly meaning' is that God is very pleased to welcome unworthy sinners. If they are truly sorry about their sins, and come back to Him, He is well pleased. Indeed, He finds more joy in them than in self-righteous people who have never admitted how sinful they really are!

Now think about the three parables:-

1. THE LOST SHEEP (vs. 3-7)

One sheep, out of a flock of 100, went missing. It was lost! The shepherd valued it highly, so out he went, searching tirelessly until he found it. Then, he carried it home and lost no time in telling his friends and neighbours about its safe return. Jesus explained that it is like that in Heaven when one 'lost' sinner repents of his sin, and comes to the Lord for salvation. There is joy over one who is 'found', more than over ninety-nine who never discover that they are 'lost' and in need of being saved. Remember from Study 1 what **Luke 19: 10** teaches!



2. THE LOST COIN (vs. 8-10)

Our Lord repeated His teaching by telling a second story. A woman had lost one silver coin. She had nine others left, but she found no comfort in that! She was concerned about the lost one, and so she searched everywhere until she found it. Her joy was unbelievable! Quickly she spread the good news, and called her neighbours to rejoice with her. Again our Lord explained His meaning. **"Tax collectors and sinners"** are not to be despised and avoided; God cares about them and when they genuinely turn from their sins, God is delighted. Has there been joy in Heaven because you have forsaken your sins and trusted the Saviour?

3. THE LOST SON (vs. 11-24)

The 'Prodigal Son' is perhaps the best known of all Jesus' parables. He was very wasteful. ('Prodigal' means 'wasteful') He misspent the money his father had given him, behaved very badly and dishonoured his father's name by his sinful behaviour. In spite of it all, his father longed for his homecoming.

When eventually the son came back and acknowledged how wrong he had been, what a welcome he got! He was completely forgiven and restored to his former position in the family.

As in the first two parables, Jesus is answering the Pharisees and scribes who are condemning Him for caring for 'social rejects'. It is as if He is saying: 'All of you are happy when you find what you have lost, be it a sheep, a coin, or a son. God, too, welcomes and forgives people who have strayed far away from Him, if they repent and return. You, therefore, ought not to condemn Me for being a Friend to sinners.'

When we are troubled in our minds about our sins, there is an excellent example of a prayer of repentance.

"I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and You forgave the iniquity of my sin." (Psalm 32: 5)



Study 2. Lost and Found

1

A. WHY WERE TAX COLLECTORS (PUBLICANS) SO DESPISED BY MANY JEWS?

B. WRITE FROM LUKE 15: 2, THE CRITICISM WHICH THE PHARISEES AND SCRIBES MADE OF JESUS.

4

2

DRAW ARROWS BETWEEN EACH PAIR OF ASSOCIATED WORDS.

SHEPHERD

ANGELS

WOMAN

SON

FATHER

COIN

GOD

SHEEP

4

3

WRITE THE WORDS WHICH THE SON ACTUALLY SAID TO HIS FATHER WHEN HE ARRIVED HOME.

3

4

EXPRESS, IN YOUR OWN WORDS, THE MAIN LESSON WHICH IS BEING TAUGHT IN THE THREE PARABLES.

4

5

WHY WERE THE TAX COLLECTORS EAGER TO HEAR WHAT JESUS HAD TO SAY? (v. 1)

2

6

ALL THREE PARABLES ARE A 'PICTURE' OF US. IN WHAT WAY?

4

7

ACTS 5: 30 & 31 TELLS US THE BASIS ON WHICH GOD GRANTS FORGIVENESS. WHAT IS IT?

4

25

Total marks
for this study

Study 3. A Stranger says, "Thank You"

READ: Luke 17: 11-19



KEY VERSE: Psalm 105: 1 & 2
"Oh, give thanks to the Lord! . . .
Talk of all His wondrous works."

The healing of the ten lepers is found ONLY in the Gospel of Luke. Of special note is the fact that the one who came back to thank the Lord Jesus for making him well was a Samaritan.

Who were the Samaritans? The map shows the area where most of them lived; it was known as Samaria. This ethnic group had arisen from the inter-marriage of Jews and Assyrians, many years before the time of Christ. They were, therefore, despised by the Jews, who looked upon them as 'half-castes'. One of the Gospel writers tells us that **"Jews have no dealings with Samaritans"**. (John 4: 9) As people who were not full-blooded Jews, they had no part in the worship of God in the Temple at Jerusalem. Instead, they had established their own system of worship on Mount Gerizim. (See map.)

We can be confident that God, by His Spirit, directed Luke to include this story, because it helps to emphasize the theme which runs right through his Gospel. You will recall, from Study 1, that Luke stresses that Jesus is the Saviour for ALL. He has come to save Jews, Gentiles and even Samaritans! No one is excluded. This also agrees with the commission given by the risen Lord Jesus to His apostles before His ascension. (Acts 1: 8)

Now let us examine some details of this incident:-

1. Their Disease. Verse 12 introduces **"ten men who were lepers"**. Leprosy was a very serious skin disease, which, in some forms, was highly infectious and could result in severe disfigurement of the body. Under Old Testament laws, therefore, a leper was excluded from social contact with other people. If he saw someone approaching, he was to cry, **"Unclean! Unclean!"** (Leviticus 13: 45 & 46)

We may properly think of the physical plight of a leper as a picture of our own spiritual condition before God. Just as leprosy was a spreading and unclean disease, which resulted in death, so our sins have rendered us unclean and unfit for Heaven.

2. Their Distance. Luke takes note of the fact that they stood **"afar off"**. It is most likely that nine of them were Jews, and as such, they would know the Old Testament's regulations about leprosy. Even the one Samaritan among them would understand what the Law said. So we can see that all ten of them knew how serious their condition was, and accepted what God's Law declared!

The spiritual lesson is plain for us. **"Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you."** (Isaiah 59: 2)

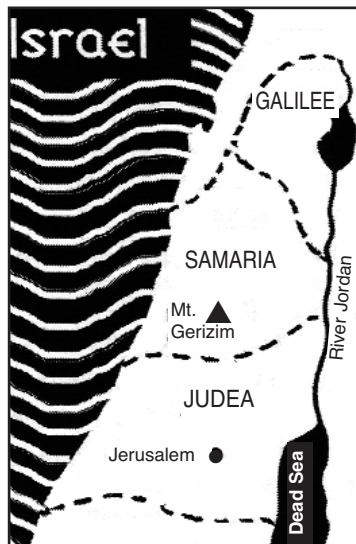
3. Their Desire. **"They lifted up their voices, and said, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' "** (v. 13) It is obvious that they had some knowledge of who Jesus was; they must have heard of His wonderful healing power. Believing that He had the answer to their great problem, they appealed sincerely and trustingly to Him.

4. Their Deliverance. Their appeal was not in vain! At once, our Lord told them to go to the priests. A leper would only do this if he felt he had been cured. The fact that all ten of them at once acted upon what Jesus said, shows their faith in Him, and in response to that faith, the Lord performed a mighty miracle, and all ten were immediately healed.

The conclusion is important! How many returned to say, "Thank You", and to **"give glory to God"**? Only one! Our Lord noticed the absence of the others! The

remarkable thing is that the one who came back was **"a stranger"**, as Jesus called him, meaning that he was a non-Jew, a Samaritan. To him, our Lord had something special to say. (v. 19)

Let each of us ask: Have I trusted the Saviour for cleansing from my sin? Am I thankful to Him for giving His life for me? Does my life, every day, show that I appreciate His great salvation?



Study 3. A Stranger says, "Thank You"

1

WRITE A SENTENCE EXPLAINING WHO THE SAMARITANS WERE.

2

2

ON THE MAP, MARK THE THREE PLACES MENTIONED IN VERSE 11.

3

IN WHAT WAY DOES THE STORY OF THE TEN LEPERS FIT IN WITH LUKE'S OVERALL PRESENTATION OF THE GOSPEL?

3

2

4

READ LEVITICUS 13: 45 & 46, AND WRITE DOWN THREE REGULATIONS WHICH APPLIED TO LEPERS.

5

"ONE OF THEM . . . RETURNED". (v. 15)

a) What religion/nationality was he? _____

b) Name TWO things which he did when he turned back. _____

c) What did the Lord Jesus say to him? (v. 19) _____

3

4

6

LEPROSY CAUSED FAMILY SEPARATIONS, JUST AS SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD. WRITE OUT ISAIAH 59: 2, TO PROVE THIS.

2

7

a. SUGGEST TWO WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN SHOW OUR THANKFULNESS TO THE LORD JESUS FOR SAVING US. _____

b. WHY DO PEOPLE TODAY NOT VALUE WHAT THE SAVIOUR HAS DONE FOR THEM?

4

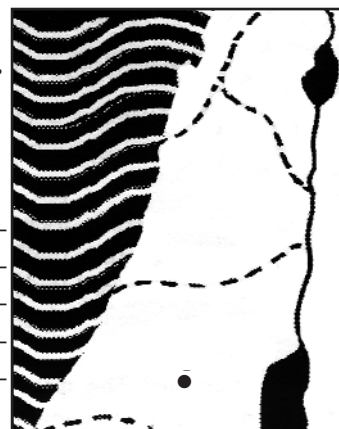
8

ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE TO THE FOLLOWING:-

- a) Only nine lepers were healed. _____
- b) The one who returned to give thanks was a Jew. _____
- c) Jesus told all ten to go to the priests. _____
- d) Leprosy may be thought of as a 'picture' of sin. _____
- e) Jews normally did not associate with Samaritans. _____

5

25



Study 4. The Thief who went to Heaven

READ: Luke 23: 32-46



KEY VERSE: Luke 23: 43

“And Jesus said unto him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise.’”

Throughout his Gospel, Luke continues to emphasize the power and willingness of the Lord Jesus to save all kinds of people. This Study brings us to the day of His death, and Luke clearly shows that, even then, the Lord Jesus was the **“Friend of sinners”**.

It is well known that two criminals were crucified with Jesus. The fact that one of them repented and received forgiveness is found **ONLY** in Luke’s Gospel. It fits in perfectly with the theme which runs right through all the earlier chapters - the Lord has a message of forgiveness and hope **FOR ALL**, if they will only turn to Him, in repentance and faith.

Note the following facts about this unnamed criminal, or malefactor, who died beside Jesus.

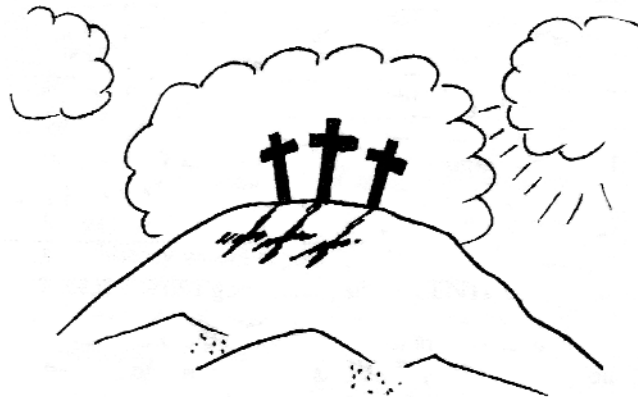
1. HE CHANGED HIS ATTITUDE.

In the early stages of the crucifixion, this man joined with the other thief in hurling abusive and hurtful words at Jesus. (**Read Matthew 27: 44 & Mark 15: 32**) But there came a point where his attitude changed; he became aware of how wrong **HE** was! The One hanging beside him was altogether different, for He had done no wrong!

2. HE CONFESSED HIS WRONG DOING.

His first words (**v. 40**) were a rebuke to his companion who was still shouting insults at Jesus. In doing so, he admitted that he was receiving **“the due reward”** of his deeds. He knew full well what crimes he had committed, and he understood clearly that his punishment was deserved.

How dreadful to see the sad end to which sin and wrong doing lead! Here is a warning to us all. **“The wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6: 23)** We may not be criminals, but all of us need to understand how



serious our sin is; like the thief on the cross, we should confess our wrong-doing to God.

3. HE CAST HIMSELF UPON THE SAVIOUR.

Having spoken to his companion, he then turned to the Lord Jesus. **“Lord,”** he said, **“remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”** These words express his faith! Clearly, the thief has understood that the Person beside him is special. Indeed, He is God’s King, the Messiah, who one day, will set up His kingdom. From his changed and repenting heart, the thief cries for mercy! He has no other hope! How wise, then, to commit himself to the Lord Jesus for his personal, eternal salvation!

4. HE WAS COMFORTED BY A SURE PROMISE.

The promise which the Lord made to him is found in the **Key Verse** - **“You will be with Me in paradise.”** In a short while, he died; he did so, however, with this wonderful assurance - ‘I shall be in paradise with the One to whom I have committed myself.’ (Note: ‘paradise’ denotes a park, or pleasure ground; it is a pictorial way of speaking of Heaven.) Here, then, is Luke’s concluding story of how warmly the Saviour welcomes sinners, when they are truly sorry for their sins and put their trust in Him. It is much better to take that step when we are young. Don’t leave it until the end of your life, as the thief did! **“Behold, NOW is the day of salvation.” (2 Corinthians 6: 2)**

NewLife WorkSheet

Study 4. The Thief who went to Heaven

1 WRITE OUT THE WORDS OF LUKE 23: 33.

2

2 WHO SAID?

- a) "Father, forgive them . . ."
 b) "He saved others . . ."
 c) "If You are the King . . ."
 d) "If You are the Christ (Messiah) . . ."
 e) "Lord, remember me . . ."
 f) "Today you will be with Me . . ."

6

3 IN WHAT WAY DID ONE OF THE THIEVES 'CHANGE HIS ATTITUDE'?

3

4 THE VERSES YOU HAVE READ FOR THIS STUDY CONTAIN THE LAST WORDS OF JESUS BEFORE HE DIED. WRITE THEM OUT.

2

5 THE THIEF IN THIS STORY WAS SAVED 'AT THE LAST MINUTE'. WRITE A SENTENCE TO SHOW WHY IT IS FOOLISH TO DELAY ONE'S SALVATION TO THE VERY END OF LIFE.

3

6 THE TWO CRIMINALS WERE ON EITHER SIDE OF JESUS. WRITE A SENTENCE TO EXPLAIN HOW THEY WERE ALSO DIVIDED IN THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS HIM.

4

7 a. WHAT HAD THE THIEF TO DO IN ORDER TO OBTAIN FROM JESUS THE ASSURANCE THAT HE WOULD BE WITH HIM IN PARADISE?

b. EXPLAIN HOW ANYONE TODAY CAN BE ASSURED OF GOING TO HEAVEN.

5

Return your study sheets to:

or the PBS Centre below

25

Total marks
for this study