

## Tuesday, November 3, 2020—Luke 22-24

Satan is an accuser and deceiver. He continually plots and prowls so he can undermine the plans of God and devour His people. When he saw an open door, he entered Judas (22:3) in order to betray Jesus.

God Himself is a plan maker. He works to see that His will is completed. Nothing that Satan or any of his forces attempt and accomplish can overcome His design. As the betrayal was set in motion, Jesus continued steadfastly toward the cross. He sent His disciples into town to secure a room for their Passover meal, and they discovered a place just as Jesus described. He had a plan being fulfilled they knew nothing about.

Things seemed to unravel rapidly. Jesus was arrested and put on trial. Peter denied Him three times. When it seemed He would be released, the people cried out for His crucifixion. Then, the Son of God was nailed to a cross, treated as a criminal, and died. What kind of plan was this?

On the third day, His followers began to learn the fullness of this plan. The angels at the empty tomb said He fulfilled His promises (24:8). The two travelers to Emmaus realized Moses and the prophets had told of this plan hundreds of years earlier (24:27). Eating supper with the disciples, Jesus told them, too, that this was God's plan all along (24:44).

Join God's life-changing plan. Preach repentance and forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus. Pray for the power of the Spirit to lead you.

## Monday, November 2, 2020—Luke 18-21

Jesus taught that faith was persistent because faith trusted in God's righteousness and justice not in the faith of the faith-filled person. Jesus wanted His people to be humble and child-like. God could do what man found impossible (18:27), so He would easily provide for His children.

Jesus said He had come to seek and to save what was lost (19:10). Whether a blind beggar or a wealthy tax collector, no one was too ostracized for Jesus. He treated these men like people, not objects, and their faith made them whole. He was looking for people who would trust Him and serve Him. To those He promised blessing and honor (19:11-27).

As He approached Jerusalem, Jesus wept over the city (19:41). They did not recognize Him. They did not repent. They would suffer greatly because they would not follow the Son of God. He rebuked those who made the Temple a place for personal gain, and He taught there and proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom. He declared His rejection by the religious leaders and the punishment as a result (20:1-47).

His great sacrifice would win salvation for His disciples, but it would not spare them from great trouble as they carried out His mission. He assured them, "By standing firm you will gain life" (21:19), and "When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (21:28). He warned them to avoid the snares and anxieties of life so they could stay alert for His return (21:34).

Ask God to shape your faith to be pleasing to Jesus.

## Sunday, November 1, 2020—Luke 14-17

Jesus continually described a Kingdom life that thought more of others than self.

He wanted His disciples to trust the heart of God to provide for them and protect them. His disciples could live with a sacrificial, risk-taking heart because God was fully aware and able to care for them. He would, in turn, reward them in the next life (14:1-33). Their calling was not to make much of this life but to make much of Jesus.

Jesus wanted His disciples to understand the heart of God. He longed for those that were lost to be found, and His disciples had the privilege and responsibility of loving the lost enough to find them and care for them. Sadly, some would be so focused on their own comfort or success that they would resent the grace God lavished on the lost who are found and come to Christ in repentance (15:1-32). Many would justify themselves in the eyes of men and be guilty before God (16:15).

Jesus taught that the condition of the heart was of far more importance than the appearance of the man. God had given His word through the Law and the prophets for ages, but many remained unrepentant (16:19-31). Others, however, gladly accepted the grace of God and devoted their lives to Him, serving without any thought of receiving thanks from God and having time off from serving Him (17:1-10).

“Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it” (17:33). Give up your life for Jesus’ sake, and find it.

Saturday, October 31, 2020—Luke 10-13

Jesus calls His disciples to hard work. He came to be a servant. He calls them to be like sheep among wolves (10:3). Bringing the light of His Kingdom into the darkness of the world’s kingdom is serious business. Even when they faced opposition, the Kingdom of God was near (10:11). In the hardest of situations, they were to love others sacrificially (10:25-37).

Mary chose to sit at Jesus’ feet while Martha rushed about working. She knew the treasure of being with Him. Jesus knew the treasure of spending time with His Father, and the disciples saw the results. They wanted Jesus to teach them to pray as He did (11:1). Scripture never records their asking Him to teach them to preach or heal or teach, but they did ask Him to teach them to pray. The disciple’s path is impossible without prayer.

Jesus taught the necessity of inward change leading to outward obedience (11:28). The culture was full of examples of “godly” men and religious behavior, but their souls were empty and wicked (11:37-53). Their example was pervasive and influential, like yeast in bread (12:1). Jesus was calling people to be rich toward God and generous to people. Instead of worrying, they were to seek the Kingdom and leave the results to Him.

Live with the expectation of His return and the desire to glorify Him above all else (12:35-48). Pray for a life full of the fruit of repentance instead of one that simply takes up space in His vineyard (13:1-8).

Friday, October 30, 2020—Luke 7-9

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther tacked 95 points of discussion and disagreement with the Church to the door of the church building in Wittenberg, Germany. He unknowingly began the Protestant Reformation. At the heart of his theses was what Scripture says leads to justification. It comes by faith alone.

In Jesus' day, people had similar discussion. What made someone worthy of God's favor? Some Jewish leaders came to Jesus asking Him to heal the servant of a centurion, a Roman officer. "He deserves this favor," they said, "because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue" (7:7). When He was not far from the house, the officer sent friends to tell Jesus he was not worthy of Jesus' visit. Jesus needed only to say the word, and healing would come. Jesus found the man worthy of favor because of faith, not by his works. Likewise, to the most scandalous of women, He said faith had brought forgiveness (7:50). Neither tried to justify self like the legal expert (10:29).

Jesus was demonstrating the partnership of faith and works. Faith brought forgiveness from God because of the heart attitude, but faith also stirred obedience because God was the new master of the faith-filled heart. Jesus' family was the ones who heard God's word and practiced it (8:21, 10:37). Faith alone saves, but faith that saves is not alone. Works follow.

Pray for faith that denies self, takes up the cross daily, and follows Him (9:23). Be obedient to pray for workers and to go to work (10:2).

Thursday, October 29, 2020—Luke 4-6

The Spirit will lead you where He wants you to go, but those may be places you would never choose yourself. Jesus spent 40 days in the desert facing temptation. He overcame those temptations through the power of the Spirit and the truth of the word of God. He saw His Father as more beautiful than anything the flesh, the eyes, or pride could offer. In the end, He was stronger and more mature than if He had not been challenged.

When Jesus returned to His hometown, He read from the Scriptures, and the people were amazed. When He made the people realize they were spiritually immature, they changed their minds and tried to kill Him. Undeterred, He preached and healed in many places. Then, He called His first disciples. In doing so, He stunned them with the magnitude of His glory and power but reassured them and called them to minister with Him.

Jesus was doing a new work that made the teachers of the Law angry. Jesus wanted people to consider why God had given the Law instead of why tradition told them to keep the Law. He was stretching their minds and spirits (5:33-6:11) so they could know God and enjoy Him. That stretching process is rarely comfortable but will pay great dividends if endured to completion. He was calling then and now to lives of love for enemies, doing to others as one would have them do to self, examining self, transformed hearts, and obedient faith (6:27-49).

Thank God for challenges that lead to your growth and His glory.

Wednesday, October 28, 2020—Luke 1-3

Matthew walked with Jesus. Mark was personal friends with Peter. Luke, however, was an outsider. He came to know Jesus long after He had ascended to heaven. Luke was so moved and amazed by the gospel that he spent time with eyewitnesses to put together an investigative report about the life and ministry of Jesus so others could know Jesus with certainty.

God prepared the way for Jesus even before His arrival. God told Zechariah, a

priest, that he and his wife would have a son, John, in their old age. John would be a spokesman who would be like the Old Testament prophet Elijah, calling people to change their hearts and minds. Some months later, He sent an angel to a young, unmarried woman named Mary, informing her she would be the mother of Jesus. The angel told her nothing was impossible with God (1:37). Elizabeth, Mary, and Zechariah all responded to God and His plan with praise and wonder.

When Jesus was born, there was more praise and wonder. The angels announced His arrival. The shepherds glorified God. Simeon and Anna expressed profound gratitude, and Joseph and Mary were amazed. Jesus' coming was unusual but unmistakable. God had come to earth.

When the time was right, John began to lay the groundwork for Jesus' ministry, calling people to repentance and new lives (3:8). Then, Jesus was baptized, and His ministry began. Praise God today for sending Jesus to earth. Pray for repentance that glorifies Him and draws others to Him.