

THE LIFE OF JESUS

IN 15 ACTS

EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS TAKEN FROM THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.

We present 15 episodes of Jesus' life, which will help us understand the value and need of having and encounter with the only one who can change lives: our Lord Jesus Christ.

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JESUS MAKES THE DIFFERENCE: HE IS RISEN!

THE LIFE OF JESUS IN 15 ACTS

EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP LESSONS TAKEN FROM THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.

We present this material with the purpose of offering resources to the local church, especially for its use in cells, home meetings, or mission points.

We expect this work to be a blessing and a tool for our leaders and pastors, and to help better fulfill the Great Commission ordered by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We fervently desire everyone to be a protagonist of the work of God in the people that surround them: their family, their neighborhood, their city. That is why we wish, through evangelism and discipleship, for the presence of Christ to manifest itself in the hearts of people.

To God be the glory!

INTRODUCTION

THE THEOLOGY OF THE GOSPEL OF SAINT LUKE

The Gospel of Saint Luke differs from the other three Gospels in that, even while each one is an independent piece with its own content, Luke is part of a work that deals with the beginning of Christianity. In the first four verses, Luke explains that his intention is to present a narration ordered for the benefit of those who know something about Christianity. He believed that faith is God in attached to historical facts, which should be seen as **acts of God**, and he wanted to show his readers the firm historical foundation of that which they have heard about Jesus and the first church.

Luke shows four characteristics about his literary gift:

1. His literary gifts helped him tell his story well.
2. His gift of being a historian stands out more than the other evangelists.
3. His restlessness is to show the theological meaning of what happened.
4. He cares about the pastoral needs of his readers.

Theological Emphases

Prepare the theological emphases beforehand and then explain them with your own words.

Bear in mind that the objective is to provide a brief introduction to the passages that will be read later. If needed, stop for a moment, ask questions, and give examples and illustrations.

You are not doing an exam. Teaching that enriches is the one in which both parts can learn; in simple words: it is a coming and going.

1. Luke tells the story of Jesus. His Gospel is more biographical. He cares about showing the continuity of what is registered in the Old Testament regarding the acts of God with his people and the story of Jesus together with the birth of the first church. The

story of Jesus is the most important part of God's activity in the world. Presenting it in this way, Luke shows us that the earthly life of Jesus is essential to the gospel.

2. The main theme of his narration of the gospel is salvation. Two of his favorite terms are: "preach the gospel" and "salvation." The first one summarizes what Jesus did: his teachings, healing, and compassion were a holistic part of the proclamation of the good news of God coming to the world. The second term indicates the content of the good news. The summary appears in 19:10: "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost".

3. If salvation is for "the lost," it is for everyone, for everyone is lost. Jesus brought salvation to the deprived ones of Judah: to the poor, the women, the children and the stubborn sinners. Even though his work was limited mostly to Jews, He pointed out with clarity that his message was also for the gentiles – particularly for the Samaritans, the hated enemies of the Jews – and that his message had consequences for the oppressed.

4. A curious fact about the Gospel of Luke is its little reference about the meaning of the cross as a means of salvation. Instead, it shows that suffering and death were part of the way signaled by God for Jesus, before He could re-enter the heavenly glory. The relation between the death of Jesus and sinners and sin appears only in 22:19-20 and in Acts 20:28.

5. No other author has emphasized with more clarity than Luke the width of the mercy of God. At the same time, no one has expressed with more strength Jesus' claims. Those who wanted to be his disciples received the warning of first considering well the

cost, denying themselves and following Jesus daily. The grace of God is not “cheap”; sinners must repent and give up their sins.

6. Luke wrote a second book about the story of the church (the book of Acts of the Apostles). But already in the Gospel, he shows what the period of development of the church would be like. It was the time in which Jesus ascended to the heavens and was sitting at the right hand of the Father. In the meantime, his servants had to continue his work of evangelizing all the nations. They were qualified by the same Holy Spirit that empowered Jesus to fulfill his task, and they sought the divine help in prayer, in the same way that He had done it. Only when the work of this mission is complete, Jesus will return as the judge of humanity and will establish his heavenly kingdom.

THE GREATEST GIFT FOR HUMANITY

(Subdivided in 5 parts) Luke 1:1-80 y Luke 2:1-52

Total Video Act # 1 (5:28 min)

ACT # 1 PART I

A WONDERFUL BIRTH, GOD AMONG US

Ask the members of your class to help you reading Luke 1:1-4

OUTLINE:

1:1-4 Dedication and purpose.

❖ Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. What can we expect as we open this literary work, since it is part of the Bible? (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

2. Who is the author of this book?

- a. He was _____ (Colossians 4:14)
- b. He was not _____ (Luke 6:12-16)
- c. He was a partner of _____ (Acts 16:9-10)
- d. He was also the author of _____ (Acts 1:1-2)

3. What things did Luke write about and with what purpose? (vv. 1-4)

We invite you to do the following activity:

Make posters with the following verses, Luke 1:14; 2:10; 13:17; 15:5-10, 23-32; 19:6, 37.

Find a microphone (a real one or a fake one) to act like a reporter in a TV show. Ask the following question as an interview to the classmates:

Which one of these verses is more impressive to you and why?

Everyone must participate!

Luke talks frequently about the joy that comes with faith and salvation.

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



In **1:1-2**, Luke narrates the story of Jesus from the unique perspective of a gentile, doctor, and first historian of the early church. Luke was not an eyewitness of the ministry of Jesus. However, he is concerned about preserving the facts correctly and about transferring the foundations of the Christian faith in the most intact way possible to the next generations.

Many had such a great interest in Jesus that they retold in written their personal experiences with Him. It is possible that Luke used these narrations and all the other means possible as resources to compose a precise and complete narration of the life, teachings, and ministry of Jesus. Christianity does not say: “Close your eyes and believe,” it rather says: “Discover it.”

In 1:3 the name Theophilus is mentioned, which means “the loved one of God.” The book of Acts, also written by Luke, starts in the same way. This preface may be a general dedication to

all Christian readers. Theophilus, Luke's boss, was the one who helped him finance the elaboration of the book. Further on, he was a Roman who knew Luke and was very interested in the new Christian religion.

In 1.3-4 we notice that Luke, being a doctor in medicine, knew the importance of being meticulous. He used his skills of observation and analysis to investigate the stories related with Jesus. What is his diagnosis? The gospel of Jesus Christ is the truth! You can read the narrations about Jesus with the assurance that they were written with a clear mind and a complete investigation. Because the gospel is based upon historical truth, our spiritual growth must include diligence, discipline, a thorough research of the word of God, and also, understanding how God has worked throughout history. If this kind of study is not part of your life, look for a pastor, professor or book to help you start, and to guide you in this important part of your growth as a Christian.

ACT # 1

PART II

HOPE FOR ISRAEL AND FOR THE WORLD

READ: Luke 1:5-38

OUTLINE:

1:5-25 Prophecy of the birth of John

1:26-38 Prophecy of the birth of Jesus



❖ **•Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.**

1. What was the meaning of the tasks that Zechariah performed? (1 Chronicles 23:13)

2. Why does the angel consider Mary as the favored one of God?

3. What would be the main difference between the two births announced by the angel Gabriel? (Compare 1:23-24 with 1:34-35)

4. What are the attributes of baby Jesus? (vv. 31-33; Isaiah9:6; Philippians 2:10-11)

5. How did Mary respond to the announcement? (v. 38)

6. How does her reaction compare to that of Zechariah? (v. 18)

7. How did the angel illustrate before Mary the power of God to do what He promises?

(v. 36)

Mary responded to God with faith even though she did not understand everything.



Thinking about the situation we face daily in our lives:

Do you find it hard to believe in the promises of God? _____

In what ways could you limit the power of God? _____

Can you say that you are a man or woman of faith? _____

How can you demonstrate that faith during the week? _____

What other lessons do you learn from Mary's life as described in these verses, that you can implement in your life? _____

After answering this questionnaire, take a time to ask yourself if you need to make some changes in the way you act.

- This is a very special time in which you can ask God to help you and strengthen you for your faith to be genuine and for you to be able to announce it to other.

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



1:5 This king was Herod the Great, whom the roman senate called the king of the Jews. Since he was half Jewish and he wanted to please his roman superiors, he expanded and embellished the

temple in Jerusalem, but he placed an eagle in the entrance. Herod the Great later on ordered a massacre of children with the futile purpose of killing baby Jesus, who was called the new “king of the Jews.”

1:5 The Jewish priest was a minister that worked in the temple and managed its maintenance; he would teach the Word of God and lead the worship service. In that time, there were about twenty thousand priests in the whole country.

Zechariah was of the class of Obadiah y he was supposed to officiate in that week. Every morning the priest would enter the temple to burn incense. They would toss lots to decide who would enter the Holy Place and one day it was Zechariah’s turn.

1:6 Zechariah and Elizabeth were not only motivated by the impulses of following the laws of God. Instead, they backed up their position with a strong obedience of heart and that is why they were called “righteous before God.”

1:9 Incense was burnt in the temple twice a day. When the people saw the burnt incense, they would pray.

1:11-12 Angels are spiritual beings that live in the presence of God and fulfill his desires. Only two are mentioned by name in Scripture: Michael and Gabriel, but there were many more that acted as messengers of God.

1:13 Zechariah, as he offered incense in the altar, was probably also praying for a son or for the coming of the Messiah. God answers prayers in his way and in his timing. He worked in an “impossible” situation: Zechariah’s wife was barren. If we want our prayers to be answered, we must be receptive to what God can do in the midst of impossible situations. We must wait for him to work in his way and time.

1:15 God selected John for a special service. Maybe he was prohibited from drinking, as a Nazirite vow, an antique vow of consecration to God.

1:17 John’s role was almost similar to that of the prophet in the Old Testament: to motivate the people to turn away from sin and return to God. John could perform “heart transplants.”

He changed hardened hearts of adults into soft hearts as those of children: docile, trusting and open to change.

Are you receptive to God as you should be? Or do you need your heart to be changed?

1:18 When he was told that he would have a son, Zechariah doubted of the words of the angel. From his human perspective, his doubts were understandable, but with God everything is possible. Even though Zechariah and Elizabeth no longer had the age to procreate, God gave them a son. When we feel tempted to think that some of the promises of God are impossible, we should remember his meticulous work throughout history. Trust completely in him.

1:26 Gabriel did not only appear before Zechariah and Mary, but also before the prophet Daniel more than five hundred years before (Daniel 8:15-17; 9:21). Every time he would appear, he would bring important messages from God.

1:26 Nazareth, Joseph y Mary's town, was far away from Jerusalem, the center of Jewish life and worship. It was located on the busiest road, frequently visited by gentile salesmen and roman soldiers. That is why its reputation was blurred among the Jews. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but he grew up in Nazareth.

Who would have thought that the people of Nazareth would reject him as the Messiah?

1:27-28 Mary was young, poor, and a woman, characteristics that for the people of her time would make her into somebody that God would never use. But God chose Mary for one of the greatest acts of obedience that he ever demanded of anyone. Maybe you consider that your capacities, experience, or education make you a bad candidate for the service of God. Do not limit God's choices. God can use you if you trust in Him.

1:30-31 The blessing of God does not bring immediate success, fame, or favor automatically. His blessing over Mary, the honor of being the mother of the Messiah, would bring her a lot of

pain: her relatives would make fun of her; her fiancé would be about to leave her; they would reject and try to kill her son. But through her son would come the only hope of the world and that is why Mary would be praised throughout the generations because, as the angel said, “you have found grace before God.”

1:31-33 *Jesus*, a Greek form of the Hebrew word *Joshua*, was a common name that meant “the Lord saves.” In the same way in which Joshua led his people into the promise land (see Joshua 1:2), Jesus also guided his people to eternal life. In the name of Jesus there were healings, daemons were cast out, and sins were forgiven.

1:34 The birth of Jesus of a virgin is a miracle that many find it hard to accept. Three facts can help our faith: (1) Luke was a doctor and knew very well how babies were formed. For us it would be very hard to believe in a virginal birth; however, he writes it as a fact. (2) Luke was a fond researcher who based his Gospel on reports by witnesses that were present during the events. Tradition says that he spoke to Mary about the facts that he narrates in the first two chapters. This is history, not fiction. (3) Christians and Jews, who worship God as the Creator of the universe, should believe that He has the power to create a child in a woman’s womb without the intervention of a man.

1:35 Jesus was born without the sin that entered the world through Adam. He was born holy, righteous; like Adam, He was created without sin. In contrast with Adam, who disobeyed God, Jesus obeyed and is in conditions of being our substitute to free us from the consequences of sin.

1:38 A young pregnant woman risked herself to disaster. Unless the father of the child decided to marry her, there was a big chance that she would stay alone her whole life. If her father rejected her, she could find herself forced to beg or be a prostitute to survive. And Mary, with her story of becoming pregnant by the Holy Spirit, risked being considered a crazy person. With all of this and in spite of the possible risks, Mary says: “May it be done to me according to

your word.” When Mary affirmed this, she did not imagine the tremendous blessing she would receive.

Do not wait to see the blessing you will have before offering your life to God. Offer yourself out of good will, even when the results of doing so may seem disastrous.

ACT # 1

PART III

A BLESSED YOUNG WOMAN

READ: Luke 1:39-80

OUTLINE:

1:39-56 Mary's visit to Elizabeth

1:57-80 Birth of John

❖ **Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.**



1. Why is Mary blessed? (v. 45)

2. To whom was the content of the blessing told? (v. 65) _____

What was their reaction? (v. 66) _____

3. What great things will the Redeemer of Israel do? (vv. 68-79)

4. How was the plan of God related to the Old Testament? (vv. 69-70, 72-73)

5. In the whole chapter, in what ways can we see how God uses fragile human beings to bring about his work? _____

6. Write down the requirements to be useful in the hands of God.

Think for a moment and answer:



Do you have to make any changes in your life for God to use you? Which ones?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



1:41-43 It seems that the Holy Spirit told Elizabeth that the son of Mary would be the Messiah. We suppose this because Elizabeth greets her young relative calling her “the mother of my Lord.” Mary’s pregnancy

could have seemed impossible, but her old and wise relative believed and rejoiced.

1:46-55 This chant is often called *Magnificat*, the first word in the Latin translation of this passage. Mary glorified God through a chant for what He would do through her for the sake of the world.

1:48 Did Mary show pride when she said: “For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed”? No, she recognized and accepted the gift that God gave her. *Pride* is to deny accepting the gifts from God, *humility* is to accept them and use them to worship and serve him. Do not deny your gifts. Give thanks to God for them and use them to glorify him.

1:54-55 The birth of Christ was the fulfillment of a promise announced in prophecy and Mary understood it in this way. She was not surprised when her Son later on announced to her that He was the Messiah. She knew his mission even before He was born.

1:56 Because of the difficulty of traveling in that time, long visits were common. Mary was probably a great help for Elizabeth who was experiencing the difficulties of a first pregnancy in her old age.

1:62 The relatives of Zechariah communicated with him through gestures because he seemed to be completely deaf, as well as mute, and he could not hear what his wife told him.

1:67-79 Zechariah worshiped God with his first words after months of silence. Zechariah prophesized the coming of a Savior who would redeem his people and he predicted that his son John would prepare the way for the Messiah. All the prophecies of the Old Testament were being fulfilled. No wonder Zechariah praised God! The Messiah would come in the right time and John was chosen to prepare the way.

1:71 The Jews expected the Messiah with anxiety, but they thought he would come to save them from the power of the Roman Empire. They were waiting for a military Savior and not a Messiah of peace that would overcome sin.

1:72-73 The promise of God to Abraham was to bless all the nations through (see Genesis 12:3). This would be fulfilled through the Messiah, a descendant of Abraham.

1:76 Even though He had unlimited powers, God decided to work through fragile human beings who start out as babies.

Do not minimize what God can do through those who trust in Him.

1:80 Why did John live in the wilderness? Prophets sought being alone to increase their spiritual growth and focus their message on God. Being in the wilderness, John showed his separation from the economical and political powers, and therefore he could direct his message against those powers.

ACT # 1

PART IV

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

READ: Luke 2:1-20

OUTLINE:

Luke 2:1:20 The great divine miracle: Jesus is born.

❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. Who governed when Jesus was born and over which territory? (1:5; 2:1) _____

2. Where did Mary and Joseph live? (v. 4) _____

3. Why was Joseph living in Bethlehem? (v. 5; Micah 5:2; John 7:42) _____

4. In light of 1:32-33, How do you think Mary would feel giving birth to a child and putting him in a manger? _____

5. What do you learn regarding God's control over politics and the history of the facts mentioned in verses 1 through 6? _____

6. In your opinion, Why would God have chosen to announce the coming of his Son to a group of shepherds? (1 Corinthians 1:27-28) _____

7. What impresses you of Joseph and Mary's lives? _____

8. How can humans find peace and the good will of God, of which the angel spoke? (v. 14; Romans 5:1 y 8) _____

9. How did Mary respond to everything that happened in chapters 1 and 2? (v. 19)



Think for a moment and analyze what lesson you have learned for your own life.

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



2:1 Luke is the only writer of the Gospels that relates the facts he narrates with world history. Palestine lived under the government of the Roman Empire; Augustus Caesar, the first roman emperor, was in charge. The roman authorities, who were considered gods, stood in strong contrast with the baby in the manger, who really was God made flesh.

2:3-6 The government forced Joseph to travel a long distance only to pay his taxes. His fiancé, who had to go with hi, was going to have their baby in any moment. But when they arrived in Bethlehem, they couldn't find a place to stay. When we do the will of God, we do not have the warranty that we will lead a comfortable life; we have been promised that even the uncomfortable things have a meaning in God's plan.

2:4 God controls all of history. Because of the decree of Augustus Caesar, Jesus was born in the town that was mentioned in the prophecy (Micah 5:2) even though their parents did not live there.

Joseph and Mary were descendants of king David. The Old Testament is full of prophecies that announce that the Messiah would be born of the royal lineage of David (see, for example, Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 33:15; Ezekiel 37:24; Hosea 3:5).

2:7 This reference of the manger is the basis of the traditional belief that Jesus was born in a stall. Frequently, stalls were caves with warehouses carved into the rocky walls (mangers) to feed the animals. Even though Christmas cards show pretty images, the surroundings were most likely dirty and dark in reality. This was not the setting that the Jews expected the King

Messiah to be born in. He works where it is needed, in the midst of the darkness of sin and the filth of the world.

2:7 Even though our first impression of Jesus is that of a baby in a manger. Baby Christ in the manger offers a beautiful scene of Christmas, but we should not leave it there. This little and defenseless child had a wonderful life, died for us, ascended to the heavens, and will return to the earth as the King of kings. What image do you have of Jesus, that of a baby in a manger or of your Lord? Make sure not to underestimate Jesus.

2:8 Luke narrates what had been announced to the shepherds of the region about Jesus' birth. What an announcement! The shepherds were frightened, but their fear became joy when they received the good news from the angels about the birth of the Messiah.

2:9-10 The greatest event in history already happened! The Messiah was born! The Jews waited for centuries, and when it finally happened, the announcement came to the humble shepherds. The good news about Jesus is that He goes to all, both to the rich and to the poor. He comes to anyone who has a humble heart and desires to accept him. It does not matter who you are or what you do; you can have Jesus in your life. Do not think that you need extraordinary qualities; He accepts you just as you are.

2:14 The story of the birth of Jesus resounds with music that has served as an inspiration to composers during two thousand years. The song of the angels is still one of the favorites. Frequently called *Glory*, which is the first word of this verse in the Latin translation, it has been the base of modern choral masterpieces, traditional Christmas carols, and antique liturgical melodies.

ACT # 1

PART V

THE GROWTH OF A PERFECT CHILD

READ: Luke 2:21-52

OUTLINE:

2:21-40 Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

2:41-52 Jesus' visit to the Temple during Passover

❖ • **Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.**



1. Why was Jesus circumcised? (Genesis 17:11; Leviticus 12:3)

2. What did they offer? (v. 24)

3. What does the offering reveal about Jesus' family? (Leviticus 12:6-8)

4. Where did Jesus live during his childhood? (v. 39)

5. What was his job? (Mark 6:3)

6. In what areas of his life did He grow? (vv. 40, 52)

7. How old was Jesus when He went to Jerusalem with his parents for the Passover feast? (v. 42)

8. What impresses you about Jesus' parents?

9. What example does Jesus give for every son/daughter? (v. 51; Ephesians 6:1-2)

10. How can one achieve a good favor from God and people?

(v. 52; Proverbs 3:3-4)

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



2:21-24 Jewish families had the tradition of conducting certain ceremonies after the birth of a child. (1) *Circumcision*. A part of each boy's foreskin was circumcised y a name was given to the child on the eighth day after his birth (Leviticus 12:3; Luke 1:59-60). Circumcision symbolized the separation between Jews and Gentiles, and the Jew' special relationship with God. (2) *Redemption of the firstborn*. The firstborn son was presented a month after his birth (Exodus 13:2, 13:11-16; Numbers 18:15-16). The ceremony included the act of buying again, of "redeeming". (3) *Purification of the mother*. During the forty days following the birth of a son and eighty days following the birth of a daughter, the mother would remain ceremonially impure and could not enter the Temple. At the end of this time of separation, the parents would bring a lamb to offer it and a pigeon as an offering for sin.

2:28-32 When Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple to dedicate him to God, they met an old man who told them who this child would be. The song of Simeon is often called *Nunc*

Dimitis, an expression that comes from the first words in the Latin translation of this message.

Simeon could die in peace because he saw the Messiah.

2:32 The Jews were aware of the prophecies of the Old Testament that talked about the blessings the Messiah would bring to their nation. However, they would not always pay attention to the prophecies that announced that He would not only save the Jews, but the whole world (See, for example, Isaiah 49:6).

2:33 Joseph and Mary were amazed by three things that Simeon said about Jesus: that he said Jesus was a gift from God; that he recognized him as the Messiah; and that he added that Jesus would be the light for the whole world.

2:34-35 Simeon prophesized that Jesus would be a paradoxical signal. The prophets had already announced that some would fall because of him (see Malachi 4:2), while other would rise up (see Isaiah 8:14-15). With Jesus there would be no neutral position; people would accept him with joy or reject him completely.

2:36 Even though Simeon and Hannah were very old, they had the hope of seeing the Messiah. Guided by the Holy Spirit, they were the first ones to witness about Jesus. In the Jewish culture, old people were highly respected and the prophecies of Simeon and Hannah had a higher weight because of their advanced age. As Christians, we should maintain these values.

2:39 Did Mary and Joseph return immediately to Nazareth or did they remain in Bethlehem for a while? It seems as though there is a period of time missing between verses 38 and 39, enough for them to find a house in Bethlehem, escape to Egypt fleeing from Herod, and return to Nazareth when the situation got safer.

2:40 It does not surprise us that Jesus should more wisdom than what is normal for his age, for He remained in permanent contact with his Heavenly Father. God says, in James 1:5, that He is willing to give wisdom in abundance to those who ask for it. Like Jesus, we can grow in wisdom as we walk with God.

2:41-42 Passover was celebrated in the spring and was followed by a weeklong tradition called the Feast of the unleavened bread. The Passover was a reminder of the night the Jews fled from Egypt, when the angel of the Lord killed the firstborns of the Egyptians and passed over the Israelite homes (Exodus 12:21-36). Passover was the most important of the three annual feasts.

2:43-45 At the age of twelve, Jesus was considered almost an adult, and He did not spend much time with his parents during the feast. Those who attended the festivities would usually travel in caravans to be protected from the assaults in the Palestinian roads. It was the custom for the women and children to go in the front of the caravan and for the men to go in the back. At the age of twelve, a boy could be in either one of the two groups, and both Mary and Joseph thought he was probably in the other group.

2:46-47 The school of the Temple, a seminary class, was famous throughout Judea. During Passover, the most renowned rabbis of the land would gather to teach and discuss great truths. The coming of the Messiah, without a doubt, was a popular topic of discussion for everyone that was expecting his coming. Jesus was mature enough to listen and respond to questions. It was not his young age, but the depth of his thoughts that amazed these teachers.

2:48 Mary had to let her son go and allow him to become a man, the Son of God, the Messiah. In fear of not having been careful enough with the child God had given her, she looked for him desperately. But she was looking for a child, not for the young man that was surprising the religious leaders with his questions.

2:49-50 This is the first insinuation that Jesus was the Son of God. However, in spite of letting us understand that He knew his real Father, Jesus did not reject his earthy parents. He went back to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph, and lived under their authority for eighteen more years. The people of God do not neglect human relationships or family responsibilities. If the Son of God, Jesus Christ, obeyed his human parents...

How much more should we honor the members of our family!

2:50 Jesus' parents did not understand what He meant when He was talking about his Father's house. They did not get that He was making a distinction between his earthly father and his heavenly Father. Even though they knew that He was the Son of God, they did not understand what His mission included. The other thing is that they were supposed to raise him together with his brothers (Matthew 13:55-56) like a normal child. They knew He was special, but they did not know what He had in mind.

2:52 The Bible does not narrate any episode of the next eighteen years of Jesus' life, but He learned and matured. As the oldest one in a large family, He helped Joseph in the carpentry. It is possible that Joseph died during this period.

2:52 In the second chapter of Luke we find that even though Jesus was special, He had a normal childhood and youth life. In terms of development, He was like any other human being: He grew up physically and mentally. A holistic human life is not unbalanced. It was important for Jesus, and it should be important for all Christians, to harmoniously develop each one of the basic areas of life: physical, mental, social, and spiritual.

ACT # 2 (Video 3:40 min)

THE EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY AND OBEDIENCE

READ: Luke 3:1-38

OUTLINE:

3:1-4:13 John the Baptist and Jesus

3:1-20 John's preaching

3:21-22 The baptism of Jesus

3:23-38 The genealogy of Jesus.

❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. What is the historical and geographical background of John's ministry? (vv. 1-2)

2. What is the importance of the words "the word of God came to John"? (v. 2;

Malachi 1:1)

3. According to John's preaching, How were the prophetic purposes that his father, Zechariah, predicted in Luke 1:76-79 fulfilled? (Luke 3:4-6)

4. What was John the Baptist's ministry? (vv. 3-4)

5. Who did John preach to and how did he call them? (v. 7)

6. How do verses 7-8 show the spiritual state of the people?

What does "We have Abraham for our father" mean?

7. How did the people react? (vv. 10-14)

8. List the groups of people that would come to John. (vv. 10, 12, 14)

9. How did John respond to each group? (vv. 11-14)

10. What question arose because of John's ministry? How did he respond? (v. 16)

11. How did John describe Jesus?

12. When would Jesus baptize with fire and with the Holy Spirit? (Acts 2:1-4)

13. In your opinion, What is the meaning of John's baptism? (vv. 16-17)

14. Did this kind of baptism save people? _____

15. In your opinion, Since Jesus had no need of repentance, what was the meaning of his baptism? (vv. 21-22) _____

16. What calls your attention as you read Jesus' genealogy in verses 23-38?

17. In the end of the genealogy, Jesus is the son of...

18. Why are we not all sons and daughters of God, if we are all sons and daughters of Adam?

(Romans 5:12)

19. How does one become a son or daughter of God? (John 1:12)



BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



3:2 Pilate, Herod, and Caiaphas were the most powerful leaders in Palestine, but a lonely prophet from rural Judea challenged them. How often do we judge people by our cultural parameters, such as power, wealth, and beauty, and we disregard the people who really important and through whom God works! Greatness is not measured by what one has, but by what one does for God.

3:3 Repentance has two sides: turning away from sin and coming close to God. To receive forgiveness, both attitudes are required. Decide to be free from all sin that God has pointed out and place your trust only on him, for him to guide you.

3:6 This book was written to a Gentile audience (not a Jewish one). Luke refers to Isaiah to show that salvation is for all people, not only for Jews (Isaiah 40:3-5, 52:10). John the Baptist called all people to prepare for their encounter with Jesus. This includes you, no matter what connection you have with religious organizations or authorities. Do not allow your feelings to keep you away from the cause.

3:7 What motivates your faith, a fear of the future or the desire of being better in a superior world? Some people wanted John to baptize them only to escape eternal damnation, but they were not seeking God.

Do you desire a new and transformed life, or do you simply want to receive a vaccination or an insurance policy that prevents a possible disaster?

3:8 Many of the listeners were shaken when John said that it was not enough to be Abraham's descendants for God. To stand before God, the religious leaders depended more on their genealogy than on their faith. For them, religion was an inheritance. But it is not possible to transmit a relationship with God from parents to children. Each one should have his own relationship with God. Do not trust in anyone else for your salvation. Place your faith in Jesus. Salvation is personal. Someone once said: God has children, not grandchildren.

3:8-9 The confession of sins and a life transformation are inseparable. Faith without works is dead. Jesus directed these harsh words to the respectable religious leaders that were closed to a genuine change. Following Jesus means more than expressing good words. It means to do what he commands us to do.

3:12-14 John's message began to grow roots where it was least expected: among the poor, the criminal, and even the hated occupation army.

3:15 For more than four hundred years, there was no prophet in Israel. There was the general belief that when the Messiah would arrive, prophecy would return (Joel 2:28-29; Malachi 3:1, 4:5). When John came into the picture, the people got excited. Obviously, he was a great prophet and they were sure that the long expected year of the Messiah had come. In fact, many thought that John would be the Messiah.

3:16 John's baptism with water symbolizes the washing of sins. His baptism went alongside with his message of repentance and change. Jesus' baptism with fire includes the necessary

power to do the will of God. It began in the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), when the Holy Spirit came to the believers in the form of tongues of fire, giving them power to proclaim in many languages about the resurrection of Jesus.

3:17 John warns about the coming judgment comparing those who reject living for God with the chaff, the useless part of the wheat. In contrast, he compares those who repent and fix their lives with the wheat that nurtures itself. Those who repent and believe have great value in the eyes of God because they begin a life of productive service to him.

3:19-20 This is Herod Antipas. Herodias was his wife and also his brother's wife. He planned to commit treason for the death of John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1-12). The Herods were an incestuous, criminal, and fraudulent family. Contradicting a Roman official who was such a tyrant and had the authority of throwing people into prison and executing them, was an extreme danger. John reprimanded him and he ended up in jail, and was later decapitated. It seems like Herod had the last word, but the story was not over yet. In the final judgment Herod, not John, will be the one in danger.

3:21 Luke emphasizes Jesus' human side. He had humble parents; he was announced to shepherds and strangers from other lands. His baptism was the first public declaration of his ministry. Instead of going to Jerusalem to identify himself with the established religious leaders, Jesus went to the river and identified himself with those repenting from their sins. At the age of twelve, he visited the Temple and understood his mission (2:49). Eighteen years later, in his baptism, He began to fulfill it.

3:21-22 If baptism was a signal of repentance of sins, Why did Jesus ask to be baptized? There are often several explanations: (1) Jesus' mission in this world was to identify himself with our humanity and sin; (2) Jesus gave us the example by being baptized; (3) Jesus' baptism marked the beginning of his public ministry; and (4) He was baptized for the sins of the nation. The coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove showed that God approved of what Jesus was doing. He was a perfect man who did not need baptism for sin, but who still did it for our sake.

3:21-22 This is one of the spots in Scripture in which all of the members of the Trinity are mentioned: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the traditional words of the church, He is the only God that exists in three persons, but has only one substance, which is eternal and equal. There is no adequate explanation to describe the power and intricacy within this unique relationship. There are no perfect analogies in nature because there is no other relationship like the Trinity.

3:23 Imagine the Savior of the world working in the carpentry of a small town until He was thirty years old! It seems incredible that Jesus felt content to remain in Nazareth all that period of time, but with patience, He depended of the Father's timing for his life and ministry. Thirty years was the established age for the priests to begin their ministry (Numbers 4:3). Joseph was thirty years old when he started serving the king of Egypt (Genesis 41:46) and also David when he started to reign over Judah (2 Samuel 5:4)

3:23 Maybe Eli was the father-in-law of Joseph. In this sense, the genealogy actually belongs to Mary, and it is possible that Luke received this information from Mary herself. It is pertinent that Luke shows the genealogy of Mary because of the importance that he gives to women in his Gospel.

3:23-38 The genealogy of Matthew goes back to Abraham, showing that Jesus was related with all the Jews. The genealogy of Luke goes back to Adam, showing that Jesus was related to all the human beings. This is coherent with the description of Luke that Jesus is the Savior of the whole world. This is all so beautiful, clearly the perfect plan!

A GREAT MIRACLE AT SEA

READ: Luke 5:1-11

OUTLINE:

- 5:1-7 The miraculous catch
5:8-11 From fishers of fish to fishers of men

- ❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. Why was the crowd pressing around Jesus? (v. 1)

2. Why did Jesus want to use Simon's boat? (v. 3)

3. What did Simon mean with the first part of his answer? (v. 5a)

4. In your opinion, What did Jesus want to teach Simon with the miracle of the great catch?

How did this miracle affect Simon? (vv. 8-9)

5. What do his words mean? (v. 8)

6. What steps did Jesus implement to persuade Simon to be his disciple? (vv. 3-11)

7. What did each one of these words mean to Simon and his companions?

- a. "they left" _____
- b. "everything" _____
- c. "they followed" _____
- d. "him" _____
- e. What does it mean for you to follow Jesus?



8. What are the results of the work when we are not guided by the Lord?

(v. 5; Psalm 127:1)

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- a. What are the results when we work in obedience to the Lord and in complete dependence to him? (v. 6; 1 Corinthians 15:58)

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- b. If we recognize Jesus in our life, how will we regard personal gain? (Philippians 3:7-8)

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



5:1 The lake of Gennesaret was also known as the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Tiberius.

5:2 In the Sea of Galilee, the fishermen used nets. Frequently they would attach a lead weight shaped like a bell on the borders of the net. When a net was thrown into the water, the lead weight made it sink and cover the borders. The fisherman would then pull a rope from the net to close it and trap the fish inside the net. The nets were to be kept in good conditions, so they were washed to remove the algae and they were fixed whenever torn.

5:8 Simon Peter was intimidated by the miracle and his first reaction was to recognize his smallness in comparison to the greatness of the man before him. Peter knew that Jesus healed the sick and threw out demons, but he was amazed that Jesus was aware of his daily routine and understood his need. God is not only interested in saving us, He also wants to help us in our daily lives.

5:11 There are two conditions to follow God. Like Peter, we should recognize our sinful human nature. Then, like these fishermen, we should recognize that we cannot save ourselves. God is the only one that can do it.

If we recognize that we need help and we know that Jesus is the only one that can help us, we will be in conditions of leaving everything and following him.

5:11 This is the second calling to the disciples. After the first one (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20), Peter, Andrew, James, and John went back to fishing. They observed that Jesus established his authority in the synagogue, as He healed the sick and cast out demons. Now Jesus was also establishing his authority in their lives; He found them in their context and helped them with their job. Since then, they left their nets and abided with Jesus. For us, following Jesus is more than recognizing him as Savior. It means to leave our past behind and dedicate our future to him.

ACT # 4 (Video 2:11 min)

SHE IS NOT DEAD, SHE IS JUST SLEEPING

READ: Luke 8:40-42 and Luke 8:51-56

OUTLINE:

8:40-42 The faith and humility of Jairus

8:51-56 The power of the author of life

- **Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.**



1. Who was Jairus?

2. Why did he come to Jesus?

3. Do you think it was easy for Jairus to go to Jesus, since they were from different social classes?

4. In spite of his position, what powers did he lack? (vv. 42, 49)

5. What happened on the way as they were going to Jairus' house? (vv. 43-48)

6. What had happened in Jairus' house and what did the servant suggest? (v. 49)

7. What was Jesus looking for in Jairus and his family?

8. What seems to be the secret to have a relationship with Jesus?

- a. Acts 16:31
- b. John 3:16
- c. John 1:12



In your opinion, why was Christ's message accompanied by miracles? Take into account that in that time, the New Testament had not been written yet.

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



8:41 The synagogue was the local center of worship. The principal of the synagogue was in charge of administration, maintenance of the building, and supervision of worship. It was probably very unusual for a respectable leader of a synagogue to fall to the feet of an itinerant preacher and beg for the healing of his daughter. Jesus honored this man's trust and humility (8:50, 54-56).

8:43-48 A lot of people surrounded Jesus when he was on his way to Jairus' house. It was virtually impossible to be able to go through the crowd, but a desperate woman found the way to do so with the goal of touching Jesus. As soon as she touched him she was healed. What a great difference touching Jesus made! Many people have a weak familiarity with Jesus but do not experience any type of change nor improvement in their lives, because it is a superficial knowledge. Only the touch of faith is what sets free the healing power of God.

Do you barely relate to God or do you come close to him with faith, knowing that by just touching Him your soul will receive healing?

8:56 Why did Jesus ask the parents not to talk about the healing of their daughter? He knew that the facts would speak for themselves. Besides, He was conscious of his ministry. He did not want to be known as the man who performed miracles, He wanted the people to listen to his message, the same one that still possesses the virtue of healing broken spiritual lives.

Something else about this passage:

The rabbi of the local synagogue did not go to look for Jesus when there were no other options for his daughter. But Jesus simply came close to her and resurrected her! In our lives, Christ can change everything when it seems to be too late. He can reconcile broken marriages; set people free from vices, forgive and transform destroyed lives. If in your situation there seems to be no hope, remember that Christ can do the impossible.

ACT # 5 (Video 2:14 min)

THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION BY THE KING

READ: Luke 6:12-16

OUTLINE:

Luke 6:12-16 The calling of the disciples



- Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.

1. What is the new title that Jesus gave to his twelve disciples? (v. 13)

2. What did He do before selecting them and naming them? (v. 12)

3. What should we do before making transcendent decisions?

4. Which ones of them were brothers?

5. Which ones of them would betray the Lord and why?

6. What do the following words mean?

a. Disciple: _____

b. Apostol: _____

7. When God calls us, is it only for a short time?

8. How can we explain leaders and ministers of the Lord who stop serving him?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



6:12 The writers of the Gospels highlight that Jesus took time to be alone and pray before every important event in his life. And that is what He did when He was about to choose those who would be part of his intimate circle, the twelve disciples.

6:13 Jesus had many *disciples* (apprentices), but He only chose twelve *apostles* (messengers). The apostles were part of his intimate circle, and Jesus prepared them and sent them forth giving them His authority. They were the men that started the Christian church. These twelve men that He chose are often called the disciples in the Gospels, but are called apostles in the book of Acts.

Make sure that every important decision in your life is based on prayer.

6:13-16 Jesus selected "common" men, with different backgrounds and personalities, for them to be his disciples. Today, God calls "common" people to build his church, to teach the message of salvation, and to serve others with love. Maybe we feel like we do not have the capacity to serve Christ efficiently, but together, we can form a strong group that is able to serve God, in spite of all things. Be patient to accept the differences between the people in your church and build on the diversity of capacities present in your group.

6:14-16 The disciples are not always referred to with the same name. For example, Peter is sometimes called Simon or Cephas. Matthew is also known as Levi. Jesus gave some of his disciples new names. Bartholomew is thought to be Nathaniel (John 1:45) and Judas, brother of James, could probably be Thaddeus.

Jesus was surrounded by followers, of whom He chose the twelve that would be his companions on a daily basis. He did not select them on the basis of his face, because a person's faith can fluctuate. He also did not choose them because of their potential talents or abilities, for none of them stood out in that sense. The disciples represented a large scope of backgrounds and life experiences, but apparently their leadership potential was not greater than any of the other people that were not chosen. The only characteristic that they all possessed was their decision of obeying and following Jesus. After the ascension they were filled with the Holy Spirit and played determining roles in the growth of the early church. Let us not disqualify ourselves from being able to serve Christ because of not having the best credentials.

Think for a moment and answer:



What characteristic should a disciples have to be aproved by God?

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ACT # 6 (Video 2:17 min)

IT IS NOT ABOUT RELIGION, IT IS A NEW LIFESTYLE

READ: Luke 6:27-37

OUTLINE:

Luke 6:27-31 Genuine love for our enemies

Luke 6:32-35 The golden rule

Luke 6:36-37 Not judging, not to be judged

❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. What main aspects of unconditional love did Jesus mention in verses 27-30?

2. What famous law is found in this section?

3. What are the reasons to obey such a difficult law? (vv. 35-36)

4. How does this law contrast with sinners' philosophy? (vv. 32-36)

5. What behaviors did Jesus condemn in verse 37?

6. In your opinion, Is it easy to love your enemies? Why is it so?

7. When Jesus spoke about forgiveness, do you think He preached through his example? Give some examples of cases in which Jesus practiced forgiveness.

8. Are there people in your social context that you have not forgiven? What should you do about that?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



6:27 Loving our enemies means helping them to improve their situation.

We can pray for them and seek for ways to help them. Jesus loved the whole world, even though the world was in rebellion against God. He asks us to follow his example loving our enemies. Give your enemies the same

respect and rights that you wish others to give you.

6:35 Love means action. This is easy to do with people that love us, but love means doing it even with those whom we do not like or who even want to hurt us.

When we are aggravated, frequently our first reaction is to look for a way to get back at them. Jesus tells us to do good to those who cause us damage. We should not hold resentments, but love and forgive. Instead of seeking revenge, pray for those who hurt you.

6:37-38 A forgiving spirit shows that a person has received forgiveness from God.

Jesus uses the figure of a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over—to illustrate the issue. It is a biblical principle or a law of biblical reciprocity, for when you give, God gives you back. When you sow seeds, the land returns a harvest. This is a reciprocal relationship. The land gives you, if you previously gave it seeds. If you place money in the bank, the bank pays you the interests. This is called reciprocity.

However, there are many people who want to receive without giving anything, especially when it related to God's things. They know that reciprocity is fundamental in the world's system.

However, they are always expecting God to send them something when they have not invested anything on the Kingdom of God.

If we criticize before being compassionate, we will also receive criticism in return. If we treat others with generosity, grace, and compassion, these qualities will return to us in greater measure.

For many Jews of that time, these declarations were offensive. A Messiah who would offer the other cheek could not be the military leader that they were expecting. They wanted someone who would lead a revolt against Rome. But Jesus suggested a new response to injustice. Jesus' radical declaration says that it is more important to give justice and mercy instead of demanding them.

By calling us not to take revenge, Jesus sets us free from taking justice into our own hands. As we pray and love our enemies instead of seeking vengeance, we can overcome evil with good. Jesus told us that we must love our enemies. As we love our enemies and treat them well, we show that Jesus is the Lord of our life.

❖ How can we be perfect?



(1) *In character.* In this life we cannot be impeccable, but we can aspire to be more like Christ.

(2) *In holiness.* We must separate ourselves from the sinful values of this world.

(3) *In maturity.* We should grow until we have the character of Christ and live in holiness.

(4) *In love.* We can seek to love others as God loves us. Our tendency to sin should never stop us in the task of becoming more and more like Christ. He calls all of his disciples to excellence, to overcome the level of mediocrity, and to mature in everything, until we become like him.

Those who put the effort to reach perfection will one day be perfect as He is perfect.

ACT # 7 (Video 3:08 min)

GENUINE WORSHIP, SOMETHING BETWEEN YOU AND GOD

READ: Luke 7:36-50

OUTLINE:

Luke 7:36	An informal invitation
Luke 7:37-38	The unexpected visit of a woman
Luke 7:39	Criticism to genuine worship
Luke 7:40-43	The amazing teaching of the Master
Luke 7:44-48	Unlimited worship
Luke 7:49	The ignorance of worship
Luke 7:50	Peace and salvation, fruit of genuine worship

- ❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. How did the life of Simon, the Pharisee, contrast with the woman's life in the following areas?

- Lifestyle_____
- Spiritual experience_____
- Response to Jesus_____

2. What does the parable that Jesus tells Simon mean and how can it be applied? (vv. 41-42)

3. What do you learn from this story for your own life?

4. How can you express gratitude for the forgiveness that Jesus offers you?

5. What elements should exist for worship to be genuine?

6. What do you think about what Jesus said in John 4:23-24?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



7:36 A really special incident occurred later on in the ministry of Jesus (see Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-11).

7:37 The alabaster vases were carved, expensive, and beautiful.

7:38 Even though they didn't invite the woman, she somehow came into the house and kneeled before Jesus. In that time it was common to lay down while eating. The guests would lay in their places with their heads close to the table, reclining over one arm, and stretching their legs. The woman could easily anoint the feet of the Lord without having to come close to the table.

7:44 Luke compares the Pharisees with the sinners again and the latter ones take the lead once again. Simon made many social mistakes forgetting to wash Jesus' feet (a courtesy that

was always extended to guests, for the use of sandals caused people's feet to get really dirty), to anoint his head with oil, and to offer him a welcome kiss.

Did he probably think that he was too good to treat Jesus as an equal?

In contrast, the sinful woman shed tears, poured an expensive perfume, and kissed her Savior. In this story, the prostitute is generous, and the miser religious leader is not; she receives forgiveness of sin. Even though it is the grace of God through faith that saves us, and not our acts of love or generosity, the actions of this woman demonstrated her true faith, which Jesus honored.

7:47 Love overflows as a natural reaction to forgiveness and as an appropriate effect of faith.

But only those who recognize the depth of their sin can appreciate the extent of God's forgiveness that is offered to them. Jesus saves all of his followers from eternal death, whether they were extremely evil before or conventionally good.



Do you value the infinite mercy of our God? Are you thankful for his forgiveness?

7:47-50 The Pharisees thought that only God could forgive sins, so they were amazed that this man, Jesus, would say "your many sins are forgiven." They did not see Jesus as God.

ACT # 8 (Video 2:17 min)

FOUR DIFFERENT HEARTS

READ: Luke 8:4-15

OUTLINE:

Luke 8:4-8 The sower went out to sow

Luke 8:9-15 The amazing explanation of the parable

- ❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. What method did Jesus use to teach the crowds? (v. 4)

2. What is a parable and what was Jesus' purpose in teaching in this way? (v. 10)

3. Mention the four different places where the seed fell. (vv. 5-8)

4. What do verses 8 and 15 have in common? (Looking for the words that are repeated will help you answer this question)

5. According to Jesus' interpretation, What do the following terms mean in the parable?

a. The seed _____

- b. The sower _____
- c. The birds from the sky _____
- d. The road _____
- e. The ones on the rocks _____
- f. The thorns that drown the seed _____
- g. The good soil _____
- h. Fruit with perseverance _____



Therefore, in your opinion, What is the emphasis of this parable?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



8:4 Frequently, Jesus would communicate spiritual truths through *parables*, short stories or descriptions that come from a familiar situation to teach a spiritual application. By linking the known with the unknown, and forcing the listeners to think, the parables can point out

spiritual truths. A parable allows “those who have ears to hear” to discover the truth, and it is hidden from those who have prejudices. As we read the parables of Jesus we should be careful of not extracting more that what corresponds. Most of them have only one topic and meaning.

8:5 Why would a sower allow the seed to fall on the road, between thorns or rocks? This is not the figure of a farmer that spreads the seed irresponsibly without thinking. The farmer employs the method in which he uses hand to sow in a great territory, throwing seeds around as he walks his land. His goal is to get the highest percentage of seeds develop in good soil, but there is an inevitable loss when some of the seeds fall in less productive spots. The fact that

some of the seeds do not produce fruit is not the faithful sower's fault, not the seeds' fault; the results depend on the condition of the soil where the seed falls. Our responsibility is to spread the seed (the message of God) and we should not be discouraged when some of our efforts fail. Remember, not every seed falls on good soil.

8:10 Why did the people not understand the words of Jesus? Maybe because they were expecting a military leader and his words did not match their preconceived ideas. Maybe they were afraid of the pressure of the religious leaders, therefore they did not dare to go deep into Jesus' words. God said to Isaiah that the people would hear his words and see powerful miracles and still would not understand his words (Isaiah 6:9). The same thing happened to Jesus. The parable of the sower is an appropriate figure of the reaction of people to the rest of his teachings.

8:11-15 Those of the "road," as many religious leaders, refused believing in the message of God. Those on the "rock," as the crowds that followed Jesus, trusted in God but never did anything to prove it. Those "among the thorns," as people dominated by materialism, did not give God space. Those of the "good soil," in contrast to the other groups, follow him in spite of the cost. What type of soil are you?

Human ears pick up many sounds, but there is a much more profound sound that is spiritual. If you sincerely seek the will of God, you will perceive spiritual hearing, and these parables will give you new perspectives; a new lifestyle.

ACT # 9 (Video 1:52 min)

THE WORD OF POWER

READ: Luke 8:22-25

OUTLINE:

Luke 8:22-23 Jesus sleeps in the midst of a storm

Luke 8:24 Fear vs. Peace

Luke 8:25 In awe before the power of the words of Jesus

- ❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. What conclusion can you make as you see Jesus sleeping through the storm?

2. Why were the disciples afraid even though they were with Jesus?

3. Why do many Christians feel fear when they face storms in their lives?

4. What security should all the disciples of Jesus have? (v. 22)

5. How can this event be a test of what Jesus had just taught?



6. Think about which have been the strongest storms in your life. Have you experience God's presence to help you?

7. When we feel that the storms of life drown us, what should we do? (v. 25)

8. What do you thing about the power of words and especially the words of God? Could this help you in the storms of life? How?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



8:23 The Sea of Galilee (actually a large lake) is still today the setting of great storms, sometimes with waves that reach seven meters of height.

Jesus' disciples were not fussing without reason. Even though several of them were expert fishermen and they knew how to control the boat, the danger was real. It is possible that they were on a fishing boat because many of the disciples of Jesus were fishermen. Josefus, a historian of the time, wrote that there were usually more than three hundred fishing boats in the Sea of Galilee. This boar had space for Jesus and his twelve disciples, and was managed by oars and sails. During the storm, however, the sails would be put down so they would not tear and this would make controlling the boat easier.

8:24 The Sea of Galilee has a caudal of water that is not very common. It is relatively small (21 km of length and 11 of width). It is 208 meters bellow sea level and its depth reaches 48 meters. From one moment to the other there can be sudden storms that shake the water, generating waves of up to seven meters of height. The disciples saw themselves suddenly trapped by the storm and the danger was high.

8:25 Even though the disciples witnessed many miracles, they were filled with panic in this circumstance. As experienced sailors, they were conscious of the existing dangers; what they did not know is that Christ could dominate the forces of nature. There is always a dimension of our life in which we feel that God cannot work or will not work. When we understand well who Jesus is, we understand that He calms the storms of natures as well as the storms of a troubled heart. The power of Jesus that calmed the storm can also calm strong winds that blow in our lives. God is willing to help us if we ask him. We should not exclude him of any aspect of our life.

When we are in the midst of the storms God life, it is easy to think that God has lost control and we feel like we depend on the winds of destiny. In reality, God is sovereign. He controls the story of the world and our personal destiny. In the same way in which Jesus calms the waves, He can calm any storm we face.

ACT # 10 (Video 1:51 min)

THE ENDLESS PROVIDER

READ: Luke 9:10-17

OUTLINE:

Luke 9:10 The return of the disciples

Luke 9:11-12 The suggestion of the disciples

Luke 9:13 Jesus' challenge to his disciples

Luke 9:14-17 Overabundance in the great miracle of the feeding

❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. Describe the return of the twelve. (v. 10)

2. What was the uneasiness of the twelve? (v. 12)

3. What surprising order does Jesus give them? (v. 13)

4. What resources did they have? (v. 13)

5. What miracle did all the ones present enjoy in that occasion? (vv. 16-17)

6. What blessing will those who eat the Bread of Life have?

7. What type of hunger and thirst was Jesus talking about?

8. How can that nourishment be obtained?



In many Bibles there is a weight and measurement chart, where the name and value of the currency in the times of Jesus. What would 200 denarii be worth?

Were the disciples expecting Jesus to perform a miracle? What teaching does this episode leave us with?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



9:11 The Kingdom of God was a focal point in the teachings of Jesus. He explained that it was not just a future kingdom; it was among them, materialized in him, the Messiah. However, even though the Kingdom of God will not be completely fulfilled until the glorious coming of Jesus, we do not have to wait to taste it. The Kingdom of God begins in the hearts of those who believe in Jesus (Luke 17:21). He is so present with us as He was with the Jews two thousand years ago.

9:13-14 When the disciples expressed their concern about where the huge crowd of people would eat, Jesus offered a solution: "You give them something to eat." They complained, focusing their attention on what they lacked: food and money.

Do you believe God would ask you to do something that you and him together could not do?

Do not allow your resources blind you to see the power of God..

9:16-17 Why did Jesus bother in feeding those people? He could have easily asked them to leave. But Jesus does not ignore people's needs. He is interested in every aspect of our life, both physical and spiritual. As we seek to work with people holistically, we should never forget that we all have physical needs as well as spiritual ones. It is impossible to minister effectively one type of need without considering the other one.

The whole context indicates that the disciples did not expect a miracle of that type, and they were so impressed that the four Gospels include it in a very detailed way. What we can learn from this is that when we least expect something and it happens, greater the effect it causes.

That miracle broke the normal parameters of sowing, growth, ripening, harvesting, preparation, and baking of the bread on the one hand; and on the other hand, the process of incubation, growth, and multiplication of the fish, and their catching and cooking. The miracle overcame not only the laws of nature, but also of time and space. That is why miracles cannot be the object of analysis or study. And even though there is no rational explanation, we cannot deny them because, in this case, 5000 saw it, ate and were satisfied.

Only Jesus can fulfill that spiritual hunger, nothing and nobody else.

ACT # 11 (Video 2:19 min)

TRUE LOVE TO OUR NEIGHBORS

READ: Luke 10:25-37 y Luke 9:46-48

OUTLINE:

Luke 10:25-37 The good samaritan

Luke 9:44-48 Who is the greatest?

- ❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. Who was testing who?

2. What is the question?

3. Was it an honest question? (v. 25)

4. How did Jesus respond? (v. 26)

5. How did the interpreter summarize the law? (v. 27)

6. Is it possible to have eternal life by obeying the law? (James 2:10)

7. What other question did the interpreter ask to justify himself? (v. 29)

8. According to the story Jesus told, in your opinion, What excuses could the Pharisee and the Levite give?

9. What the Samaritan do to show his mercy?

10. Since there was such enmity between Jews and Samaritans, what could have shocked the interpreter of the law?

11. According to verse 27, What characteristic did the Samaritan show?

12. According to this story, Who is our neighbor?



What does it mean for you to love God? And to love your neighbor?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS

10:27-37 From the Word of God, we learn three principles about what it means to love our neighbor:



(1) The lack of love is frequently easy to justify, even though it is never good.

(2) Our neighbor is anyone who is in need, no matter his or her ethnicity, creed, or social background.

(3) Love means to do something to fulfill someone's need. It doesn't matter where you live, there are people in need around you. There is no justifiable reason to deny offering help.

10:33 There was a deep hatred between Jews and Samaritans. The Jews saw themselves as the pure descendents of Abraham, while the Samaritans were a mixed race whose origin was due to the marriage of Jews from the north with people from other places, after Israel's exile. For this expert in the Jewish law, the person who seemed to act as he should was the Samaritan. In reality, he could not even pronounce the word "Samaritan" when he answered Jesus. His expert attitude betrayed his lack of love, what he previously manifested that the Law demanded.

The Good Samaritan. The introduction of the parable should not be confused with a similar story found in Mark 12:28-31.

Here they ask Jesus how a person can inherit eternal life (Luke 18:18), and in the Jewish style He answers them pointing them to the law. How is the essence and intention of the law summarized? Jesus gave the same answer to the scribe in Mark 12:28. This should have not surprised him, since He is actually quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. In light of Galatians 3:12 Jesus' answer can sound a bit legalist, but it is not so when considered in relation to the whole context of this teaching.

Luke 9:44-48

WHO IS THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM?

9:44-46 The disciples did not understand the words of Jesus regarding his death. They kept on thinking of Jesus as an earthly king and they were concerned of the spots they would have in the Kingdom. Therefore, they disregarded his words concerning his death and began to discuss who would be most important.

9:48 How much interest do you show for others? This is a vital question that can measure explicitly your greatness in the God's eyes.

In what ways have you shown interest for others, especially those who are homeless, those in need, and the poor who cannot return the good they receive?

You honest answer to this question will give you a good idea of the extent of your true greatness.

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

READ: Luke 18:35-43

OUTLINE:

Luke 18:35-38 The begging of the blind man

Luke 18:39 The barriers of his claim

Luke 18:39-43 No more darkness for this man

❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. What did the blind man know about Jesus? Why did he call him Son of David? (vv. 38-39)

2. Why do you think the people wanted to make the blind man be quiet? (v. 39)

3. How does the blind man's attitude contrast with that of the rich man? (Luke 18:18)

4. What did the blind man receive? (vv. 41-42)

5. What lesson does that insistence of the blind man teach us about asking Jesus for help?

6. In verse 35 it says that he was a beggar and was blind. How would you apply this verse in the situation that our society lives in today?



7. If Jesus tells you, "What do you want me to do for you?", what would you answer him?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



18:35 Frequently, beggars would sit on the side of the roads close to cities, because those were the most appropriate places to come into contact with people. In general, those who were limited physically in some way could not work to sustain himself. There was no medical treatment for these problems, and people tended to avoid their obligation to help the needy (Leviticus 25:35-38). Those beggars had very little hope to get out of their degrading lifestyle. However, this specific blind man put his hope in the Messiah. Without any shame, he claimed to Jesus trying to get his attention and recover his sight. Jesus said, "Receive it, your faith has saved you." It does not matter how desperate your situation is, if you claim to Jesus with faith, He has all the power to help you.

18:38 The blind man called Jesus "Son of David", a title for the Messiah (Isaiah 11:1-3). This means he understood that Jesus was the long expected Messiah, while the religious leaders that saw his miracles were blind to his identity and denied recognizing him as such.

Many people come to church only to receive some benefit from God. Some just do it when they are sick or are in need, and they come to God as their last resource. Many people think that being healed is like a magical act, that you just go and receive it. Others think that if they go to certain person for prayer, they will soon receive what they are expecting; when they do not receive it quickly, they get upset. That is not how God works, we cannot manipulate the Lord with our own desires and whims, seeking our own will only when it is convenient for us.

The Word tells us to seek the things from above, and the other things will be added. But we keep on seeking earthly things.

In addition to this, it says that the blind man was sitting by the road (on the way where Jesus was walking). Beggars and blind people were considered people that brought upon themselves many curses, so they were not allowed in the temple. That is why they would sit along the way, and since everyone was on their way to the temple, they would take advantage to ask them for money. But the blind man was sitting by the road when Jesus was passing by; he was there in the right moment. If Bartimaeus were sitting by another road, he would have never had an encounter with Jesus. Meditate upon this for a moment; he was healed by Jesus because of the encounter he had with him on that road. There are many people who want to be healed, but they are on different roads. They want to be healed through witchcraft, Satanism, vices, sin, lies, and so on. But when problems come, we want God to work in us quickly even though we are so far away from him. To have an encounter with God we must be by the road.

SON OF DAVID HAVE MERCY UPON ME!

He believed the Word that had been preached to him. He did not just hear the Word, but he believed it and walked in it. He claims to Jesus in this way because he believed in the Christ that he heard about, and he sought for a miracle. I am never tired of repeating that we must extract the Word from the paper and ink, and make it a reality. Many people treat the Word of God as a storybook, and that is why they do not believe in it. It is the Word of God, words that do not come back empty without first becoming alive in us. It is necessary to act in consequence. This man was told that Jesus could heal him, or maybe he heard the testimony of another blind person who was healed by Jesus; he heard this and sought for a miracle. We should have the conviction that what God says will manifest itself in our lives sooner or later. It also faces opposition, because faith is like that, it is daring, it seeks for a miracle, it desires to glorify God.

If we read the last things that are said about the blind man after being healed, we find out that he continued on the way with Jesus. The most important thing was not his healing, but following Jesus. What is the use of the body being healed if the soul is lost?

THE HOUSE AND AUTHORITY OF GOD

READ: Luke 19:35-46 y Luke 20:1-8

OUTLINE:

Luke 19:35-38 The triumphant entrance of Jesus

Luke 19:39-44 Jesus cries for Jerusalem

Luke 19:45-46 My house is a house of prayer

Luke 20:1-8 The authority of Jesus

❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. Where was Jesus according to verses 28-29?

2. How can you imagine what is narrated in verses 35-38?

a. What do you see? _____

b. What do you hear? _____

c. What do you feel? _____

3. In your opinion, Why did Jesus do this public demonstration of his presence in Jerusalem?

(Zechariah 9:9)

4. What was the reason for this celebration? (v. 38)

5. What other biblical event makes him say the last words? (v. 38b)

6. What are the implications of the words Jesus says in verses 39-40?

7. Why did Jesus cry when He saw Jerusalem?

a. v. 42 _____

b. vv. 43-44 _____

8. How did Jesus react against the activities that were being done in the temple? (v. 45)

Why? (v. 46)

9. What were Jesus' activities in the last week of his life? (v. 47)

10. What did the main priests, scribes, and principals of the town do? (v. 47)

11. What was their difficulty in accusing Jesus? (v. 48)

12. Who did Jesus have conflict with in this chapter?

a. v. 1 _____

b. v. 19 _____

c. v. 27 _____

13. What was Jesus questioned about? (v. 2)

14. In your opinion, What were they referring to with the questions in verse 2?

15. Why did Jesus' question put the priests in a dilemma? (vv. 3-6)

16. What could Jesus have answered if they said it was “from heaven”?

17. What would have happened if they said it was “from men”?

18. In your opinion, Why did Jesus evade their question? (vv. 7-8)

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



19:35-38 Christians celebrate the events of Palm Sunday. The people were along the way, praising God, waving palm branches, and spreading their cloaks before the donkey, as it would pass by. “Long live the King!”, was the meaning of their shouts of joy, because they knew that Jesus was fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9.

To announce that He was in fact the Messiah, Jesus chose the *time* when all of Israel would be congregated in Jerusalem, a *place* where a great crowd would see him, to show his mission in an unmistakable *way*. The crowds were really excited. Now they counted with the security that their liberation was close.

19:38 The crowds that worshiped God for giving them a King had an erroneous concept of Jesus. They were sure that He would be a great national leader that would restore the nation to its original glory and that demonstrated that they were deaf to the words of the prophets and blind to the true mission of Jesus. When it was evident that Jesus would not fulfill their expectations, they turned against him.

19:39-40 The Pharisees considered that the words of the crowd were sacrilegious and blasphemous. They did not want anyone to threaten their power and authority, and at the

same time, they did not want an uprising to suffocate the roman army. That is why they asked Jesus to calm his people down. But Jesus said that if the people would be quiet, then the stones would shout. Why? It was not because Jesus was instituting a powerful political kingdom, but because He was establishing the eternal Kingdom of God, another good reason for everyone's great celebration.

19:41-44 The Jewish leaders rejected their King (19:47). They were going to far. They rejected the offer of salvation of God in Jesus Christ, when God himself was visiting them ("the time of your visitation"), and their nation would suffer soon. Anyways, God did not give his back to the Jews that obeyed him. He continues offering his salvation out of love, both to Jews and Gentiles. Eternal peace is at your reach, accept it before it is too late.

19:43-44 These words became true forty years after Jesus pronounced them. In 66 a.D. the Jews rose up against Rome. Three years later, they sent Titus, the son of emperor Vespasian, to suffocate the rebellion. The Roman soldiers attacked Jerusalem and entered the city through the northern walls, but still they could not take the city. Finally, they besieged it and in 70 a.D. they entered the city, which was very weakened, and they set it on fire. Six hundred thousand Jews dies during Titus' attack.

19:47 Who were the "leading men among the people"?



This group probably included prosper political, commerce, and law leaders. They had many reasons to get rid of Jesus. He ruined the business they were developing in the temple as He kicked out the merchants. Besides, He preached against injustice and many times his teachings would favor the poor more than the rich. Even more, his great popularity could attract the

attention of Rome, and the leaders of Israel wanted to relate with that city as least as possible, because of what it represented.

Luke 20:1-8

This group of leaders wanted to get rid of Jesus, so they tried to trap him with their question.

If Jesus said that his authority came from God, if He openly established that He was the Messiah, they would accuse him of blasphemy and take him to court. Jesus did not allow them to trap him; instead, He turned the question against him. This under covered the intentions they had and avoided him from falling into the trap.

ACT # 14 THE CLIMAX OF HIS LOVE (in 4 parts) (Video total 33:08)

PART I (Video 14:30)

THE LAST ENCOUNTER WITH HIS FRIENDS

READ: Luke 22:15-71

OUTLINE:

Luke 22:15-23	Do this in memory of me
Luke 22:24-30	Who is the most important one?
Luke 22:31-34	Peter, soon you will deny me
Luke 22:35-38	What is written needs to be fulfilled
Luke 22:39-44	Father, remove this cup from me
Luke 22:47-53	Treason and then the arrest
Luke 22:54-62	His great friend turns his back on him
Luke 22:63-71	Mocked, whipped, humiliated

❖ • **Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.**



1. What did Jesus reveal to his disciples in verses 15-22?

a. v. 15 _____

b. vv. 16 y 18 _____

c. v. 19 _____

d. v. 20 _____

e. v. 21 _____

2. What is the meaning of the New Covenant in his blood? (Jeremiah 31:33-34; 32:39-40)

3. How did Jesus prepare his disciples for what was coming?

a. vv. 26-27 _____

b. vv. 28-30 _____

c. vv. 31-32 _____

d. vv. 35-37 _____

4. What was the conflict that existed in Peter's life? (vv. 33-34)

5. What was the cause of the spiritual defeat of Judas and Peter? (vv. 3 y 31)

6. In verses 39-46, what do you learn about prayer?

7. What do you learn about Jesus' agony?

8. What illogical things to you notice in verses 47-53?

9. What impresses you in the narration of verses 54-62?

10. What is the atmosphere like in verses 63-65?

11. What were the leaders mainly looking to accuse Jesus of? (vv. 67-71)

12. What reasons do they present before Rome to accuse him? (23:2)

13. What were the results of the decisions of Peter and Judas?

a) Pedro (Luke 22:62): _____

b) Judas (Matthew 27:3-5): _____

Therefore, when I sin, What should I do?



BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



22:14-18 The Passover commemorated the escape of Israel from Egypt, when the blood of a lamb, painted on the thresholds of the doors, saved the firstborns from death. This act symbolized the work of Jesus on the cross, as the unblemished Lamb of God.

22:17-20 Luke mentions two cups of wine, while Matthew and Mark mentions only one. In the traditional Passover meal, wine would be served four times. Christ alluded to his body and his blood when He offered the fourth and last cup.

22:17-20 Christians differ in their interpretation of the meaning of the commemoration of the Lord's Supper. It does not matter what viewpoint you prefer, all Christians agree that in the Lord's Supper commemorates the death of Christ in the cross for our sins and points of the coming of the King of glory. When we participate, we manifest our profound gratitude for his work in our favor and our faith becomes more solid.

22:19 Jesus told his disciples to break the bread and eat in his memory. He wanted them to remember his sacrifice, the basis of forgiveness of sins and also his friendship, that they could keep enjoying through the work of the Holy Spirit.

22:20 In the times of the Old Testament, God accepted forgiving people's sins if they would bring animals to the priest to be sacrificed (Exodus 24:8). However, the blood of animals does not have the virtue of cleansing sins (only God can forgive sins). Jesus instituted a "new covenant" or agreement between humans and God. Under this new covenant, Jesus would die instead of sinners.

22:21 From Mark and John we conclude that this friend is Judas Iscariot. Even though the other disciples get confused with these words of Jesus, Judas knew what they meant.

22:24-27 The leadership system of the world today is very different from that of the Kingdom of God. Frequently, earthly leaders are selfish and arrogant as they climb into power. But among Christians, a leader is the one who *serves* best. We all need the heart of a humble servant.

22:33-34 Jesus prophesizes that Judas would betray him, and He says that a great affliction awaits the traitor (22:22). Then He announces that Peter would deny him, and that then He would repent and receive a mission to tame Jesus' lambs (John 21:15). Betraying is as bad as denying. But the two men had completely different destinies because one of them repented.

22:35-38 Now Jesus changes his original advice related to journeys (9:3). The disciples should take their bag, money, and sword. They could face attacks and persecution, and they need to be prepared. When Jesus says: "It is enough," He could have been saying that two swords were enough or that He had spoken too much. In either case, their need for a sword communicated in an intense way the difficulties that they would soon face.

22:39 The Mount of Olives was located to the east of Jerusalem. Jesus went to a mount that was located to the southeast, an olive garden called Gethsemane, which means "winepress of oil."

22:40 Jesus asked the disciples to pray not to enter into temptation because He knew that He would not be with them soon. They would need more strength to face the temptation that was coming up: the temptation of fleeing or denying their relationship with him. Besides, they were about to see him die. Would they still believe that He was the Messiah? The strongest temptation would be to believe that they had been betrayed.



22:41-42 Was Jesus trying to abandon his mission?

It is never bad to express our true feelings to God. Jesus exposed his fear before the coming afflictions, but at the same time He affirmed his decision of doing God's will. The cup He refers to signifies the terrible agony He would have to face; not only the horror of crucifixion, but even worse, the total separation from God that He would experience to be able to die for the sins of the world.

22:44 Only Luke mentions that Jesus seemed to sweat drops of blood. Jesus was going through extreme agony, but He did not give up nor renounce. He continued with the mission for which He had come. Scientifically, when a person enters into that state, it is possible to sweat drops of blood.

22:46 The disciples were asleep. It is tragic when many Christians act as if they were profoundly asleep when the moment of total surrender and service to God comes. Do not allow him to find you insensitive and unprepared for the work of Christ.

22:47 A kiss was, and still is, a traditional way of greeting between men in certain parts of the world. In this case it was the signal to arrest Jesus (Matthew 26:48). It results ironic that such a gesture of greeting would translate in betrayal. It was a false gesture because of Judas' betrayal. Have some of your religious practices become empty gestures?

22:50 Through the gospel of John we know that Peter was the man that cut the ear of the soldier (John 18:10).

22:53 The religious leaders did not arrest Jesus in the temple because they were afraid of causing a revolt. Instead, they went to capture him in secret during the night, under the influence of the prince of darkness, Satan himself. This should not be interpreted as if Satan were getting ahead, each situation happened according to the plan of God.

22:54 Even though it was midnight, they took Jesus immediately to the residence of the high priest. The religious leaders were anxious and wanted the execution to occur before the day of rest and continue with the celebration of Passover.

22:55 Peter's experiences in the next few hours would change his life. He would change from being an uncommitted follower to a repented disciple, and finally the type of person that Christ could use to build his Church.

22:62 Peter cried bitterly, not only because he recognized that he denied his Lord, the Messiah, but also because he turned his back to a beloved friend, someone who loved him and taught him during three years. We should be aware of our weaker sides and not be self-sufficient or presumptuous. If we fail, we have to remember that Christ can use those who recognize their failure.

22:70 Jesus did not manifest in this moment that He was God, He simply responded affirmatively to the question of the high priest, saying: "You say who I am." But Jesus identified himself with God using a familiar title that is found in the Old Testament: "I am" (Exodus 3:14). For any other human being, to say that he is God would have been a blasphemy, but in this case it was true. Blasphemy, the sin of claiming to be God or attacking his authority and majesty, would be punished with death. The Jewish leaders believed they had the evidence they needed to kill Jesus.

JESUS MADE THE GOVERNORS TREMBLE

READ: Luke 23:1-12

OUTLINE:

Luke 23:1-5 Jesus before Pilate

Luke 23:6-12 Jesus before Herod

❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. Who did they take Jesus to in this section? (v. 1)

2. What were they accusing him of? (v. 2)

3. Indicate why the accusation was false. (20:24-25)

4. What decisions did Pilate make?

a. v. 4 _____

b. v. 14 _____

c. v. 16 _____

d. v. 22 _____

e. v. 24 _____

5. In your opinion, Why did Pilate send Jesus before Herod? (vv. 6-7)

6. Who was Herod? (vv. 6-7)

7. What does he think of Pilate seeing that he has passed on the decision to him? (vv. 6-7)

8. It seems as though Pilate wanted to be impartial about Jesus' case. Is it possible to be impartial with Jesus? Why?

Do you know people who admire Jesus but do not accept him as their supreme authority in life? What do you think about that?



BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



23:1 Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea, a region of Jerusalem. He seemed to experience a special pleasure in harassing the Jews. For example, he took the money from the temple and used it to build an aqueduct and affronted the Jewish religion by bringing imperial images into the city. If the people presented a formal complaint against his administration, Rome could destitute him of his charge. Pilate began to feel insecure in his position when the Jewish leaders brought Jesus to prosecute him. Would he continue bothering the Jews putting into risk his political future or would he yield to their demands and condemn a man, whom he was sure, was innocent? This was the question that Pilate faced on that Spring Friday approximately two thousand years ago. If you want information about Pilate, you can find his profile in Mark 15.

23:7 Herod, also called Herod Antipas, was in Jerusalem that weekend for the celebration of Passover. (This was the same Herod that ordered John the Baptist to be killed.) Pilate thought about delegating his responsibility by sending Jesus to Herod, because he knew that Jesus had lived and worked in Galilee. However, Herod was not of much help. He was scrupulous with Jesus and enjoyed making fun of him. In spite of that, when he sent him back to Pilate, he went

with the verdict of “innocent.” If you want more information about Herod Antipas, you can see his profile in Mark 6.

23:12 Herod was the half Jewish governor of Galilee and Peraia. Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea and Samaria. These four provinces, together with other ones, were united under the rule of Herod the Great, but when he died in 4 a.D. the kingdom split between his four sons. Non of them were called kings, but tetrarchs (which means “governor of one fourth of the region”). Archelaus, the son who received Judea and Samaria, was destitute after ten years and its provinces were ruled by a succession of Roman governors, of which Pilate was the fifth. Herod Antipas had an advantage over Pilate in two aspects: he came from a hereditary monarchy, partly Jewish, and he had been in his position longer.

Pilate also had two advantages over Herod: he was a Roman citizen and sent by the emperor, and his position was created to replace the inefficient half brother of Herod. It is not a surprise, therefore, that the relationship between these two men was quite tense. However, Jesus’ judgment united them. Because Pilate recognized Herod’s authority over Galilee, he stopped the threatening sentiments of the Roman politicians. Since no other man knew what to do in this matter, they were united because of a common problem.

JESUS’ JUDGMENT: From Gethsemane, they took Jesus before the Jewish council, which was summoned at dawn in Caiaphas’ house. From there, they went to the house of Pilate, the Roman governor; then to the house of Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, who was visiting Jerusalem; and from there they went back to Pilate, who in desperation finally sentenced Jesus to death.

THE UNJUST SENTENCE

READ: Luke 23:13-25

OUTLINE:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Luke 23:13-16 | Pilate's cowardice |
| Luke 23:16-20 | Barabbas in exchange of Jesus |
| Luke 23:21-25 | The sentence: Barabbas free, Jesus to the cross |



❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.

1. In the end, why did Pilate change his previous decisions? (vv. 21-24)

a. Why did Herod get frustrated? (v. 9) _____

b. How did he treat Jesus? (v. 11) _____

c. Why did Jesus not answer him? (Isaiah 53:7) _____

2. In your opinion, Why did Pilate and Herod become friends that day? (v. 12)

3. Who did Pilate convoke and with what purpose? (vv. 13-16)

4. What was the people's response? (vv. 18, 21, 23)

5. Who was Barabbas? (vv. 19, 25)

a. How did Peter describe this event in Acts 3:14?

b. How does Barabbas illustrate what Jesus Christ has done for you?



6. Whose will did Pilate fulfill? (vv. 18, 23-25, Acts 4:26-28)

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



23:13-25 Pilate wanted to set Jesus free, but the crowds cried out and asked for him to be killed, therefore Pilate sentenced him. Without a doubt he did not want to risk his position, which was probably at risk, nor a commotion to arise in his province. As a professional politician, he was aware of the importance of a commitment and he saw Jesus as a political threat and not as a human being with rights and dignity.

When the profits are juicy, it is hard to stand on the side of what is good and it is easy to see our opponents just as problems to solve, and not as people who deserve respect. If Pilate had really been a man of value, he would have set Jesus free without thinking about the consequences. But the crowd was shouting and Pilate got scared. When you face a tough decision, do not ignore the effects of pressure. Consider beforehand that good decisions may not be the most pleasant ones and might even have consequences: social rejection, public ridicule, or an affected career. Think about Pilate and decide to put yourself on the side of the truth no matter the coactions of others.

23:15 Jesus was tested six times, both the Jews and the Roman authorities, and they never found him guilty of a crime worth of death. Until today, nobody can find any failure in Jesus. But, like Pilate, Herod, and other religious leaders, many are still refusing to receive him as Lord.



23:18-19 Who was Barabbas? Jews had names that identified them with their parents. Simon Peter, for example, was called Simon, the son of Jonah (Matthew 16:17). Barabbas is not identified by the name he was given; therefore it is not very helpful.

Barabbas means “son of the father.” He could have been the son of an unknown person and that is precisely the point. Because Jesus died in his place, he was set free. We are also sinners and evildoers against the holy law of God. As Barabbas, we are sentenced to die. But Jesus dies in our place, for our sins, and opens up the way to freedom for us. We do not need to be very important to accept our freedom in Christ. Furthermore, thanks to Jesus, God accepts us as his children and gives us the right of calling him *Abba*, which means “daddy.”

23:22 When Pilate said “I will punish him,” he was talking about a punishment that could lead Jesus to death. The usual procedure consisted on removing the person’s upper garments and then tying his hands to a post, before flagellating him with a triple whip that had pieces of metal. The number of whippings would be determined by the severity of the crime; the Jewish law allowed a maximum of forty (Deuteronomy 25:3). After being flagellated, Jesus endured other agonies. They beat him and mocked him. They put a thorn crown on his head, hit him with a cane, and he was undressed before being hung on the cross.

23:23-24 Pilate did not want to sentence Jesus to the penalty of death. He thought the religious leaders just envied him and wanted to free themselves of a rival. When they threatened Pilate with denouncing him before the Caesar (John 19:12), he was scared. The last thing he needed was a revolt in Jerusalem during Passover, when the city was full of Jews from all around the empire. Therefore he gave Jesus to the crowds for them to do what they wanted with him.

THE CRUELEST DEATH IN HISTORY

READ: Luke 23:26-56

OUTLINE:

- Luke 23:26-32 The way to Mount Calvary starts
- Luke 23:33-39 Jesus on the cross receives mocks and blasphemies
- Luke 23:40-43 Jesus still offers love and forgiveness from the cross
- Luke 23:44-49 Jesus dies and the soldier falls before his feet
- Luke 23:50-56 Jesus is laid in a borrowed tomb

❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. List the different groups or people that were present in the crucifixion and death of Jesus, and his reactions.

a. v. 26 _____

b. v. 27 _____

c. v. 34 _____

d. v. 35 _____

e. vv. 36-37 _____

f. v. 39 _____

g. vv. 40-43 _____

h. v. 47 _____

i. v. 48 _____

j. v. 49 _____

k. vv. 50-53 _____

l. vv. 55-56 _____

2. What meaning did the title written about Jesus on the cross have? (v. 38)

3. How do verses 40-43 reflect the message of salvation?

4. What was Jesus' relationship with his Father? (vv. 34 and 46)

5. What was his relationship with the sinners like? (vv. 34-43)

6. What signals happened at the sixth hour? (vv. 44-45)

7. What impresses you when Luke describes the last words of Jesus before his death on the cross? (v. 46)

8. When did you understand the true reason about Jesus' death? (Isaiah 53:6)

9. Which one of the characters that we studied in this lesson do you identify most with?

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



23:27-29 Only Luke mentions the cries of the Jewish women when they were taking Jesus through the streets for his execution. He told

them not to cry for him, but for themselves. He knew that just forty years later, the Romans would destroy Jerusalem and the Temple.

23:31 This proverb is hard to interpret. Some interpret it like this: If Jesus was innocent (green tree) and suffered in the hands of the Romans, What will happen with the guilty Jews (dry tree)?

23:32-33 The Skull, also called Golgotha, was probably a hill in the outside of Jerusalem by a main road. The Romans performed public executions for people's enjoyment.

23:32-33 When the sons of Zebedee asked if they could have a place of privilege by Jesus in his Kingdom, He told them they did not know what they were asking for (Mark 10:35-39). Now that Jesus was preparing to inaugurate his Kingdom through his death, the spots to his left and right were taken by men who were dying: evil doers. As Jesus explained to his disciples who were hungry of power, a person who wanted to be close to him, had to be ready to suffer and die. The way to the Kingdom is the way of the cross.

23:34 Jesus asked God to forgive the people who were killing him: Jewish leaders, Roman politicians, soldiers and watchers, and God answered that prayer opening the way of salvation even for Jesus' murderers. The Roman officer and the soldiers that witnessed the crucifixion said: "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54). Soon, many priests converted to the Christian faith (Acts 6:7). Since we are sinners, we all had a part in Christ's death. The good news is that God is good, that He forgives us, and that He gives us new life through his Son.

23:34 The Roman soldiers used to distribute the clothes of the executed evildoers among each other. When they threw lots for Jesus' clothes, they fulfilled the prophecy of Psalms 22:18.

23:38 This sign was supposed to be ironic. It seemed obvious that a king who was naked and executed on a cross had lost his kingdom forever. But Jesus, who disrupts the wisdom of the world, was starting his Kingdom. His death and resurrection would mean a deathblow on Satan and his authority would be established eternally over the earth. Only a few people who read that sign that afternoon understood its true meaning, but the sign was actually showing the

truth. Not everything was lost. Jesus was the King of the Jews, of the gentiles, and of the whole universe.

23:39-43 This man who was about to die, turned to Jesus seeking for forgiveness and He accepted it. This shows us that our works do not save us, but our faith in Christ does. It is never too late to turn to him. Even in his worst moment, Jesus had mercy of that evildoer who decided to believe in him. Our lives are much more useful and full if we turn to God at a younger age, but even those who repent in their last breath, will be with God in his paradise.

23:42-43 The dying evildoer had more faith than all the other followers of Jesus together. Even though the disciples still loved Jesus, their hopes for the Kingdom began to vanish. Many fled away. As one of the followers said with sadness two days later: "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel" (24:21). The thief, to the contrary, looked at the man who was agonizing beside him and said: "Remember me when You come in Your Kingdom." It seemed as though the Kingdom was coming to an end. How inspiring is the faith of this man who saw the coming glory beyond the present disgrace!

JESUS IS TAKEN TO DEATH: As He could not carry his cross all the way through the streets of Jerusalem, Simon of Cyrene was assigned the task of helping him. Jesus was crucified next to two common evildoers on a mount in the outside of Jerusalem.

23:44 At noon, darkness covered all the earth for three hours. It seemed like nature condoled by the tragic death of the Son of God.

23:45 This important fact symbolizes the work of Christ on the cross. The Temple had three parts: the courts for all the people; the holy place, where only the priests could enter; and the holy of holies, where the high priest would only enter once a year to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people. In the holy of holies was the arc of the covenant and the presence of God was in it. The veil that was torn was the only thing that stopped the holy of holies to be seen.

When Christ died, the barrier between God and humans disappeared. Now each person can reach God directly through Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:1-14; 10:19-22).

23:50-52 Joseph Arimathea was an honorable and rich member of the Jewish council. He was also a secret disciple of Jesus (John 19:38). The disciples who publicly followed Jesus fled, but Joseph boldly made a decision that could have cost him a lot. He appreciated Jesus greatly, and that is why he asked for his body to be buried.

23:53 This tomb was like a cave made by men, carved in the slope of one of the many hills made of limestone around Jerusalem. It was spacious enough for people to walk inside. After the burial, a large stone was placed to cover the entrance (John 20:1, Matthew 27:60).

23:55 The Galilean women followed Joseph to the tomb, so that they knew exactly where to find Jesus when they would return to visit with spices and ointments once the day of rest was over. These women could not do “great” works for Jesus, they were not allowed to present themselves before the Jewish council nor the Roman governor and testify in Jesus’ favor; but they did what they could. They stayed by the cross and they were ready to anoint the body of the Lord when most of the disciples fled. Because of their devotion, they were the first ones in finding out about the resurrection. We Christians might feel like there is not much we can do for Jesus. But we have the calling of taking the opportunities that we are given, doing *what we can* instead of focusing on what we cannot do.

JESUS MAKES THE DIFFERENCE: HE IS RISEN!

READ: Luke 24:1-12 y 36-53

OUTLINE:

Luke 24:1-12 The great surprise: The tomb is empty

Luke 24:36-49 Jesus appears before his friends

Luke 24:49-53 Jesus goes back to his place; mission accomplished.

- ❖ • Answer the following questions and then share and discuss with the class.



1. What role did the women play in verses 1-11?

2. What were the women worried about as they approached the tomb, without knowing what had happened? (Mark 16:3)

3. How might they have felt when they found it empty?

4. What did they find out? (vv. 2-3)

5. What was the attitude of the eleven and how was it different from that of the women? (v. 11)

6. Who went to investigate and what was his reaction? (v. 12)

7. What were the two disciples on the way to Emmaus talking about? (vv. 14-15)

8. In your opinion, What were they doing 12 kilometers away from Jerusalem?

9. How did they react to the "stranger"? (v. 18)

10. What was their hope? (v. 21)

11. At what point did they recognize Jesus? (vv. 30-31)

12. Why did the opinion of the eleven and the others who were with them change regarding the resurrection of Jesus? (vv. 31-35)

13. What task did He give them? (v. 47)

a. Where? (v. 49) _____

b. For when? (v. 49) _____

c. What promise? (v. 49) _____

14. How did the disciples' mood change? (Compare verses 11, 17 and 52)

15. You have also been a witness of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus because of what you have learned in this lesson. What is your responsibility now? How will you respond? (vv. 46-48)

BIBLICAL SYNTHESIS



24:1 The women brought ointments to the tomb, in the same way that nowadays we take flowers as a sign of love and respect.

24:1-9 The two angels (who appeared as “two men dressed in dazzling clothing”) asked the women why they were looking for the one who lives in the tomb. Jesus is not among the dead; He lives! He reigns in the hearts of the Christians and He is the head of his Church.

24:4 We take from the information that the Gospels of Matthew and John give us, that these men in dazzling clothing were angels. When angels appear before people, they take the shape of humans.

24:6-7 The angels reminded the women that Jesus had announced what would happen in detail (9:22, 44; 18:31-33).

24:6-7 The central fact of the story of Christianity is the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Church was built on it; without it, the Christian Church would not exist.



Why is the resurrection so important?

The most important message of the apostles was the proclamation of Jesus Christ risen from the dead! (2) The resurrection gives sense to the existence of the Church. The resurrection helps us find meaning and hope in the midst of the greatest tragedy. We have a God that is alive.

24:11-12 People who hear about the resurrection for the first time might need some time before they understand everything about that wonderful story. But as they surrender their lives to him and they dedicate their lives to serve him, they will begin to understand completely the reality of his presence. The truth is that God is not dead, He is alive!

24:12 From the passage in John 20:3-4 we conclude that John also ran to the tomb with Peter. It is almost sure that “the other disciple” was John, the author of the fourth Gospel.

24:13 The two disciples that were going to Emmaus made a mistake in their understanding of the greatest story because they were too worried about their discouragement and problems. That is why they did not realize that the person that was walking with them was Jesus. When we worry about our frustrated hopes and plans, we run the risk of missing Jesus and we are likely to walk away from the strength we can find through other believers. Only when we recognize Jesus in our midst, we will be able to experience his power and the help He can offer us.

24:18 The news of Jesus' crucifixion went around all Jerusalem since it was Passover week and Jewish pilgrims from all over the Roman Empire were visiting the city. This was not an event of little importance that affected only the disciples; the whole nation was aware of what had happened.

24:21 The disciples going to Emmaus were expecting Jesus to set Israel free from its enemies. Many Jews thought that the prophecies of the Old Testament talked about a political or military Messiah; they did not realize that the Messiah came to rescue the people from the slavery of sin. When Jesus died, therefore, they lost their whole illusion. They did not understand that the death of Jesus offered the greatest of hopes.

24:24 These men knew that the tomb was empty, but they did not notice the resurrection of Jesus because they were really sad. In spite of the evidences, of the witness of the women, and the biblical prophecies that talked about this fact, they did not believe. Today the resurrection still surprises many people. In spite of more than two thousand years of evidence and witness, many people still resist believing. What else is necessary?

24:25 Why did Jesus call these men foolish? Even though they knew the biblical prophecies well, they failed to understand that the suffering Christ was the way to glory. They could not understand why God did not intervene to save Jesus from the cross. The world has not changed its values: the concept of a suffering servant is as unpopular today as it was two thousand years ago.

24:25-27 After the two disciples told Jesus that they were sad and confused, He answered them opening Scripture, and applying them to his ministry. When we are confused with questions or problems, we can also go to Scripture and find the right help.

24:36-43 When Jesus appeared before his disciples, He was not just a simple vision or a ghost. The disciples touched his body and He ate with them. His resurrected body was even more real than before; now He was immortal! That type of body is what we will receive when we are resurrected from the dead (see 1 Corinthians 15:42-50).

24:44-46 “The Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms” is a way of referring to the Old Testament. In other words, the whole Old Testament points to the Messiah. His role as a prophet is predicted in Deuteronomy 18:15-20; his sufferings are prophesied about in 22 and Isaiah 53; his resurrection is talked about in Psalms 16:9-11 and Isaiah 53:10-11.

24:45 Jesus opened these people’s eyes for them to understand the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit today does the same work in us when study the Bible. Besides reading the passage in its context, consulting other people who are wise in the area and works of reference, pray for the Holy Spirit to open your understanding to comprehend and give you the discernment that is necessary to put into action the Word of God in your life.

24:47 Luke wrote to the Greek speaking world. He wanted them to know that the message of the love and forgiveness of God in Christ was supposed to be spread around the world. We should not ignore the reach of the gospel of Christ. God wants the whole world to hear the good news of salvation.

24:50-53 While the disciples were standing and watching, Jesus began to ascend to the air and He soon disappeared in the skies. Seeing Jesus depart would have been terrible, even though they knew that He would keep his promise of being with them through the Holy Spirit. That same Jesus, who lived with the disciples, who died and resurrected from the dead, loves us and has promised being with us forever.

24:51 When Jesus went up to heaven, his physical presence abandoned the disciples (Acts 1:9), but the Holy Spirit came soon to console them and give them the power they needed to spread the good news of salvation (Acts 2:1-4).

24:53 The Gospel of Luke describes Jesus as the perfect example of a life according to God's plan: He lived his childhood in obedience to his parents and He impacted the religious leaders in the Temple, as an adult He served God and others through preaching and healing, and finally suffered without complaining when He was condemned.

As believers who live according to the plan of God, we should obey our Lord in each moment
of our lives.