

Sunday, March Thirteenth

When people go to hear a speaker, they can often figure out right away whether the person is the real deal or a phony. In today's passage, the townspeople of Capernaum figure out right away that Jesus is the real deal.

Read: Luke 4:31-44

Reflect: Use the passage in John to work through these questions
While we don't exactly know what happened to Luke, a large group of scholars believed he likely died a martyr. Most traditions say he was hung from an olive tree.

- Who does the demon recognize Jesus as? (see verse 34)
- What attribute does Jesus demonstrate to the people? (see verses 32 and 36)

Early on in His ministry, Jesus made it clear that He wasn't just a scholar or a teacher or even a prophet. He was somebody who spoke and taught with authority. Later in Luke, Jesus will begin to reveal from whom He receives this authority.

- Why does Jesus say He must leave the town of Capernaum? (see verses 42-43)

If Jesus was visiting your house, you'd probably also try to keep Him there as long as you could, right? Imagine how the people of Capernaum must have felt when Jesus stated He had to leave, especially after seeing Him heal all of those people! While people often want to keep Jesus to themselves, He reminds us time and time again that He is for all people, in all times, and in all places.

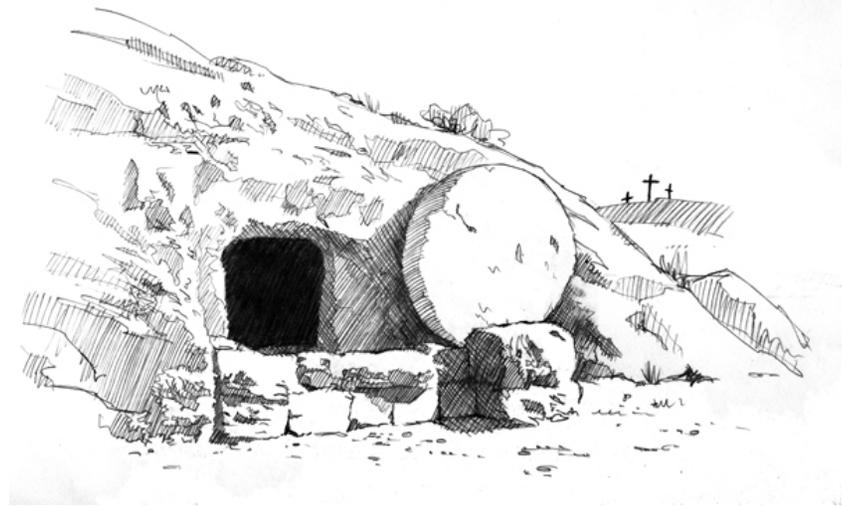
Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Take a moment to go to God in prayer and ask Him to prepare your heart for the coming week. Thank Him for sending you His Spirit.

Questions? Comments? Contact Pastor Chris at chris.futch@oursaviorfl.org or (727) 531-2761.

Read through the Bible

Luke Week 1



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Monday, March Seventh

Welcome to our six-week journey through the book of Luke! This booklet is laid out to help you walk through a portion of the events in Luke every day. Whether you start off your day with this, find some time during your lunch break, or sit down with it before you go to bed, the hope would be for you to engage with the Bible on a consistent basis. May your journey be filled with newfound perspective as you reflect on the life, ministry, and work of our Savior during this season of Lent! – Pastor Chris

Read: Luke 1:1-38

Reflect: Use the passage in John to work through these questions. Each day this week, we'll learn a little bit about the author of this Gospel. For starters, Luke never met Jesus. Instead, he relied on eye-witness accounts to write his letter (see verses 1-2).

- As Luke is writing to Theophilus (likely a Roman official), he wants to make sure the information he is sharing is correct. Why is Luke concerned about this? (see verses 1-4)
- How does Zechariah respond to the angel Gabriel's revelation? (see verse 18) What is Gabriel's response to Zechariah's unbelief? (see verses 19-20)
- How is Mary's response to the angel Gabriel different than Zechariah's? (compare verse 18 and verse 34)

Notice the difference between Zechariah's question ("How can I be sure...?") and Mary's ("How will this be?"). Zechariah wanted proof of how his wife's pregnancy was going to happen. Mary simply wanted to understand how a virgin could become pregnant. One questions God's ability; the other seeks to understand it. Zechariah and Mary's questions demonstrate the fine line between distrusting God's plan and seeking His clarification.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Do you tend to question God from a place of distrust or clarification? Take a moment to pray after re-reading verse 38.

Saturday, March Twelfth

On the TV show 'Wipeout,' courageous contestants take on a series of tests and challenges as they make their way through a wacky, colorful obstacle course. While the course may look easy to the viewers watching at home, the number of wipeouts the contestants endure shows that it is anything but easy! In today's passage, Jesus endures a series of tests and challenges before beginning His public ministry.

Read: Luke 4:1-30

Reflect: Use the passage in John to work through these questions. Of the four gospels, the Gospel of Luke provides us with the most complete chronology of events – from the conception of John the Baptist all the way to Jesus' ascension.

- What was the first thing Jesus did after being baptized? (see verses 1-2)

During the 40 days of Lent between Ash Wednesday and Easter morning (Sundays not included), we reflect the 40 days that Jesus spent fasting out in the wilderness. This is why some people "give up" something during Lent because Jesus gave up food during His testing in the wilderness.

- How did Jesus respond to every single one of Satan's temptations? (see verses 4, 8, and 12)

Jesus was hungry. He was exhausted. And yet, when tempted by Satan, Jesus clung to God's Word to battle these temptations. Satan was finally forced to realize that there was nothing he could say that could convince Jesus of who He was because Jesus' mind was governed, not by His flesh, but by the Spirit!

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Jesus went to His hometown of Nazareth and introduced Himself to the people by reading what the prophet Isaiah had spoken about Him (see verses 16-21). How were you introduced to Jesus?

Friday, March Eleventh

The Tampa Bay area has sights and attractions constantly coming into town all the time. In fact, a few weeks ago, the Florida State Fair drew in tens of thousands of people curious as to what the event had to offer. From the rides to the fried foods to the circus acts to the animal shows, there was plenty for people to see and do. In our passage today, someone we previously met arrives in town, and he sparks the curiosity of the people. How would they respond to what he had to say?

Read: Luke 3:1-38

Reflect: Use the passage in John to work through these questions Because he also wrote the book of Acts, Luke wrote more of the New Testament than any other writer, including Paul.

- According to John the Baptist, why was everyone to repent, even those who were descendants of Abraham? (see verses 8-9)

Many Jews at the time assumed they were saved by their lineage to Abraham and his faithfulness to God. John, however, cautions them against this line of thinking, and instead, calls them to repent. For John, true repentance isn't just lip service. It also bears fruit.

- What sort of good works does John suggest people do as a reflection of their repentance? (see verses 11-14)
- What does Luke attempt to show with the genealogy of Jesus? (see verses 23-38)

Luke's careful genealogy reminds us that Jesus was always the plan for our salvation. Even from the very beginning when God first created Adam, He had it in mind to come to earth Himself!

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

If you had the opportunity to ask John the Baptist what good works you should do, what might he tell you? How might doing good works become a part of your daily repentance?

Tuesday, March Eighth

Have you ever had an unexpected visitor before? Maybe an old friend shows up at your front door unannounced. Or a co-worker surprises you with a birthday lunch. Or even a former member of Our Savior who moved out of state years ago comes and sits right next to you one Sunday morning. How do you typically react in these sorts of situations? Shock? Excitement? Confusion? Disbelief? In today's passage, an unexpected visitor shows up at Elizabeth's front door, and Elizabeth's reaction is priceless.

Read: Luke 1:39-80

Reflect: Use the passage in John to work through these questions Luke was a physician by profession. We see this throughout his Gospel in two main ways – 1) his careful, methodical telling of the story, and 2) his care and concern for the vulnerable.

- How do Elizabeth and the baby in her womb respond to Mary's visit? (see verses 41-45)
- Why were Elizabeth and Zechariah's neighbors confused as to why they named their baby John? (see verses 59-61, and verse 66)

According to the custom at that time, the baby boy was supposed to be named after the father, or, at the very least, someone within the family. And yet, both Elizabeth and Zechariah were insistent that the boy be named John because of what Gabriel had told Zechariah. In fact, Zechariah's obedience in giving his son the name John allowed him to be able to speak once again. God is in the business of giving second chances!

- What are some of the similarities between Mary and Zechariah's speeches? (see verses 46-55 and 67-79)

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Once again, God proved faithful to Elizabeth and Zechariah. In what ways has God recently proved His faithfulness to you?

Wednesday, March Ninth

Its 3 am. A man nervously twiddles his thumbs. Next to him, an elderly woman rests her head against a travel pillow as she tries to get comfortable. Two little boys are passed out asleep on the floor in front of them, covered by Sesame Street blankets. The chatter from a TV mounted to the wall above plays in the background. Suddenly, a doctor walks into the hospital waiting room and exclaims, "It's a girl!" The man leaps to his feet and clasps his hands over his smiling lips. The woman next to him wakes up and begins crying tears of joy. The two boys sheepishly open their eyes, and one of them says, "Grandma, does this mean Mommy had her baby? When can we see her?" In today's passage, Joseph, Mary, and the shepherds share in the excitement and joy at the birth of a baby boy – Jesus!

Read: Luke 2:1-21

Reflect: Use the passage in John to work through these questions
Luke traveled with Paul during parts of his missionary journeys. In fact, Luke was so dear to Paul that in his letter to the Colossians, Paul refers to him as "our dear friend Luke, the doctor" (4:14).

- Why might the shepherds have been terrified by the angel's appearance to them? (see verses 8-10)
- What was the first thing the shepherds did after they saw Jesus? (see verses 17-18)

Once the shepherds saw Jesus for themselves, they couldn't help but share about Him with others. The same is true for us today. When we experience the love and grace of Jesus for ourselves, we can't help but share about Him with others!

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

When Jesus was born, only two people knew the Messiah had come into the world. But, with some divine guidance, others came to hear of this good news too. What is one practical way you can share that good news with someone you know this week?

Thursday, March Tenth

Most parents know their child is amazing. They know she's smart. They know he's talented. They know her communication skills are advanced. They know he is an excellent writer. But when a friend or stranger comments on the brilliance of their child, the parents often marvel at what is said about her (or him). It's not that they didn't already know this, but it's the fact that somebody else notices it too. In today's passage, Jesus' parents marvel at what others say about Him.

Read: Luke 2:22-52

Reflect: Use the passage in John to work through these questions
There is strong Biblical evidence to support that Luke was not a Jew, but a Gentile (see Colossians 4). This would make Luke the only Gentile writer of the New Testament!

- How did Simeon know he would not die before seeing the Messiah, and how did he know when and where to find Him? (see verses 26-27)

The role of the Holy Spirit is emphasized throughout much of Luke's Gospel. In doing so, Luke wants his readers (including us!) to understand how God is always at work in the lives of His people.

- Which details does Luke include to help us understand why Anna would have recognized the baby Jesus as the Messiah? (see verses 36-37)
- How is the 12-year-old Jesus described when Joseph and Mary find Him in the temple courts? (see verses 46-47)

Notice that Mary and Joseph didn't realize Jesus was missing from their traveling caravan for a full day (verse 44)! This anxiety-ridden moment helps us see the "fully God, fully man" aspect of Jesus: He is accountable to both His earthly parents and His heavenly Father.

Respond: Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Take time in prayer to marvel at what Jesus has done for you!