

## Notes And Helps to Instructors

Thank you for volunteering to lead a group through the treasures of God's word! You may feel overwhelmed or inadequate, but you can do this! The leader notes are designed to help you grow in knowledge and love for Christ and for you to help pass what you have received to your group. Here are some suggestions to help equip you to grow in your teaching and leading ability.

- These lessons could simply be read, and a group would receive something but that is not how they are designed. The notes are designed to grow you as a leader so you might tailor the lesson for the needs of your group. Some groups may not have much of a knowledge base in the bible, so the concepts must be brought down to their level. Other groups may have a large knowledge base and you may challenge them with more information. The key is to know your group. If you begin leading a group in one way and find that it is not connecting, it is alright to modify and bring down or raise up the level of information.
- The more preparation you do the stronger you will be as a leader. Let the study material be a joy for you! Let it feed you as you prepare! The more you are fed the more you have to give to your group.
- There is no set time on how long a lesson may take. Lessons could be slowed down and take several weeks to finish. Perhaps in leading a group, one question captivates the group and leads to a fruitful conversation. If that happens, that is good! You are in no hurry. If you can finish the material in a week, then great! But if it takes several, that is great as well! The important thing is that they receive deeply from the gospel of Jesus.
- Pray about your lesson! Pray as you prepare! Pray as you teach! Remember we do not teach or exercise our gifts in our own strength. The Holy Spirit is the one who opens the heart and mind. Pray for the Spirit to move in your heart and the heart of the group.

May our merciful Triune God bless your study and your group that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith-- that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

In Christ,

Prison Discipleship Ministry

## Lessons in Luke -- Lesson 1 – “Jesus – Who is He?”

### Introduction:

In these lessons we will look at the ministry of Jesus found in the Gospel of Luke. In order to discuss what Jesus did, we first need to see who Jesus is. And to learn who Jesus is, we will look at the Angel Gabriel’s announcement about who Jesus is before he was even born! And in this announcement, we learn that Jesus is the Savior and King that we need!

### Read this passage at least five times then answer the questions as best you can:

<sup>26</sup> Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name *was* Mary. <sup>28</sup> And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored *one*, the Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women!"

<sup>29</sup> But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

<sup>30</sup> Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. <sup>32</sup> "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. <sup>33</sup> "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

<sup>34</sup> Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

<sup>35</sup> And the angel answered and said to her, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.* <sup>36</sup> "Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> "For with God nothing will be impossible."

<sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (Luk 1:26-38 NKJ)

In verse 28, Gabriel greets Mary. What praise did Gabriel have for her?

Gabriel called her “highly favored one.” He told her that “The Lord is with you” and “blessed are you among women”

What was Mary’s response to Gabriel’s praise in verse 29 and 30? Did she think she did anything to earn God’s favor? Did she think she was worthy of such praise?

Verse 30 says that Mary was “troubled at his saying and considered what manner of greeting this was.” Mary did not think she did anything worthy of such praise. Mary was a faithful young woman of God, but she also knew she was a sinner. Later in Luke 2:46-48, Mary sings, “My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup> And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. <sup>48</sup> For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.” Mary knew she was a sinner who needed a savior. She is someone who put her faith in God to save her of her sins. There are some (Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and even some

protestants) who believe that Mary was a woman without sin. But that is not true. Sinless people do not need saviors; sinless people are saviors. Mary praised God that, “He has regarded the lowly state of his maidservant.” She knew that all the blessings she received were by grace, not by her works. If God regarded our works, all we have earned is death and hell. But God by his grace and through faith in Jesus gives us forgiveness and eternal life.

In verse 31, Gabriel says that the child’s name shall be Jesus. Jesus means “God Saves.” Look at the parallel passage of this announcement in Matt 1:18-25. What will Jesus save us from?

" 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."  
(Matt. 1:18-23 KJV)

In Matt 1:21, God spoke to Joseph in a dream because he wanted to quietly divorce Mary. In those days, to be engaged had many of the legal rights of marriage, but the marriage was not yet official (consummated). But God strengthened him saying, “She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

What are the titles Gabriel says Jesus will have?

1. Son of the Highest
2. Given the throne of his father David.
3. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever,
4. and of His kingdom there will be no end."

Why do you think it is important that Jesus will be “The Son of the Highest?”

Notice that it is “the” Son of the Highest not “a” Son of the Highest. There is something unique and special here; there are not multiple people called this. Being a Son has legal status in Jesus’ days. A son has the same rights, privileges, and estate as his father. A son would be expected to follow in the same work as his father. In other words, Jesus being called “the Son of the Highest” tells us that he has the same status and privilege of the Father. Meaning, Jesus is God in the flesh. Jesus was true man; he has everything that makes a human a human, but Jesus is also true God; He is everything that makes God, God. He is not the Father but shares in the One being that is God. Jesus is, going back to what we read in Matt 1:23, “Immanuel, God with us.”

What are some of the reasons that it is Good News that Jesus is our King?

Jesus in his life on earth, as well as his resurrected life right now at the Father's right hand for us, fulfills three offices or roles for us that we desperately need. First, he fulfills the office of prophet. He hears the voice of God and tells us the will of God for our salvation and tells us his true words. Second, he is our priest. Priests had two jobs, first, to make sacrifice for the sins of the people. And second, to make intercession, or pray for the people. Jesus made the last sacrifice we will ever need for our sins by offering his own self as that sacrifice for sin on the cross. And he ever lives at the right hand of God where he makes intercession for us (Heb 7:25; Rom 8:34). Just consider that amazing fact...Jesus is praying for you right now!!!!

But the third office he fulfills for us is that of King. The Westminster Shorter Catechism is a document that teaches through questions and answers what the bible teaches. Question 26 says that Jesus fulfills the office of King for us "in subduing us to Himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all His and our enemies."

Jesus is the king that subdues our sinful hearts to himself. He does that through the gospel. The kindness that Jesus has shown us in bearing our sins upon the cross, dying the death we deserve, and rising on the third day for our justification draws us to him in faith. He is a king who rules us through his kindness and love to us, not his force and not in cruelty. "Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? (Rom 2:4)." He also rules us by his righteous rule and law. The goodness of his character and his love makes him a king we love to serve under. But, as our king, he also defends us from our three great enemies, sin, death, and the devil. He defends us so that none of our enemies can take us away from him, nor conquer his kingdom. And he restrains the enemies' attacks against us and also, conquers even more of his enemies—enemies like we were—and brings them into his kingdom. He beats back the kingdom of Satan till on the last day all things will be put under subjection to him and his kingdom.

Mary was a virgin when she was pregnant with Jesus. Why do you think that it is important that Jesus was born from a virgin?

Adam was created straight from the hand of God in righteousness, knowledge, and holiness. He was created good without any sin. But, since the fall, all humanity was born with original sin. That means that all humanity is born with the imputed guilt of Adam's sin, and the inherited corruption of sin in all parts of our being. Our hearts, minds, emotions, thoughts, etc. and all the actions that come from it are all touched by sin. But because Jesus was born without an earthly father, it means that he was not born with the inherited guilt of Adam and is free from the inherited corruption of Sin. In other words, it means that Jesus is free from the guilt of any sin, and sin has no place in his heart.

Adam, because he was born free from sin was able, if he obeyed God to earn eternal life for his people (Gen 2:15-17). He failed. But Jesus, because he was born free from original sin can and did earn eternal life for his people.

What was Mary's response to all that she heard in Verse 38? What do you think it would mean for her to walk through this with the Lord?

Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." She submitted to the will of the Lord in her life and held to him in faith. Even though it meant that she would be slandered as a woman who committed adultery and fornication (consider John 8:38-44, where in v. 41 the Pharisees said, "We were not born of fornication" meaning we know that you were Jesus.) It meant that she would have to count the cost of following the will of the Lord in her life. It meant she would have to trust the Lord to care for her and protect her. It meant letting go of what others think of her and living in light of the truth of Christ.

Some questions for thought and discussion:

- Have you counted the cost of following Christ?
- Is Christ your king?
- If Christ is all that this passage says he is, then how can we not love and serve him?
- What reproach do you bear for following Christ?
- How is Jesus working in your life as king to subdue you to himself, protect you, and defend and conquer all his and your enemies?

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