

Understanding the Bible

Luke

Tom Wilson

DRAFT

A Bible Study Guide

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The back cover caricature of the author was drawn by the well-known artist Jan van Haasteren as a favor to Els Rooswinkel, who maintained a web site dedicated to puzzles with artwork drawn by Jan. I originally created a version of this web site and handed it over to Els, who developed the site far beyond its initial content. In appreciation of my effort, Els asked Jan to draw me.

The latest edition of this e-book is available via <https://thechurchoforlando.org>.

Draft Edition		This draft is intentionally incomplete (see Preface).
— Revision A	2/17/26	Chapter 1 and “The Dishonest Steward” (Chapter 9)



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Preface

This draft has been made available in an incomplete form to provide the material that is referenced by completed study guides. Material not referenced might also appear in the draft simply because it is nearly complete. The content of this draft may not be fully developed nor polished.



Introduction

As we would expect, the book of *Luke* is written by a man named “Luke”. He is said to be a physician in Colossians 4:14. As a doctor, he captures many details that only a doctor might think about. Thus, we will notice that the book looks at Jesus as a man. This aspect is demonstrated in “Why Four Gospel Accounts” in the *How to Study the Bible – Volume 3: Advanced Topics* study guide [3].

Of equal importance is that Luke is a Gentile. This too is studied in “Who Wrote the Gospel Accounts” in the same study guide [3]. Luke was a traveling companion of Paul, and he, therefore, captures Jesus’ ministry so that the Gentiles that are saved by grace could understand who Jesus was and why Paul highlighted that we are not under the law. Luke also presents Jesus ministry so that the Gentile believer in the prophetic program could understand what Jesus would mean to them.

Luke’s account will often focus on the Abrahamic covenant since it is through blessing Israel that Gentiles will be blessed.



Dedication

To Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, without whom nothing would be possible

Colossians 1:16—For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him

To Dahlia, my wife and my helper in all things

Genesis 2:18—And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.

To all the members of the body of Christ

2 Corinthians 13:11—Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Luke 1

Luke 1 essentially provides the details of events before Jesus' birth. There is a lot presented in this long chapter. None of the events have a parallel in the other accounts.

1.1 Verses 1-4: The Address to Theophilus

Luke 1:1-4

- 1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,
- 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;
- 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,
- 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

Verse 1 indicates that others were writing about Jesus' ministry. These were eye witnesses. This pretty much concludes that Luke was not an eye witness. This would make sense since he is a Gentile. Yet, he claims that he understands what he wrote of. I would think that this was a working of the Spirit of God.

Theophilus means "lover of God". It isn't clear who this is; perhaps a believer, a Roman official, or someone that Luke was trying to witness to. This reference ties this book to the book of *Acts*, making Luke the author of that book as well. Evidently, Theophilus had been previously instructed.

1.2 Verses 5-25: The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

Luke 1:5-10

- 5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife [was] of the daughters of Aaron, and her name [was] Elisabeth.
- 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.
- 7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were [now] well stricken in years.
- 8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,
- 9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.
- 10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

While "Herod" was a name, it becomes more like a title (like many had the name "Caesar"). There are 4 notable Herods in scripture:

1. Herod the Great: This one—he murdered infants after Jesus' birth,
2. Herod Antipas: He murdered John the Baptist in Luke 9,
3. Herod Agrippa I: He murdered the apostle James in Acts 12, and



4. Herod Agrippa II: Paul appealed to him to go to Rome in Acts 26 (Herod is essentially sending him to his death).

Herod is an Idumean, which is an Edomite (a descended from Esau).

Zacharias was a priest and he was assigned to the course of Abia. David defined 24 courses for the priests in 1 Chronicles 24. *Abia* in Greek is *Abijah* in Hebrew; Abijah was assigned to the 8th course.

Side Study 1.1: Additional Study: The Courses of the Priests

Read 1 Chronicles 24 for details on the courses of the priest. Scripture doesn't explain how the courses worked. Each named priest was probably the leader of the course. Essentially, each course of priests worked a week in the temple, probably twice a year. There were rooms around the temple where they would live. Then they each would return to his home, which was somewhere else in Israel. However, there were 3 major feasts each year when all of them worked because all Jews were supposed to go to Jerusalem: the feast of unleavened bread, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles. That would result in $24 * 2 + 3 = 51$ weeks out of the year. Perhaps they all worked another week around one of the other appointed times. The courses may have begun in Abib (or Nisan), the first month of the year. The 8th course would soon follow. Can you figure out the month and week on the calendar? You won't be able to be precise. This will give you an idea of when John was born, and, therefore, when Jesus was born. Jesus wasn't born in December! For a detailed timing analysis of those events, refer to the *Biblical Time* study guide [1].

Zacharias means "God remembers". *Elisabeth* means "his oath". As one flesh, it means: "God remembers his oath". We will see that oath in verse 17. Verse 6 says that they kept the law. This doesn't mean that they were sinless, but that they did the things that the law required to deal with sin.

Verse 7 describes their situation. It makes them like Abraham and Sarah (in *Genesis*) or Manoa and his wife (in *Judges*). Verse 9 mentions "his lot to burn incense": Zacharias had an opportunity to perform this duty (i.e., his name was put on the schedule during one of the days of the week). Verse 10 mentions a "multitude of the people": the 8th course may have been around the feast of weeks. Many would arrive early since they came from far away and could not anticipate their arrival precisely. Likewise, many might have left later.

Luke 1:11-17

- 11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.
 12 And when Zacharias saw [him], he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.
 13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.
 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.
 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.
 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.
 17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

The angel of the Lord will be revealed to be Gabriel in verse 19. This will end the famine of the word spoken of in Amos 8:11-12 and implied by the 62-week interval in Daniel 9:25 (because nothing is said about what happens during it).

John's name means "Jehovah is gracious". Verse 15 mentions elements of the Nazarite vow (see Numbers 6:2-4). John was to be born with the Holy Ghost indwelling him. That may have happened in verse 41. He will come in the spirit of *Elias*, which is *Elijah* in Hebrew.

Side Study 1.2: Additional Study: The Spirit and Power of Elijah

The old testament says that Elijah will come:

Malachi 4:5-6

- 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:
 6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Many think that Elijah never died, but he did. See "Where Did Elijah Go?" in the *How to Study the Bible* –

Volume 2: Intermediate Topics study guide [2] to understand that. So he would have to be resurrected to do that. As you read about the stories concerning Jesus' ministry, you will understand that he didn't come. So, people also teach that he will be one of the two witnesses in Revelation 11:1-14. But this too isn't so.

Luke doesn't have equivalent verses to these passages:

Matthew 11:13-14

- 13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.
14 And if ye will receive [it], this is Elias, which was for to come.

Matthew 17:11-13

- 11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.
12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.
13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

The bottom line is that John was Elijah in type: Elijah wasn't literally coming.

Luke 1:18-20

- 18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.
19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.
20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

Verse 18 seems like a reasonable question, but the response says otherwise. Gabriel also appeared in Daniel 8:16 and 9:21. He is a high-ranking angel, perhaps a seraph (see the *The Biblical Angels* study guide [6] for more information).

In spite of the praise in verse 6, a serious affliction results due to Zacharias' unbelief. This will also be a sign: John will speak for God, but Zacharias cannot speak at all.

Luke 1:21-25

- 21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.
22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.
23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.
24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,
25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on [me], to take away my reproach among men.

To be barren was viewed as a judgment from God. Elisabeth probably hid herself due to the hype.

1.3 Verses 26-38: The Birth of Jesus Foretold

Luke 1:26-33

- 26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,
27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name [was] Mary.
28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, [thou that art] highly favoured, the Lord [is] with thee: blessed [art] thou among women.
29 And when she saw [him], she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.
30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.
32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Reference to “the sixth month” is with respect to Elisabeth being with child. “Favored” is mentioned (twice), and this is grace. Mary did not earn this.

Jesus means “Jehovah saves”. A son inherits the estate of a father and works along side him in the family business. Jesus is a son in more than one way. Verses 32-33 reference a few prophecies.

2 Samuel 7:16

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

Psalms 89:3-4

3 I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant,
4 Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

Isaiah 9:6-7

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.
7 Of the increase of [his] government and peace [there shall be] no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Let's continue with the chapter.

Luke 1:34-38

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?
35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.
36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.
37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.
38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Mary's question isn't met with a harsh response. She is young (possibly still considered to be a child if younger than 20) and isn't in a high position like Zecharias. But, she gets an explanation to help her deal with the situation. She is also told about her cousin since she was unaware of her condition.

It was Jesus' conception, not his birth, that was the miracle:

Isaiah 7:14

14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Similarly, it is Jesus' conception, not his birth, that is around what we call Christmas.

Verse 35 mentions “that holy thing”. The term “thing” is also used here:

Isaiah 64:6

6 But we are all as an unclean [thing], and all our righteousnesses [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

So, this isn't a justification for declaring that a child isn't a person before birth.

The fact that Jesus does not have an earthly father is very important. Jesus is not in the “image of Adam”. Adam was created in the (sinless) image of God:

Genesis 1:27

27 So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

But he had children in his own (sinful) image:



Genesis 5:3

3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat [a son] in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

1.4 Verses 39-45: Mary Visits Elisabeth**Luke 1:39-45**

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;
 40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.
 41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:
 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed [art] thou among women, and blessed [is] the fruit of thy womb.
 43 And whence [is] this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
 44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.
 45 And blessed [is] she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

We should note that Mary had conceived soon after being told. When Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, I would expect that John was as well. This may have caused his movement. She may have had some understanding of what was going on with herself, but the Holy Ghost probably gave her understanding of Mary's situation.

1.5 Verses 46-56: Mary's Song of Praise**Luke 1:46-56**

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,
 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy [is] his name.
 50 And his mercy [is] on them that fear him from generation to generation.
 51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
 52 He hath put down the mighty from [their] seats, and exalted them of low degree.
 53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.
 54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of [his] mercy;
 55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.
 56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

Contrary to Catholic teaching, Mary is not sinless. She declares in verse 47 that God is her savior. Mary is only betrothed and not married yet. So, she returned to her own house (probably her parents' house).

1.6 Verses 57-66: The Birth of John the Baptist**Luke 1:57-66**

57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.
 58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.
 59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.
 60 And his mother answered and said, Not [so]; but he shall be called John.
 61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.
 62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.
 63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.
 64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue [loosed], and he spake, and praised God.

- 65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.
- 66 And all they that heard [them] laid [them] up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

Elisabeth would have learned John's name from Zacharias. Even though he cannot speak, verse 63 says that he wrote on a writing table. The law required male children to be circumcised on the eighth day:

Leviticus 12:2-3

- 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean.
- 3 And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

Of course, this comes from the Abrahamic covenant:

Genesis 17:11-12

- 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.
- 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which [is] not of thy seed.

The Abrahamic covenant is important to Gentiles because it is through blessing Israel that Gentiles will be blessed.

Evidently, Zacharias can't hear either. Verse 62 says that they made "signs" to him. It isn't at John's birth, but at his circumcision that Zacharias can speak again.

1.7 Verses 67-80: Zechariah's Prophecy

Luke 1:67-80

- 67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,
- 68 Blessed [be] the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,
- 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;
- 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:
- 71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;
- 72 To perform the mercy [promised] to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;
- 73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,
- 74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,
- 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.
- 76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;
- 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,
- 78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,
- 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and [in] the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.
- 80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

Now, Zacharias had received the Holy Ghost. Then he prophesied: this was symbolic for all of Israel:

Joel 2:28

- 28 And it shall come to pass afterward, [that] I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Of course, for most Jews, the Holy Ghost would come at Pentecost. Verse 68 says that God has redeemed his people. This will come through Jesus, and he hasn't even been born yet: This is the certainty of prophecy. Jesus is the prophesied horn of salvation:

Psalms 18:2

2 The LORD [is] my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, [and] my high tower.

Verse 70 set the stage for something Paul tells us. But, Luke tells us this one more time:

Acts 3:21

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

But Paul tells us this:

Romans 16:25

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

Paul tells us about the mystery that should be rightly divided from prophecy. (see the study on “Prophecy vs. Mystery” in the *Respecting Distinctions* study guide [5]).

Verses 71-75 references various old testament promises. Verses 76-79 prophesy John’s ministry. John dwelled in the deserts until his ministry began. He didn’t know Jesus until his ministry began..

CHAPTER

2

Luke 2 (planned)



CHAPTER

3

Luke 3 (planned)



CHAPTER

4

Luke 4 (planned)



CHAPTER

5

Luke 5 (planned)



CHAPTER

6

Luke 6 (planned)



CHAPTER

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Luke 7 (planned)



CHAPTER

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Luke 8 (planned)



CHAPTER

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Luke 9 (planned)



CHAPTER

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Luke 10 (planned)



CHAPTER

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Luke 11 (planned)



CHAPTER

12

Luke 12 (planned)



CHAPTER

13

Luke 13 (planned)



CHAPTER

14

Luke 14 (planned)



CHAPTER

15

Luke 15 (planned)



Luke 16

16.1 Verses 1-18: The Dishonest Steward

This story is often argued as to whether or not it is a parable. It definitely appears that the characters in it symbolize certain people, so perhaps it is a parable. But real stories can also contain symbolism in the bible.

Luke 16:1-2

- 1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.
- 2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

We'll go right into the symbolism: the rich man would be Jesus. We don't think of Jesus as being rich, but Jesus is the old testament LORD—possessor of heaven and earth—who humbled himself down to the earth. The steward represents the leadership of Israel, which are the focus of many teachings by Jesus. This steward will no longer be steward.

The parable of the wicked tenants (see Chapter 20) tells a similar story. Matthew's account of that parable says this:

Matthew 21:43

- 43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

That is what is happening in this story.

Luke 16:3-8

- 3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.
- 4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.
- 5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors [unto him], and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?
- 6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.
- 7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.
- 8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

The steward attempts to befriend the rich man's debtors by further mismanaging the rich man's goods. These debtors have debts that must be paid; as a type, these are people that have not had faith (refer to the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:21-35). So, the corrupt steward is befriendng the lost since he has poorly served the one who could bring salvation.



The “lord” here is the rich man, not Jesus himself, although the rich man typifies Jesus. The lord commends the steward for taking a wise action since he is doomed already. The steward has his eyes on the things of this world rather than spiritual things. The children of light don’t always have their minds on the things of God like they should.

Luke 16:9-13

- 9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.
 10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.
 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true [riches]?
 12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?
 13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

To understand verse 9, you need to consider what was taught in the parable of the two sons (Chapter 15). Here are two verses from that story:

Luke 15:13

- 13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

Luke 15:18

- 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

The younger son wasted his inheritance. In other words, he was not a good steward of it. But, he came to his senses and realized that he had sinned. He **failed** in his perspective of life and returned to his father.

So, the advice that Jesus is giving in verse 9 is this: Make friends with the world, so that, when you realize that you have failed, you will repent (i.e., turn back to God) and find everlasting life. This is the consistent concept throughout Jesus’ ministry: the lost realize that they need a savior. They are the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Verses 10-12 simply lead you to the conclusion in verse 13: You cannot serve God and anything else (in this case, mammon). Riches are not wrong—trusting in them is. This will all be confirmed in the remainder of the teaching.

Luke 16:14-18

- 14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.
 15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.
 16 The law and the prophets [were] until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.
 17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.
 18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from [her] husband committeth adultery.

Verses 14 and 15 tell you the problem: the Pharisees were covetous and they justified themselves before men. Let’s see some verses about covetousness:

Luke 12:15

- 15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Colossians 3:5

- 5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Covetousness is likened to idolatry. Thus, those that covet are worshipping another god.

Verse 16 says that the law and the prophets were until John (the Baptist). This means that how God was working with Israel according to the (old) law covenant was coming to an end. Therefore, the leadership that was established was being done away with.



Verse 17 says that the no aspect of the law would fail. Let's see how the old leadership was causing the law to fail:

Malachi 2:7-9

- 7 For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he [is] the messenger of the LORD of hosts.
 8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.
 9 Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.

Being partial in the law was not keeping every "tittle" of it. Here is God's view of the law:

Isaiah 42:21

- 21 The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make [it] honourable.

Verse 18 seems unrelated to the story, but it takes you back to this:

Malachi 2:14-16

- 14 Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet [is] she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.
 15 And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.
 16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for [one] covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

Verse 18 provides an example of the partiality. God never intended divorce. This is the point of focus in Matthew 19:3-9 and Mark 10:2-12 where the Pharisees questioned Jesus about Moses granting divorces. Jesus said that God never intended that. One possible reason that divorces were granted is that adulterers were not being stoned. This is exemplified in John 8:3-11 where the woman was taken in the act of adultery but the man was not also brought.

16.2 Verses 19-31: The Rich Man and Lazarus (planned)

Luke 16:19-31

- 19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:
 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,
 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.
 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;
 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.
 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.
 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.
 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that [would come] from thence.
 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:
 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.
 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.
 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.
 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

CHAPTER

17

Luke 17 (planned)



CHAPTER

18

Luke 18 (planned)



CHAPTER

19

Luke 19 (planned)



CHAPTER

20

Luke 20 (planned)



CHAPTER

21

Luke 21 (planned)



CHAPTER

22

Luke 22 (planned)



CHAPTER

23

Luke 23 (planned)



CHAPTER

24

Luke 24 (planned)





Reference Materials

Completed and draft e-books are available via <https://thechurchoforlando.org>.

- [1] *Biblical Time*, Tom Wilson, e-book; First Edition, 9/7/25
- [2] *How to Study the Bible – Volume 2: Intermediate Topics*, Tom Wilson, e-book; partial Draft Edition, 9/7/25
- [3] *How to Study the Bible – Volume 3: Advanced Topics*, Tom Wilson, e-book; partial Draft Edition, 2/3/26
- [4] *Matthew*, Tom Wilson, e-book; First Edition, planned
- [5] *Respecting Distinctions*, Tom Wilson, e-book; partial Draft Edition, 2/3/26
- [6] *The Biblical Angels*, Tom Wilson, e-book; First Edition, Revision A, 9/11/24
- [7] *The Biblical Creation*, Tom Wilson, e-book; First Edition, 1/1/24



Index of Bible Verses

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Tom Wilson presents an expositional study of the book of *Luke*. Luke's account of Jesus ministry helps us bridge the gap between prophecy and the mystery revealed by Paul.

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