

Goals

In this unit, our students will learn that we have an understanding Savior who is able to sympathize with our every weakness and need. They need only to trust in Him and bring all their cares to Him. Since God has given us this free gift, our students will reflect on how they can repay the Lord Jesus for all His mercies. One of the best ways is to give to others what we have received, freely and unconditionally. Students will examine how the Lord Jesus came to save and choose people indiscriminately, no matter how insignificant that person may seem to be. They will in turn reflect upon whether their treatment of others is selective and discriminatory or whether it reflects the all-embracing and compassionate love of our Lord Jesus.

unit 3

Teacher Devotional

The Christian life is a spiritual tug-of-war. Sin feels good. It seems so right. So the battle rages.

Paul also struggled with this. He wanted to do right and he got frustrated when he did wrong.

Be encouraged! God's power was made available to Paul and is there for us too through the power of the Holy Spirit. This power can break the iron grip of sin.

The truth is, we do not seek to live right in the hopes of earning our salvation; we desire to live right because we have our salvation.

Dead to Sin and Alive to God

*"And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."
(Romans 6:13)*

Lesson 7

The Gospel of Luke Jesus Christ, the Son of Man

Listed Scriptures

Lk 1:26-38; 2:1-24; 39-52; 4:1-13; Jn 4:7-26; 11:17-44; Heb 4:14-16; Heb 2:5-18

Lesson Aim

- 1) To enable students to understand that Jesus Christ was not just a man with human emotions and needs, but He was God who became a man
- 2) To enable students to know that we entrust everything to God because He cares and understands

Memory Verse

"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." (Heb 4:15)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Luke 1-8

B I B L E B A C K G R O U N D



Author:

To the best of our knowledge, the entire Bible was composed by Hebrew writers, with the exception of one man – the beloved physician Luke. A Greek from Antioch of Syria, Luke was well educated and thoroughly acquainted with the Roman world. He was a travelling companion during Paul's missionary journeys (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16; Col 4:14; Philemon 24). It was probably this close relationship with the Apostle Paul and the church leaders that enabled Luke to hear about the stories and eyewitness accounts of the Lord Jesus needed for compiling the gospel. Since Luke was a Gentile, it is of no surprise that his gospel seems to highlight Gentiles and their response to Jesus Christ. For example, Matthew traces the Lord's genealogy back to Abraham, the father of Jews (Mt 1:2), but Luke traces it back to Adam, the father of the human race (Lk 3:38). Furthermore, Luke's narrative

continues into Acts, where He shows the gospel moving beyond its Jewish origins to include people of every race.

Date of writing:

Probably written around AD 60-61 in Caesarea.

Purpose of writing this book:

Luke's purpose for writing is stated in his preface to the gospel. He wanted to provide "the most excellent Theophilus," a man of position and rank, with a "carefully investigated" and "orderly account" of the life of Jesus Christ (Lk 1:3). His aim was that Theophilus "may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed." In his two well-researched volumes, Luke presents Jesus Christ as a real man. Yet at the same time, by recounting the miracles and the prophecies connected to the Lord's life, Luke portrayed Him as a divine being, God Himself manifest in the flesh. Luke gives the most complete account of Christ's ancestry, birth, and development. He is the ideal Son of man who identified with the sorrow and plight of sinful humanity in order to carry our sorrows and accomplish the work of salvation. One of the aspects that Luke emphasizes is that Jesus Christ came not only to save the Jews, but also to be the Savior of the whole world. The Lord Jesus that Luke portrays reaches out to people of every class and background – Jews, Samaritans, Gentiles, Roman soldiers, the poor, women, children, the powerful, the sick, the fearful, the devout, the irreligious. He has something to offer everyone.

W A R M U P



Describe your relationship with the Lord Jesus.

Do you see Him as a friend, Father, an awesome God...? Why?

B I B L E S T U D Y



Part 1

Jesus Christ is Fully Man

The Lord Jesus was God who came to the world taking the form of a man. In what ways did the Lord show that He was fully human?

A . Jesus Christ Had Human Connections

The genealogies recorded in the gospels of Matthew and Luke trace the family line of the Lord Jesus. Of the many reasons for documenting Jesus' ancestry, one was to show that the Lord was truly a man who existed in history. The Lord Jesus came as the Son of Man, which means He came as a human being. Jesus Christ was a person born in a particular time in Roman and Jewish history (Lk 3:1-2). He came into the world when Caesar Augustus was Emperor of the Roman Empire from 27 BC to 14 AD. The Lord also had biological and personal roots. From His genealogy, we see that He descended from King David, and was the offspring of Abraham, both key figures in Jewish history. The first few chapters of Luke and Matthew also describe the Lord Jesus' infancy to show that He was born just like any other flesh-and-blood human being (even though His conception was miraculous). The Lord was born in Bethlehem of Judea, into a family much like any other with His parents, Joseph and Mary, and with siblings.

B . Jesus Christ Went Through the Process of Growing Up

Although the Lord was unique in many ways, He still had a normal upbringing. In terms of development, He, like any child, developed from an infant, to a toddler, to a young child. He learned to crawl, sit up, walk and run. He learned to eat and talk. He did not simply appear as an adult or take any short cuts. Instead, the Lord went through the growth process of a human. Luke 2:41-52 records the Lord Jesus learning in the temple. The Lord did not come into the world already knowing everything He needed to know. He did not acquire knowledge without studying. Though the Lord Jesus amazed His teachers with questions and responses, He nevertheless went through a lifelong process of growing physically, mentally, socially and spiritually (Lk 2:52).

Jesus Christ was born under the law and was submissive to the law. Growing up, the Lord underwent the same rituals and rites as any Jewish boy. For example, He was probably circumcised and named on the eighth day after birth (Lev 12:3; Lk 1:59, 60; 2:21). As the first born son, He was presented to God one month after birth. During this ceremony His parents would buy Him back, or "redeem" Him, from God through offering. For the first three years of life, children received education at home from their mothers. From three years of age on, fathers taught their sons the law. Fathers were also responsible for teaching their sons a trade. The Lord

was not just a carpenter's son (Mt 13:55). He was also a carpenter (Mk 6:3). At about six years of age, Jewish boys attended a school attached to the Jerusalem temple called "the house of the book." Here they were schooled in the Old Testament and the laws. It was here that the Lord Jesus was found at the age of twelve (Lk 2:41-52). At thirteen, a Jewish boy became a "son of the law," fully responsible for performing the commandments. This is known as a Bar-Mitzvah, and is commonly practiced among Jews today.

C . Jesus Christ Had Human Needs and Emotions

Although the Lord Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, He was not void of emotions or involvement with humans. He showed feelings of tender compassion and loving care to all those around Him (Lk 7:12-13; Mt 9:36; Mk 8:2; 10:21; Jn 11:5; 35; Jn 15:11). He also showed indignation, sorrow or even frustration towards those who were unbelieving (Lk 19:41-44; Jn 2:14-17; Mk 8:12).

The Lord not only responded to the people around Him, He also had personal emotions and needs. Like any human, the Lord Jesus was not isolated from the pressures and temptations of life. After a long day of preaching, healing the sick and teaching, He would experience fatigue, hunger and thirst, just as we do. After forty days of fasting in the wilderness, the Lord obviously would have been hungry. The Lord Jesus' status as Son of God did not make this fast easier; His physical body suffered the same severe hunger and pain of going without sustenance like us. The Lord also experienced moments of weakness such as when He had to give Himself up. The intense inner pain and struggle was seen through His prayer where His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground (Lk 22:44). Why was it necessary for the Lord to experience all the human emotions, temptations and needs? By coming to earth as a human being, the Lord experienced our weakness, felt our pain, bore the punishments for our sins, and brought us back to Him (Heb 4:15). Therefore, we should not be afraid to bring our true feelings, our joy and our pain before Him. The Lord understands them for He fully experienced them.



Part 2

Jesus Christ Understands Our Needs

A . Jesus Christ Knows Our Physical Needs

One day the Lord Jesus and His disciples took a boat to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, when suddenly a great storm arose. The waves beat so hard against the boat that it began to fill with water. In our lives, we may face many worldly storms that blow up suddenly. Sometimes danger, sickness and unpleasant circumstances arise. During such times, it is hard to see God in the midst of the storm. There may also be times when, like the disciples, we question God saying, "Do You not care whether we perish or not?" or "Do You not see what is happening to us?"

Indeed the Lord sees and He cares. We know He cares and sees when He protects and delivers us in times of difficulties and disaster. He knows our needs when in times of trouble, He gives us His joy and peace so that we can transcend all the troubles of life. He tells us that He understands when, despite our troubles, we can maintain a peaceful heart through trusting in His love and abiding in His word.

Not only does the Lord give us physical peace from life's troubles, He also provides for our daily bread and needs. One morning, the Lord appeared to His disciples, who had just returned after a night out at sea, saying, "Children have you any food?" They replied, "No". The Lord then asked them to cast their nets on the right side of the boat. They caught so much that they were not able to draw the nets in. Later, as they came onto the land, they saw that the Lord had already prepared breakfast for them (Jn 21:1-13).

The Lord Jesus is not solely concerned with our spiritual well being, but our physical needs too. Here, the Lord Jesus understood that the disciples had been out fishing all night and probably had not eaten. He therefore provided breakfast for them. The Lord Jesus reminds us that we need not be anxious for our physical cares and needs, because these are the things that Gentiles worry about. He tells us to consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. Does God not care for them? How much more will He care for us?

B . Jesus Christ Knows Our Emotional Needs

In addition to physical needs, humans have emotional needs too. Matthew 8:1-3 mentions how a leper came to Jesus Christ and knelt before Him, crying, "Lord, if

you will, you can make me clean.” The Lord stretched out His hand, touched him and cleansed him of his disease. In those days, lepers were untouchable. They had to cry out in the streets to warn others to move away from them. They lived outside cities, separated from their loved ones and families. Besides the need to be physically healed of their disease, they had a deep and inner need for love and acceptance. The Lord understood this and He reached out and touched the leper! If we’ve ever been lonely, ever felt rejected or unloved, we know what we need. If we’ve ever been convinced that no one could possibly care for us, we need to remind ourselves that like the case of the leper, we need only to cast our cares and needs upon Him, for He knows us and cares for us (1 Pet 5:7).

C. Jesus Christ Knows Our Spiritual Needs

The ultimate proof that shows that God cares is sending His only beloved son, the Lord Jesus, to the world. Jesus Christ came to deal with the root of all life’s problems, which is sin. He came to give Himself up as an atonement for sin (Heb 2:17). His greatest love and concern for us is shown not merely through healing our diseases, blessing us materially or helping us get out of a tight spot. It is shown through His paying the penalty for sin (Is 53:10; Heb 2:17; 2 Cor 5:21). The Lord saw our need in that while we were yet sinners, He came at the appointed time to die for us, so that we have hope of eternal life.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



- 1** How did the Lord Jesus show Himself to be a perfect human being?
- 2** Why is it important that Jesus Christ came as a human being?
- 3** In your experience, how has the Lord satisfied your physical, emotional or spiritual needs?

L I F E A P P L I C A T I O N



“I Understand Your Pain”

Why did the Lord Jesus live on the earth as long as He did? Couldn’t His life have been much shorter? Why not step into our world just long enough to die for our sins and then leave? Why not a sinless year or week? Why did He have to live a life? To take on sins is one thing, but to take on fatigue, hunger and suffering? To put up with the long roads and long days? Why did He do it? Why did He endure all these feelings?

Because He knew you would feel them too. He knew you would be weary, disturbed and angry. He knew you’d be sleepy, grief-stricken and hungry. He knew you’d face pain—if not the pain of the body, the pain of the soul. And He came to experience all this to let us know He understands.

Some people proclaim that science can solve everything. Others arrogantly believe that they are capable of accomplishing everything. But the truth is, our life on earth is brief, our abilities are limited, and we suffer many weaknesses. The Lord Jesus’ message in coming to the world is—Trust in Me. Because Jesus Christ lived as a man, He fully understands our experiences and our struggles. Since He is God, He has the power and authority to deliver us from sin. The Lord Jesus is the everlasting God, the maker and ruler of all things. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient.

Testimony 1:

Hallelujah, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I testify about an experience I had during prayer on December 26, 1999 in Toronto Church, Canada. During this prayer, I was thinking about my father who was in Taiwan, working hard to support my family here in Canada. The last time I saw him was over a year ago, and I really missed him. Even though my father is very strict, I still wanted him to come back and hug me, and I wanted to tell him how much I loved him. Thinking about him being so far away made me want to cry.

A few minutes after the prayer began, a bright light suddenly shone into my eyes and began enveloping me until it completely surrounded me. I saw a person dressed in a white garment coming toward me. Following him were five or six people who were also dressed in white. I then realized that the first person was the Lord Jesus and the people following Him were angels!

The Lord walked toward me and placed His loving arms around me. At that moment, I felt incredibly joyful, peaceful and comforted. I felt totally safe and protected. Lord Jesus hugged me for what felt like a long time. Then He said, "I am your Father, I am your God." The Lord Jesus was telling me not to worry. My father in Taiwan would be all right and the Lord would look after him and me.

Out of curiosity, I looked up because I wanted to see what the Lord looked like. But I could not see His face, because it was shining so brightly – even brighter than the sun. The faces of the angels were also shining brightly like the Lord Jesus. The angels formed a circle around the Lord and me, holding hands. They sang hymns in a spiritual language, praising the Lord. Even though I did not understand what they were singing, it sounded heavenly, harmonious and melodious. I had never heard such beautiful singing in all my life!

I then looked down where I was kneeling. The ground had turned pure white, and the whiteness started to spread gradually from the spot where the Lord Jesus and I were, radiating out in all directions until it covered the entire area. The church seemed to disappear and I felt that I was no longer in the world – I realized that I was in heaven! This was the first time I saw a glimpse of the heavenly kingdom with my own eyes. Words cannot describe the beautiful views that surrounded me. Everything was pure white, but it did not seem strange.

Then I heard the prayer bell ring. The Lord Jesus stood up and walked away, with the angels following Him. They all disappeared into a white light in the distance.

As the vision ended, I started to sense the presence of the other brothers and sisters who were praying beside me. I opened my eyes, and I realized that I was in church. I felt incredibly joyful that I had been hugged by my Heavenly Father and that I saw Him with my own eyes!

This was a wonderful experience that I will never forget. I now know that my Lord my God is also my dearest, most precious, loving Heavenly Father. He will take care of me, love me and will always be at my side. I feel very blessed to be His child.

(My Father in Heaven, Manna, Issue 34, Jan–Mar 2001)

Testimony 2:

The past couple of months will remain deeply imprinted on my mind as it allowed me to experience the love of brothers and sisters and the wonderful grace and mercy of God.

As part of my university degree, I had to spend four months in St. Petersburg, Russia. Those four months seemed the longest and hardest months of my life. Looking back, I am glad that I had that experience, although I hated it at the time. Before I left Russia, I knew that I would have a long and difficult time ahead, with a different language and culture. Most importantly, the absence of church members meant that it would be a test of my faith. The thought scared me - I didn't know whether I could sustain four months without spiritual support. But thank God for assuring me in my prayers, confirming that He would not leave me alone.

My first glimpse of God's assurance was through a Russian lady. This lady had been in Edinburgh (Scotland) for a couple of days and was supposed to return to London. Somehow, she missed the last train to London. Not knowing what to do, with nowhere to stay, she wandered in the streets of Edinburgh. Amazingly, she ended up at a church brother's take-away shop and asked him for help. The brother called my aunt, and later that evening, my cousins took the Russian lady to their home. They gave her food and offered her a room for the night. The next morning before this lady left for London, she exchanged addresses with my cousins. She told them that I should contact her once I went over to St. Petersburg. When I learned of the incident, I knew that it was God's providence.

Why did this lady from St. Petersburg appear in Edinburgh? Why did she miss the last train to London? And why, of all the take-away shops on that busy street, did she enter the one belonging to our church brother? I was deeply moved because I realized that God had answered my prayers. He was reassuring me that He would be with me to hold my hand and lead the way. He would not leave me alone. I was much comforted by this incident. Later, I managed to meet with this lady in Russia and enjoyed her hospitality. We have become good friends and I hope that one day, she too will be able to experience the love of God. Truly, God had opened a way.

The second incident that I would like to share demonstrates the importance of prayer. After some time in Russia, I felt alone and depressed. The weather was not improving; I was not getting anywhere with the language. My faith was dwindling. I felt so weak that prayer was an arduous task. On many occasions I did not feel like praying even though my heart reminded me that I had to. Once, when my cousin called, I told her how difficult it was to get myself to pray and how lonely I felt. She reminded me that I should always pray no matter how weak I felt. If we do not even take the first step to pray, how will God help us? For Him to draw near to us, we have to first reach out to Him. After that call, I prayed for God's forgiveness and help - I could not do it alone. I desperately needed God, the only

one who could help me. I realized then the importance of prayer. If I stopped, I would lose all contact with God. This would then inevitably lead to the death of my spiritual life. I did not want that to happen - I could not let it. Not after all that God had done for me. I owed Him that much at least.

Another incident that helped me in my struggling faith was a card I received from a sister. On hearing of my unhappiness and loneliness she wrote: "I just wanted to cheer you up and let you know that a lot of people are thinking about you and praying for you." As I read this, tears welled up in my eyes. I was very touched yet deeply ashamed. Brothers and sisters out there were praying for me. But I couldn't even find the strength to pray. It was so comforting to learn that members still remembered me. They have left an indelible impression in my heart and have enabled me to understand the importance of intercessory prayers.

(God Will Find A Way, Manna, Issue 30)

Questions to think about:

1. From the two testimonies, how did the people deal with their problems? How do you deal with your problems? Do you bring all your joys and pains to Him? Do you turn to Him in times of trouble and need? Or do you run from difficulties and use your own ways to resolve your problems?
2. How did the Lord answer their prayers? Think of a time when the Lord opened a way for you.
3. What did the people learn from their experiences? What did you learn from your experience(s)?
4. How does knowing that our Lord once came as a man help you relate to Him?
5. The Lord Jesus is the perfect embodiment of God, who sees, knows and controls of everything. How will our attitudes and lifestyles change if we really believe and understand that Jesus can relate to how we feel? How will it affect our prayers?
6. Do you ever feel as though the Lord Jesus just doesn't understand you or your circumstances? Explain.



1. If you are not already keeping a prayer journal, try it for one month. Get a little notebook, and in one column, write down the date you prayed about a specific need. Keep the second column open to record when and how God answered your prayer.
2. Be on the lookout this week for ways you can convey Christ's compassion to others. Let your friends see that you understand and appreciate their unique troubles. Let your family know that you are trying your best to understand their personal challenges. Do something out of the ordinary. Take a special step out of your comfort zone.