



May the Lord grant to us power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge (Eph 3:16-19).

Lesson 9

The Gospel of Luke

Jesus Christ, the Savior of All Mankind

Listed Scriptures

Lk 2:1-14; 8:1-3; 10:29-37; 16:19-31; 19:1-10; 24:44-48; Gal 3:23-4:7

Lesson Aim

- 1) To enable students to know that the Lord Jesus came to save all mankind
- 2) To enable students to realize the importance of preaching the gospel to the different people of this world

Memory Verse

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3:26-28)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

Luke 17-24



Please refer to the Bible Background section in Lessons 7 and 8 for additional information on the Gospel of Luke (Lessons 7, 8 and 9 are Bible studies based on the Gospel of Luke).



What kind of people do we like to associate with?

Are there certain types of people whom we would rather not be around or have in our lives?

B I B L E S T U D Y

Part 1
*Who
Did the
Lord
Come to
Save?*



In a society where people are discriminated against due to money, education, status, and health, Luke gives comfort by speaking of a Savior who was without any prejudice: "Behold I bring you good news of great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Lk 2:10-11). Jesus Christ came and turned the world and its values upside down. He came to revolutionize lives. He did not judge people based on appearances or factors such as gender, status, education, wealth, or lineage. The Lord saw people for who they were; people who had physical and spiritual needs and wants. He reached out to each soul that needed Him and brought them salvation. By doing this, the Lord abolished every existing human and artificial barrier to save and transform the lives of man. Which kinds of people did the Lord come to save?

A . The Savior of Jews and Gentiles

Since the time of the Old Testament, God promised Abraham that He would bless the world through His descendants, the Israelites (Gen 12:3). God had chosen Israel to be His own people, a separate and holy nation. They were to be a light to the nations and proclaim the news of God to the rest of the world (Is 49:6). But when the Lord Jesus came, the Jews did not recognize Him as their Messiah (Lk 2:10-11).

In his gospel, Luke tells us that although salvation was first given to the Israelites,

salvation is, in fact, universal. Jesus Christ offers forgiveness and salvation freely to all humanity, regardless of race, gender or social merit. Salvation is not only for the Jews, but also for the non-Jews, the Gentiles. To illustrate this, Luke makes constant reference to the Samaritans. In His parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37), the Lord tells the people that it was not a Jew who reached out to help the wounded man. Instead, it was a hated Samaritan, the very race that the Jews abhorred because they were a "mixed race," contaminated by Gentile blood. The Lord's association with the Samaritans, going into their villages, healing the ten lepers and constantly comparing the faith of Gentiles to the unbelief of the Israelites, enabled Jews to realize that He saves even their "enemies" (Lk 17:11-19; Jn 4:1-26).

Besides Samaritans, the Lord demonstrated that salvation could also come to the Gentiles. He excludes no one (Lk 7:1-10; Mt 8:5-13; Mt 15:21-28). Before His ascension the Lord commissioned His believers to proclaim the good news to all (Mk 16:15-16; Mt 28:19). It is God's desire that we preach, from the people of a remote village to the "annoying" neighbor next door. The gospel needs to be spread across ethnic, racial and national barriers.

B . The Savior of Sinners

Ordinarily, people like to associate with those who are wealthy, popular or talented. There are few who would choose to associate with sinners. The majority would much rather keep away from them. The Lord Jesus, however, associated with the sinners. The Pharisees in those days accused the Lord Jesus of being "a friend of tax-collectors and sinners" (Mt 11:19). According to the Pharisees and teachers of the law, contact with tax collectors and sinners made a Jew unclean. The term "sinners" referred not only to immoral and pagan people, but also to the common people, who were not learned in the law and did not abide by the rigid standards of the Pharisees. They were regarded as wicked and opposed to the will of God because they did not observe the rituals for purity that enabled them to eat with others. Thus, to eat and drink with such people was particularly heinous. Furthermore, tax collectors were particularly abhorrent to the Jews because they betrayed their fellow Jews by choosing to work for the Romans. They were also notorious for making themselves rich by adding a sizable sum to the sum due and keeping the money for themselves. The Pharisees would have nothing to do with such people, but not so with the Lord. The Lord was willing to associate with the outcasts of society in order to save them. His mission was "not to call the righteous, but the sinners to

repentance" (Lk 5:31-32). Luke particularly mentions how the Lord forgave the criminal on the cross (Lk 23:39-43), the adulterous woman (Lk 7:37-50). He converted Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10) and called Matthew the tax collector (Lk 5:27). Jesus was able to look beyond their sins and see the needs of these people. They were people who needed the gospel the most. Unlike the self-righteous Pharisees, the sinners recognized their sins and humbly came to Him for pardon and a renewed life.

C . The Savior of the Rich and Poor

Throughout His ministry, the Lord Jesus showed mercy to people from all walks of life and different levels of society. He loved the poor and humble as well as the rich and those of high social status. This is because the Lord looks at a person's heart rather than his/her material wealth or status. Among His followers were those who were rich and powerful as well as those who were poor. Joseph of Arimathea, who requested the body of Christ from Pilate, was a councilor and a rich man (Mt 21:57). Zacchaeus too was a rich tax collector who gave up his all to follow the Lord (Lk 19:1-10). Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish council, was a person of power and status.

Luke also highlights the Lord's care and treatment of the poor. He blessed the poor (Lk 6:20); healed their sicknesses and provided for their needs (Lk 9:10-17); commanded followers to help the poor (Lk 14:13); saved Lazarus, the poor man (Lk 16:19-31); chose disciples who came from poor and lowly backgrounds. The poor are those who have no money and are often despised by society. The Lord Jesus recognized the difficulties and hardships the poor faced and so provided for their physical needs. Yet, the poor are usually more aware of their powerlessness, and thus it is easier for them to acknowledge their need for salvation.

Salvation is therefore not limited to the poor or the rich. Not all poor people go to heaven while all the rich go to hell. What matters is whether the individual responds to the grace of God. The salvation of God is open for everyone, regardless of whether one is poor or rich, humble or honorable.

D . The Savior of Men and Women

In a patriarchal society, the Lord came to show that women, as well as men, have needs, particularly the need for salvation. In Luke there are ten references to women, five of which are not mentioned in the other gospels (Lk 4:38-39; 7:11-17;

7:36-50; 8:1-3; 43-48; 10:38-42; 13:10-17; 21:1-3; 23:27-31; 55-24:11). In first century Jewish culture, women were usually treated as second-class citizens, enjoying few of the rights that men had. Women were often overlooked. Jewish tradition frowned upon women studying with rabbis. Some even considered it sinful to teach women the law. Women were permitted in the synagogue but custom required them to sit apart from the men. Luke however, made special note of how the Lord cared for respected and saved women. In Luke 8:1-3 for example, several women are mentioned for their devotion and service to the Lord. Ordinarily, women would not have been acknowledged, but here, Luke records how the women provided for the ministry, followed the Lord, wept at the cross, prepared spices to anoint the Lord's body and were the first to whom the Lord appeared after His resurrection.

Furthermore, in a society where women were overlooked and ignored, the Lord Jesus not only spoke to women, but He also healed them of their diseases (Lk 4:38-39; Lk 8:43-48; 13:10-17), showed compassion upon them (Lk 7:11-17), forgave their sins (Jn 8:1-11) and saved them. This reminded the Jews that the Lord Jesus respected men and women equally. It also shows that the souls of men and women are equally precious in the sight of God.

Part 2 **Make the Lord Our Savior**

A . Believe in the Lord Jesus

Was there a time in your life when you held a very strong belief in something or someone? How did that belief influence your thoughts or actions? Today, many people claim to believe in God, but their attitudes and actions do not reflect that belief. Their lives, speech and attitudes reflect a belief in themselves and the world rather than in God. We see, therefore, that the depth of our belief directly impacts how we live our lives. The deeper our understanding and belief of the Lord, the closer we will follow Him and let His words shape our attitudes, speech and thoughts. If we observe the people that the Lord encountered during His ministry, we see that those who believed in Him exhibited a complete change and transformation in their lives. They changed because they had full conviction and confidence in whom they believed. Let us, therefore, examine the depth and genuineness of our faith and ask the Lord to increase our faith and knowledge of Him.

B . Repent

“Repent” in Greek is *metanoia*, which means “a change of heart and life, a change of life direction.” A person who repents turns from his old ways to wholeheartedly commit himself to doing the will of God. We need to repent of our past sins, transgressions in daily life, refusal to believe in God, or belief in false doctrines or religions. To show our repentance we need to be determined to change our ways and follow God’s direction and commandments. Zacchaeus is a great example of a person who repented from his former life of sin. After knowing the Lord, he demonstrated inward change by outward action. It is not enough to follow the Lord in our head or heart alone. We need to show our repentance by a changed life and changed behavior. Our renewed lives need to reflect a change from our past attitudes, ways and worldly views. Today, what aspects of our lives need repentance? Has our repentance resulted in action or change?

C . Be Baptized by Water and the Spirit

One night a Pharisee named Nicodemus came to the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus declared to him that to enter the kingdom of God, one must be born of the water and the spirit (Jn 3:5). Through baptism of water, our former self is buried with Christ and our past sins are washed away. We become a new person with new life in Christ. Through baptism of the spirit, we are given a seal to our heavenly inheritance (Eph 1:13-14). Also, the Holy Spirit is our personal counselor who helps us to transform from a sinful and depraved life to being a true believer.

D . Lead a New Life

While Jesus Christ was on earth, His mission was not simply to heal the people of their sickness, bestow physical blessings or resolve their problems. The Lord came to be the Savior of men’s souls. He came to save us from death and sin. Today, if we seek the Lord Jesus only as a Savior of this life and not eternal life, then we are, as Apostle Paul says, “of all men most pitied” (1 Cor 15:19), for we have missed the whole message. When we clearly understand that the Lord came to save us from the horrors of sin and death, our lives should reflect this understanding. Our lives and inner beings change as we obey His commands and do His will.

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



- 1** What does the Lord teach us regarding our attitude towards other races and cultures, particularly those we may have ill feelings towards?
- 2** Suggest ways to spread the gospel to different races and people.
- 3** How have we tried to open ourselves or the church up to enable people from other races to feel more at home?
- 4** The Pharisees separated themselves from impurity and impure people. How do we regard people whose ways are sinful and wicked?
- 5** What can we learn about the heart of the Lord Jesus with regards to sinners?
- 6** Does status, wealth or fame easily impress us?
- 7** Are we partial to those who are materially well off while we ignore those who are less fortunate?
- 8** What does the Lord Jesus teach us about salvation and material wealth?
- 9** In what ways have we treated others or have been treated as second-class citizens? How did you deal with the situation?
- 10** What changes do we need to make to treat someone like the Savior did?
- 11** What steps do we need to take to make Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior?
- 12** Do our speech, thoughts, and actions reflect Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior in our life?
- 13** Share with each other how our lives have changed since knowing the Lord.



The Watermaster

Years ago there was a village in a desert. Water was scarce, and the people treasured what little they had. It seldom rained, but when it did, people scurried about to capture it in buckets and pots. Every drop was a treasure, every cup was precious.

One day, a farmer was digging holes for fence posts. A few feet below the surface of the ground, he found a cavern – not large, but full of water. He immediately lowered a bucket, pulled it out and tasted, to his delight, cold, sweet water. He was so excited he filled all his buckets, loaded them in the back of his wagon, and hurried into the village.

“I have water! I have water!” he shouted. The villagers came running out of their houses. As the people gathered, the farmer explained how he had come upon the treasure. He joyfully announced that there was enough for everyone. “Drink all you want. There is plenty! Enjoy it!” The people rejoiced for the first time as long as anyone could remember, there was enough water for everyone. The farmer then announced his plan. “I’ll bring some water in every morning so each of you can have what you need.”

And that’s exactly what he did. The farmer became the watermaster. Every morning he loaded the buckets into his wagon, rode into town, and gave some water to the people. It was great. The water was free. The farmer was willing and the villagers were grateful.

This continued until the farmer had a dream one night. In the dream, he saw the people taking the water and not being thankful. They would walk up to the wagon, snatch the bucket and march away without a word of appreciation. When he awoke he was troubled. As he rode into town, he resolved to give the water only to the grateful. He announced to the people, “From now on, I will not give water to those who aren’t thankful.” The people were surprised. Each person thanked him when he or she received the water.

All was well until the farmer had another dream. In this dream, some of the people who were drinking the water were unkind to their neighbors and mean to their animals. The next morning, he decided he would give the water to worthy individuals

only. “If you are mean to your animals or unkind to your neighbors, you will get no water,” he decreed. The people looked at each other and were silent. They knew the bad people among them. When the watermaster saw the looks of distrust, he had an idea.

“Each of you come and tell me who is unworthy so I will know who is mean and unkind.” So one by one they came with their names, and he made a list. The list grew and grew. Finally after every villager had spoken, the farmer read the names. He was shocked. Every person in the town was on the list except one. The farmer.

So he stood on the wagon and announced that since few were grateful and none were worthy, he would bring no more water into the village. And with that he turned his wagon of water around and rode off.

Questions to think about:

1. *How does this story teach us about the difference between giving what a person needs and what a person deserves?*
2. *Have we changed the way we treat others based on external factors, or based on whether a person is considered “good” or “bad”?*
3. *When we share the gospel with others are we selective about whom we speak to? Do we speak to those who appear to be deserving of the gospel, and ignore those who do not fit our personal views? How can we have the attitude of the Lord, who chose indiscriminately, no matter how insignificant that person seemed to be?*

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



The good news about Jesus Christ is that He comes to all types of people, including the unlovable, the plain, the outcasts and the despised. He comes to anyone with a heart humble enough to accept Him. Jesus Christ accepts them for who they are. Let us pray and ask the Lord to help us have an all-embracing heart, a heart of compassion and concern for the people around us and a heart to share the wonderful gospel to the world.