

Luke Training Day – How to Study Luke

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 13 September 2008

Preacher: Canon David Short

[0 : 00] Well, it's great to welcome you all on this Luke Day. And as people are still filing in, I hope you have a set of notes available to you.

A white sheet with headings on it, which I seem not to have. Someone, thank you very much, would supply me. That would be great. Thanks, Aaron.

A white sheet, creatively named Luke. And on the table on the yellow sheet, we're going to break at 10.30 for coffee.

This first session is full of content and Aaron is going to be working a PowerPoint presentation. As Amber said, Aaron will push our buttons.

Bronnie and I were walking along the beach wall a few months ago and we passed a guy who was walking along furiously saying, Don't push my buttons! Don't push my buttons! And this is a gift that Aaron has and so we're grateful to it.

[1 : 09] Now we have three goals today. The first is, as an introduction to Luke, to give an overview and a feel for Luke's gospel. It's a big gospel. And so we want to help each other with that.

And second, to do that, we're also going to dive into some skills, some basic skills. And that's the second session. Between 10.50 and lunch, we're going to learn a little toolkit and then you're going to work on passages together.

We're going to share our wisdom and we're going to do that after lunch as well in the dead hour. So we're going to fly over Luke. We're going to get some basic skills. And thirdly and most importantly, we want to grow in our knowledge of Jesus Christ, don't we?

I mean, this is useless unless... It's completely useless, isn't it? Unless we do that. Unless we hear God speak and unless we come to understand more of who Jesus Christ is.

On your sheet, you can see background one, shape of Luke two, how to read Luke three, and then four themes. I'm going to introduce three themes in Luke and that'll be the major content before we get to coffee.

[2 : 21] On the right-hand side, just where Jan's walking, there's a white piece of paper and there are pens on the Bible stall there. And you're invited to write sentences that combine lots of L's to describe what we're doing.

And there are prizes for those who come up with the best sentence, like learning to love the legacy of Luke or something like that. So if you have any ideas, write them down there and we'll read them out during the breaks.

Now, this is Luke's Gospel and you can see... I don't know if you're aware or not, but Luke is the patron saint of art.

And I'll explain why in just a minute. And there are many thousands of very famous paintings, sculptures, drawings. This is the... Actually, I'm not sure what that is.

I think it's a 14th century French painting. And this is Luke writing his Gospel. It looks like the Titanic in the background. And above him is the symbol for Luke, which is a bull, strength and sacrifice, because Luke starts in the temple and finishes in the temple.

[3 : 37] Would you push my buttons, please, Erin, just once? Thank you. This is... This is the... I think this is the Carolingian Gospel.

I'm not... No, no, it's a Celtic manuscript, this one. You can see the Celtic crosses. That's Luke. And by this time in history, he's got himself into slippers. So we're going to stop every now and again and have a look at some pieces of art, but that's enough for now.

Let's get into the content. Background. Who was Luke? Point A. And I wonder if you would push the button again, Erin. You can see from the beginning of Luke's Gospel and the beginning of the Book of Acts that Luke is writing to the same person.

You see verse 3 of chapter 1, It seemed good to me, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus. And then in the Book of Acts, he says, In the first book, O Theophilus, I've dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, which means that the Book of Acts is about all that Jesus continues to do and teach, of course. So they're written by the same person. They are artistically and structurally very similar. And there are all sorts of linguistic overlaps.

[4 : 53] But who is Luke? So if we go to the next sheet, you know there are three passages in the New Testament that mention Luke. Here in Colossians 4, the Apostle Paul is in prison in Rome.

And he speaks, he's writing to the church in Colossae, and he speaks about Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you. Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, who wrote the second gospel.

And Jesus called justice. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. What does that mean?

They're Jewish, that's right. And they're fellow workers with him. Some of them are in prison with him. Some of them are not. All of them are fellow workers. He mentions Epaphras in verse 12, 14. Luke. Push a button, Erin. Thank you. This is my second PowerPoint presentation. I loathe and despise PowerPoint, but I thought it would be useful today.

[5 : 54] Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greets you. Luke, he's a doctor, and he's loved, and he's with Paul in his first Roman imprisonment.

Et cetera, et cetera. Isn't that remarkable? Okay, the next passage is in Philemon. Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you.

This is written from his second imprisonment in Rome. And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

So what do we know about Luke so far? He's with Paul in two imprisonments. This is a very good time to say all cell phones should be turned off.

He's with Paul in two imprisonments. He knows Mark. Mark is with him. He knows Mark personally. He's not Jewish. We learned that from the Colossians passage.

[6 : 54] And he's a fellow worker. Let's look down at 2 Timothy 4. The last passage to mention Luke in the New Testament.

Do your best to come to me soon. Demas, in love with the present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia. Titus to Dalmatia. Luke alone is with me. Here he is in his final imprisonment. Luke alone is with him. Get Mark and bring him with you. He is very useful in serving me.

Verse 13. When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all, the parchments. What's that referring to?

Well, we don't know. But do you think it's possible in the final imprisonment, Paul is saying, come on, Luke, get the gospel, write the gospel, write the book of Acts, and Mark's coming over with the thing that he's written.

[7 : 53] I don't know. We're not sure. But we do know that Luke is a Gentile, a doctor, greatly loved, knows Mark, and comes to Jerusalem.

He's a doctor, so he's a man of science. He's the only Gentile writing in the New Testament. And we also know that he is an artist. And this is a very ancient tradition.

So we'll go to the next picture here, Aaron. Yes. That doesn't show it very brightly, does it? These are a number of icons.

Nobody knows when. It's a late medieval icon, that one. It's in Russia somewhere. There's another one, which is a Russian icon in black and white. These pictures depict Luke painting the Virgin Mary.

If you read Luke's gospel, I'll come to this in just a second, I think you have to say that it's like a work of art. And it's not very, I mean, you can't systematize it easily.

[8 : 55] And so there's this ancient tradition about Luke being a painter and painting the Virgin Mary. And if you go to Rome, there's a church in Rome, the Capella Paolina.

There is a painting there, which I think I've got on the next slide, which some people think is actually Luke's painting of Mary and the Virgin.

I doubt it sincerely. Although the Virgin is not pointing to the baby, which means it's pre-medieval, the painting is dated to 400 and something or other A.D., which is very interesting but probably not historically accurate.

However, Luke, because he's an artist and because the way he writes is incredibly creative, he has become a source of artistic inspiration down through the ages.

And I have one more here, which you'll all know. So that's Rembrandt's prodigal son. And in the early medieval, the early medieval ages, artistic, the guild of artists, the visual artists in various cities were called guilds of St. Luke.

[10:13] It's all very interesting. But the key for us is that Luke is a Gentile. So as you read the Gospel, know that he's writing for people who don't have a lot of familiarity with the practice of Judaism.

And again and again and again, he uses titles which explain what's going on. Let me give you an example. He doesn't just refer to demons. He calls demons unclean demons because the Greeks thought that they were good demons as well as unclean demons.

And in chapter 9, when Jesus is transfigured, he doesn't just use the word transfigured. He uses the word changed because pagan deities used to transfigure themselves.

But the Gospel has this feeling of artistic spread and the Gospel is universal. All flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

And I don't think another Gospel comes close to describing the gentleness of Jesus. And because it's so big, there are many unique stories in Luke's Gospel. Secondly, sources.

[11:16] Where did he get all this stuff? Well, if we turn to the next slide, we realise that Luke travelled with Paul in the book of Acts. Push the next button.

Do you see that effect? We should do it again. Go back and do it again. That's enough. You're pushing my buttons.

You see, when you read through the book of Acts, Luke describes what's going on. And suddenly in chapter 16, we find he joins the Apostle Paul. You see? So he's with the Apostle Paul here in the second missionary journey.

And then in chapter 20, which is the next slide, six years later on the third missionary journey, let me read you a couple of these passages. You see, in chapter 21, they journeyed.

Actually, they come all the way from Philippi and they come to Ptolemy. And then they, verse 8, they departed to Caesarea. We entered the house of Philip, the evangelist, one of the seven, and stayed with him.

[12:21] And he had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. I'm going to preach on that one day. And while we're staying for some days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

Verse 15, after these days we made ready and went up to Jerusalem. Verse 17, when we'd come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. On the following day, Paul went in with us to James.

This is James, the brother of Jesus. And all the elders were present. And then they have the second council. So Luke is a friend and known to some of the family members of Jesus.

Paul is then arrested. And for two years, Luke has access to all the people in Jerusalem. He obviously travels and speaks with Mary. And he has a number of eyewitnesses with him.

And then in chapter 27, which we don't have a slide of, he travels with Paul to Rome for Paul to be executed.

[13:25] So just open your gospel at Luke chapter 1 for a moment. You see, in the first couple of verses, Luke 1, and I'm not sure what version you're using.

I'm reading from the ESV. In verse 2, sorry, in verse 1 he says, many have undertaken to compile a narrative. That's not just telling a story.

That describes written documents. So Luke, as he writes his gospel, has written documents.

Perhaps he has Mark's gospel. Verse 2, Just as those who were from the beginning eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also having followed all things closely for some time past.

I've carefully investigated this. And as you go through Luke's gospel, every now and again he just stops down and names some people that the other gospels don't name. And when you get those names, think about these people and Luke's relationship with them.

For example, in chapter 8, when he's mentioning some of the women, Luke is obviously, there's obviously a woman who is married to the head of Herod's house. So some of the information that he has on Herod, he's checked out through this woman.

[14:51] I think her name is Joanna. All right. So let's just, there's another slide or two here. It's not a very good picture.

But on the left, we have one of the most, these are two of the earliest texts of Luke's gospel, 110 to 150 AD.

These documents are. So they're copies of copies of copies. But they're very close together. The P75, the Oxyrhynchus discoveries overturned some of the thinking about Luke.

And there's one more I've got on the next page. This is a folio of, in the Chester Beatty library with some of Luke. And this is, these are some of the very most early manuscripts we have.

And Luke would have been writing on something a little bit like that on a scroll. Secondly, let's look to the shape of Luke, shall we? And I've got four points to make under here.

[15:57] The first thing to say is it's a narrative. That's what he calls it here in chapter 1, verse 1. So when we read Luke's gospel, we read it as a narrative. Do you remember last year when we looked at the book of Exodus?

When you take a book, a narrative, you come to it and you start to read it and to appreciate it as a narrative. So when you look at Luke's gospel, it begins and it ends in the same place, in the temple. It begins and it ends in joy. There are angels in the early chapters and angels in the last chapters. So there's a narrative and a movement.

Secondly, if we go up to 30,000 feet, Erin, if I could see the next slide, please. There are three sections of Luke's gospel. This is very important. Chapters 1 to 9 is all Jesus' ministry in Galilee. And the main issue in chapters 1 to 9 is who is Jesus. And then in chapters 9 to 19, we have the longest section of Luke is a journey to Jerusalem.

[17:03] And in the journey, everything is done in the light of the cross. There is this sadness and darkness that casts its shadow back on the journey to Jerusalem.

And in this section, Jesus does most of his teaching and he's mostly teaching his disciples. That's where most of the parables occur. And then the third section is actually in Jerusalem itself.

And as we come into Jerusalem out of the end of chapter 19, it's conflict, conflict, conflict. As the Son of Man suffers and is crucified and is raised and ascends to the right hand.

Vicious opposition. So if you look at the next slide, that's a map of Israel. Galilee is in the north. And that is where chapters 9 to 1, Jesus' influence, he goes a little bit up north.

But basically, in and around Galilee are the stories in the first nine chapters. Jerusalem is the place of chapters 19 to 24. But the middle section goes all the way down.

[18:07] And that middle section, in some ways, is the most important section of Luke's gospel. See? Let's look at the structure of chapters 1 to 9. I just want to point out to you that the first four chapters are preparation for the ministry of Jesus.

Those of you who've read the gospel will be very familiar with this. Chapters 1 and 2 are about two main characters. Who are they? John the Baptist and Jesus.

That's right. And they are laid side by side. And there are ten stories. John the Baptist and Jesus laid side by side. Both of them announced by an angel, Gabriel. Both of them are named by God. Both of them have a mission from God. Both of them have a mission that fulfills the Old Testament. Both of them are born to great joy. But when we work through those first two chapters, we find the massive weighting of the material is towards Jesus.

And the only time the two come together is when Mary and Elizabeth are both pregnant with the boys. And John the Baptist leaps in the womb.

[19:11] And Elizabeth calls Mary the mother of my Lord. Massive joy in Jesus' coming. And then the second from chapter 4 verse 14 onwards, Jesus begins his public ministry.

D, the big theme through these nine chapters, as I say, is Jesus' identity. So I don't know whether you are a massive verse writer downer, but I'll list a couple of verses here.

And I'll just read a couple of them. When I was in seminary, the lecturers used to read lots of verses and we'd write lists of them. And I don't think I've ever looked up any of them.

So you don't need to write these down. But here are some of the people who ask about who Jesus is. In chapter 4 verse 22, the locals say, is this not Joseph's son?

In 4.36, the crowd says, what is this word? With power and authority he commands the unclean spirits. In 5.21, the Pharisees say, who is this that speaks blasphemies?

[20:16] In 7.16, the crowd says, a great prophet has risen amongst us. In 7.19, John the Baptist's disciples come and say, are you the one who is to come?

You see how it's gathering in its drama. In 8.25, the disciples say, who then is this that he commands the winds and the water?

When we get to chapter 9, it's very interesting. There are three people who ask about Jesus' identity. First is Herod. Then Jesus calls the disciples to answer the question. And then finally, in chapter 9, in the transfiguration, God himself speaks from heaven. You want to just look at that one verse with me. Chapter 9, verse 35.

He's on the mountain.

[21 : 20] He's being transfigured. A voice came out of the cloud, verse 35, saying, this is my son, which comes from where?

Psalm, Psalm 2. My chosen one, which comes from Isaiah 45. Listen to him, which comes from Deuteronomy 18.

So God the Father combines three Old Testament quotes. And now, by the time we get to the end of chapter 9, it's absolutely clear who Jesus is. So, in chapter 9, verse 51, we move to the second section of his ministry.

Number three, heading number three, how to read Luke. I'll pause for questions at the bottom of the page. I've just got four little things to say here. The first is this.

Luke is written for the ordinary reader. It's not written for the expert. There are huge books that are written on Luke. I didn't bring any today because they're so heavy.

[22 : 26] I've got a commentary that's about 900 pages on Luke. My own view is that the best way to understand Luke's gospel is to read it.

I know that sounds very technical. But to read it over and over and over. And my own testimony to this is, and I'm reading it now again and again and again in my own private Bible readings.

It's my own reading of it, not the commentaries, where I see the links and I see what's going on.

Don't let the size of Luke frighten you. I thought it was a bit of a monster.

And the thing is it resists systematising furiously. And I think that's wonderful. Because you can't squeeze Luke into a neat little box.

And all the commentaries try and do it. And these bits keep going, poof, and squeezing out. They don't quite fit. It's an orderly account. But I think it's breathtakingly beautiful.

[23 : 30] And let me tell you, if you miss a Sunday or if you miss a chunk of Luke, the next section's not going to make as much sense to you. So you all must come every Sunday.

It's like a piece of art. So click twice, please, Eric. This is a piece of art that is on the ceiling of Des Invalides in Paris.

And it was painted, the date is late 1690s, by Charles de la Fosse. And this is Paul, you can't see it very well, telling Luke, let's go to Rome, mate.

I'm sorry about the lighting on this. It's not very good, is it? But you know how you read painting? I mean, the obvious movement is across from here to here.

But in contradiction, Paul's hand is pointing down here. And down here, you can't see it very well, right here, is the mausoleum in Rome where execution is happening.

[24 : 38] And here is the sword by which Paul will be crucified. And here is the priest's helmet from chapter 1 from Zechariah, which Luke, obviously, get away from me, Paul.

I'm legally writing the story. And Paul says, no, no, come on, let's go and die. Now, I think it's a wonderful painting, but I think Luke is a bit like that.

You know when you come across a piece of art where you think, I've got to look at this for longer. And Luke is like that. You keep looking at it, and each time you come past it, you see something new.

So don't let the size of it frighten you. Secondly, we need to read it in the light of the Old Testament. I said this last Sunday. Is there anybody here who wasn't? No, no, I won't do that now.

If you would like to hear the sermon, it's probably online. But when I say you need to read it in the light of the Old Testament, there's a lot of little words in Luke's Gospel which help us.

[25 : 39] The word fulfill, whenever that comes up, it's like a five-alarm bell word. But there's another little word that Jesus uses. It's the word must. The first words of Jesus are when he's in the temple as a boy, and Mary and Joseph are looking for him.

And he said, don't you know that I must be about my father's business or in my father's house? That's God's divine will. When he says the Son of Man must suffer and be raised.

When he says I must preach the Gospel, those are Old Testament references. And you'll see quotes from the Old Testament and echoes from the Old Testament.

The parable of the vineyard is an echo of Isaiah, etc., etc. Read it in light of the Old Testament. Thirdly, orderly. I spoke about that last Sunday. And fourthly and finally, before we take some questions, I just want to mention this universe of discourse.

Each book in the Bible has its own integrity, its own universe of discourse. It's part of the revelation of God. But when you're reading Luke, you're not reading John.

[26 : 48] And when you're reading Mark, you're not reading Matthew. So read Luke and try and understand Luke and what Luke is saying. For example, the feeding of the 5,000 in John's Gospel is very much about Jesus as the new Moses and the bread of life.

Whereas in Luke's Gospel, it's placed in a string of stories about the failure of the disciples. And that element of it is brought out. So be faithful to each universe of discourse.

When you read Matthew's Gospel, Matthew is about Jesus the Messiah coming to bring faith and salvation. Mark is about the kingdom of God that has arrived, repent and believe the Gospel.

John is about eternal life for those who believe that Jesus is the Son. But Luke's Gospel is about salvation, which we're going to come to in our theme. So let me pause there and see if there are any questions so far.

Anybody got any questions or comments? Ron.

[28 : 02] The question is about the orderliness of Luke. Yes, I'd love to. In chapter 1, verse 3, Luke says that he's writing an orderly account.

What that means is that each story takes part of its meaning and significance from where it is in the sequence. He says, I've deliberately put these in sequence like a work of art. So don't rip one little story out of its context.

You need to work hard on seeing what that passage means in its context. It's very interesting. Luke uses this word again in Acts chapter 11. Remember when Cornelius is converted in chapter 10, the story is told, takes a thousand verses, a lot of verses.

And then in chapter 11, Peter goes up to Jerusalem and retells the story and brings out the theological significance. And in the Greek, Luke says he gave an orderly account. So an orderly account is a gathering of the stories in a particular sequence to bring out the main theological reason.

So I say to you again, as you're reading the gospel and Sunday school teachers, you're teaching the gospel to children, be aware that the story you are telling is in a particular context in Luke's gospel.

[29 : 23] And there are lots of those I can't make out. I can't understand what's going on in the context. But those, when you start to see some of the context issues, it gives you great confidence in your understanding of the story in front of you.

Any other questions? Yeah. You said it was written for the ordinary reader. Yes. How many people would be able to read?

The question is, if it was written for the ordinary reader, how many people would be able to read? I think our view of illiteracy in the ancient Near East has changed in the last few years.

And certainly a number of documents we've got of small businessmen in and around Galilee demonstrates that they spoke and wrote likely Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek.

But most reading was done out loud anyway. This silent reading that we do, when was that invented? Does anyone know? No? It's a medieval thing, isn't it?

[30 : 32] Late medieval thing? Excuse me? Post-Gutenberg. Is that right? Well, it's Renaissance, Reformation. Well, anyway, all reading was done out loud.

So maybe we should read Luke out loud as we read it. Yeah. We, Bronnie and I do that at home. We're very boring. That's... Any other questions?

Yeah, David. Luke? Yeah. You know, I always see the debate as to whether it's around... Yeah.

...or whether it's... And the second thing is, like, what was the connection between that and the earliest papyrus? Papyrus.

Papyrus, yeah. What did we have? Yeah. Two questions. When was it written? And what's the connection between that and the earliest papyrus we have? I'm not certain when it was written. My view is it's pre-fall of Rome.

[31 : 30] So it has to be written after 58. And it has to be written before 59, depending on when you date the death of Paul.

Because the book of Acts doesn't finish with Paul being crucified. Paul's happily preaching the gospel still in Rome. So it depends what dating you put Paul's execution at. That's when I think it was written.

The connection between the papyri is, of course, we don't have the autographs. We don't have the actual manuscript that Luke wrote. Or we don't think we do. And this is a whole area called textual criticism.

How do we find out? How do we figure out whether these texts are reliable? And I'm not going to answer that question in any depth. Just to say that when it comes to the New Testament, and particularly Luke, and Luke's gospel of all the documents in the New Testament, is the most widely attested in the early church.

So you have people quoting it before the end of the first century. Many of the church fathers quoting it at the beginning of the second century. And the documents that we have, all the different families, the Western texts, the Sinaiticus, the Vaticanus, all those families, attest, have very few major differences in the copies.

[32 : 48] We have thousands of copies of Luke by the time we get to 500. Any other questions? Yes, sir. When you write something in relation to some of the things that shapes, how do you write it?

Yes. Very interesting. What Theophilus is? Are you paying for it? Yes. Do we know anything about the text? Question about Theophilus shaping the text. We don't know much about Theophilus. It's a Greek name. And one of the most interesting things about it is that he's called most excellent Theophilus in the first gospel.

And in verse 4, Luke says, you've heard about this. Yes. But you need to know the truth of it. And the word to know is the personal side. So most people think that he probably was a wealthy Greek patron who Luke wants to get this published.

And when he writes the book of Acts, he just calls him Theophilus. And a lot of people think, well, maybe he became a Christian between the two. Let's move on, shall we? Do you want to just stand for 30 seconds?

[33 : 49] Because we're going to move faster for the second half of this. Okay, sit down again.

Sit down again. Sit down again. Sit down again. This second section is the part I've been looking forward to.

All of that, in a sense, is introductory and interesting. But this is really what we're getting into now. So these three points.

Let me introduce these three themes by saying that the big theme of Luke's gospel is salvation.

Okay? God's purposes to bring salvation are finally going to be fulfilled.

What does Mary say in 147? God, my Savior, she calls him. And in chapter 2, 11, the angels say to the shepherds, To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior.

[35 : 00] This is the purpose of God. This is why the Old Testament is important. And this helps us understand the conflict in Luke's gospel.

Because if you are not, if your purpose is different than God's salvation, you will end up opposing God. So flick over to chapter 7 for a second.

7 verse 29. Astounding verses. 7, 29.

When all the people heard this and the tax collectors too, they declared God just or righteous.

Having been baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

They rejected God's purpose because they rejected salvation. So salvation comes as the purpose of God. But salvation is so big and so rich and so wonderful that Luke paints these different pictures of it.

[36 : 07] And I think there are five main pictures of salvation in Luke. There may be more. But in the last few months in working on it, I've come to five main.

I want to give you three and I want you to discover two in your Bible passages. They all connect and they all overlap. And the first is release. Release.

I wonder if you put up the next slide, please, Aaron. Release. You want to turn back to chapter 4 and you want to look at the screen.

The first picture of salvation in Luke's gospel is that salvation is release.

Now, Jesus comes to the synagogue in Nazareth of Galilee and he preaches. And I want to read this passage, all of it, so just keep that up on the screen.

[37 : 04] Verse 16. He came to Nazareth where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and he stood up to read.

So every Sabbath he went into the synagogue and he preached. This is the only sermon in a synagogue of his that we hear. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him and he unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

And all spoke well of him. And they marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, Is this not Joseph's son? But then he loses them.

[38 : 20] He said to them, Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself. What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.

And he said, Truly I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. But in truth I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over the land.

And Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath in the land of Zidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them were cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.

When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of town, and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff.

But passing through their midst, he went away. It is truly remarkable, and not a good response for his first sermon. These words are programmatic for Jesus' ministry.

[39 : 32] They're the first words of his public ministry. And he gets up and he reads this from the prophet Isaiah. And then he stands and he says, I am the fulfillment of these words.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. I am the anointed one. And look at the emphasis on me, me, me. He has anointed me. And what has he anointed me to do? It is to preach good news to the poor.

That is the main verb. And what that looks like is this. It's to proclaim release to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty, another click please, which is the same word as release, to those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

So Jesus' ministry, I'll come back to the good news to the poor in just a minute. Jesus' ministry is the proclamation of release. He's come to bring release. And the Greek word for release I've put up there is the word *aphesis*, which is the word to forgive.

So from the beginning, we know from chapter 177, that God is about to bring knowledge of salvation through forgiveness of sins.

[40 : 50] And throughout Luke's gospel, release and forgiveness are the same thing. Release from sin, release from sickness. Let me give you one illustration.

Just turn over to chapter 13 for a second. In chapter 13 in verse 12, he's in the synagogue.

There's a woman who's disabled, a disabling spirit. In verse 12, Jesus calls her over and said to her, woman, you are free from your disability.

They don't like that. This is lovely. I've got to read this. Verse 14, the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, oh no, there are six days in which work ought to be done.

Come on those days and be healed. We cannot have God interfering with this. Then the Lord answered him, you hypocrites, does not each one of you on a Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it?

[41 : 57] Ought not this woman, listen to these words, a daughter of Abraham, who Satan bound for 18 years be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?

And so we find Satan is behind all bondage, both in sickness and both in sin, and salvation is liberation from bondage. So if you go to the next slide, here is a picture.

Salvation is release. And have we not finished studying the book of Exodus? And the freedom that comes from slavery, which is the theme of the book of Exodus, is now played out in the book of Luke.

And for those of you who remember, in chapter 9 of Luke's gospel, when he is transfigured, do you remember what Elijah and Moses are talking with Jesus about on the mountain?

His exodus. So his death and resurrection, in his death and resurrection that he fulfills in Jerusalem, Jesus brings release. That's the first picture. The next picture, secondly, salvation is reversal.

[43 : 07] A few weeks ago, we had the Vancouver Youth Leaders Conference. This is kids. And I asked the young people to write lists and share with us how to be in, how to be cool, how to be admired, how to be popular.

What are the status markers amongst young people today? Very interesting. It was a wonderful list. I'll share it with you later, those of you who...

Now, it was very interesting. You need an iPod for one. And you need an iPhone for two. Some of the kids talked about, it's not just what you wear, it's how you wear it.

You have to have your own style. And in Vancouver, the pressure on the kids is to have one thing they're really good at. If you have one thing, it could be sport, it could be music, it could be anything, then you're in.

But the interesting thing is that at each table, when they fed back, every single table had one thing in common, one thing that makes you an admired person. It is money.

[44 : 16] Very interesting. As you read through Luke's Gospel, I want you to be aware that status is very important. There's no throwaway line in Luke's Gospel.

So go back to chapter 1 for a second. Look at verse 5.

As the Gospel starts, in verse 5, in the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest of Zechariah, of the division of Abijah.

These are all status words. A wife from the daughters of Aaron. Couldn't get higher in Israel. Herod is king.

It's not just the rules. That's a status term. The same with Augustus in chapter 2, verse 1. He's called the Caesar. These are power, privilege words. But who did the angels come to, and who did the angels announce the good news to in chapter 2?

[45 : 29] Shepherds. And they were at the very bottom. They were seen as unclean. So the Gospel starts with Zechariah, who's a priest, which is very high status. But there's a twist.

They're barren, which doesn't give them high status. Here is the point. When salvation comes, when the Gospel comes, it completely redefines status.

When my youngest son was about three, we were on holidays together, and my oldest son and I were playing chess, and Ben was thrashing me at chess. And Josh came over, and I guess he thought it was like a rough and tumble game, and he came over and wanted to join in, and he went like this, and he pushed all the pieces.

It was great. I won. And that is what Jesus is doing. When he says in chapter 418, I have come to preach good news to the poor, explain why does he go to the rich, as well as the poor, economically?

And the answer is because the poor are not primarily defined in Luke's Gospel in the way that we define poor.

[46 : 50] They are not primarily, it's not primarily an economic term in Luke's Gospel. It is a status and power term. We judge people, we judge status on the basis of money.

We talk about poverty in terms of income and the house that you live in, although I did come across this in the paper the other week. This is Jamie Oliver.

You know the young cook in England? He says there's a new poverty in England. People have widescreen televisions, cars, cell phones, and above all, beer.

It's got nothing to do with famine, quite the opposite. Quote, England is one of the richest countries in the world. The people I'm telling you about have huge TV sets, it's a lot bigger than mine. They have state-of-the-art mobile phones, cars, they go and get drunk in pubs on the weekend.

Their poverty shows in all sorts of ways. He says, I'm going to be harsh, but I think England people's food lacks heart. It's bland. He's talking about a new poverty.

[47 : 56] In Jesus' day, status did not come from money. You could be poor, but have high status. Zechariah is an illustration.

He wouldn't have had a lot of money, but he was a priest at the center of things, in the temple. I know this is hard for us to believe, but until about 250 years ago, over 90% of people in the world were poor.

The reversal that has come in the last 200 years through capitalism has brought a completely different way we've looked at the world. I bought this book at Regent a little while ago.

It's called Cash Values by Craig Gay. It was reduced from \$22 to \$9. Sorry.

It's a wonderful book, and he describes how capitalism has changed the way we measure things and the way we look at the world. He talks about the money metric. To have capitalism work, it needs one thing by which we can measure everything, where we can objectify everything.

[49 : 05] And he quotes de Tocqueville, and he says, de Tocqueville says, one usually finds that the love of money is either the chief or the secondary motive at the bottom of everything the Americans do.

This gives a family likeness to all their passions and soon makes them a weariness to contemplate. However, in Craig's view, what has happened is that this measurement of money has its own metaphysic.

It brings its own philosophy of life and way of thinking. And he says, there is a cost in this, not just environmental in terms of capitalism. There is a cultural, psychological, and spiritual cost.

It empties things of meaning. It gives a weightlessness. And it means we measure people in a way that is completely different from God. And Jesus says, man shall not live by bread alone.

So status, you see, was measured differently. Status, your personal worth, was not tied necessarily to your money. So when Jesus uses the word poor, it's like it's a catch-all for all of those who are outside of salvation.

[50 : 19] So he lists these people in need. In chapter 7, 22, he says, the blind receive the sight, the lame, the deaf hear. Listen to this list. Blind, lame, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up.

What's above dead? The poor have the good news preached to them. And what is it to be a disciple in chapter 6?

It is to be poor, hungry, weeping, persecuted. And salvation is good news to the poor because it overturns our status.

We are not determined by our family or our money or our heritage or our gifts or our success or our failure or our car or our house. All those status markers just go with salvation.

And that explains in chapter 4 the vicious reaction of the crowd to Jesus. You remember they said in chapter 4, verse 22, it's Joseph's boy.

[51 : 26] When Jesus said these things are fulfilled amongst you, they thought because Jesus is our hometown boy, our homie, these blessings come to us.

We're on the inside. And Jesus says, no, no, no, no, you don't understand the purposes of God. God's purpose is always going out to those who need salvation. Elijah, he didn't heal any widow's son in Israel but he went out to the woman in Zarephath.

And there are plenty of lepers in Israel on the day of Naaman but only one is healed, Naaman the Syrian. And that's why they kill him. Because, you see, salvation completely overturns their status. He has shown the strength of his arms, sings Mary. He has scattered the proud and the imagination of their hearts. He's put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of low degree. Why does he put down the mighty from their thrones?

It's so that they will be saved. Why does he exalt those of low degree? It's so that they will be saved. Salvation completely overturns the way we look at the world. There are three verses I just want you to see before I do the third thing.

[52 : 39] The first one is in chapter 14 verse 11 where Jesus says everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

That is the opposite of the way we put the world together. The next verse, chapter 18, I tell you this man, this is the Pharisee and publican, went down to his house justified rather than the other.

Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled but he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Third verse, verse 16, the Pharisees who were lovers of money heard all this and they scoffed at him but he said to them, you are those who justify yourselves before men but God knows your hearts for what is exalted among men is an abomination to God.

Isn't that amazing? And what is the greatest reversal in the gospel? Jesus is crucified but God raises him up. So the very shape of the gospel itself is about a great reversal.

And I wish I had more time but I don't. Next slide. The second thing is salvation is the reversal of status and I think I have three minutes for the third one and it's this salvation is the coming of the kingdom of God.

[53 : 52] Do you remember last year Dr. Walke said that the summary of the Old Testament and I quote is the eruption breaking in from outside not eruption from within of the kingship of the holy, merciful and only God.

That the way God brings himself glory is by establishing his rule and now he does it through Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God has come because Christ has come.

And again and again and again and again in Luke's gospel Jesus proclaims the kingdom. And it's very interesting that the kingdom is often, most often seen in contexts of conflict.

So let's turn over to chapter 11. This is the final passage we'll look at. 11 verse 14.

He was casting out a demon that was mute and when the demon had gone out the mute man spoke and the people marveled. But some of them said he casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, another name for Satan, while others who test him keep seeking a sign from him from heaven.

[55 : 05] But he knowing their thoughts said to them, every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste. It's stupid to say that Satan is casting out demons, a divided household falls.

If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? You say I cast out demons by Beelzebul. But if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out?

You're painting yourselves, all your own exorcists with the same brush. They will be your judges.

Verse 20. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, where does that come from?

Finger of God? Exodus. If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come among you.

Let me explain, says Jesus. When a strong man, i.e. Satan, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe. Satan has got all of us. But when one's stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armour, in which he trusted, and divides his spoil.

[56 : 06] Jesus has come, the kingdom has come to steal people away from Satan's kingdom.

Whoever is not with me is against me. Whoever does not gather with me scatters. There's nothing neutral about this.

You either belong to Satan or you have been rescued from the house. Isn't that astounding? So, the kingdom of God is not nice words in theology.

It is the power of God. It is the rule of God through the Son of God. And lurking behind all the opposition is Satan. One last picture, if you will.

God has visited the planet. And I'm sorry about this, but on the left, this is a very simplistic diagram and there are all sorts of things wrong with it. But if we describe our world as fundamentally under the rule of Satan, which is what the New Testament does, and it has values, all sorts of things in a particular way, when the kingdom of God comes, it has different values.

And when it invades, you and I live in that place which is the overlap, which is why our lives feel like this so often as Christians. However, let me summarize because we've come to the end of our time.

[57 : 15] And there are three things. Firstly, salvation is release. Second, salvation is reversal.

Thirdly, salvation is the coming of the kingdom. I think it's 1010. I've got till 1030.

Let me pause for questions.

I'm sorry. I raced through that. Sorry. I thought we had 1010. Let me see if there are any questions on those three pitches of salvation. Aaron.

Do you think Luke is used as a favorite gospel called liberation theology? Yeah. I'm just going to know your thoughts on that. The question is Luke is used as a favorite gospel regarding liberation theology.

Thoughts? Liberation theology is a theology that came really out of South America in the late 70s. Gutierrez and a number of people who took the issue of release for the oppressed.

[58 : 40] Christians. And they were Catholic priests in a situation of terrible oppression. And so they began to preach that Jesus' ministry is really about releasing political captives.

And I'd have to say if we lived in a place where there was that kind of oppression, it would be incumbent on Christians to work for their release. I don't think there's any doubt about that.

However, I don't think it's a fair reading of Luke's gospel.

gospel. How many people in prison does Jesus literally bring out of prison? Peter in Acts 4?

But I don't think that's the main thing of his ministry. And if you want me to continue this, if you turn back to chapter 4 for just a moment, it's a good warning to us though because I think we need to be careful, you know, we're sort of 21st century, west coast, affluent, money-minded, stressed out, individualistic Christians.

And we bring a lot of that stuff to the text. But if we read the text, we've got to be careful. If you see in chapter 4, after the sermon, what's the first thing that happens after the sermon?

[60 : 08] Someone call it out. He casts out a demon. He heals someone from a demon. Why does Luke put that straight after the sermon?

I think he wants to give us a picture of deliverance, of what it is to set at liberty the captives. Verse 38 to 41.

What's the next section? He's healing people. Now, so is his ministry about casting out demons and healing? Verse 42.

When it was day, he departed and went to a desolate place, and the people sought him and came to him and would have had him and would have kept him from leaving them. Why? They've got all their sick relatives, all the people that he's been healing.

They know he can heal anyone. But he said to them, I must, that's a God word, I must evangelize, preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well.

[61 : 09] I was sent for this purpose. So his ministry is a word-based ministry. By his word, he heals people.

By his word, he casts out demons. But the center of his ministry and the priority of his ministry is to proclaim the good news of the kingdom because it is only in that way that people can be saved.

So I don't think salvation, I don't think that the ministry of Jesus is primarily a message of political liberation. I think whenever we try and politicize the message of Jesus, we're in trouble.

I don't think being a Christian obviates us from responsibility to be involved in that. But I think that the heart of the message of Luke's gospel is like Exodus. It's the liberation of people from bondage to Satan through the gospel.

Thanks. Any other questions? Joe? I can't quite hear, sorry.

[62 : 21] On the kingdom of God? I have pages on it. The question is, can we expand on the kingdom of God? Yes, I did.

Well, let me make a couple of comments. You know that the kingdom of God is the most frequent term that Jesus uses in preaching. Thirty, thirty something, thirty-six times, I think, in his sermons he preaches about the kingdom.

And when you look at the frequency of references to the kingdom, as we come to Jerusalem at the end of chapter 19, there's a huge spike in the references because of the opposition.

And then when he comes into Jerusalem, a number of the parables that he tells in the temple are about kingdom and kings. It's very interesting. Because, you see, these people who are the priests and scribes and lawyers who own the Judaism are opposing the purpose of God.

So the kingdom of God, now that it has come, brings conflict because of the kingdom of Satan. And those who come into the kingdom of God do so by coming under the rule of Jesus Christ.

[63 : 38] And the fundamental way that we do that in Luke's gospel is repentance. Repentance. Because repentance is turning our lives upside down. It's turning it right way up, according to Jesus.

The overlap of those two spheres is just the fact that we still live in this world and we still live with sinful hearts. But we still, but we now, if we've crossed over, we live a life of repentance under the rule of Jesus Christ.

Which is why when you become a Christian, your life is more conflicted inside than it is before you were a Christian. And, yeah. Anything else?

Yep. I wanted to talk a little bit about their release from bondage. And I'm assuming that that means generally captivity of sin.

And how does that release come on the practical and ground level, the theological level, the moral and ground level? Right. The question is about the release from sin.

[64 : 42] How does it work on a practical level? How does it work in the life of believers? Is that the question? One of the passages you're going to work on moves in this direction, and so I don't really want to give away too much of Luke on that.

If you're asking me theologically today how it works, I think that our faith in Jesus Christ brings us into a world where we live an ongoing life of repentance.

But repentance comes as we see the goodness and loveliness of God and his offer to us. So how it works for us is as we hear the gospel ongoingly and understand the gospel ongoingly, we grow deeper in repentance and we grow deeper in understanding and the grasp of the forgiveness that we have.

Take the illustration of chapter 4. Jesus preaches that those first verses from Isaiah 61, today this is fulfilled, everyone says, what gracious words.

It is gracious. It's incredibly gracious that God should send his son to bring release and sight to the blind and to proclaim the year of God's favour. Jesus has proclaimed the gospel in saying that.

[66 : 10] But what is their response? They are infuriated with him that it doesn't just come to them. So they are not repentant, you see. It's a beautiful picture of how Jesus preaches the goodness and the glory and the magnificence and love of God, but their response is the opposite of repentance because they are so bound to their status view of the world.

So how does it work? For us as Christians, repentance comes by letting go of status, by increasingly, ongoingly cutting away the grip that status has on our hearts.

And that means that changes the way we relate to each other. It changes the way we deal with forgiveness to other people. It changes the way I think about myself.

Status in itself is not wrong, like money in itself is not wrong. But because we are sinful, we so easily slide those things into status issues.

So repentance will show itself, the life of repentance will show itself, that what I do with my status is to serve God. That I won't be too busy to put in my diary serving God, for example.

[67 : 34] That I'm not so intent on climbing the corporate ladder of success that I will compromise time with my family and time to be involved in Bible study and committing to God.

My joke about being at church every Sunday is only semi-serious. It means we'll take money and repentance will actually affect the way we use money.

We'll take the gods in our world, the status things that we have in our world, and we'll turn them and use them in a way that Christ will please Christ. That I think is somewhat towards an answer. Any other questions?

Yeah. The question is, in the middle section of Luke's Gospel, Jesus is training his disciples. How does he do that? He does two things, I think. He reconfigures their view of God.

[68 : 39] In the central section from chapter 9 to 19, the parables are about the heartbreaking loveliness of the fatherhood of God.

Feast, feast, feast, feast, fatherhood, fatherhood. It's magnificent stuff. We're not going to get to it until next year, I'm sorry. I think we're going to get to the end of chapter 9 by Christmas.

That's the first thing he does. He completely changes their view of God. The second thing he does is he tells them they must die. So he predicts his death in that section, and then he tells the disciples just as they begin that section, they have to die as well.

He's going to die, they're going to die. Because if you believe in the heartbreaking loveliness of the fatherhood of God, you're going to die. You're not going to be someone who's going to find it easy in this world.

They're the two things that he does. One more question. Does Luke see Jesus as teaching salvation?

[69 : 52] Yes. It's very interesting.

I think there's a Pauline influence in Luke. He uses the word justify a number of times. The other gospels don't use it in that way. He also uses the word faith.

But faith and repentance are the two sides of the one coin. I cannot repent unless I have faith in Jesus to turn to.

I can't turn away from my sin unless I'm turning to Christ. And I can't have true faith in Jesus Christ unless I turn away from my sin. The two things are the same. So in the book of Acts, Luke becomes a little more sophisticated in the way he describes it.

Sometimes he describes it just as repentance. Sometimes he describes salvation just by faith. And sometimes he describes it as the two together. But when we see repentance in Luke's gospel, it means faith and repentance.

[70 : 58] It's the same thing. And it can come by no other means. So the lovely story of the Pharisee and the tax, the publican in chapter 18.

The Pharisee goes into the temple. He's got all these great things that he's done. And the tax collector goes in and he says, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. And Jesus says, that's the guy who goes home.

Justified before God. Rudy. Question, at what point did Jesus recognize that he was God?

Right. Yeah, it's interesting to think that question through. I don't think anyone knows the answer to that. How did Jesus come to know that he was God? There are two sides to the answer.

And you've got to hold both sides together at the same time. On the one hand, he's human. And as he's born, he's a genuine baby.

[72 : 06] He needs to learn how to walk and how to speak, etc. But because he was born without the taint of sin, no doubt his mum told him of the unusual circumstances of his birth.

And by the time he is 12, we know from chapter 3, he goes in the temple and he's speaking to the Pharisees and the clergy there.

And they are bamboozled with his grasp of the Old Testament. So the way in which God revealed himself to Jesus was not just through the bat phone.

It wasn't just a direct link, although there was that. It was through the Old Testament. So Jesus, when he speaks about his identity, chapter 4, it's from the prophet Isaiah. When God affirms him in the baptism and the transfiguration, it's from the Old Testament.

Jesus understood his ministry from the Old Testament. So he was truly human. That's one side of the equation. The second side of the equation is that when he was in the womb, he was God.

[73 : 20] When he was in the womb, he was actively upholding the universe by the power of his word. Now, there's a doctrine that has a fancy Latin name that describes that.

It's called the Ad Extra Calvinisticum. And that would give you indigestion, except we're going to coffee. But you've got to hold those two things together. And the first appearance, the only childhood appearance we have of Jesus is in Luke's Gospel.

But by the time he's 12, for heaven's sake, he's very clear, not just that he is the Son of God, not just that God is his Father, but that his mission is to be, in the translation says, my father's house.

The word house is things, stuff, my father's thing. I've got to be, that's what I'm doing here. So as far as a 12-year-old can understand it, being the Son of God, he was clear at least by 12.

All right. Let's, Jan, do we have any instructions? Yeah. There's two coffee stations, one here in the lobby and one in the Trendle Lounge.

[74 : 44] Both of them, you can go down both sides, so please do that. The other thing is, once you've got your coffee, and there's a lot of goodies there too, and fruit, please move away from the coffee table with it.

So there's not a log jam there. So if the people on this front half of the room go out this door and use the coffee station in the Trendle Lounge,