

# **What Do We Really Know About Jesus?**

**An Account taken from the Eyewitnesses**

**The Gospel of Luke**

**By Pastor Joe Meyer**

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# Helpful Hints:

As you study the book of Luke you'll be encountering one of the Bible books that we call "Gospels." "The Gospel," that which Romans 1:16 says is "The power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes," is actually the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. In other words, Romans 1:16 reminds us that we are saved by placing our trust in the truth of the life, death and resurrection for our salvation and God gives us both the faith to trust the Gospel and through it gives us salvation in Jesus. The four Gospels then, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, tell us about the Gospel in a narrative form, proclaiming to us the life, death and resurrection of Jesus so that we can believe it and be saved.

Having said that, each Gospel, while containing the same basic information, is also unique in its own right, unique in its focus, view and writing style. Therefore God uses each Gospel writer uniquely to convey the same truth in a very unique way. Luke's Gospel is very intricate or detailed, but it's also very personal and heartfelt and down-to-earth. As you work through Luke's Gospel you'll hear his voice, a voice that is tenderly reminding you of the amazing love that God has for sinful people and the amazing truth that the Lord Himself is seeking, saving and receiving sinners just like you and me.

As you study Luke then, hear God's voice speaking to you and speaking forgiveness, love and acceptance on account of Christ. Hear Him accepting you as a sinner but also hear Him calling you to love Him more than you love your sin. In order to do that, you need to read slowly. Many people rush through Bible reading as if it is a race of some kind. Don't do that. Take your time. Reading through the Bible in a year is great, but reading through the Bible slowly is even greater. Pause at times to pray. Pause and ask the Lord to speak into your life and into your life's situation.

**Bible Study Notes:** As you take your time walking through this study you'll encounter three ways in which you can grow:



**Discuss Sections:** These are intended to get you to think more deeply about the subject matter in a conversational way. If you're studying on your own, Discuss segments are an opportunity to go deeper into the who, what, when, where and why of the Bible by thinking through the questions and perhaps writing out your thoughts on the page underneath. If you're studying in a group, the Discuss segments give you the opportunity to express your thoughts to others and hear their perspective as well.



**Discover Sections** are intended to give you an opportunity to think through the Bible passage itself. What does the passage say in relation to other passages, both those given in the study guide, and others you may think of yourself or find referenced in your study Bible. If you're studying alone and cannot talk about it without talking to yourself (grin), then take time to write your thoughts down in a journal or in this study guide. Then the next time you have an opportunity to talk to other Christians about it, ask them what they think of your take on that passage and the related ones.



**Download Sections** are intended to give you the opportunity to apply the section to your own life. Raw Bible reading isn't what God intends. Facts for facts sake don't help. But reading, studying and knowing the Bible and then applying what you've read, studied and gotten to know to your life, is God's will for us as His disciples and solid Bible study as well.

**How Can I Help?** I pray this study will bless you and further your walk with Jesus. For additional help or clarification, you are welcome to email [joe.meyer@gdjc.church](mailto:joe.meyer@gdjc.church) or you can call me at 515-346-7084 for assistance at any time.

# Study Number One

## **Jesus is the Lord Who Reveals Himself as a Baby**

September 12, 2018



What do you know about this writer named “Luke”, his life as a disciple and his profession prior to? Google “Gospel of Luke” if you don’t know what he did for a living. Then, talk about the things you know/learned about him and how that affects how the Gospel of Luke was written.

What other book of the Bible did Luke write? Why is that significant?

Many people love Luke...why do you think Luke is such a popular book for Christians? What other Gospel for you is similarly intriguing or engaging?

As you read the prologue, in your opinion, what is the purpose of the Gospel of Luke? Interestingly...what does the name Theophilus mean?



The first four verses of our Gospel are sometimes called “The Prologue.” These verses are called that because...? **Read Luke 1:1-4.** From what you read there...was Luke an eyewitness of the things that Jesus did? Why is that important? Where did he get the information then? After discussion, look at the High Priestly Prayer of Jesus in **John 17:6-21** and consider the fact that Jesus is praying for us...but how so?

What jumps out at you from the prologue? What does the prologue say to you as a disciple of Jesus?

The next segment is long, but again, it’s a narrative or story-telling, so you’d expect it to be so...but what’s the import or thrust of this segment? **Read Luke 1:5-25.** What jumps out at you and what would you say is the central focus?

After talking about that, consider John’s role in the Christ-story... what was his role? Consider that and then check **Malachi 3:1-5** along with **Luke 7:18-35.**

In verses 14-15 we're told that John would not "drink wine or strong drink". What was that about and why do you think the Lord insisted that he avoid such things? Check **Numbers 6:1-8** to put a name to John's consecration, but then ask yourself "Why did the Lord want John to live this way?"

Consider one other thing here: The Lord brought John the Baptist into our world to declare the coming of the Christ, but He did something else here...He helped Zechariah and Elizabeth. **Read Luke 1:24,25** again. What does that say about our Lord?

In verse 18, we're told that Zechariah doubts the possibility of Gabriel's announcement because of his advanced age and the same for Elizabeth. If you could put into words what "doubt process" Zechariah was struggling through in the moment, what was it? Consider the story of Peter walking on the water for a similar doubt process—**Matthew 14:22-33**.

Now let's jump over to what is called "The Magnificat" in **Luke 1:46-56**. This of course is Mary's song, sung or spoken, after the Angel Gabriel announces her role in the Christ-story. What jumps out at you from this "song" of Mary? What jumps out at you regarding Mary herself? Let me ask this: How do you think you would have handled the assignment?

**Read Luke 2:1-7.** This segment is clearly important for a couple reasons, both of which are tied to history. What would those two reasons be?

What was the thing we call “the inn”, in which there was no room, in the historical context?

**Read Luke 2:8-20.** As you look at this very familiar narrative, what jumps out at you on a fresh reading of the text? Why is the appearance of the angels to the shepherds on the hill a very significant part of the story? What role do they play in telling the Christ-story?



## Download

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## Study Number Two **Jesus is the Lord Who Ministers Among Us**

September 19, 2018



Have you ever wondered why Jesus held off “doing ministry” until after He was baptized? Why do you think He did that? Do you think Jesus’ did some ministry related things before He was baptized?

Why do you think that the Lord included the narrative of Jesus at twelve years old in the Temple in Luke’s Gospel, but nowhere else?



**Read Luke 2:41-52.** This much-loved story in the life of the boy Jesus is very important to understanding who Jesus is/was as He walked this earth...and even before in the heavenly realm. To begin with, take note that Luke tells us that Jesus was asking questions but interestingly, Jesus amazed the people “with His understanding and His answers.” This wasn’t just a moment when a young Jewish boy was asking the spiritual advice of his elders, this was a moment when...what? Consider **Colossians 1:15-20**, **John 1:1-5** and **Romans 9:1-5** in that regard. So...is this the beginning of Jesus’ ministry...or was it later?

Why do you think Jesus did the whole “God-thing” subversively? Why didn’t He just come out and say “I am God!”? Or did He blurt it out after all? Can you think of a time that He did proclaim it loud and clear?

Often people question whether or not Jesus broke the 4th Commandment in this story... “Honor your father and your mother.” How do we know that He did not? Consider that and then look at **Hebrews 4:14,15**. Also, what did Jesus say to Mary when she found Him at the Temple? How does that inform our question about the 4th Commandment? Also, what does **Hebrews 4:14,15** further say about Jesus?

**Read Luke 3:1-3 and 3:15-17.** As Jesus is starting His ministry He employs a “forerunner” to proclaim the beginning of His priestly-tour and to announce Him to the public. Why was that important for Jesus to do? Let me ask this: Do you think the crowds respected John and his spiritual opinions? Also, had John gathered a “following” by the time Jesus comes on the scene? Why would that work to Christ’s favor? But did Jesus “need” John’s announcing?

When John spoke about Jesus, why did John announce what would come much later, namely, the advent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost saying “He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire”? Why so soon an announcement prior to Pentecost? What was the Holy Spirit’s purpose in John’s prophecy? Finally, consider John’s prophecy in the light of the prophecy found in **Acts 2:16-21**.

Consider the differences between Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus found in **Matthew 1:1-17** with Luke’s found in **Luke 3:23-38**. What are the main differences and how do we reconcile those?

**Read Luke 4:1-13.** What was the purpose of the temptation of Jesus? Was Jesus going to give in to satan? Was that even possible? If so...what conundrum does that create? If not...why did He go through it?



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# Study Number Three **Jesus is the Lord Who Calls and Heals His Disciples**

September 26, 2018



Why is it important that Jesus called the disciples into service rather than the disciples deciding to follow Him? What does it point to?

When Jesus healed people He often told them not to say anything about it to anyone...particularly in the book of Mark. Why? What would be the reasoning for not sharing the good news?

Sometimes Jesus' healings were done in the presence of His detractors and skeptics...why did they not believe in Him then? The biggest miracle of all being the Resurrection by the way and don't forget, He was on the earth for forty days post Resurrection.



Why do you think Jesus came healing people? What do you see as the purpose of the healings? (Of course you can also consider **Isaiah 61:1,2** which is quoted in **Luke 4:18-19**).

The Disciples/Apostles immediately followed Jesus, no questions asked. Why do you think people resist Jesus so strongly today? Why is it that so many vehemently resist Him?

**Read Luke 4:20-30.** We have here a story of Jesus speaking about Himself as fulfillment of God's Word. Initially the crowds are said to speak highly of Jesus but then the tide turns on Him...why? What did He say that made them mad? What message would you say would illicit a similar reaction in our day and time? What do you do when people vehemently disagree with your Christian faith?

Jesus is taken to "the brow of a hill" to be thrown off...pretty drastic reaction, yes? Why did they react that way? But...furthermore...why were they unable to kill Jesus in that way? Consider Jesus' words in **John 10:14-18.**

**Read Luke 4:38-41.** This is an amazing section for two reasons: 1) Jesus casts out demons. Don't let this be "ho-hum" to you as you read it...it's amazing. In fact, consider the implications of the demonic healings in relation to truths like that found in **Ephesians 6:10-20**. 2) Take special note of the fact that the demons knew Jesus, particularly verse forty-one. What does this say then about the Temptation of Jesus? What does it say about satan's knowledge of Jesus...in other words, if the demons know who Jesus was...what does satan know?

**Read Luke 5:1-11.** Jesus came to save the world...but Jesus also came to teach. To begin with, Jesus sat in the boat to teach the crowds. This was both practical as well as traditional...Rabbis sat to teach. What was Jesus teaching the crowds?

But Jesus genuinely intended to teach Peter and the boys. What was the primary lesson Peter had to learn? To get at the lesson Peter needed to learn, check **Matthew 14:22-33**. Jesus was saying what to Peter? Why was that important for the call Jesus was leveling to the boys to be "fishers of men"?

This story contains one of the more amazing pride to humility or repentance to forgiveness stories in the entire Bible. Peter's recognition of his arrogance towards Jesus drives him to fall at Jesus' feet and ask for forgiveness. What about for us? Does the frequency of Confession and Forgiveness in our services make it "ho-hum" at times? **Read 1 John 1:5-10** and consider the context in

which the words “If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves...” was written. Changes the possible “ho-hum” of Confession and Absolution, right?

**Read Luke 5:17-25.** This is a very, very important story in several and yet, interconnected, ways. To get at the import of this story we can say that on a whole, this is a story of love.

**1.)** This is a story of love given among friends. To begin with, the lengths to which the friends were willing to go to get healing for this paralytic man is amazing. They weren’t going to let anything come between them and the healing the man needed. **Read Matthew 22:34-40.** When Jesus says in **Matthew 22:39** “love your neighbor as yourself”...how do you define His words there?

**2.)** This is also a story of love from a...forgiving God. Now this is not what you might think by my opening statement...you see the Lord knew this man’s sin ahead of time. Jesus also know that this man’s sin is not what caused his tribulation. But the people thought this man was in the physical condition he was in because of his sin. Jesus was saying, “Okay...let me dispel that myth by forgiving his sins and he stays in the same situation...then after you’ve seen that...I’ll heal his body.” **Read John 9:1-7** in that regard. By proclaiming forgiveness of sins Jesus was also saying...what? Why is this critical for us today?

**3.)** This is a story of love from a God who chooses to reverse the effects of a sin-torn world. Jesus said that this is why He came in **Luke 7:18-20.** Why did the Lord choose to make healings be

the signs of His Messianic ministry? What then did it do for the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins to the paralytic man? What did it say about our salvation?



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# Study Number Four

## **Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath**

### **...the Lord of All**

October 3, 2018



If Jesus kept the law for us as we'll explore in this study, were there ever instances that He, being the God who gave the law, set aside the law for His own purposes? Can you think of any instances where it seems like that?

Since we're talking about the law, were the Old Testament people saved by the keeping of the law? Can you give Scripture to back up your answer?

Since the Sabbath was Saturday...why do we celebrate/worship or "sabbath" on Sunday?



**Read Luke 6:1-5.** Jesus says two important things in this segment: First, Jesus points to David who was not only king but also acted as priest in the story He references from **1 Samuel 21:1-6**...even though King David wasn't technically a priest. It seems apparent then that David was foreshadowing the three-fold role of Prophet, Priest and King that Christ would bring with His advent into our world. David was a prophet...he wrote prophecy in the Psalms.

David acted as Priest...he ate the bread of the priests. David was clearly king...made so by God, anointed by Him for that purpose. And of course Jesus was all three of those as He prophesied, most clearly, about His own death and resurrection **Mark 8:31-33**; He was the High Priest, as named so in **Hebrews 9:11-15**; and He was the King of kings as declared in the **Revelation 19:11-16**.

But Jesus claims something even bigger here at the end of this section...Jesus claims to be...what?? What does it mean that He is "the Lord of the Sabbath"? Who alone is that? And if that's the case, what does it mean for Jesus' approach to the Sabbath and the other laws? Furthermore, knowing that Jesus is "Lord of the Sabbath" what does **Matthew 5:17-20** mean for us?

**Read Luke 6:46-49.** This famous comparison between faith in Jesus/trust in His Word and the two foundations, is one that we must take seriously in our day and time. Unfortunately, many Christians do not base their lives on what God's Word says as much as they pick and choose verses from God's Word to bolster their lives and strengthen their resolve for day-to-day life. Now, that's not all bad as they are looking into God's Word for strength, but what genuinely gives us a sure and solid foundation is hearing His word and doing them. In other words, living the Word of God and not just using the Word of God for our personal purposes.

What does that look like however? Consider the difference this passage alone would make in our lives: **Ephesians 4:25-32**. After reading that segment, check **Luke 8:19-21**.

**Read Luke 7:1-10:** This incredibly beautiful story gets at the heart of Jesus being “Lord of all.” More than that, it also gets at faith...in...Jesus being Lord of all. The faith/trust needed here by this centurion was amazing. Let’s note a couple things here though: 1) The Jewish folk think this man is “worthy” to have Jesus heal because of what he’d done for them. Isn’t this the way we continue to think? People are often deemed “worthy” based on what they do for us. Re-read verse six for the Centurion’s opinion of himself! 2) Connected to this, notice that the Centurion’s faith is based on who Christ is...not on who he was...namely, that Christ has the authority and power to heal. Having said that, His power to heal and your faith in His healing, does not mean that He will heal. Compare these two passages: **Luke 11:5-13** and **1John 5:13-15**. **1John 5:14** says what about our prayer and answers to our prayer?

**Read Luke 7:11-17.** This amazing and poignant story brings proof that Jesus is Lord of all, even the Lord over death itself. Why was this healing/raising of the dead so important? Since we know what it did for the young man...what did this do for the woman, his mother? On a twist and side note, do you see a healing like this as “cruel” since the boy was brought back from heaven itself? Consider Paul’s famous words **Philippians 1:18-26**.



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# Study Number Five **Jesus is the Lord of the Seen and the Unseen**

October 10, 2018



Jesus exhibited mighty and amazing powers while on earth. We talked about this in the last study, but why did folks miss who He was when they knew what He did?

Does the idea of demons and the demonic frighten you? Should you be afraid? What changes our perception of the evil-spiritual-realm?



**Read Luke 8:22-25.** It seems that this story, and others like it, are often lost on us in our day and time. While the disciples struggled with Christ being God in the flesh, we struggle to see Jesus as flesh and blood. We've grown so used to Jesus being our Lord and Master that we sometimes "ho-hum" stories like this. Put yourself in the disciples' shoes for a moment...their Friend and Rabbi made a storm stop. Imagine if your friend/teacher/confidant stood out on your deck and stopped the incessant Midwest rain? What would your reaction be? Now, to the disciple's question: "Who then is this?" Well...that's obvious, right? Only God can control the weather, right? Well...hmmm...look at **Job 1:6-20.** Furthermore, remember that Pharaoh's men were able to do "miracles" just like

Moses did. So the question is a good one...how then do we know that Jesus wasn't just satan making up a hoax? Consider Christ's words in **Luke 11:14-23**.

**Read Luke 8:26-39.** This is a very famous demoniac story because of the demon's "name" being "legion" because, as we're told, "they were many." But this story is interesting and significant for so many reasons. 1) This man who was out of control constantly is suddenly brought into submission by the presence of Jesus, calling Jesus "Son of the Most High God" and begging for mercy as well. To the point of **Luke 11:14-23** in the previous segment, it's clear that Jesus is in opposition to satan and not in league with him. More than that, Jesus is Lord over satan and his minions as well. Consider then the temptation of Christ as recorded in **Matthew 4:1-11**. From the dialogue, who is "in charge" of this event? After talking about that consider **Mark 1:12,13**. 2) Sometimes, when the power of Jesus is exhibited, people do not turn to Jesus but turn away from Him instead. Note that the people of this region asked Jesus to leave after He performed this mighty miracle. What might be the reason for their request for Him to vacate? What were they afraid of? Consider also **John 6:60-71** and then read **Luke 8:4-8** and consider the truth found there...in other words, will everyone receive Jesus?

**Read Luke 9:1-6.** This couldn't be a more important passage for Christians of our day and time to consider. This is what could be called a "transference of power" or "transference of authority". We know that Jesus is Lord of the seen and the unseen, but He

transfers that authority to His Apostles...why? Why does the Lord work this way? Look also at the Great Commission in **Matthew 28:16-20** and consider Christ's words "all authority..." and "go, make disciples" together. Also consider this: The disciples, and Jesus as well, went out "preaching the gospel". What was "the gospel" at this time? Jesus did not yet die and rise, so were they preaching the Passion of the Christ (His death and resurrection) or were they simply preaching "the gospel" of Christ's kingdom breaking into our world? Think back on Jesus' words in **Matthew 11:1-6**...but even there Jesus speaks of "good news" being preached.



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# Study Number Six

## **Jesus is the Lord who Cares for the Poor and Disenfranchised**

October 17, 2018



**Matthew 25:31-46** talks about the things we do because we're Christians. When you read those words, what changes in your life need to be made?

Why does the Lord expect us to take care of the physical needs of individuals when we know full well that the spiritual is more important?



**Read Luke 9:46-48.** This segment of Luke nine, though deep into the chapter, could be seen as governing the truths found in this chapter. Not only do these verses speak to the kind of people Jesus expects His disciples to be, but furthermore, as you'll see, who Jesus Himself is. This segment is the antithesis of what many Christian churches have become. Consider the lengths we go to to placate and please our "members". We spend more energy making people feel comfortable, loved, wanted and part of the process than we do challenging folks to live for Christ by giving up their own wants, needs and desires for the sake of others. Christianity

is not about what I can get, but what I can give. In your opinion, does GDLC model that truth? Consider Paul's famous words in **Philippians 2:1-4**.

To that end, now page back into chapter nine and **read Luke 9:23-27**. Define what it means to "deny...take up...and follow Jesus" in this world. What does that look like? How does that play out in the local congregation? How does that play out in your working world? How does that fit into GDLC's Mission and Vision "Leading Ordinary People to an Extraordinary Life in Christ"? Can you name ways in which we foster the Christian way of life to "deny...take up...and follow Jesus" at GDLC?

Now, consider how the "deny...take up...and follow Jesus" mantra is shown in **Luke 9:10-17**. Clearly, Jesus, who is the Lord and Master, cares for those who are hurting and in need. What about the disciples? How did they measure up in their care for the crowd?

**Read Luke 9:21-22.** When we talk about Christ's care for the "disenfranchised", we must talk about the cross and the grave as it is the quintessential way in which Christ cared for the poor and disenfranchised. These two short verses should be amazing to us on a couple levels: 1) Jesus knew exactly what was coming His

way and yet, He went that way anyway. Check His famous words in **John 12:27-33**. While the disciples were jockeying for who was the greatest...the Greatest was positioning Himself for a horrible ending...glory of the resurrection notwithstanding. His concern was never for Himself but always for His own, those who would believe in Him for eternal life. 2) Jesus told the disciples over and over again...as I'm assuming this wasn't the only instance of this prophecy...that He would die and rise again. Why weren't they hanging out at the tomb waiting for Him to rise on the third day? Put yourself in their shoes by reading **John 20:19-23**.

**Read Luke 10:1-12.** First of all...seventy-two? What's that all about? Why seventy-two as a number by itself and then, why not just use the twelve disciples to do the work? Check **Exodus 24:1-11** for a possible connection to 70+2.

Second, Jesus lays out an important principle of disciple-making when He sends them out "two by two". What advantage does that bring? After thinking about that, read **Acts 15:36-41**.



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