

# The Gospel According to Luke (Part 6)

March 26, 2017

Recap:

(Luke 1-9)

Luke's portrayal of John the Baptist and Jesus as the fulfillment of the story of Israel and of God's promises told in the OT Scriptures. We then watched Jesus launch His mission and bring the good news of God's kingdom to the poor among Israel, people of low social status and also people who are outsiders. Jesus taught that his kingdom is upside down, it's a reversal of all our common social boundaries. This section culminated with Luke showing us how Jesus was a new Moses, about to bring a new exodus by his death in Jerusalem.

(Luke 10-19a)

So we come to the large center section of the book where Jesus leads his newly formed Israel on a journey to Jerusalem. This part of the book consists mainly of Jesus' teaching and parables given on the road to the various people he encounters, mainly his growing group of disciples. In this way, Luke portrays following Jesus as a journey, it's something you do when you learn as you go along life's path. So first, Jesus invites his disciples into his mission as he sends a wave of them to go ahead of them announcing God's kingdom. So being a disciple, right from the start, means participating in Jesus' kingdom mission; making it your own.

As Jesus' disciples come back, he then starts giving various teachings about prayer and about trusting in God's provision, etc. It's actually in these chapters of Luke that Jesus talks more about money, possessions and generosity than anywhere else in his teachings. If following Him is truly like being on the road, it should produce this "minimalist" mentality, creating a freedom from possessions that allows for radical generosity.

Another key theme in these chapters is Jesus' continued mission to the poor. As he travels he continues to form his new Israel and he encounters all these people who are sick or blind or infirmed in some way, even Samaritans who are ancient enemies of the Jewish people. Famously, Jesus meets Zacchaeus, a Jewish man who heads up tax collecting for the Romans. All of these social outsiders meet Jesus and they're transformed by the encounter and so they join His kingdom community which He describes as a great banquet party. He is here to "seek and save the lost" (19:10) and so He's celebrating when people discover the mercy of God.

But not everyone at the party is happy. Luke includes multiple stories of Jesus at banquets with Israel's religious leaders and these all become heated debates where Jesus confronts their pride and hypocrisy. So these contrasting banquet parties are captured most memorably in Jesus' parable of the "Prodigal Son," (chapter 15) which I shared about last week. A foolish son runs

away but comes back repentant so his father forgives him and throws a huge party saying, “My son who was lost is now found.” But the older brother who never left his father is angry and resents his father’s generosity to this undeserving son. In this famous parable, Jesus is explaining His whole kingdom mission to these leaders. His parties represent God’s joyous welcome of every kind of person into His family; the only entry requirements are humility and repentance. So it highlights the tragedy of Israel’s leaders who reject Jesus and His upside down kingdom community.

## **Luke 19:1-10 (ESV)**

### **Jesus and Zacchaeus**

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through. <sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. <sup>3</sup> And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. <sup>4</sup> So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. <sup>5</sup> And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” <sup>6</sup> So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. <sup>7</sup> And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” <sup>8</sup> And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” <sup>9</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

#### **-OBSERVATIONS:**

- actual occurrence, not a story Jesus told
- once again the religious are calling OTHERS “sinners”
- look at the heart transformation of Zacchaeus (v. 8)
- less about quoting the “sinner’s prayer” and more about sincerity and authenticity
- Jesus came to “seek and save the lost” ex. Lost sheep, coin & son (Luke 15)

(Luke 19b-22a)

This resistance to Jesus ramps up as He finally arrives in Jerusalem for the Passover festival. As He nears the city He’s weeping. His disciples are hailing Him as the Messianic King but Israel’s leaders are denouncing Him and He knows that their rejection of His kingdom of peace is going

to set Israel on a road of resistance and rebellion against the Roman Empire that will bring the city's downfall. It's that destruction of Jerusalem that Jesus symbolically enacts when He storms into the temple and runs out the animal sellers and He brings the sacrificial system to a halt. He says, "This place of worship has become a den of robbers and will be destroyed." (19:45)

This act of course generates a whole series of debates between Jesus and Israel's leaders all leading up to Jesus' prediction that the Roman armies will one day surround this city and will desolate it and the temple all within a generation. And with that Jesus retreats with His disciples to celebrate the Passover meal. It's the annual symbolic meal about Israel's liberation from slavery through the death of the lamb. And this is where Jesus turns the meal's bread and cup into new symbols about this new Exodus. His broken body and His shed blood will bring liberation for Jesus' renewed Israel.

### **FEAR (Pharisees)**

-20:6; 20:19; 22:2

How is living in and with fear causing us to live our lives? How do we treat people, especially those that aren't like us in any way? What lies do we end up believing about ourselves that just aren't true? How does fear lead us to look at the world around us?

COMMUNION (LUKE 22:14-23)