



As we read and reread the Gospel of Luke this month, we find a series of themes that speak into our lives today. Some of those themes are uncomfortable, confrontational, and filled with dire warnings, and Luke challenges us to recognize we don't behave like Jesus did. In the face of blatant rejection and tremendous resistance, we're busy trying to be liked and unoffensive, but not Jesus! He was determined to take truth to the people around Him, even if that led to difficult consequences. Here's another theme we see: The most unlikely people respond to Jesus. His followers are not the religious biblical scholars, but unscholarly fishermen, prostitutes, and tax collectors. Throughout his gospel, Luke consistently reminds us there is life beyond this physical world—a spiritual dimension with power and authority beyond what our five senses can perceive. Luke also shows how Jesus prepared His disciples to follow Him. This is where we can raise our hands and say, "I'd like to be one of those," and that's where we can begin to focus and watch how the disciples responded to Jesus. What changes did they make to follow Jesus, and what kinds of changes does Jesus want us to make so we can follow Him more closely? Luke provides a radical presentation of Jesus' message and remarkable insight on the people who would follow Him. The Gospel of Luke is worth a repetitive read!

***In your sphere of influence, where are your biblical values currently being rejected?**

Luke 8:19-56

JESUS' MOTHER AND BROTHERS

¹⁹ Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. ²⁰ Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." ²¹ He replied, "My mother and brothers are **those who hear God's word and put it into practice.**"

***We all need to listen better to what God is saying. Share some ways you have heard God's voice. How do you distinguish God's voice from the many others?**

JESUS CALMS THE STORM

²² **One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and set out.** ²³ As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. ²⁴ The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!" He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. ²⁵ "Where is your faith?" he asked his disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, "Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him."

***When Jesus calmed the storm, the disciples responded with "fear and amazement." Describe a time in your spiritual life when you responded to the Lord in "fear and amazement."**

THE HEALING OF A DEMON-POSSESSED MAN

²⁶ They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. ²⁷ When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!" ²⁹ For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

³⁰ Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. ³¹ And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. ³² A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. ³³ When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. ³⁴ When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, ³⁵ and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ³⁶ Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured.

³⁷ Then all **the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So he got into the boat and left.** ³⁸ **The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying,** ³⁹ "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

***Evil spirits impact thoughts and behaviors. What are some ways you see evil at work in our world today?**

A DEAD GIRL AND A SICK WOMAN

⁴⁰ Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. ⁴¹ Then a man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house ⁴² because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying.

IN CAPERNAUM, THOSE SEEKING JESUS' ASSISTANCE: Luke 7:2–5

² There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. ³ The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. ⁴ When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, ⁵ because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue."

JESUS' MESSAGE OF JUDGMENT: Luke 10:13–16

¹³ "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴ But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ¹⁵ **And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.** ¹⁶ "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

Luke 8:19-56, Continued ...

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. ⁴³ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. ⁴⁴ She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped. ⁴⁵ "Who touched me?" Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you." ⁴⁶ But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

⁴⁷ Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. ⁴⁸ Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace." ⁴⁹ While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," he said. "Don't bother the teacher any more." ⁵⁰ Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, "**Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.**"

⁵¹ When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except **Peter, John and James, and the child's father and mother.** ⁵² Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. "Stop wailing," Jesus said. "She is not dead but asleep." ⁵³ They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴ But he took her by the hand and said, "My child, get up!" ⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. ⁵⁶ Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

***How would you encourage someone to put their faith and trust in Jesus when they are afraid and struggling to believe?**

PROCLAMATION OF FAITH

We have cast our lot with the Prince of Peace,
We have yielded our will to the Lord of Lords,
We are servants of the King,
We reflect the beauty of the Lily of the Valley,
We stand in the strength of the Lion of Judah,
We live in health through the Great Physician,
Our needs are met because He is Our Abundance.
We know our path because we follow the Great Shepherd,
We are participants in the Kingdom of God because we found THE Door,
We are righteous because of His Sacrifice,
We have taken hold of true life because He is risen.
His name is Jesus of Nazareth, He is Christ, our Lord & our King.

WE WILL NOT STOP.