

PONDER

How does Jesus' teaching about obedience (vv. 7-10) follow on from and explain his teaching about faith (vv. 5-6)?

PRAYER IDEAS

Ask God to help you to trust and obey him in everything.

Thursday

- Read Luke 17:20-37

QUESTIONS

1. What does this passage teach you about "the kingdom of God"?
2. What will the day when the Son of Man is revealed be like?

PONDER

"Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it" (v. 33).

How does the expectation of Jesus' return affect your daily decisions?

PRAYER IDEAS

Ask God to help you to give up everything in order to find life in Christ.

Friday

- Read Luke 18:1-9

QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of Jesus' parable (v. 1)?
2. What is the content of the prayers Jesus has in mind (v. 7)?
3. How is God like this unrighteous judge? How is God different to him?

PONDER

"When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (v. 8).

When Jesus returns, will he find you faithful?

PRAYER IDEAS

Ask God to grant you faith to find salvation.

Also ask him to dispense justice against your adversaries.



15 Steps through the Bible

Jesus' Life

God kept his pledge by sending his son Jesus into the world. Jesus was a

Jew, an Israelite who was a descendant of King David. He lived the life of special relationship with God that all of Israel was supposed to live. He fulfilled the words of the prophets. Unlike Israel (and unlike Adam and Eve), Jesus never disobeyed God. He told people that it was time for God's people to be reconciled to him.

Luke 2:11

"Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

Mark 1:14-15

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The time has come", he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

More detail

The Gospels tell us what Jesus did. For instance, Matthew tells us that:

"Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness among the people" (Matt 4:23).

There are at least three important aspects of Jesus' life that show us he was the one who would be the saving ruler of God's kingdom:

Power

Jesus demonstrated his power by not only healing a paralyzed man, but also forgiving his sins (the story is in Mark 2:1-12). His power to heal was evidence that he had been given the authority to forgive sins.

Mark 2:1-12

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. 3 And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. 4 And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. 5 And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— 11 "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." 12 And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Preaching

Jesus preached and taught about the coming kingdom of God.

He was talking about himself!

In Luke 4:16-21, Jesus told the assembled religious leaders that he was the fulfilment of God's promise to send a saviour (see also Matthew 5:17).

Luke 4:16-21

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. 17 And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, 18 "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 the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." 20 And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Matthew 5:17

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."

Parables

Not everyone would see that Jesus was God's chosen King, the one who would save Israel and provide salvation for the nations, too. In Mark 4:11, Jesus explains to his disciples his practice of telling parables.

Mark 4:11-12

And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, 12 so that "they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven."

Jesus was sent from God to fulfil the promise to provide a powerful ruler of God's Kingdom who would also save people from their sins.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the 'good news' of Jesus?
2. Read through the 'More detail' section. What indications are there that Jesus would be the saving ruler of God's kingdom?

PONDER

How is the life of Jesus connected to, or the fulfilment of, previous stages we've seen in this overview of the Bible (e.g. the *Pledge*, or the *Kings*, etc.)?

PRAYER IDEAS

Repent of your sins and confess them to God, believing the good news.

Thank him for the forgiveness of sins, for the saviour he has sent in Jesus, and for revealing his kingdom and its king to you.

Daily Readings

The life and teachings of Jesus are revolutionary in themselves. His parables challenge us and uncover our well manicured motives for what they truly are.

As we explore just a slice of Jesus' teaching ministry this week, pray that God would refine you, like gold passing through fire.

Monday

- Read Luke 16:19-31

QUESTIONS

1. When the rich man lived in comfort and had an abundance, how did he treat Lazarus?
2. When the rich man was in need and wanted comfort, how did he treat Lazarus?
3. What is the warning that Jesus gives in this parable (vv. 25-31)?

PONDER

How do you think this passage relates to the rest of chapter 16? (Look back over Readings 1-2.)

PRAYER IDEAS

Ask God to give you ears to hear the good news of the kingdom of God.

Tuesday

- Read Luke 17:1-4

QUESTIONS

1. What must you *never* do?
2. What must you *always* do?
3. Why should you do this (v. 1)?

PONDER

Is there anyone you need to forgive? Is there anyone who might need rebuking? Is it you?

PRAYER IDEAS

Ask God to help you to forgive as you have been forgiven. In addition, ask him to guard you from temptation.

Wednesday

- Read Luke 17:5-10

QUESTIONS

1. Is the quantity of the apostles' faith the issue? What is Jesus saying is important?
2. Is the obedience of a servant a reason for special reward or honour?
3. How does Jesus apply this parable in verse 10?