

Responding to God Word: How to Faithfully Interpret the Bible
 Men's Bible Study at Park View
 A Study of the Gospels
 February 22, 2005

NOTES

<p>Read Luke 4:1-4</p> <p>What was the occasion or stated purpose for Luke's writing? What was his method? Who were his sources?</p> <p>The main purpose of today's study is to examine the interaction of Jesus with other people. Each table group will look at a different story in order to get a fuller picture of the way of Jesus. Since these same stories are told by several gospel writers, the parallel scriptures are listed.</p> <p>Table 1 - Luke 5:17-26 (Matt. 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12)</p> <p>Table 2 - Luke 8:26-39 (Matt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20)</p> <p>Table 3 – Luke 8:19-21 (Matt. 12:46-50; Mk. 3:31-35)</p> <p>Table 4 – Luke 8:40-56 (Matt. 9:18-26; Mk. 5:21-43)</p> <p>Table 5 – Luke 9:1-2 (Matt. 9:35-10:4; Mk. 6:6b)</p> <p>Table 6 – Luke 9:46-50 (Matt. 18:1-14; Mk. 9:33-50)</p> <p>Table 7 – Luke 18:18-30 (Matt. 19:16-30; Mk. 10:17-31)</p> <p>As you study the scripture passages, look first at the story as told in Luke then compare and contrast it with the accounts in other gospels. How significant are the differences?</p> <p>Look at all of the characters that are named or described in the story. With which of these characters do you most readily identify? Imagine yourself in the story as it is happening. See the sights. Smell the smells. Hear the words. What might you have been thinking and feeling as the interaction with Jesus was happening?</p>	<p>In the world of literature, the Gospels are unique. They could be described as “theological biographies.” They tell about the life, teaching, and passion of Jesus of Nazareth.</p> <p>To properly understand the gospels, it is necessary to read both vertically and horizontally. That is, one should read within the context of the gospel and in comparison with other gospels.</p> <p>Three of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) have much of the same material. The fourth gospel (John) has significantly different material. Thus, we can say that there is one gospel, but many dimensions.</p> <p>The gospels are written about Jesus; they were not written by Jesus. The only account of Jesus writing anything is when he wrote on the ground (John 8:6. But we are not even told what he wrote!</p> <p>All of the scriptures we are studying today are narratives. That is, they tell a brief story. If there is a teaching, it is linked to a particular time and place. In that way, we can understand the teaching in relation to the particular story.</p>
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Be prepared to answer the following questions for the entire men's group:

What situation brought Jesus into contact with the other main character(s) in the story?

What actions did Jesus take in response to the situation?

What questions did Jesus ask?

What instructions or commands did Jesus give?

What lesson did Jesus teach?

Why might the Spirit have inspired Luke to include this particular story in his gospel?

What does the story tell us about the character and teaching of Jesus?

What person or situation in your life today is most like the one in the Bible story you studies today? What might Jesus want to say or do in this situation?

Most of the teachings and actions of Jesus make the most sense when you look at the context.

Jesus often answered a question by asking another question. That is a common trait of the Jewish people.

Jesus gave very different instructions to people who came to him. We must be careful to understand his instructions in their context.

Just as in a modern biography or novel, every vignette in the gospel adds to our knowledge of the main character -- Jesus.

The gospels come alive to us today as we see the resurrected Jesus at work in our world.