

LEADERS GUIDE

► WELCOME TO THE LEADERS GUIDE

This guide is designed to be a tool for you as you lead your small group through the Gospel of Luke. For each study you will find the following possible categories of tools.

- Notes - These are general notes on that section or tips on leading.
- Launch - These questions are designed to be approachable by anyone and simply get the group talking about the topic of the night.
- Introduction - This stops short of getting into the passage but will help your group understand the context of the passage and get into the passage.
- Discussion Questions - This is the meat of the guide and includes mostly observations and meaning questions to walk your group through learning the passage.
- Summary Questions - These questions help the group come to a full understanding of the passage and function as a test to determine whether they properly understood the passage or not.
- Application Questions - These questions will help your group members wrestle with what the text means for their own lives. This is essential.

It is your job as a leader to make use of these tools in a way that fits your group. Based on maturity, some groups will need to be going through their own study guide each week before they arrive. Other groups may be less mature and will just read and discuss the passage when they arrive each week. Some weeks you will have more time than others for discussion. This may leave more or less time for conversation and require you to filter certain questions out. It is your job to walk in the Spirit and make these decisions.

One final note. This guide is not designed to be a crutch for your own study of the word! The best way to be prepared each week is to study the passage well yourself. It is hard to help others study the Bible if you have not taken the time to study it yourself.

Lead well!



9:57-62 GUIDE

► NOTES

- As your group dives into the text for the first time this week, your goal is twofold. You want to help them to begin to learn *how* to study the Bible *and* you want them to begin to *actually* study the Bible. We have written into the study a number of questions that will help them to study the Bible better. Most of these type of questions come from what is called “inductive Bible study.” It is basically a way of looking at a passage from a number of different lenses. (You can find all of these lenses/questions listed under Observation at the beginning of your study guide.) A simple way to put it is, you want their eyes looking down at their Bibles a lot. By asking these kinds of questions you are helping them learn how to read the Bible well. At the same time your goal is to actually help them learn the Bible.
- This is week one and your group, even if they have met before, will likely need help talking and discussing. A good strategy here is to have them answer some of the questions in pairs. Especially early questions. This helps them all get talking.
- This passage lays the framework for the rest of Luke as we see Jesus focused on Jerusalem as the place of his death on behalf of sinful man. Help them understand this overarching theme in addition to helping them study this immediate passage.

► LAUNCH

- What have you noticed about your parents’ commitment to each other? How has that affected the quality of their marriage?

► INTRODUCTION

- Well tonight we are going to look at a passage in which Jesus call’s his disciples to radical commitment and see how this relates to our relationships with him. This call to commitment comes at a significant turning point in the book of Luke. So before we dive into the commitment Jesus calls his disciples to and to get our study of Luke started let’s consider this shift in Jesus focus.
- Have someone read 9:51 out loud.
- This verse starts the next major section in which Jesus marches toward Jerusalem where a cross is waiting for Him. Let’s scan through the next 10 chapters and look for Luke’s reminders that this is where He’s headed.
- Go around and have the group look up the following verses in Luke: 9:51, 9:53, 13:22, 13:33, 13:34, 17:11, 18:31, 19:11, 19:28.



9:57-62 GUIDE

▶ INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

- Why does Luke say Jesus “set His face” for Jerusalem?”
- So that is the main thrust and context of the rest of Luke. Now let’s dive into our passage for the evening.

▶ DISCUSSION

- Have someone read 9:57-62 out loud.
- As he sets out on this journey he encounters three people who face obstacles to following Jesus. In these encounters we see Jesus addresses three aspects of commitment.
- (1) What is the first aspect of commitment that Jesus is emphasizing in this section? [Sacrifice.]
- Sacrifices vary in level of intensity, why makes this sacrifice particularly difficult?
- How would willingness or unwillingness to sacrifice affect your relationships with other people?
- How would willingness or unwillingness to sacrifice affect your relationship with Jesus?
- (2) What is the second aspect of commitment that Jesus is emphasizing in this section? [Priority.]
- Does this second person seem unwilling to completely follow Jesus? [No, he simply wants to do something else first. The man says that he must “first” bury his father. Jesus focuses on the issue of priority. Following Jesus must come first.]
- What sorts of problems and issues might this young man face if he didn’t show up at the family funeral?
- The young man wanted to put family commitments first. What does Jesus say must be the priority for His disciples? Does this seem unfair? Why or why not?
- How would making something other than Jesus your first priority affect your relationship with him?
- How would making Jesus your first priority affect your relationship with him?
- (3) What is the third aspect of commitment that Jesus is emphasizing in this section? [Perseverance.]
- This seems like a harsh element of commitment. In what way is perseverance integral to commitment?
- What things have you noticed that seem to cause Christians to turn back on their commitment to Christ? What calls you to turn back?



9:57-62 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Ok so we see Jesus is calling his disciples to three aspects of commitment: sacrifice, priority, and perseverance. To help us pull all these together let's think about a wedding for a moment. What are some common phrases spoken in wedding vows: What similarities do you see between these vows and this passage? What is Jesus really asking?
- As he sets out on this journey he encounters three people who face obstacles to following Jesus. In these encounters we see Jesus addresses three aspects of commitment.

► SUMMARY

- To consider commitment more let's return to the topic of marriage where we started. What are some common phrases spoken in wedding vows? What similarities do you see between these vows and this passage? What is Jesus really asking? [The following are some common phrases often spoken in wedding vows: "in sickness and in health," "to honor and cherish," "forsaking all others," "till death do you part." What do these vows emphasize? "In sickness and in health" suggests a willingness to sacrifice. "To honor, cherish" and to "forsake all others" speaks of priority in our affections. "Till death do you part" expresses a commitment to persevere in love. Love is measured by its willingness to sacrifice, by its priorities, and by its duration, or perseverance. Seen in this light, it is apparent that Jesus is calling for a commitment from His followers that is tantamount to a marriage commitment. Basically, He is saying, "Will you marry me?"]
- At first glance some of the things that Jesus requires from "would-be" followers seem overly steep and perhaps even harsh. But now take a look at Luke 19:41.
- Have someone read Luke 19:41
- Having finally made it to Jerusalem where He will be nailed to a cross, Jesus weeps. . . for Jerusalem. Not for Himself, but for the people who are about to reject Him. What does this reveal about Jesus' commitment? [He is totally committed to His people and He prioritizes their good over His own. Jesus is the ultimate husband. He asks us to commit our lives to Him because He's totally committed to us.]
- How does it affect your ability to be totally committed to Jesus know he was totally committed to us? [Help your group see both sides. The total surrender due of them, and the safety of making that commitment to someone whose primary concern is for you, even on the eve of His own agonizing death.]



9:57-62 GUIDE

► APPLICATION

- What would be hard for you to sacrifice for Jesus?
- How does the way you spend your time reflect the priority Jesus has in your life?
- What aspect of the Christ life feels the most difficulty to persevere in?
- What would it look like for you to be full committed to Jesus this week?



10:38-42 GUIDE

▶ NOTES

- This is a great passage to help your group grow in the spiritual discipline of a daily 'quite time'.
- The important thing to note, for busy and active people, is their need to slow down and pull away to be with Jesus. While this might not be a natural inclination, it is a necessity.
- It is not incidental that this story is followed by Jesus' lessons on prayer. These lessons provide the fundamental attitude change needed to keep a biblical perspective. The first of these lessons is to seek first God's kingdom and His agenda.

▶ LAUNCH

- What are the top three things that cause worry in your life?
- How do these worries affect your ability to live life the way you want?

▶ INTRODUCTION

- Well tonight we are going to look at a passage where Jesus deals with how the worries of life affect our ability to have intimacy with him.
- Let's read the passage.

▶ DISCUSSION

- Why is Martha so upset and frustrated?
- Let's consider these two women more. Read John 11:17-44. Combined with the passage in Luke, describe the basic temperaments or personalities of the two women.
- Who do you identify with more, Mary or Martha?
- What are the strengths of being a "Martha" in life and ministry? What are the weaknesses?
- Having lost her focus on the Lord and having been consumed with worry, Martha lashes out and blames her sister when, according to Jesus, it was her own poor choice. What are the common results you experience when you lose your focus on God? Who, or what, do you blame when your life becomes chaotic?
- In verse 41, how does Jesus refocus Martha's perspective?
- In verse 41, the passage more literally reads "Mary has chosen the better portion." Look up Numbers 18:8-29 and Lamentations 3:23-24. What background they give concerning Jesus' use of the word "portion."



10:38-42 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Luke reports that Mary “sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching” and Jesus praises her for this. We can’t physically sit at Jesus feet today. What does it look like for us to sit at Jesus’ feet?
- In verse 41, the passage is most accurately translated “Mary has chosen the better portion” or “Mary has chosen the best portion.” Look up Numbers 18:8-29 and Lamentations 3:23-24. What background do these passage give concerning Jesus’ use of the word “portion?” [Jesus is our portion. He is the thing that ultimately sustains us.]
- What insight does this provide as to how we should see our time with the Lord?

► SUMMARY

- How would you summarize the principle he wants Martha to understand?

► APPLICATION

- Now that we understand the perspective that Jesus wants us to have when it comes to spending time with him let’s consider what this looks like in our own lives.
- This passage invites us to see Jesus Himself as our ‘portion.’ Apart from Christ, what things do you treat as your ‘portion’? In other words, where are you tempted to look for life apart from Christ?
- [Here it is helpful to help you group think though and move toward regularly spending time ‘at Jesus feet’. Help them think through what it looks like to have a regular quite time. This is possibly the most important part of the time now that you have studied the passage.]
- What has been your experience of spending time with Jesus reading your bible, praying and journaling?
- Let’s read “How to have a Daily Quiet Time”.
- What would it look like for all of us to have a daily quite time this week? [Talk this out with your group in an effort to get them to commit to a regular quite time. Talk through the practicals of when, where, and what passage of scripture they will read.]



10:38-42 GUIDE

➤ DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Ask them, what repeated phrases or ideas do we see in the passage? Let them share a couple answers.
- After you have let them share a couple say, “we saw the phrases ‘in Him’ or ‘in Christ’ 9 times in this passage. Additionally, many of the blessings seem to have this phrase attached. Why is this phrase significant? What does it mean to be in Christ?”

➤ SUMMARY QUESTION

- How would you guys summarize this section?
 - This is a good litmus test as to whether they understand that passage or not.
 - The answer should be something along the line of, “God is worthy of praise for all the ways he blesses us through Christ.”

➤ APPLICATION QUESTION

- If Christ is the source of all of God’s blessing for us, it would be helpful to consider what we look to outside of Christ for blessing. What do you look to outside of Christ as a source of blessing in your life? [Be prepared with examples from your own life.]
- Which promise most seems like good news to you? What would it look like to trust God that this promise is true this week?



11:1-13 GUIDE

► NOTES

- The focus of this lesson is on prayer. Just like learning to ride a bike the best way to learn prayer or grow in prayer is simply to pray. To help you towards that end there is a prayer exercise immediately after the application section of this weeks guide. Make sure you leave 10 to 15 minutes at the end of your study to do this exercise with them. All of the discussion questions will enable them to have a fuller biblical understanding of prayer but make sure you actually give them space to pray.
- This passage has a parallel text in Matthew 6:5-15, where the Lord's Prayer is also taught. In Matthew, Jesus contrasts His teaching on prayer with the vain and empty prayers of the pagans who endlessly recite the same words, believing that somehow they will grab God's attention. This is important to realize because many have done this very thing with the Lord's prayer, believing that somehow through its repetition, God's favor will be garnered. It is for this reason that the study approaches this as a "model" prayer. In other words, though it is helpful to pray the exact words of the Lord's prayer, Jesus also intended it as a sample of the way in which we should pray, intending for us to personalize and adapt it.

► LAUNCH

- Imagine you had a magic cell phone that you could use to contact God with calls and texts. How do you think you would use it?
- Tonight we are going to look at a passage where Jesus teaches us how to communicate with God through prayer.
- Read Luke 11:1-13

► INTRODUCTION

- Matthew 6:5-15 also records this model prayer. What additional lessons does Jesus teach in the section in Matthew? [Jesus emphasizes the need for sincerity. Not praying so that others will think us more spiritual, and not simply repeating empty words.]
- How should these additional lessons effect the way we apply Jesus' teaching on prayer? [Though it is helpful to pray the exact words of the Lord's prayer we should avoid viewing it as a magic incantation. So we should also it as a sample of the way in which we should pray, intending for us to personalize and adapt it in sincerity.]



11:1-13 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION

- Look back at Luke 11:1-4. What principles/topics do you see in the prayer? [Let them discuss how they would summarize the principles/topics. After they have shared you can tell them that a simple way to summarize and remember the Lord prayer is: Person, Purpose, Provision, Pardon, Protection; that is the person of God, the purpose of God, the need for provision, the need for pardon, and the need for protection.]
- Jesus begins by extolling God for His Person. What do you love to praise Him for? What passages in Scripture have you read that describe His greatness? [If you have members of your group that are new to the Christian faith or even new to prayer you can help them brainstorm attributes of God that are praise worthy. You can talk about what it looks like to pray through a particular psalm or passage of scripture that describes various aspects of God's character. Psalm 100 is a short and easy starting place you can point them to or even practice with them.]
- Next Jesus prays for God's purposes to be fulfilled. Why is it important to pray in this way? [Taking time to pray in this way aligns our hearts to God's purposes for our lives and the world. We are to be the vehicles of bringing about His purpose and will, not the reverse.]
- What would praying for God's purposes look like? [Topics could include God to be glorified, lost people to be saved, believers to walk in faith and righteousness, etc.]
- Jesus then asks for God's provision. Look at Mt 20:29-34. If Jesus were to show up and ask you, "What would you like Me to do for you?" What would you say? Do you feel the freedom to pray in this way?
- Next Jesus invites us to ask for pardon. Why is it important to ask forgiveness for sins if God has already forgiven us through Jesus? [Although our relationship with God never changes our fellowship with Him can change. That is, if someone outrageously sins against their parent their fellowship with their parent may be damaged but they are always their parent's child. In the same way, our fellowship with God can be damaged but as believers our relationship never changes. So confessing our sins brings us back into right fellowship with God. Additionally there is a healing processes associated with sin that only begin once we confess our sin. This is seen in the famous first step of the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous: admitting you have a problem. See 1 John 1:5-10 if you want to look at a passage that address the topic of confessing sin.]



11:1-13 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Finally Jesus models seeking protection. What makes you feel weak and tempted? Or where do you feel weak and tempted? How might Jesus help you in this area?
- At this point, you can help them remember the model. Ask them to repeat back to you the 5 P's of the Lord prayer. [Person, Purpose, Provision, Pardon, and Protection.]
- Ok now that we have looked at Jesus' model for prayer let's look at two barriers that hinder our ability to pray.
- Read Luke 11:5-10
- Having told us what to do, Jesus now addresses the primary thing that interferes with our ability to do it. In this parable what belief of ours is Jesus addressing? [Having told us how to pray, Jesus then addresses the chief reason we find it difficult to pray. He tells a story about a man who is reluctant to grant requests. Though this man is nothing like God, he's very much like the false image we have of God. Jesus knows that if we doubt that God is favorably disposed towards us we're not likely to pray, and even less likely to pray with persistence. He tells this story to draw attention to our false view of God and to encourage us to be bold and persistent in bringing requests to Him.]
- Why do you think that God wants us to persevere in praying? Why doesn't He always answer immediately? [The difference between simply striking a door and knocking on it is repetition. This is a different kind of repetition from the kind Jesus condemns in Matthew 6: 5-15. Jesus is not teaching to say the same words over and over again, but to be assertive, confident, and persistent in approaching God with our requests. This stretches our faith as well as demonstrates our trust in God's goodness. It also cultivates our own hearts to deeply desire to see our reality changed.]
- Ok let's look at the second barrier.
- Read Luke 11:9-13
- In this parable Jesus continues His work to repair our view of God. He is using the Jewish teaching form in which one makes his/her case by arguing "from lesser to the greater." In this parable what belief of ours is Jesus addressing? [His point here is that if human parents know how to give good gifts to their children, then how much more does God? Jesus wants to say, as powerfully as it can be expressed, that God cares and loves to give good gifts to His children – more than we can imagine.]



11:1-13 GUIDE

► APPLICATION

- Jesus seems to know that we tend to doubt God's favorable disposition toward us. Why do you think we doubt this, and how have you seen this doubt effect your own prayers?
- What helps you believe that God is good and wants to answer your prayers?
- Read John 14:12-14. If we do not see God give us what we have asked for, why might this be? [In fact, His major reason for withholding our requests is that the things we ask for might not really be for our good. In John 14:12-14, Jesus says that He will grant any prayer that is asked in "His name." By this He means anything we ask for that is in accordance with His will. The more we grow as Christians, the more our prayers align with God's will, and as a result, the more we see our prayers answered.] How have you seen the things you ask for in prayer change since becoming a Christian?

► PRAYER EXERCISE

- Remind your group of the 5 P's: Person, Purpose, Provision, Pardon, and Protection. Then have them take 5 minutes to write out a prayer to God using the Lord's prayer as a model. Have them write out 1 or 2 things for each of the P's. After they are finished, have them pair up and pray through what they wrote. If you sense that anyone is intimidated by this you can shepherd them through the exercise. You can remind people that prayer is just talking with God and it's ok to mess up. Again like riding a bike they might be getting on for the first time and skin their knee. It's more important that they simply talked with God than they feel like they prayed "perfectly".



12:1-21 GUIDE

► NOTES

- This week begins an extended section of Jesus' teaching. As a reminder you study sections like this more like you would one of Paul's letters; breaking it down paragraph by paragraph and sentence by sentence rather than breaking it down like a story. You can remind your group about these two ways of studying scripture and help them not only study this passage but continue to grow in how to study a passage.
- Verse 10 - What do we make of the unforgivable nature of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? Jesus teaches that there is a form of hypocrisy, of which the Pharisees were guilty, that can never be forgiven. This sin is to refuse the testimony of the Holy Spirit concerning the identity of Jesus Christ as our Savior. The logic is simple. All sins can be forgiven due to Christ's death on the cross, except the sin of rejecting Christ. In this case, there is no provision for sin. The Pharisees were guilty of this hypocrisy, for they claimed to know God, but were rejecting the Son. For this, there was no forgiveness, because they had rejected the only provision for the forgiveness of their sin.

► LAUNCH

- Have you ever warned someone who was unaware of some dangerous situation they were about to face? What happened?
- Well tonight we are going to look at a passage in which Jesus warns his disciples about potential dangers they may face in the future.

► INTRODUCTION

- Have them read the passage.
- In this passage of scripture Jesus deals with two main issues: One in vv. 1-12, and a second in vv. 13-21. Luke quotes Jesus using the same phrase to set up each and alert us to the topic. What's the phrase Jesus repeats and what are the two topics He is teaching on?
- Ok let's break the passage down even further. What is Jesus' main idea in each paragraph? [1-3: general hypocrisy; 4-7: hypocrisy of being a Christian, yet not being willing to publicly acknowledge this fact; 8-12: public acknowledgement of being a Christian continued; 13-21: the foolishness of putting your security in your wealth.]
- Ok now that we have done a brief fly over of the whole passage let's dive into each section more deeply.



12:1-21 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION

- First let's consider the topic of hypocrisy. What is hypocrisy? Why does Jesus say that it is ultimately futile? [Saying one thing but doing another. What you do contrary to what you say will be revealed one day.]
- Jesus makes clear that our deeds will be made know one day but in this passage he doesn't say when. Thinking about what you know from the rest of scripture when will God disclose the secrets of our hearts? [At the judgement when Christ returns.]
- So we know there is a final judgment day when our hearts will be revealed but interestingly scripture also refers to trials as "mini-judgement days" (1 Peter 4:12-19). God graciously allows believers to experience trials in order to expose their hidden areas of underdevelopment and sin.
- Describe a time when the stress of a trial "proclaimed from the roof tops" a hidden area of your weakness and sin?
- If God allows us to go through trials, read 12:4-7 and 11-12, and consider what specific trials Jesus suggests we might go through?
- What form of hypocrisy is Jesus concerned about here? [Being a Christian, but not being will- ing to publicly confess this fact.]
- What causes us to be hypocritical in this area?
- What does Jesus teach to counterbalance these pressures? How should this make a difference in our witness for Christ? [Two things: 1. To fear and reverence God more than man, because He alone is the true judge. 2. Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will give us the words to say.]
- Read 12:8-10. Jesus mentions here one form of hypocrisy which the Pharisees were guilty of that can never be forgiven. What is it? Why can't it be forgiven? [See the lesson notes on this section.]
- In the next section Jesus warns his listeners to be on their guard against greed. Looking ahead in chapter 12 is is clear that Jesus continues to deal with the topic of hypocrisy. Why does Luke include this section on greed in the middle of Jesus' teaching about hypocrisy? How would hypocrisy of the Pharisees been related to the greed of the Pharisees? [They would say they wanted to help people but they really wanted the money and status that came with their positions of power. This can be a great temptation and eventual barrier to serving others.]



12:1-21 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Compared to the rest of the world, how would you assess your wealth in the following areas? Education; Money; Possessions; Health; Time; Vocation (financial freedom that enables you to choose a career); Freedom (to speak, travel, etc.)
- How was this rich man foolish concerning his wealth? [He trusted in his wealth rather than God. He also hoarded his money.]
- Do you see yourself as truly free to serve Jesus in whatever way He would ask, or do you feel obligations or ensnarements to pursue careers, additional studies, financial security, or even a family? In which of these areas do you feel a sense of obligation? [It would be good to begin the sharing with the different ways you have felt ensnared to pursue family, career and a comfortable lifestyle.]
- What lesson can you learn from the rich man and Jesus' warning to "be on your guard?"

► APPLICATION

- Well now that we have considered hypocrisy and greed lets consider how Jesus' teaching applies to us.
- Why do you suppose we find it so hard to look to the approval we have from God in Christ instead of the approval we get from man?
- When has not believing that His good opinion of you is all that matters caused you to try to win approval from the crowd? Did it lead to hypocrisy?
- In light of this passage, how do you sense God calling you to give from the wealth you possess?
- The leading character in the parable believed that "life" could be found in accumulating more possessions. If this parable was describing ways you look for life apart from Christ, what would it be about? What do you accumulate?



12:22-34 GUIDE

► NOTES

- You will need to help your group to think about what seeking the kingdom looks like as it is a pretty opaque term and not expounded on much in this passage.
- Despite the need to help them a bit here, know that the main focus of this passage is give up what causes them worry. You can't seek the kingdom unless you do this. So you will want to encourage your group to consider what they most fear losing and whether they might need to give it away, trusting God who has promised to give them the kingdom and a thousand things besides.

► LAUNCH

- When you are stressed and worried what do you tend to dream about at night? Do you have a particular recurring dream that alerts you to dread in your life? What do you most often worry about?
- Well tonight we are going to look at a passage where Jesus addresses the topic of worry.

► DISCUSSION

- Read 12:22-28
- This passage immediately follows our passage from last week. To think about and consider context look back over Luke 12:13-21. What is going on in that passage? How is that passage tied to and relevant for our passage, 22-34, this week?
- We see that Jesus has just been talking about greed. How is greed related to worry?
- In vv. 24-28, Jesus gives two main illustrated lessons about worry. What are they? [The futility of worry and the provision of God.]
- How have you experienced those lessons?
- In the first century, worry would have focused on food and clothing (12:22). What are the big worries today?
- So it is clear the ways that we worry but at the same time we have seen God provide for us. In what ways have you already seen God provide and take care of you? Why do you think you struggle with worry related to these issues?
- If Jesus stopped His sermon at 12:28, do you think you would have the instruction you need to stop worrying? Why or why not? [No. At this juncture He has only addressed the thinking component of worry. The real problem is the heart and how that must be changed.]



12:22-34 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Read 12:29-31
- In 12:29, Jesus warns about setting our hearts on issues that cause us to worry. How is worry a problem of the heart?
- What does Jesus teach as the heart cure? [To focus our hearts on seeking after God and His kingdom.]
- What does seeking His kingdom involve personally? relationally? In ministry? [Learning about the kingdom by reading and studying God's word; seek fellowship with the king of the Kingdom, Jesus; submit yourself to the reign of Jesus by obeying his word in scripture and following the leading of his spirit in our lives; seek fellowship with the other citizens of the kingdom, other believers; invite others into the kingdom, non-believers; live out the values of the kingdom: justice, mercy, kindness, righteousness, service, sacrifice, etc.]
- Read 12:32-34
- This is weird advice. What advice does he give and how does it apply to worry? [Jesus actually suggests that they get rid of the very thing they are worried about losing! You can consider using this analogy from the movie The Usual Suspects. There is a great (if not disturbing) illustration of this principal in the film. Uber bad guy, Keyser Soze, comes home to find his wife and kids taken hostage by a rival bad guy with the threat that unless he yields control to his competition, his wife and kids will die. His solution? He whips out his gun and kills his own wife and kids so that no one will have any leverage on him. I suppose it also helped him that everyone in the criminal world was then terrified of his ruthlessness. Though murdering your family is hardly the application we are looking for, Soze is following Jesus' principal: Take the very thing you are disposed to worry about (money in the case of Jesus' audience) and give it away. It's the surest way to break its control over you. It also frees you to focus on the things about which worry isn't possible; things that can't run out, be stolen, or be destroyed. When we believe that it's true that the Father has been pleased to give us the kingdom, everything else we worry about seems less important.]



12:22-34 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Can you think of a time when Jesus was worried? 12. What did He do in that circumstance? [The only time was in the Garden of Gethsemane before the crucifixion. He was so overwhelmed with dread He was literally sweating blood. In His terror, His solution was to surrender the thing He feared losing and embrace the suffering. That's how salvation and ultimately resurrection comes – via surrender and death. This lesson is consistent with the inverted values of the kingdom. If you want to save your life, you must lose it. If you want to have everything, possess nothing.]

► APPLICATION QUESTION

- What do you most fear losing? [This is honestly a hard question. If you want to soften it you can ask: What are some things you fear losing? You can judge how hard you want to push your group.]
- If those things are true for us, is there something you need to give away that would demonstrate trust, refocus your heart and help you to see God's provision? What is it?
- How do you need to seek God's kingdom in a way you are not currently?
- You can end with a time of prayer where you confess worries to God and asking him to give you faith in His love for you and the provision of his kingdom.



12:35-13:35

► NOTES

- This section in Luke's gospel is comprised of several stories and teachings of Jesus that appear to be disconnected but are actually centered on a common theme. In this study, you and your group will look at each one (or most of them anyway) and try to figure out what the point of the vignette is. As the pieces come together the overall purpose should emerge. It's a different sort of study with a very high value on self discovery.
- Your challenge will be to keep things balanced. Leave enough room for people to theorize and genuinely discover, but don't let them drown in frustration if they can't figure out what is going on. You might want to put this leaders guide down and go try to figure it out on your own so you'll know what they'll be going through. Keep two questions in mind:
 - What is the message in each scene?
 - What is the overall message Luke is giving by putting all these scenes together? Then come back and read the tips below.
- After you spend time in the passage yourself you can look at the commentary on each scene below to think more about each section. The discussion starts later.
- The context of the passage is Jesus is inexorably headed for Jerusalem, and Israel is receiving their final opportunity to respond. The window of opportunity is closing fast, and Jesus is pleading and warning them that this is their last chance to accept Him and avert national judgment. At the same time, Jesus unveils to His disciples how the kingdom of God will be manifested in light of His rejection.

► SCENE 1: 12:35-40

- This is the first time that Jesus addresses the theme of His Second Coming. When we read this from our historical vantage point it's not all that shocking, but to His disciples it must have sounded very odd. "What do you mean 'The Son of Man will come when you don't expect Him.' You're right here."
- They were expecting that the Messiah was about to set up His Kingdom and all would be good for Israel. Instead there is talk of significant time passing and a surprise visit. It must have all been very disorienting. Notice, though, that when the master does return, great blessing awaits. He will serve His servants.



12:35-13:35

▶ SCENE 2: 12:41-48

- Peter hears all this talk about some secret plan that he's not privy to and he wonders if he's among the rabble that will not be given the inside scoop. As usual Jesus doesn't directly answer the question but continues to describe what it will be like when He returns. Again there will be blessing for those who are faithful and wise in His absence. But there will also be severe judgment against those who are not. Jesus' point to Peter seems to be that he knows enough and would do well to act on his knowledge of what the master wants.

▶ SCENE 3: 12:54-59

- In this scene Jesus is raising the level of warning for those who aren't ready now, but should be. They are unable to read what Jesus thinks should be self evident, and they are ignoring an urgent problem. He is telling them that they are missing something and time is running out.

▶ SCENE 4: 13:1-5

- Here Jesus is discussing some current events. These weren't Old Testament stories, just recent news items. Jesus' point here is pretty clear. Judgement is coming, and Israel needs to repent, or else perish.
By now your group should feel the intensity rising. What started as some shocking news about a delayed kingdom is now pretty clearly a warning and rebuke. Luke's purpose in organizing these stories should be getting clearer.

▶ SCENE 5: 13:6-9

- This is very similar to scene 4. It's useful to know that fig trees were a common symbol for Israel. God has given ample time for them to produce fruit, and they are receiving their last opportunity before judgement comes, symbolized by the cutting down of the tree. See Jeremiah 24 for more insight.

▶ SCENE 6: 13:10-17

- Now we move from teaching about Israel's need to repent to illustrating it. Here's Jesus miraculously healing somebody who has suffered for 18 years and all the syn- agogue rulers can see is that He did it on the sabbath which they mistakenly think is illegal. They are blind. The Messiah is right in front of them but they can't see Him for Who He is.



12:35-13:35

▶ SCENE 7: 13:22-30

- Now the final insult. Not only are the Jews being judged and excluded, but a bunch of Gentiles dogs (people from the east and west and north and south – pretty much everywhere except Israel) are entering the Kingdom.

▶ SCENE 8: 13:31-35

- The entire section aptly closes with the picture of Jesus' lament for Jerusalem and the nations' coming judgment. Here Luke brings us back to the narrative theme: Jesus' final trek to Jerusalem. We see that He is drawing near to the city that He loves, the city that will put Him to death.

▶ BIG IDEA

- While faithfully holding out the invitation to repent and follow Him, Jesus is painting a picture of Israel's rejection of their Messiah and God's subsequent judgment of Israel. The door is closing and they are on the outside refusing to come in. While some Jews will be faithful, our attention is drawn to the Gentiles whom God is graciously going to invite to the banquet to feast in the kingdom of God.

▶ LAUNCH

- What is the biggest warning your parent's ever gave you. Did you heed it?
- Well tonight we are going to look at a long passage in which Jesus gives a series of warnings. To spend time in God's word tonight I am going to lean a lot more on you guys to figure it out. So we are going to go section by section and see if we can 't figure out what Jesus is teaching and then what his overarching theme is.

▶ DISCUSSION

- Read 12:35-40.
- What's weird about this?
- What's the message?
- Read 12:41-48.
- What is the answer to Peter's question?
- What's the message?



12:35-13:35

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Read 12:54-59.
- One reason people didn't recognize Jesus as Messiah is that they were looking for more of a political leader, or majestic king. In what ways do people misidentify Jesus today?
- What's the message?
- Read 13:1-5
- Do you know anything about the events He is referring to?
- What's the message?
- What's the message?
- Read 13:31-35.
- What emotions do you perceive in Jesus in this scene?
- What's the message?

► SUMMARY QUESTION

- How would you summarize all of Jesus teaching in this section?

► APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- This is about Israel's rejection of the Messiah. Is it possible that this same rejection can take place in our lives? How, even as Christians, can we be hard-hearted toward Christ?
- What are ways you don't believe Jesus is Who He said He is?
- If He were to come back tonight, would you be ready?
- What do you think it means to be ready? Are there any changes that you need to make in your life?



15:1-10 GUIDE

► NOTES

- We are really slowing down here. Jesus actually intends chapter 15 to act as one unit but we are going to divide it into three weeks. So many rich things to consider in this chapter.

► LAUNCH

- Before we look at the text this week answer this question: what are some of the ways that unbelievers are described in the Bible? Terms, descriptions? [Allow the group to discuss. Lost is the key term in this study.]
- When did it look like for you guys come to faith in Christ? Before high school, during high school, or since coming to college? How did you become found? [Let them share a couple of stories.]

► CONTEXT

- Let dive into our passage tonight by looking at the first two verses. Read Luke 15:1-2.
- Luke reports that the Pharisees were grumbling, what were the Pharisees specifically complaining about? What is the question they are implicitly asking?
- If this story were retold today with you cast as a Pharisee, who might you be muttering about?
- As Jesus often did He skipped the direct attack and told a story. Why do that? What's the value of a parable?

► DISCUSSION

- Ok well now that we know about bit of the content let's dive into Jesus' first parable. Read Luke 15:3-7.
- The key to understanding a parable is to realize it has one main point. They're not allegories in which everything is a symbol. Could somebody retell the story? [Here you just want the group to begin interacting with and dissecting the story. Have them tell it, talk about it, and begin to figure out what Jesus is saying.]
- If we're going to figure out the point, let's think about the elements. What's up here? Is anything repeated?
- Before we land on a main idea for the passage let's make sure we take in everything Jesus has to say by reading his second parable. Read Luke 15:8-10.
- This story is similar to the first. They both share the same main point. What's this one about?



15:1-10 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- What's the common element in both stories?
- The purpose of the parables, both parables in fact, is to answer the question implied by the grumblers, "Why do you hang out with losers?" What's Jesus' answer to that question? [Why does Jesus hang out with losers? For joy! Because when one of these sinners repents (is found) and is made safe again, it delights Him. And it delights His Father. Finally, it delights everyone who loves Them. Jesus hangs out with sinners for joy.]
- Not only that but take another look at the original complaint. Did you notice what verb they attribute to Jesus there? They say he "welcomes" sinners. That's true enough but kind of passive. Now check out the verbs He applies to the character representing Himself in the stories. He goes after, finds, puts them on His shoulder, and takes them home. He lights a lamp, sweeps the house, searches carefully and finds. Jesus is saying, "It's worse than you know. I don't just welcome them, I go after them, search carefully, and sweep the house. I do whatever it takes and I find them and bring them home. And I do it all for joy."]
- What does this passage teach us about the character of God?
- What false view of God's character does it want to correct?

► APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- This passage would suggest that joy is the appropriate response to repentance (turning back to God). But often this isn't the common emotion we associate with repentance. Often we experience fear at the thought of repenting personally. We are afraid about being honest about our sin despite the fact that God welcomes us back with joy.
- And often we experience apathy towards those that are lost. Or even towards believers that are less mature than we are.
- How do you experience fear when it comes to repenting personally rather than knowing there will be joy in heaven when you repent?
- How do you experience apathy, or maybe even disdain, rather than a desire for the lost around you to be found? Who do you know that needs to be gone after, searched for, and found?
- Where do you see a false view of God in your life when it comes to rejoicing over repenting? How might a correct view of God change your life?



15:11-24 GUIDE

► NOTES

- This week's passage is essentially linked to last week. What was going on last week? Jesus is responding to the Pharisees grumbling about his interacting with sinners. Essentially they are asking Jesus why he hangs out with losers. And Jesus gives two parables whose main idea is that rejoicing when something is found, when a sinner repents, is the appropriate response. And that should cause us to move towards God in repentance and should cause us to move towards those that don't know Jesus in the hopes of introducing them to him.
- This week we'll begin to look at the third story. Though it continues in the same direction as the parables of the lost sheep and coin, this one has at least two major differences. One, it's significantly longer with more vivid details. And two, it has a curious second act that is lacking in the other two. We're going to save act two for next week, and focus on the details in vv. 11-24.
- One of the key sections in this week's passage is the section where we see how the father responds to the lost son returned. In that section take time with your group to look at and enjoy everything the father does. Marinate in it because this is the image of God that Jesus is trying to impress upon us. Unfortunately, we are slow of heart to believe it. When I have screwed up huge, especially since coming to Christ, it is hard for me to imagine God would watch for me, be filled with compassion towards me, run to me, throw his arms around me, kiss me and restore me again. It's likely that you and the people in your group struggle to believe that too. That has to be why Jesus made this story so lavish. He's trying to convince us of what He knows His Father is like. The Pharisees thought God was a mean grouch like they were. Jesus tells this story to challenge and correct their (and our) faulty view of God so that we would go to Him for mercy, and praise Him for His grace.

► LAUNCH

- What's one of the most disobedient things you did as a kid? Did you ever confess it to your parents? What happened?
- Well tonight we are going to look at a passage that deals with turning back to God when we have messed up.



15:11-24 GUIDE

► CONTEXT

- To review from last week, I look back over Luke 15:1-10; what is the big question Jesus is responding to in those parables? [Jesus is responding to the Pharisees grumbling about his interacting with sinners. Essentially they are asking Jesus, "why do you hang out with losers?"]
- What is His answer? [Jesus gives two parables whose main idea is that rejoicing when something is found, when a sinner repents, is the appropriate response. So why does he hangout with losers? For joy. And this should cause us to move towards God in repentance ourselves and this should cause us to move towards those that don't know Jesus in the hopes of introducing them to him.]
- Ok let's dive into our passage for tonight and see where Jesus takes us next.

► DISCUSSION

- Read Luke 15:11-32.
- There are two big differences between the first two stories and this one. What are they? [Many more vivid details, and a second act.]
- We're going to look at the second act next week and focus on the details in vv. 11-24. Why do you think this story is so much longer? [Without getting into what Jesus is actually trying to do with the second act in 17-32 you can make sure they see that the details are there to appeal to our hearts and persuade us of something. They will have to wait for act two next week to see that something.]
- Look back at 15:13-16
- Taking a look at the first scene. What does it describe? [It describes the ruin that the son's sin brings into his life.]
- What is the trend in this guys life throughout this scene? [Downward spiral. Here Jesus describes the typical pattern of sin. Sin almost always starts off fun and spirals downward into misery. Observe with your group all the details that show this process at work. Take note that Jews were not fond of pigs. The fact that he ends up feeding pigs shows how low he had sunk.]
- He began this story as a privileged son. How would you describe him now? [He has traded in sonship for slavery. He used to enjoy all the privileges that were his to enjoy as the son of his father. Now he's reduced to a humiliating job and starvation.]
- How would you title this scene? [Allow the group to choose. I used "Sin and Misery."]
- Read 15:17-19
- What is being depicted in this scene? [We see the steps and process of repentance.]



15:11-24 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- What are elements of repentance? [In vv. 17-20 Jesus gives us a pretty detailed view of what repentance looks like. Pay close attention to the description of the son and note three things.
- 1. He comes to his senses. The first step in repentance is to realize the folly of having traded what God wants for us for some inferior substitute, no matter how bright and shiny it may appear at first. 2 Tim 2:24-26 is a great picture of how this happens as God mercifully intervenes in our lives.
- 2. He is broken and has no sense of his rights. There's no presumption or demands, just an overwhelming sense of need.
- 3. He goes seeking mercy. Repentance is more than feeling wretched for sin. It requires an actual change. Judas felt bad, but rather than repenting and being restored he killed himself. Peter repented, went to Jesus, and was forgiven.
- Observe too that he has no sense or hope of being a son. He is a slave and the highest hope he can muster is to be a slave of his father rather than a pig farmer.]
- How does he see himself? [He sees himself as a slave.]
- How would you title this scene? [Choose your own. I used "Repentance."]
- Read 15:20-24.
- This is where we see the hero of the story. Make a list of the father's verbs in this act. What does each one tell you about the character of the father? [The father saw him. He was watching, observing and thus aware of his son's move towards him. He was filled with compassion. No anger, just joy in the son's return. He ran to his son. When was the last time you saw an old man run? They look ridiculous, but dignity is not his concern. He threw his arms around him and kissed him. He is lavish and affectionate giving a far warmer reception than the son dared dream. He said to his servants...robe, ring, sandals, fattened calf, celebrate! This isn't merely a party, it's a party for his son. The robe and ring are symbols of his sonship. He calls him "this son of mine," and restores him.
- **Be sure to marinate in this truth as it's likely that you and the people in your group struggle to believe it too. When I have screwed up huge, especially since coming to Christ, it is hard for me to imagine God would watch for me, be filled with compassion towards me, run to me, throw his arms around me, kiss me and restore me again.]
- How does the father's behavior affect the son's status? [He restores him to sonship.]
- How would you title this scene? [I used "The Love of the Father."]



15:11-24 GUIDE

► SUMMARY QUESTION

- Why do you think Jesus told this story? [This is a great question to let your group summarize the passage and give you an opportunity to see if they understood it. Allow the group to discuss. I think He told it to radically confront their view of the Father and show us that's He's much more gracious than we realize. He did this so that we would go to Him for mercy, confident of His affection for us.]

► APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- How does the father in this story mirror the way you view God? How does he differ?
- Which behavior of the father is hardest to believe God would do for you?
- Is there an area of your life in which you need to return to the Father, perhaps where you have experienced the downward spiral of sin? What keeps you from doing so?



15:25-32 GUIDE

NOTES

- This is our final week in Luke 15. Your goal this week is to make sure they see the main point of Jesus three parables. There is a rhythm to them that is disrupted in our verses this week. Something is lost then found then people rejoice. Something is lost then found then people rejoice. Something is lost then found but only some people rejoice!! Don't let your group miss this. He is calling out the Pharisees and scribes for not rejoicing when lost sinners are found.
- But that is only half of what you want your group to see. You want to make sure you see how Jesus ends the parable with the conclusion unknown. We don't know how the elder brother responds. The point is Jesus is making an invitation. He is entreating the Pharisees to come back into the party. The reality is they are just as lost as the younger brother. He was trying to get the father's stuff by breaking all the rules. But they were similarly trying to get the father's stuff by keeping all the rules. Jesus graciously invites both back into relationship with him.
- Help your group see how they are also like the elder brother and try to earn God's favor with their good works.

► LAUNCH

- Has there ever been a time when you were angry at someone else's good fortune? Tell us about it?

► CONTEXT

- What is the question that sets up Ch 15? [Why do you hangout with losers?]
- Looking at the first two parables and the first act of the third parable, what is the common theme? [When something was lost people rejoiced at its finding.]
- Ok now look back at verses 1 and 2. Who is Jesus addressing these parables to? [Pharisees and the scribes.]
- What do we know about the Pharisees and scribes? [Let them discuss. Make sure they see the negative aspects of these group.]
- Given how Jesus has been teaching that people should rejoice at sinners being saved and how the Pharisees more often than not fail to do that, how would you expect Jesus to respond to them? [Let them share. Don't give away the end of the lesson where we see Jesus, rather than being harsh with them, kindly entreating them to come into relationship with Him.]
- Well let's look at how Jesus responds to them by considering how he wraps up the second act of this third parable.



15:25-32 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION

- Look at verses 25-30. What all can we learn about the elder brother? [He is dutifully in work (he was in the field when his brother came home). He never disobeys his father. He gets angry and bitter that his brother gets blessing. He sounds like a pretty conservative guy.]
- Go back and compare verses 12 and 29. What do both of the brothers want? [Their father's stuff.]
- What is different about how they go about trying to get it? [The younger brother disobeys all the rules to get blessing. The older brother keeps all the rules to get blessing.]
- To consider why both of these methods are faulty lets consider the father.
- Look at verses 25-30. What all can we learn about the father? [He goes out to his elder son in a similar way he ran to his younger son. He loves both sons. He feel gives his possessions to his elder son the same way he freely gave them to his younger son. He is humble, he leaves a party he is hosting. Relationship is his highest value. He appeals to their status as sons as the basis of their relationship.]
- Based on what we see is true of the Father, why are both of the son's methods of getting blessing faulty? [Blessing is based on their status as sons. One thinks he can have blessing without this status. One thinks he can earn the blessing. The ultimate blessing is relationship with the Father. But they get the side perk of his stuff as well. Both the relationship and his stuff come to them as they have the status of sons. At some level they both misunderstood their sonship and all its implications.]
- The end of the story come rather abruptly. What seems to be missing? [We don't know if the elder brother came back into the party!!]
- Earlier we talked about how given Jesus teaching on spending time with sinners and the Pharisees misunderstanding of this you would expect Jesus to have a harsh response to them. How does he respond? Why does he end the story the way he does? [He places them in the story as the elder brother who is kindly and lovingly entreated. He is kind and lovingly entreating the Pharisees and scribes. Jesus is saying, it's not the sinners that are lost. You are all sinners and you are all lost. But you are all loved and forgiven and I want you back as well. Stop trying to earn blessing and salvation through what you do. Instead trust me for salvation and blessing.]



15:25-32 GUIDE

► APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- We easily become like the “older brother” in this story. What takes place in the heart of an “older brother”?
- Where do you see the “older brother” attitude in your own life?
- In what way has your life become more about what you can accomplish than simply enjoying your relationship with God? What would it look like to live in more of a love relationship with God?



17:1-21 GUIDE

► NOTES

- As your group dives into the text for the first time this week, your goal is twofold. In this section Jesus is dealing with several key character traits that should mark Christians. That is for those in God's kingdom, here are the values of that kingdom.
- Each section will have a little bit of application as you go but then one main application at the end to wrap up.
- This lesson might feel longer to you as there are four topics included. You will have to watch the clock and make sure you aren't getting bogged down with any one. Make sure you get to the last section on the kingdom and the heart and the application section.

► LAUNCH

- Think about someone you really respect. What is it about his character that you most wish you could emulate?
- Similarly, what do you think the key character traits are that distinguish a follower of Christ?
- Well tonight we are going to look at a passage that deals with several key character traits of Christians. As we have seen in Luke so far, Jesus has taught some very important lessons about God's new plan for establishing His kingdom, but He has not directly dealt with the question, "How should kingdom people live?" This week we will see that how He describes the guiding values that kingdom members are to embody.
- Let's dive into the character trait that Jesus describes.

► DISCUSSION

- Read 17:1-4.
- What is the key character trait identified here as belonging to members of Christ's kingdom? [Forgiveness]
- Why are Christians able to forgive in a way that non-Christians can't? [The first quality that members of this new kingdom are to embrace is forgiveness. The basis for membership in the kingdom of God is reception of God's unmerited forgiveness of our sins, accomplished by Christ's death on the cross. Having been forgiven such a great debt gives us the wherewithal to forgive lesser debts.]



17:1-21 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- So as Christians we have a greater motivation and power to forgive, but if we find ourselves unable to forgive, what might this be telling us about ourselves? [When we are stingy with forgiveness, it makes it clear that we have either not received forgiveness, do not fully apprehend all we've been forgiven from, or simply are not experientially feeling forgiven.]
- While the basis for our forgiveness as Christians is Christ's death on the cross, what is the key to experiencing and feeling this forgiveness daily? [Confessing our sins to God and others. While Christians are granted forgiveness of their sins due to Christ's death, confession on an on-going basis is essential for feeling and experiencing this forgiveness as it relates to specific sins. Additionally, having a close Christian friend with whom we can share our hidden areas of sin for prayer and support can also aid in feeling God's forgiveness.]
- Have you thought lately of all Jesus forgave you for and what it cost Him to do so? Is there anyone you need to forgive?
- Read 17:5-6.
- Jesus presents an interesting view on faith in this section. Where does Jesus say the power of faith comes from? [What you put your faith in not how much faith you have.]
- The first key to living by faith is the focus of our faith, but Jesus gives us one more key. What point is Jesus making with the mulberry tree? [As we put our faith in Jesus we are to actually step out in faith. We are to take the risk that Jesus will do what He promised.]
- What would it look like for us to put our faith in Jesus and step out in that faith in an ongoing way? [Let the group discuss.]
- Who do you know that characterizes a life of faith? What dynamics distinguish them as people of faith?
- What practical steps do you need to take to grow in your ability to trust Jesus? [Allow the group to discuss. Getting to know Jesus better by spending time in His word can give us the confidence that he is trustworthy. Also, past experiences of seeing Him prove faithful are huge. Simply taking a faith risk and watching Him show up will increase our ability to trust Him.]



17:1-21 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Read 17:7-10.
- Jesus is emphasizing the quality of humility. What is the basis for a Christian's humility? [Our salvation was a product of grace, and our lives are lived as an overflow and extension of that same grace. There is nothing we can do of spiritual value and nothing we can become without God's empowerment.]
- What trait is Jesus concerned with that may manifest itself in the life of His followers, if they don't have this attitude? What happened with the Pharisees? [We are always at risk of becoming prideful.]
- What helps you to live with the humility Jesus is describing? [Allow the group to discuss. Seeing Jesus' supreme humility always motivates me to stop thinking things are beneath me.]
- Read 17:11-19.
- What's the final attribute that was present in only one of the ten? [Thankfulness.]
- Because of God's grace to us in our salvation, at even the worst of times, there are dozens of things that we have been given that should be a source of thankfulness. Take a few minutes and list as many things as come to mind.
- Read 17:20-21.
- How does this exchange relate to all that Jesus has just said? [We see that rather than in a nation, it is in the heart and lives of individuals where this new kingdom will grow. A heart that manifests these qualities identifies a heart where Jesus is reigning as King.]

► APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- As you think of your own heart as Jesus' new kingdom, are there any of these four areas (forgiveness, faith, humility, thankfulness) where you have not allowed Him to freely reign?
- Why do you think it's hard for you to not surrender to Jesus as king in that area?



19:28-44 GUIDE

► NOTES

- For the last 12 weeks we've been following Jesus on His march to Jerusalem. Along the way we've listened to Him essentially propose marriage, calling us to a total commitment superseded only by His commitment to us. We've learned that He is our portion and He's taught us how to pray. There have been warnings of judgment and vivid pictures of His great love for sinners. He has also given us lessons about life in the Kingdom. Today, finally, he arrives in the city. His arrival is filled with paradoxes. That is the focus of this final passage.

► REVIEW

- Well this is out last week in Luke. Before we dive into our passage and conclude this series, let's look back. What were some of the lessons we've learned while following Jesus to Jerusalem?

► LAUNCH

- Ok to get us thinking about our passage tonight think back to the unkind days of junior high and high school, did you ever have a friend turn on you over night? Did you ever do that to someone else? Tell us about it.
- Well tonight we are going to consider Jesus arrival in Jerusalem. These are the last moments on his journey before his is turned on by everyone. In this passage we are going to explore a number of seeming paradoxes about Jesus.

► DISCUSSION

- Read 19:28-34.
- This event is reminiscent of Matthew 17:24-27. Look at that passage real quick. How are they similar? What do they teach about Jesus? [Both show Jesus with an eerie knowledge and control of events. It shows He is sovereign.]
- If He's so powerful, why do you think He chose such a lowly, unimpressive way to make His final entry into the city? [Because He is lowly, as well as majestic. It fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 that the Messiah would be, "righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey."]
- Why is it important that Jesus is both sovereign and humble? What is the problem if you have one but not the other? Why do you think this feels like a paradox? [Let them discuss.]



19:28-44 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- Read 19:35-38.
- The song they sing is from Psalm 118. Read Psalm 118:19-29. What do you think it is about? Why do they apply it to Jesus? [It's about the Messiah, whom they recognized Jesus to be. You might point out that in Luke 20 Jesus also quotes a portion of Psalm 118 about the rejected capstone.]
- Why does the crowd praise Him now and shout for His crucifixion days later? [Let the group discuss. Our hearts are so fickle and given to contradiction. In John 2 it says, "Jesus would not entrust Himself to [men], for He knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man, for He knew what was in a man." It must have been odd for Him to enjoy the adoration of the crowd knowing that He would soon endure their taunts.]
- There maybe no other figure in human history that experienced such a paradox of being worshiped and being hated. Why do you think this is true? [Let them discuss.]
- Read 19:39-44.
- In this section we see the paradox of divine sovereignty and human responsibility.
- What does Jesus mean when He says, "the rocks will cry out?" What does that tell us about Him? [That's because the purpose of the entire universe is to bring praise to God. He has ordered the world in such a way that it will bring Him praise. That's the point of everything. That funny little phrase, "The rocks will cry out," reminds us that Jesus is sovereign over all things and will receive the praise He is due. He can turn rocks into worshipers. He did turn you and I into worshippers.]
- What Jesus is describing in vv. 42-44? [The destruction of Jerusalem coming in AD 70.]
- Why is Israel going to be judged? [According to vv. 44 their judgment is the result of their refusal to recognize Jesus as Messiah.]
- Why doesn't Jesus turn their hearts? [Allow the group to discuss. This is the mystery of human responsibility and divine sovereignty. It's clear from Scripture that He does turn fallen hearts to faith. 2 Tim 2:24-26 is one of many examples of this. But He also turns fallen hearts over to judgment. Romans 9:18 summarizes both of these.]
- How do you resolve that tension? [Though the group isn't likely to solve it, it's healthy for them to wrestle with it.]



19:28-44 GUIDE

► DISCUSSION CONTINUED

- The final paradox exists in that when Jesus gets to the city where he will die a wretched, excruciating death, and be cut off from His Father, He doesn't weep for Himself but for Jerusalem. What does that tell you about Him? [That He is loving and kind and selfless, even towards His enemies. He didn't come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. On the cross He prayed the Father would forgive His tormenters. At every step He gives away love like the sky gives rain and sun.]

► APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- Where have you seen your own heart flip-flop, worshipping Jesus at one moment and then cursing Him the next?
- What does this flip-flop potentially reveal about the inadequacy of your view of Jesus?
- From this twelve week portrait of Jesus, what makes you most want to worship Him?
- What lesson has been the hardest for you to believe?
- Which has been the hardest for you to apply?

