



Jesus in the Temple

Luke 2 v 41–52

Ask God to reveal something new as you read the passage from Luke.

1. Visiting Jerusalem for the Passover was a part of Jesus' family traditions. Think of your own family traditions either growing up or now. What is your favourite?

Reflect: What traditions, patterns and routines could you develop to help connect with God and build your faith?

2. Jesus was sitting with the teachers in the temple courtyard when his family found him three days later. Who are some of the teachers that have had the greatest influence in your own life? Whose are the voices that you allow to teach and inspire you today?

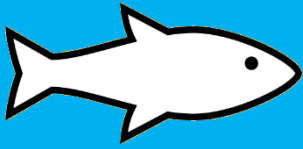
Reflect: Who are you connecting with to study and grow in your knowledge and understanding of God?

3. Jesus' parents had been visited by Angels, Wise Men and Shepherds; they had raised Jesus for twelve years, but they were still amazed by his behaviour. There is always more for us to discover about who God is, we just have to seek Him.

Reflect: While we cannot all meet together in church where are the places where you feel most connected to God? How can you seek a new experience and deeper understanding of God today?

4. Jesus grew in wisdom and strength; we know that he lived a life without sin but verse 52 teaches us that he became more pleasing to God as he grew. What changes can we make in our own lives to make them more pleasing to God?

Reflect: Why not ask God what it is about you that pleases Him? What could you do in your own life to grow in wisdom and strength?



Jesus' first followers

Luke 5 v 1-11

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6. In this story we find Jesus teaching, he is not in the temple or a meeting place, he meets the people where they are right beside the lake. He sits in the boat just off the shore so that everybody can hear and learn from him.

Reflect: What does Jesus want to teach you where you are right now?

7. Jesus instructs Simon to leave the shallows by the shore and go further out to the deep waters. How deep do you think you are in your faith right now? What could you do to take your relationship with God deeper? How open are your nets today?

Reflect: In which areas of your relationship with God would you like to go deeper?

8. Simon and the other fishermen had been fishing all night without success. They were tired and discouraged but still followed Jesus' instructions. How can we find the strength to follow and obey Jesus even in challenging times?

Reflect: What past failures or discouragements are holding you back in your relationship with God?

9. There were so many fish caught in the nets that they began to break, what an incredible reminder that God gives good things to us in abundance. It took two boats to bring the nets to shore.

Reflect: Who are your partners in the other boat? What support can you draw on in difficult times and times of blessing.

10. Simon and the other fishermen were amazed at the number of fish they had caught. They knew instantly that there was something special and different about Jesus. Simon's response was to fall on his knees in repentance.

Reflect: What is your response when you see Jesus at work in your own life?

11. The fishermen's lives would never be the same after their encounter with Jesus. They leave everything behind to follow him. What must the other fisherman have thought seeing their boats and huge haul of fish abandoned?

Reflect: What differences has being a follower of Jesus made in your life?



Jesus heals and forgives.

Luke 5 v 17–26

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- 13.** There are a lot of times in the gospels where we read about the Pharisees and teachers of the law trying to trick Jesus or asking him difficult questions. At the beginning of this story we read that they have travelled from all over the area to hear Jesus because they had heard of his healing ministry. Jesus used the opportunity to demonstrate both his compassion and authority before them.

Reflect: How do you respond to your critics? What might God want to show them through you?

- 14.** The friends could not carry their friends straight to Jesus because of the crowds. They had carried him so far but now it seemed that the way was blocked. What are the barriers in our own life to helping draw others closer to Jesus or to seeking healing for others?

Reflect: Who are you carrying in prayer at the moment? What are the obstacles you need to overcome?

- 15.** The friends lowered their friends right into the middle of the crowd to bring him to Jesus. They didn't let the audience put them off or keep them back. They cleared out of the way the tiles of the roof and lowered him down together.

Reflect: Who are your partners and friends in your walk with God?

- 16.** Verse 20 says that Jesus saw "their" faith. When we lack faith of our own we can draw on the support and prayers of friends and family.

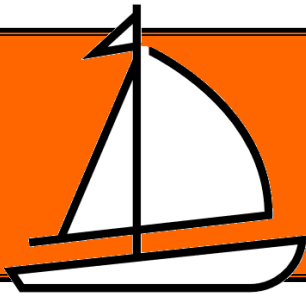
Reflect: What are the areas where you are lacking faith in your own life, who could you call on to support you in prayer?

- 17.** 1 Samuel 6 v 17 says "People look at the outside of a person. But the Lord looks at what is in the heart." Here, Jesus' first priority is to forgive the man's sins before he heals him. What do we prioritise when we come to God in prayer?

Reflect: What does God want to change in your heart today?

- 18.** This story ends by saying that "everyone was amazed and gave praise to God". Even Jesus' critics could not deny that they had seen something miraculous.

Reflect: What "unusual" things does God want you to do today that will show others his power and love?



Jesus calms a storm.

Luke 8 v 22–25

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20. We don't know why Jesus wanted to go to the other side of the lake and the disciples in the story do not ask Him. They get into the boat and they leave. What can we learn from the obedience of the disciples and their willingness to follow Jesus wherever he went?

Reflect: Where is God leading you at the moment?

21. Jesus understood the importance of rest, throughout his story we see moments when Jesus finds space to be alone or to spend time talking with God. What can we do to find rest and to create space to connect with God?

Reflect: What are you doing to build times of rest into your week?

22. The disciples were experienced fishermen, they were used to being on the lake, but this storm terrified them. They recognised that they were in real danger. Where are your comfort zones, the places you feel most confident in your faith?

Reflect: Where might God be asking you to step out of your comfort zone with him?

23. The disciples could not see a solution, they thought they were all going to drown, but even in their panic they called on Jesus. What can we learn from this example? What is our first reaction when we face challenging or scary moments?

Reflect: What habits could you build into your prayer life so that calling on Jesus becomes your first response to challenges?

24. Jesus was not afraid, he was confident in his authority, he gave the wind and waves the order to stop. God's word promises that we too have authority over things on earth and in heaven through God's spirit.

Reflect: Where are some of the areas that God is calling you to use your authority?

25. The disciples had seen Jesus performing many miracles, they had been following him and living with him and yet in this moment they asked "Who is this?" How amazing that there will always be more for us to discover about who God is. How can we raise expectation in our hearts that God will continue to surprise and amaze us.

Reflect: When was the last time that you were amazed by new knowledge or an encounter moment with God?



Jesus with two sisters

Luke 10 v 38–42

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27. Mary sat at Jesus' feet listening to him. What can we learn from this positioning? How can we replicate it in our own lives? What is God speaking to us today

Reflect: Where are you positioned in relation to God today?

28. Martha had a house full of important guests, she was busy with all the things that needed doing. What are the things on your to do list which are stopping you from spending time with God. Are there things that you are doing for God which he wants you to lay down in favour of spending time with Him?

Reflect: What work has God called you to this week?

29. Jesus reminded Martha that the most important thing was to be in relationship with him. God's word reminds us to 'seek first the Kingdom of God' and everything else will be added afterwards. What can we do to invite God's rule and reign in our own lives?

Reflect: Where are the areas in your life where you need to put Jesus first?



Jesus and the children

Luke 18 v 15–17

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- 30.** People were bringing their babies and children to Jesus, they wanted him to hold them. What are the traditions and activities in your own church community that help bring babies and children to Jesus? Who are the children and babies that are part of your church family?

Reflect: Which children and families from your church community can you support this week?

Remember to follow church safeguarding guidance when reaching out to connect with children and families.

- 31.** The disciples told people to stop bringing babies to Jesus. Why do you think they did this? Have you ever felt like your church worship or service has been interrupted or disrupted by babies and children? What are some of the things that stop you being open to children taking part in church activities?

Reflect: How can we be more like Jesus in the way we welcome and include babies and children?

- 32.** Jesus said that we must receive God's kingdom like little children, what do you think this means? What does it look like when a child encounters a new thing? How do children respond to new information or experiences?

Reflect: How does God want you to be more childlike in your faith journey today?



Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Luke 19 v 1–10

Ask God to reveal something new as you read the passage from Luke.

34. Jesus was not in Jericho with a specific purpose he was “passing through” but he did not pass by an opportunity to reach out to Zacchaeus. Where are the places that you pass through each day, who are the people you pass by? What would happen if you stopped and reached out?

Reflect: Who might God want you to reach out to today with his love and hope?

35. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, he did not expect to speak with him or even to have Jesus visit his house. The crowds were all looking at Jesus, they did not see Zacchaeus in his tree. Who are those watching on the fringes of our lives? What can they learn from the way we practice our faith?

Reflect: Would you live out your life and faith differently if you thought somebody was watching? Do you behave the same way towards strangers as you do to those who know you have faith?

36. When Jesus told Zacchaeus to come down, he did so at once. Zacchaeus was glad to welcome Jesus into his home. What are the things that stop us from being obedient to God or responding instantly to his instructions? What are the faith practices that we struggle to do with gladness?

Reflect: What is God asking you to do today?

37. The people began to whisper when they saw Jesus with Zacchaeus, they were not pleased that he was visiting the house of a sinner. Who are the Zacchaeus’ in our world today? Who do you view as less valuable or deserving because of their behaviour? Corrupt politicians? Criminals? Abusers? Vandals?

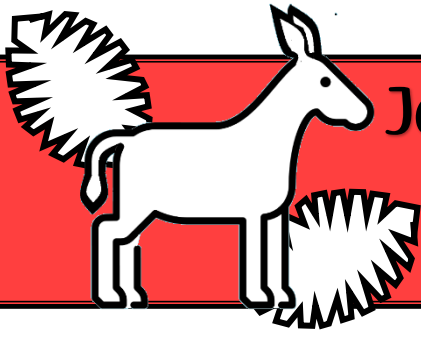
Reflect: Who does God want to give you compassion for today?

38. Zacchaeus recognised his own sinful behaviour and sought to make amends. His repentance was immediate and his reparation extravagant. Are there behaviours in your own life that you recognise as sinful? Do we always demonstrate our repentance through a change in our behaviour?

Reflect: What areas in your own life are not pleasing to God and require a change?

39. Jesus came to “look for the lost and save them”, what part are we called to play in seeking the lost today and sharing with them God’s promise of salvation?

Reflect: Who does God want you to share the Good News with today?



Jesus comes to Jerusalem as King

Luke 19 v 38–42

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40. Jesus rode into Jerusalem not with a grand parade or a fully equipped army, he entered on a young donkey without even a saddle. It was just as Zechariah had prophesied (9v9) but it probably still surprised the crowds. Even so people laid their coats on the road before Jesus.

Reflect: What do you have which you could lay before Jesus today?

41. The people recognised the kingship and authority of Jesus, they had seen it in the miracles he had performed, and they worshipped him. What miracles and works of Jesus have you seen in your own life?

Reflect: How can you praise and give glory to God today?



Jesus' last supper

Luke 22 v 7,14-21

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42. The Passover meal was a reminder of the meal that God's people ate before leaving their time of slavery in Egypt and following Moses on a journey to the promised land. The blood of a young goat or lamb was painted on the doorframes to protect those living inside from the angel of death as it passed overhead. What does this meal teach us about the sacrifice that Jesus was about to make?

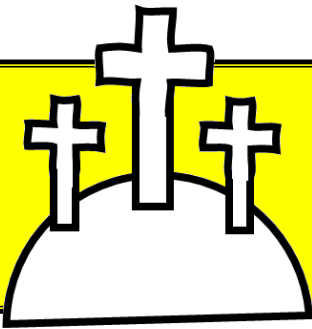
Reflect: What does the original Passover meal mean for us today?

43. Jesus broke and shared the bread with his disciples. Jesus knew the physical punishment his body would have to bear before he died. Jesus described himself as the 'bread of life' – how can we feed on and be nourished by Jesus in our own lives?

Reflect: What does the bread of communion mean to you?

44. Jesus took the cup after supper and shared it with his disciples. A new covenant was being made through his sacrifice, no longer would God's people need to bring animal sacrifices to seek forgiveness, God's forgiveness through Jesus was for all time and for all people.

Reflect: What does the wine of communion mean to you?



Jesus dies

Luke 23 v 32–34, 44–46. 52–54

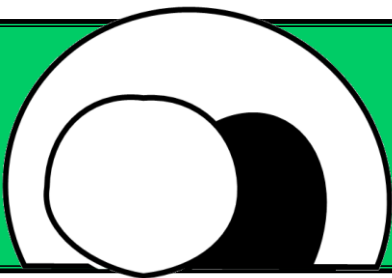
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45. Even as he was being crucified as a common criminal Jesus asked forgiveness for those who were punishing him. The temple curtain which stopped people from entering the Holy of Holies was torn in two. No longer would we need an intermediary to approach God on our behalf the way was open for us to draw close to God.

Reflect: How will you draw close to God today?

46. Jesus' body was prepared for the tomb, wrapped in linen and cloth. In John's telling of this part of the story (John 19) Nicodemus brings myrrh to embalm the body of Jesus. Pause and think back to the swaddled child born in a stable, the myrrh presented by Magi, how do these images speak to us?

Reflect: Why do you think God allowed Jesus to die and be buried? What can we learn from this part of the story?



Jesus is alive again!

Luke 24 v 1–6

47. The women in the story believed that Jesus was dead, they had come to anoint his body with spices. Their encounter at the tomb showed taught them the truth that Jesus was risen. Although he doesn't walk the earth today Jesus is still alive today!

Reflect: How does God want the truth, that Jesus is risen and alive to change your life today?